SI 431 Course Syllabus

Class
Times: Tu/Th: 8:30am-9:50am (synchronous)
Location: https://umich.zoom.us/j/92877175677 (Links to an external site.) (remote only)
Instructor: Sarita Schoenebeck (yardi@umich.edu) (she/her)
Student Hours with Sarita: Mon: 1pm-3m; Wed: 10am-11am EST (sign up via Google Calendar (Links to an external site.) for 10 minute slots at least 24 hours in advance, you may sign up for multiple slots if you want them, or by appointment
Location: https://umich.zoom.us/my/schoenebeck (Links to an external site.) (remote only)
GSI: Marilu Duque (marilud@umich.edu)
Office hours with Marilu: Tu/Th 11am-1pm EST (please sign up via Google Calendar (Links to an external site.)), slots are in 20-minute increments, you may sign up for multiple slots if you need them), or by appointment

Course Overview
Algorithms are a set of rules for computers to follow. Algorithms affect myriad aspects of everyday life, from facial recognition to privacy to policing to social media. This course will examine the ways that algorithms impact individuals and communities, especially in ways that may not be obvious to people who are consumers of algorithmic technologies. We will investigate concepts of bias, discrimination, fairness, ethics, and justice, especially as they relate to attributes like gender, race, or health. Students will engage in class discussions and will be given an opportunity to explore new ideas via projects and papers. Students do not need to be knowledgeable about the technical underpinnings of algorithms; this class is designed for students from both social and technical backgrounds. This class will prepare students to identify and understand the social and ethical impacts of algorithms in society. Students interested in design, management, and leadership careers will be prepared to consider potential harms of emerging technologies.

Course Objectives
The goal for the course is to develop a sophisticated and critical understanding of the relationship between algorithms, people, communities, and society. Students will learn to:

- Identify and assess algorithms in technologies
- Understand how algorithms can impact people’s lives in a variety of ways
- Be able to describe and explain bias, discrimination, fairness, justice, and related concepts and their relationship to algorithmic technologies
- Design technologies that consider the impact of algorithms on users
- Discuss and shape emerging topics in algorithms

Course Objectives
We’ll be reading excerpts from websites, scholarly articles, and book excerpts. Links are provided on the schedule or through Canvas.

Assignments
The table below contains an overview of assignments and grading for this class. Readings should be completed before class and you should arrive to class prepared to discuss and debate them.
Reflections: Most weeks have a reflection associated with it. Reflections are worth 3 points each. Reflections will ask you to reflect on readings and sometimes also on lecture or guest lecture topics. There are 9 required reflections. All reflections after the top 9 grades will be dropped (i.e. not counted)

Students are responsible for viewing their grades in Canvas and promptly informing the instructor of any discrepancies. Also, students must keep copies of any work submitted until final grades are submitted. If you are concerned about your grade, please make an appointment to discuss the situation with the professor as early in the semester as possible.

Due Dates and Late Policy

- All assignments are due by class time on the date listed for that assignment
- Any assignment submitted outside of the exact due date and time (as indicated by the Canvas timestamp) will be assessed a penalty of up to 50% in the first 24 hours
- Each additional 24 hours will result in an additional 25% off
- Exceptions to the rules above will be made at the discretion of the instructor

Grading

A 94-99
A- 90-93
B+ 87-89
B 84-86
B- 80-83
C+ 77-79
C 74-76
C- 70-73
:(

Regrading Policy

If you feel that the merit of your work on any assignment has not been fully recognized, you may choose to submit the assignment for re-grading. To do so, you must explain in an email why you feel your work deserves re-grading. You should provide details and point to specifics in the assignment that you feel merit a higher grade. One of three outcomes is possible: your grade may be raised, it may remain the same, or it may be lowered.

Religious/Cultural Observance

Persons who have religious or cultural observances that coincide with this class should let me know in writing by email within the second week of the class. I encourage you to honor your cultural and religious holidays! However, if I do not hear from you by the end of the second week, I will assume that you plan to attend all class meetings.

Point of View

The readings and my and your comments in class will suggest particular points of view. I encourage you to disagree with the ideas in the readings and lectures as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various issues. Therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another, but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion.
Communication

Canvas is the dissemination method for course materials including lecture notes, assignment descriptions, and the course schedule. You are responsible for keeping up-to-date with the materials on Canvas.

When you email me, we are interacting in a professional context. I expect that you will use appropriate etiquette. Use suitable salutations and signatures. Do not use text message slang or Internet slang. Please use “[431]” at the start of the subject header in any email you send to me. I'm happy to be called "Sarita", "Professor", or "Professor Schoenebeck."

Academic Integrity

Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School’s policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master’s and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.

Student Well-Being

Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, U-M offers many resources, some of which are listed at Resources for Student Well-being on the Well-being for U-M Students website. You can also search for additional resources on that website. The School of Information also has an Embedded Psychologist, Ashley Evearitt, Psy.D., who you can contact at evearitt@umich.edu. If you or someone you know may not have access to enough food, visit the Maize and Blue Cupboard. It is open to all UM students. You can go look around, or leave with a couple grocery bags, it’s your choice.

Course Summary:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Due by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon Jan 25, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Bias and Discrimination</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Feb 1, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Recognition Technologies</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Mon Feb 8, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Policing and Criminal Justice</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Fri Feb 12, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Facial Recognition</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Mon Feb 15, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Search and Recommendations</td>
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<td>Mon Feb 22, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Health and Healthcare</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Fri Feb 26, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Vaccination Priority</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Mon Mar 1, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Human Rights and Conservation</td>
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<td>Mon Mar 8, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Auditing Methods</td>
<td>1pm</td>
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<td>Fri Mar 12, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Global Violence</td>
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<td>Mon Mar 15, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Privacy and Surveillance</td>
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<td>Mon Mar 22, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Marketing and Advertising</td>
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<td>Mon Mar 29, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Policy and Regulation</td>
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<td>Assignment Student Proctoring</td>
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<td>Mon Apr 5, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Workplace Surveillance and Automation</td>
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<td>Fri Apr 9, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Hate Speech Detection</td>
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<td>Mon Apr 12, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Disability</td>
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<td>Tue Apr 27, 2021</td>
<td>Assignment Final Project</td>
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<td>Assignment <strong>Class Participation</strong></td>
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