Course Number: COMM 4P35
Term/Year/Duration: Fall Winter 2016 D3
Course Title: Data and Society

Instructor Name:	**Dr. Karen Louise Smith**
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Office Location:	Scotiabank Hall Rm. 316
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Liaison Librarian:	**Laurie Morrison**	lmorrison@brocku.ca

Times and Locations:

Lecture/seminar on Wednesdays 14:00 -17:00 pm, WH 202, beginning Jan. 11th

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Course Calendar Description:

Topics may include open data, big data, social media and algorithms.

Course Prerequisites (if any):

Prerequisite(s): Restriction: open to BCMN, COMM, MCMN and PCUL majors with approval to year 4 (honours) or permission of the instructor. Note: students will analyse a data set and apply their findings.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

The learning objectives for this course are for students to:
1. To critically explore the meaning of emerging concepts such as *open data*, *big data* and *algorithms*
2. Participate in critical debates concerning data in society in sectors including government, education, and the technology sector
3. Explore legal and technological aspects of using data including APIs and licenses
4. Locate or collect a data set an analyze it utilizing software and/or concepts from the scholarly literature

5. Demonstrate applied communication skills through written assignments as well as presentations, group work, and online class forums

Required Readings or Texts:

The text book is *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences* (2014), by Rob Kitchin.

Required and supplementary readings are listed in the week-to-week schedule. Students should be prepared that additional texts may be introduced in lecture/seminar.

Students are expected to complete readings *before* class, and to bring copies (electronic or paper copies). Students can refer to Sakai for the "Readings" folder under "Resources" for a selection of materials.

Course Communications:

Essential course information will be shared in class, via Sakai, in the Yammer discussion board and through Brock email. The instructor will use Twitter to post supplementary information (#COMM4P35). Questions that are of interest to the entire class should be sent via the Yammer discussion board. Email should be used for individual issues and the instructor will attempt to reply within 2 business days. In-depth questions need to be addressed through office hours, or an individual appointment.

Office Hours:

Thursdays from 2:30-3:30 pm or by appointment

Updates:

If there are errors or omissions on this syllabus the class will be notified.

Evaluation Components and Due Dates

Assignments and evaluation components of the course will be discussed in class and more detailed guidelines will be posted to Sakai.

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
• Presentation (Group Project)	15.0%	Weeks 2-4
• Critical Response	15.0%	Weeks 5-9 (best 1 of 2)
• Data Analysis Assignment (DAA): Preliminary Topic Rationale (Individual or Group Project)	5.0%	Feb. 8 (earlier submission encouraged)
DAA: Interim Report	15.0%	Mar. 1 (written document

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
(Individual or Group Project)		and in-class presentation)
DAA: Final Report (Individual or Group Project)	35.0%	April 5 (written document and in-class presentation)
• Participation	15.0%	Ongoing
TOTAL	100.0%	

Assignment Submission Instructions

Instructions about how to submit each assignment will be included on each assignment handout. Assignments are due by 14:15 on the day of lecture/seminar. Most assignments for 4P35 require that a hard copy be submitted on the due date, along with an electronic copy on Sakai.

In addition to following assignment instructions, students are expected to follow the CPCF departmental guidelines for essays when handing in written work (see: http://www.brocku.ca/social-sciences/departments-and-centres/cpcf/student-success/essay-style-guidelines).

Late Submission Policy:

Assignments are due at the start of lecture and no later than 14:15, unless the assignment instructions specify otherwise.

Late work with receive a grade of "0" unless one of the following circumstances applies:

- The late work is accompanied by medical documentation that aligns with the delay in submitting the assignment. See Medical Exemption Policy and the medical health certificate at http://www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption
- Late work can be explained by an accessibility issue that requires accommodation, which is documented through Student Accessibility Services at Brock
- The student can demonstrate extenuating, or emergency level circumstances for failing to submit work that will be evaluated solely at the instructor's discretion

Students with extenuating or emergency circumstances *before* a deadline, should contact the instructor as soon as possible, to request an extension. Students may also contact the instructor *after* the deadline if an extraordinary or emergency level situation prevented them from submitting their assignment and contacting the instructor before the deadline or due date. The instructor will assess each situation on a case-by-case basis and accept work when there is a compelling reason to justify late submission. Please note that students may be asked to provide evidence or documentation to support the instructor's discretionary decision about whether to accept late work.

Group Work Policy:

Group work is a component of this course. Team members are generally expected to resolve any challenges within the team. In extenuating circumstances, such in the case of a non-contributing team member, please notify the instructor well in advance of the assignment deadline. A group meeting may be called with the instructor. Individual grades and/or a team 'divorce' may be implemented in extenuating circumstances. All group members should retain rough notes, drafts, and evidence of their contribution to the group project in case they are required by the instructor to assign an individual grade.

Relationship between attendance and grades:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to show up on time. Missing class, being late, or leaving early up to twice over the semester, will not impact your participation grade. Students who need to miss class for reasons consistent with accessibility, medical or religious exemption purposes can consult with the instructor for accommodations.

