

The header features a white background with several geometric elements: a dark gray quarter-circle in the top-left corner; a large shape in the top-right composed of a dark gray semi-circle and a blue semi-circle; a light blue horizontal bar across the middle; and a blue quarter-circle in the bottom-right corner. On the left side of this bar, there is a dark gray circle partially enclosed by a light blue semi-circle.

Ethical Frameworks

Ethics in Technology

Consequentialism/Utilitarianism

- For the purposes of this course, treat these terms the same.
 - Utilitarianism is a subset of consequentialism.
- Maximize positive consequences.
 - “The greater good.”
- Examples:
 - Give to charity because it feeds the hungry.
 - Don’t steal because it hurts people.

Deontology

- An action is good if it follows from moral rules/commands.
 - A duty based ethical system.
- Opposed to consequentialism.
 - Consequences don't matter, following the moral law matters.
- Examples:
 - Not lying, even if you think it will have a positive consequence.
 - Not stealing, even if you think it will have a positive consequence.

Virtue Ethics

- Education based ethical system.
 - Observe virtuous people, practice virtuous action, become virtuous.
- Examples:
 - Read about courageous people, think about how it applies to your life, practice being courageous.
 - Same with wisdom, kindness, generosity, etc.

Relativism

- All ethical frameworks are subjective.
 - Anchored in a place and time, no absolute right and wrong.
- Examples:
 - Some cultures frown on bribery, some don't.
 - Some cultures value individual freedom, some don't.
 - Some cultures have capital punishment, some don't.

Ethical Decision Making Model

- Develop problem statement.
- Identify alternatives.
- Choose an alternative.
- Implement decision.
- Evaluate results.