

Ethics Case Study

Problem 1

Student, Service Director: Exploiting Vulnerabilities in a University Computer Service

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A university student used the campus computer time-sharing service as an authorized user. The service director announced that students would receive public recognition if they successfully compromised the computer system from their terminals. Students were urged to report the weaknesses they found. This created an atmosphere of casual game playing and one-upmanship in attacking the system.

The student found a means of compromising the system and reported it to the director. However, nothing was done to correct the vulnerability, and the student continued to use her advantage to obtain more computer time than she was otherwise allowed. She used this time to play games and continue her attacks to find more vulnerabilities.

Student: Using Computer Services by Taking Advantage of a Vulnerability