Students will be expected to present informally in relation to their course assignments, homework and to discuss the course readings.

Important dates: (check the section on sessional or important dates in the relevant online University calendar at https://brocku.ca/webcal/2016/undergrad/sess.html)

Mar 10 is the date for withdrawal from the course without academic penalty.

Mar 3 is the date you will be notified of 15% of your course grade.

Feb 20-24 is Reading Week.

No dates are set aside as makeup days due to holidays. Please consult with the instructor at the beginning of the term if you require accommodation to arrange makeup dates.

Apr 10 is set aside as a designated reading day (this day may be used to cover classes missed because of adverse weather).

Apr 11-26 are set aside for formal examination periods.

Academic Policies

Academic Integrity:

Academic misconduct is a serious offence. The principle of academic integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students should consult Section VII, "Academic Misconduct", in the "Academic Regulations and University Polices" entry in the Undergraduate Calendar, available at http://brocku.ca/webcal to view a fuller description of prohibited actions, and the procedures and penalties.

Please see the CPCF in-depth statement on Academic Integrity at the end of this syllabus. Each student in this course will be expected to submit a signed copy of the CPCF Pledge of Academic Integrity before work will be graded and returned (see: http://www.brocku.ca/webfm_send/4333 or the copy at the end of this document).

Academic Accommodation:

As part of Brock University's commitment to a respectful work and learning environment, the University will make every reasonable effort to accommodate all members of the university community with disabilities. If you require academic accommodations related to a documented disability to participate in this course, you are encouraged to contact Services for Students with Disabilities in the Student Development Centre (4th floor Schmon Tower, ex. 3240). You are also encouraged to discuss any accommodations with the instructor well in advance of due dates and scheduled assessments.

Academic Accommodation due to Religious Obligations:

Brock University acknowledges the pluralistic nature of the undergraduate and graduate communities such that accommodations will be made for students who, by reason of religious obligation, must miss an examination, test, assignment deadline, laboratory or other compulsory academic event. Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructor(s) for alternative dates and/or means of satisfying requirements.

Medical Exemption Policy:

The University requires that a student be medically examined in Health Services, or by an off-campus physician prior to an absence due to medical reasons from an exam, lab, test, quiz, seminar, assignment, etc. The Medical Certificate can be found at: http://www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption

COMM 4P35: Week-to-Week Schedule

Week	Focus and activities/ assessments	Readings
1 - Jan. 11	**Kickoff** - *Join class Yammer board*	• Kosinski, M., Stillwell, D. and Graepel, T. (2013). Private traits and attributes are predictable from the digital records of human behavior. *PNAS*. 110(15): 5802-5805. • Golbeck, J. (2013). *The curly fry conundrum: Why social media "likes" say more than you might think* (Ted Talk). Available online: https://www.ted.com/playlists/130/the_dark_side_of_data • Baym, N. (2015). Social media and the struggle for society. *Social Media + Society*. April-June: 1-2.

2 – Jan. 19	**Introduction to Data in Society**
	- *Presentations begin*
		• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.*
		  • Chapter 1: Conceptualising Data (p. 1-26)
		  • Chapter 2: Small Data, Data Infrastructures and Data Brokers (p. 27-47)
		  • Chapter 6: Data Analytics – read the section on Data Visualisation and Visual Analytics (p. 106-110)

3 – Jan. 25	**Open Data**
	
	- *Guest presentation from Connie McCutcheon, IT Open Data Portal Lead, Niagara*
		• Sieber, R. E. and Johnson, P. A. (2015). Civic open data at a crossroads: Dominant models and current challenges. *Government Information Quarterly*. 32(2): 308-315.
		• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.*
		  • Chapter 3: Open and Linked Data (p. 48-67)
		
		• Open Knowledge Foundation. (2010-2012). *Open Data Handbook*.
		  • Why Open Data from http://opendatahandbook.org/en/why-

		open-data/index.html • What is Open Data from http://opendatahandbook.org/en/what-is-open-data/index.html

4 –
Feb. 1
	Big Data	• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.*
		   • Chapter 4: Big Data (p. 67-79)
		   • Chapter 5: Enablers and Sources of Big Data (p. 80-99)
		   • Chapter 6: Data Analytics (remainder of chapter excluding Data Visualisation and Visual Analytics section)
		• boyd, danah, & Crawford, Kate. (2012). Critical Questions for Big Data: Provocations for a Cultural, Technological, and Scholarly Phenomenon. *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), 662–679.

5 – Feb. 8	**Data Creation or Collection in Political Contexts** *- DAA: Preliminary Topic Due and in-class discussion*	• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.* • Chapter 7: The Governmental and Business Rational for Big Data (p. 113-127) • Croeser, S. and Highfield, T. *(2014).* Occupy Oakland and #oo: Uses of Twitter within the Occupy movement. *First Monday.* 3 (3) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v19i3.4827 • Small, T. (2011). What the hashtag? A content analysis of Canadian politics on Twitter. Information, Communication, and Society. 14: 872-895.
6 – Feb. 15	**Ethics and Data**	• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.* • Chapter 10: Ethical, Political, Social and Legal Concerns (p. 165-183) • Kramer, A. D. I., Guillory, J. E. and Hancock, J. T. (2014). Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks. *PNAS.* 111(24): 10779-8790.

