

Fairness

Ethics and Computing Chapter 10

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Motivation

- Unfairness and discrimination hurt the image and progress of any field.
- Not only are unfairness and discrimination unethical, such behavior is typically illegal.

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Codes of Ethics

- ACM
 - ◆ Be fair and take action not to discriminate.
- IEEE
 - ◆ Treat fairly all persons regardless of such factors as race, religion, gender, disability, age, or national origin.

Codes of Ethics

- AITP
 - ◆ I shall cooperate with my fellow members and shall treat them with honesty and respect at all times.
- Software Engineering
 - ◆ Not give unfair treatment to anyone because of any irrelevant prejudices.

Definition

- Fairness
 - ◆ Equality of opportunity

U.S. History

- Declaration of Independence (1776)
 - ◆ We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

U.S. History(cont.)

- 13th Amendment to Constitution(1865)
 - ◆ No slavery
- 15th Amendment(1870)
 - ◆ Voting rights regardless of race or color
- 19th Amendment(1920)
 - ◆ Voting rights regardless of sex
- 24th Amendment(1964)
 - ◆ Voting rights regardless of poll taxes

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Under-Representation

- Not all types of people are represented in a certain area of opportunity
- E.g., PhDs in computing
 - ◆ Taulbee survey (.pdf)
 - ◆ U.S. Census Bureau (.pdf)

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Under-Representation in CS/CSE

- Why?
 - ◆ Social culture and family structure
 - ◆ Lack of role models
 - ◆ Women: child rearing
 - ◆ Minorities: income level
 - ◆ Discrimination

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Under-Representation in CS/CSE

- Should we try to change?
 - ◆ Strength in diversity
 - ◆ Reaching different cultures
 - ◆ Global competitiveness
 - ◆ Tapping changing demographics
 - ◆ Stability through inclusion
 - ◆ Exclusion breeds dissatisfaction

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Dealing with Discrimination

- Almost all types of discrimination stem from dealing with people as members of a stereotyped group rather than as individuals
- Types of discrimination
 - ◆ Sexual harassment
 - ◆ Racial discrimination
 - ◆ Bias against immigrants, elderly, disabled
 - ◆ Reversed discrimination

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Points to Remember

- The U.S. has a long history of dealing with discrimination issues.
- Diversity of human resources can have a positive effect.
- Discrimination and harassment are both unethical and illegal.
- Federal law exists regarding incidents of discrimination and harassment.

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Resources

- ComputingResearchAssociation
 - ◆ www.cra.org
- The Ada Project on women in computing
 - ◆ tap.mills.org
- UTAPolicies
 - ◆ www-ais2.uta.edu/policy