

**CS 4873 Computing, Society, and Professionalism (Spring 2020)**  
**Week 3 (Jan 22, 2020) Section Guide**

0. TA will give out printed copies of the section handout (class activities) to each student

I. Questions (5 min)

- Remember each class to bring a question, observation or relevant news item for discussion

II. Work on the ethical dilemma given in the Class Activity 1 (15 min). After that, each student goes in turn to present their thoughts/answers. TA to moderate discussion at the end of each activity.

III. Review (5 min)

- Review the two formulations of the categorical imperative

IV. Work on the ethical dilemma given in the Class Activity 2 (which was briefly highlighted in the class on Wednesday), using Kantianism and the above review of the categorical imperatives, (10 min). After that, each student goes in turn to present their thoughts/answers. TA to moderate discussion at the end of each activity.

V. In the light of class activity 2, TA to note the case for and case against Kantianism (10 min):

The Case For:

- It treats all persons as moral equals
- It gives all persons moral worth by considering them as rational, autonomous beings
- Everyone is held to the same standard
- It produces universal moral guidelines
- The Case Against:
  - Most times we can be quite confident of what the consequences of our actions will be, in which case we need not hesitate because of uncertainty.
  - Kant seems to assume that we would be morally responsible for any bad consequences of lying, but we would *not* be responsible for any bad consequences of telling the truth.
  - Sometimes no single rule fully characterizes a situation
  - Sometimes there is no way to resolve a conflict between rules
    - \* Suppose it is held to be absolutely wrong to do X in any circumstances and absolutely right to do Y in any circumstances. Then what about the case in which a person must choose between doing X and doing Y?
  - Kantianism allows no exception to perfect duties

VI. Second homework assignment: politics of an artifact (10 min)

- Discuss in detail