

What I Learned

This week I learned the difference between legal rules and ethical responsibilities in cybersecurity. Laws define what I can do, while ethics guides my decisions and how to be a good trustworthy person. Out of the five ethical frameworks we discussed, I will most likely lean the most on consequences/utilitarianism because when done right, it does the best job of maximizing good for the most people. I also know this framework has flaws, like ignoring smaller groups, so I want to stay familiar with all five. I often make decisions based on virtue and care for others, focusing on honesty and how my actions affect relationships and trust. The *Ethics in Technology* reading showed how these frameworks are lenses that shape our choices, and how ethical reasoning often goes beyond the law. The ACM Code of Ethics reinforces this by calling on computing professionals to *avoid harm* (1.2) and *respect privacy* (1.6), which directly connect to consequences and care.

How I'll Apply It

In a college setting, I can see why explicit authorization matters when working with network equipment. For example, a student started messing with a lab switch just to learn how it works, but didn't get approval. They could accidentally shut down the entire campus network. Even if their intentions weren't harmful, it would still count as acting without authorization, and under the CFAA it could even be seen as exceeding authorized access. Using the consequences framework, the better choice is to think about who might be harmed first, other students losing access to classes, staff losing internet, or entire systems going offline. The right move would be to ask the IT office or instructor for written approval before touching critical systems. That way the learning still happens, but it's done in a controlled way that protects everyone.

Muddiest Point

One thing I am still unsure about is how to clearly map situations onto the four "boxes" of legal/illegal and ethical/unethical. The idea makes sense in theory, but once I start thinking of examples, it feels messy because a single action could fall into different boxes depending on context. For instance, monitoring keystrokes at work could be legal but still feel unethical, or whistleblowing could be illegal in some cases but ethically justified. I would like more clarity on how to judge these gray areas without oversimplifying real-world scenarios.

Portfolio Note

- I will add my ethical lens summary (Consequences with support from Virtue and Care) so I have a clear reference point for how I'll approach ethical decisions this term. I will also add the other ethical lens we discussed in class.

- I will post a short AUP summary to show how authorization, consent, and scope translate into real policy language for a lab setting.
- I will include notes on the major professional codes (ACM, IEEE, and ISC²) because they give me quick “shortcuts” to connect ethics to professional standards.

AI Use Note

I used ChatGPT as a structured writing partner. I provided my lecture notes and the assignment requirements, then asked the tool to guide me through the reflection step by step with targeted questions. This let me organize my thoughts more effectively while keeping the final writing in my own words. I see AI as a professional support tool, I controlled the content and direction, but used ChatGPT to make the process faster, clearer, and more organized.