

MODULE 8

Your AI Ethics Position

Capstone Synthesis

STUDY GUIDE

AI Ethics for Higher Education

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1 The Central Thesis

AI amplifies human choices at unprecedented scale — making the ethics of those choices more consequential, not less. A biased human affects individuals. A biased algorithm affects millions. **The ethics aren't new. The scale is.**

2 Cross-Module Connections

Bias + Surveillance = discriminatory policing (Modules 3+4). Workplace AI + governance gap = unregulated algorithmic management (Modules 5+6). Deepfakes + accountability = evidence crisis (Modules 2+7). Self-regulation failure + privacy exploitation = surveillance capitalism (Modules 4+6).

3 Five Questions Your Position Must Answer

(1) Where do you draw the line between beneficial and harmful AI? (2) Who should govern AI and with what authority? (3) What do we owe people displaced or harmed by AI? (4) How much privacy are you willing to trade for security? (5) What is your personal responsibility as someone who uses AI?

4 Rights-First vs. Outcomes-First

Rights-first (deontological): some AI uses should be banned regardless of benefits; people have the right to explanation and appeal. **Outcomes-first** (utilitarian): evaluate AI by measurable results; slowing development costs lives. A mature position draws from both.

5 Governance That Works

Self-regulation fails (167 published principles, none enforced). What works: algorithmic impact assessments, mandatory independent auditing, incident reporting, affected community participation, right to explanation and appeal.

6 The Capstone Skill

Ethical maturity means applying the right framework to the right situation — not rigid consistency, but principled reasoning that can explain and defend its choices. You should be able to articulate what you believe, which framework supports it, what tradeoffs you accept, and where you draw lines.

7 What You Carry Forward

You will encounter AI ethics in every career. The people making AI decisions aren't smarter or more ethical than you. Your generation's choices about what to demand, accept, question, and refuse will shape whether AI serves human values or undermines them.