Feb 22	**Reading Week – No Class**	
7 – Mar. 1	**Transparency, anti-corruption and data** - *DAA Progress Report Due*	• Mittal, M., Wu, W., Rubin, S., Madden, S. and Hartmann, B. (2012). Bribecaster: documenting bribes through community participation. In Proceedings of the ACM 2012 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW '12). ACM. New York, NY, USA: 171-174. • Raman, N. V. (2012). Collecting Data in Chennai City and the Limits of Openness. The Journal of Community Informatics. 8 (2). Available online: http://ci-journal.net/index.php/ciej/article/view/877/908 Websites: • I Paid A Bribe http://www.ipaidabribe.com/ • Sunlight Foundation https://sunlightfoundation.com/

8 – Mar. 15	**Personal Data and Everyday Life Presentation by Andrew Hilts**	• Hilts, A., Parsons, C. and Knockel, J. (2016). Every Step You Fake: A Comparative Analysis of Fitness Tracker Privacy and Security. Open Effect Report. Available at: https://openeffect.ca/reports/Every_Step_You_Fake.pdf
		  • Sections 1, and 5-7
		• Neff, G., and Nafus. D. (2016). Self-Tracking. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
		  • Chapter 2: What is at Stake? The personal gets political (p. 37-68)
		• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.*
		  • Chapter 9: Technical and Organizational Issues (p. 149-164)

9 – Mar. 22	**Data and Humanitarian Crises**	• Bruns, A. and Liang, Y. E. (2012). Tools and methods for capturing Twitter data during natural disasters. First Monday. 4(2). Available online: http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3937/3193 • United Nations Foundation et al. (2011). Disaster Relief 2.0: The Future of Information Sharing in

		Humanitarian Emergencies. Available online: http://issuu.com/unfoundation/docs/disaster_relief20_report • Read p. 8-33.
10 – **Mar. 29**	**Work Period**	
11 – **Apr. 5**	**Synthesis and DAA Project Presentations** *- DAA Final Reports Due*	• Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures and Their Consequences.* • Chapter 11: Making Sense of the Data Revolution (p. 184-192)

Department of Communication, Popular Culture and Film

Pledge of Academic Integrity [Adapted for COMM 4P35]

Please read the following statement, sign it, and submit. Your assignments will not be graded unless this form is attached or received earlier in the term.

I, the undersigned, understand that all the following practices constitute academic misconduct according to Brock University's policy on academic misconduct and general academic practice:

☐ Quoting someone else's words without using quotation marks

☐ Quoting someone else's words without acknowledging the source

☐ Using someone else's ideas in my own words without acknowledging the source

☐ Using someone else's argument in my own words without acknowledging the source

☐ Fabricating data or sources of information for an assignment, bibliography or list of works cited

☐ Having or employing someone else to write all or part of my assignment, or do all or some of the preparatory work for me. There are two exceptions to this rule: I may have or employ someone to type the final assignment make editorial comments. However, I take full responsibility for any errors introduced by a typist or editor

☐ Allowing another student to use material from my assignment when drafting his or her own assignment

☐ Writing all or part of an assignment for another student, or doing all or some of the preparatory work for him or her. Such preparatory work includes (but is not limited to) reading and note-taking from required books and articles.

☐ Submitting any work for credit in two or more courses

I confirm that I have not committed any form of academic misconduct for COMM 4P35 and will uphold academic integrity throughout the course.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Department of Communication, Popular Culture and Film

Academic misconduct is a serious offence. The principle of academic integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students should consult Section VII, "Academic Misconduct", in the "Academic Regulations and University Policies" entry in the Undergraduate Calendar, available at brocku.ca/webcal, to view a fuller description of prohibited actions, and the procedures and penalties which may be applied.

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism (presenting the words and ideas of another person as if they were your own), submitting the same work for two different assignments, and other forms of cheating such as using crib notes during a test or fabricating data for a lab assignment.

Instructors and teaching assistants in the Department thoroughly investigate all suspected cases of academic misconduct.

The penalties for documented cases of academic misconduct can be severe. The Department may recommend that a grade of zero be given for the assignment, and a failing grade if not a grade of zero be given for the course. In addition, a note will be attached to the student's academic transcript. A second offense can result in suspension from the University. The disciplinary process is administered initially at the Department level and in cases where academic penalty is assigned will be referred to the offices of the Dean of Social Sciences.

Make yourself aware of the issues involved. Read the section of the Undergraduate Calendar that pertains to academic misconduct. You are reminded that the Student Development Centre (Schmon Tower, Room 400) offers workshops on writing skills, and issues surrounding plagiarism.

For further information on all aspects of your academic program, including course planning, you may consult with the Department's Academic Advisor:

Penni Lafleur, SBH 344, ext. 5308 , plafleur@brocku.ca>