

Homework #1

- “If you see something, say something”
- Discuss each of the following questions:
 1. Under what circumstances is it OK for the university to:
 - a) monitor your social media activities?
 - b) use video surveillance throughout the campus?
 - c) monitor your health?
 - d) require testing for diseases?
 - e) require vaccination?
 - f) force people to be on campus during a pandemic?
 2. Should students be empowered to report concerns regarding the health of fellow students, faculty, and staff?
 3. Should the definitions of “free speech” and “right to privacy” be altered during a pandemic?, war?, natural disaster?
- Please submit your response document to Blackboard by 9/18

1.

- a. The university has no reason to **monitor** my social media activities.
- b. Video surveillance is acceptable as long as the recordings are only stored on media such that it's not accessible to the rest of the internet (through any means) and is deleted/overwritten after a certain time frame. This way in the event of a crime the evidence exists and can be retrieved but there's no potential for abuse such as in the case of stalking. Additionally there is no reason to record audio but with these precautions it would likely be ok.
- c. Health data is very sensitive and personal information. Students should be required to opt into providing the school their health data as although it is an invasion of privacy the university has facilities such as the office of student health and wellness which if well coordinated could save lives or prevent serious health issues.
- d. If the student recently traveled from a country in which a disease is known to be endemic it would be reasonable to require the student to get tested for it. However, this is largely handled by the federal government and likely an overreach by the university unless it was related to school activities like for example a study abroad program.
- e. Currently the university requires a select few vaccines to live on campus which I think is reasonable. However if we were to provide the maximum choice to students an alternative system would be that the university maintains it's

vaccination ratios in order to provide herd immunity. In this case being vaccinated would not be a requirement but if you are not vaccinated there's a chance that you would not be allowed to be on campus until you get a vaccine or until more vaccinated people join the university. Of course in the case of COVID where the virus is mutating rapidly enough to render vaccines nearly ineffective the herd immunity ratio is increasing so in this scenario unvaccinated students may be required to get vaccinated in order to continue to attend classes. Regardless of if this system would work or not, the university's decision to require vaccination (unless student petitions) is definitely the easier route and likely safer.

- f. IIT clearly has a precedence with success in administering in online classes so I see no reason why students should be required to be on-campus. IIT has very limited and aging dorms and I've been forced to live off campus as a result of the limited options filling up early. So it's clear that restricting students to on-campus housing for their first 2 years is just a money grab, but unfortunately there's nothing that can be held against them for doing this as they're expected to do things like this as a profit-seeking company. Regardless, this could violate some ethical norms.
- 2. I feel there should be no limitations or things that would make students uncomfortable with reporting health concerns to appropriate people and staff members in the university. Seeing as there's a vaccine requirement and generally good health practices on campus I don't expect there to be issues related to COVID19. If there are any health issues which cause problems for others or potentially if a student is seen struggling severely as a result of some health issues it might make sense for someone to report it so that help can be administered and the issues resolved, however, as with before it's generally best for people to mind their own business and makes no sense as to why one would report them.
- 3. Going to break it into 3 categories as I think they're require different perspectives
 - a. Pandemic: Pandemics do have lives on the line but in the case of COVID19 for example the death rate is low and continues to drop as new mutations are less deadly and more contagious.
 - i. Free speech: Fake and misleading news has done a great harm to society by among other things - increasing death rates, causing shortages, incitement of violence, etc. However it's very difficult to police as the contents' authors are often anonymous and/or outside of US jurisdiction. Therefore the only reasonable solution is to better educate the population.
 - ii. Right to Privacy & More: As we can see with COVID19's recent destruction of Chinese supply chains throws doubt at their governments claims of success with invasive and authoritarian approaches to the pandemic. On the opposite side of the spectrum we have Sweden, which although admittedly having a less social culture, has managed to do fine without a lockdown, privacy violations and much fewer restrictions than most other western countries.

- b. War: information and public opinion are very important factors in warfare and thus the best approach would likely depend on the type of war at hand.
 - i. Existential threat: Wars where the majority of the action is taking place nearby or if the conflict is sufficiently global and intense in scope. For example if the cold-war were to have gotten hot or an invasion of US territory. In this case, making restrictions on freedom of speech would be potentially reasonable however invading the privacy of civilians, especially by means of things such as backdoors can give opposing forces an upper hand so often it doesn't make sense for a government to violate privacy.
 - ii. Participation in external conflict: The US has participated in a war of some sort for a significant portion of its history and it's rarely an excuse to make special policy decisions in order to better enable that as these wars often have very little to no positive impact on life back home.
- c. Natural Disaster: natural disasters require quick reactions and can often be unpredictable with unforeseen circumstances. It is for this reason that the US government has chosen to give FEMA nearly infinite power under the right conditions in order to resolve crises effectively. Privacy violations should happen as they typically do in emergency response situations. If the person is in danger, the 911 operator can access their location information in order to send help. I can't think of any additional violations of privacy and freedom of speech they would need in order to save lives.