Professional Code of Ethics for Software Engineers

The ACM/IEEE code is deontological

- that is, emphasizes rules and principles
- this is in contrast, e.g., to virtue ethics that focus on qualities of morally excellent persons
  - e.g., individual responsibility, awareness of the world around them, honesty, resilience under pressure, sense of fairness, attention to detail while maintaining perspective, pragmatism in applying professional standards

The 8 Principles of the ACM/IEEE Ethics Code

1. **Public**: act consistently with the public interest
2. **Client/Employer**: act in the best interests of their client and employer, consistent with the public interest
3. **Product**: ensure products meet highest professional standards possible
4. **Judgement**: maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgment
5. **Management**: subscribe to and promote an ethical approach to management of projects
6. **Profession**: advance the integrity and reputation of the profession consistent with the public interest
7. **Colleagues**: be fair to and supportive of their colleagues
8. **Self**: participate in lifelong learning and promote an ethical approach to the practice of the profession

The code is not an algorithm

"The list of principles and clauses is not exhaustive"
"... not a simple ethical algorithm that generates ethical decisions"
"... standards may be in tension with each other"
"... require the software engineer to use ethical judgment to act in a manner which is most consistent with the spirit of the [code] given the circumstances"

The public interest comes first

See paragraph: "Ethical tensions can best be addressed by thoughtful consideration of fundamental principles, rather than blind reliance on detailed regulations. ..."

**Exercise sheet**: Read the code, then do the exercises