

CS/Analytics Breakout Assignment 6

Due: Nov. 5

To be done only by CS and Analytics majors

For this assignment, you are to find two separate news articles that report on China's surveillance/social credit policies. As discussed in class, China is developing an extensive system that relies on video surveillance, facial recognition technology and the 'scoring' of each citizen's perceived trustworthiness. Find two news articles that describe some aspect of this system. Summarize the information in the articles – remember to properly cite and reference the information and provide clickable links. I expect this assignment to be $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 page long.

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China's social credit system is a unique idea to manage the country's populace. It consists of two distinct components, the first is financial creditworthiness, similar to our credit score we have in Canada, and social creditworthiness, which seeks to improve trust in society through anti-corruption initiatives, fraud prevention, and enhanced compliance.

The primary emphasis of the Chinese government is on regulating corporate credit, establishing a framework for data sharing among different agencies rather than focusing on individual citizens. However, local governments have launched experimental attempts that occasionally combine financial and social credit elements. One such example was the incentivizing of blood donations. These programs have attracted international scrutiny and criticism for their corrective aspects, although these measures are confined to pilot projects and lack standardization or enforcement from the larger government of China.

In recent years, Beijing has reacted to the more contentious local implementations by issuing regulatory guidance that confines penalties to actions that are already illegal and lower excessive social credit enforcement. This response from the central government has prompted cities like Rongcheng to revise their systems, leading to a more cautious strategy toward the standardization of social credit policies.

While some analysts speculate about the potential application of advanced technologies such as AI within China's social credit system, experts emphasize that the system predominantly relies on low-tech methods, using traditional data collection and manual oversight. A draft legislation was released in November 2022 and outlined a planned shift towards technological integration for data sharing, but did not propose a fully tech-driven framework.

The trajectory of China's social credit system seems to support enhancing corporate responsibility and fostering societal trust, rather than escalating individual surveillance. In summary, the social credit system of China embodies China's determination to enhance accountability, and within clearly defined and rigorously regulated boundaries.

Sources

<https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/11/22/1063605/china-announced-a-new-social-credit-law-what-does-it-mean/>

<https://theconversation.com/digital-surveillance-is-omnipresent-in-china-heres-how-citizens-are-coping-225628>