

# Amina A. Abdu

(214) 218-5905

aabdu@umich.edu

aminaxabdu.github.io

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## RESEARCH EXPERTISE

My research examines how AI and other algorithmic technologies shape U.S. public policy. I am an interdisciplinary social scientist, drawing from critical algorithm studies, organizational theory, administrative law, and science and technology studies. Methodologically, my work employs qualitative analysis of scientific and political discourse across academia, industry, and government.

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## EDUCATION

### University of Michigan

*Ph.D. in Information*

Ann Arbor, MI

2021–2026 (*expected*)

- Science, Technology & Society Graduate Certificate
- **Dissertation:** Everyday Legitimacy Practices in Algorithmic Governance
- **Committee:** Abigail Jacobs (chair), Ben Green, Elizabeth Popp Berman, Simone Zhang (NYU Sociology)

### Pomona College

*Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics & Economics*

Claremont, CA

2014–2018

- Thesis: *Optimal transport theory for selection of Nash equilibria in multiple-equilibria games*, advised by Dr. Adolfo Rumbos (**Distinction in Senior Exercise**)

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## RESEARCH

### Publications

**Amina A. Abdu** & Abigail Z. Jacobs. AI Evaluations and the Standards Metaphor.  
*Yale Journal of Law and Technology*. 2025 (forthcoming).

- Presented at the *Governing Data Symposium*. New Haven, CT. 2025.
- Presented at *Privacy Law Scholars Conference*. Los Angeles, CA. 2025. <35% acceptance rate.
- Presented at the *Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)*. Seattle, WA. 2025.

Irene V. Pasquetto, **Amina A. Abdu** & Natascha Chtena. Essential Work, Invisible Workers: The Role of Digital Curation in COVID-19 Open Science.

*Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*. 2024.

**Amina A. Abdu**, Lauren M. Chambers, Abigail Z. Jacobs & Deirdre K. Mulligan. Algorithmic Transparency and Participation through the Handoff Lens: Lessons Learned from the U.S. Census Bureau's Adoption of Differential Privacy.

*ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability and Transparency (FAccT)*. 2024. 24% acceptance rate (175/725).

- Presented at *Privacy Law Scholars Conference*. Boulder, CO. 2023.
- Presented at *Data (Re)Makes the World Conference*, Information Society Project at Yale Law School. New Haven, CT. 2023. 15% acceptance rate (26/170).

**Amina Abdu** & Abigail Jacobs. Public Administration.

In *Keywords on the Datafied State*. Data & Society. 2024. 12.5% acceptance rate (20/160).

**Amina A. Abdu**, Abigail Z. Jacobs & Irene V. Pasquetto. An Empirical Analysis of Racial Categories in the Algorithmic Fairness Literature.

*ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability and Transparency (FAccT)*. 25% acceptance rate (150/608).

## Selected work in progress

**Amina A. Abdu** & Abigail Z. Jacobs. Legitimacy and the Algorithmic Turn in the Administrative State. Under Review at *Big Data & Society*.

- Presented at *Privacy Law Scholars Conference*. Washington, D.C. 2024. 35% acceptance rate.

**Amina A. Abdu**, Jeremy Seeman & Abigail Z. Jacobs. Ethical Closure Problems in Formalizing Technologies.

Under Review at *ACM Journal on Responsible Computing*.

- Presented at *Privacy and Public Policy Conference*. Washington, D.C. 2024.

## AWARDS AND HONORS

UMSI Dean's Fellowship. U-M School of Information, 2025.

Gary M. Olson Outstanding Ph.D. Student Award – *Honorable Mention*. U-M School of Information, 2025.

Rackham One-Term Dissertation Fellowship – *Honorable Mention*. U-M Rackham Graduate School, 2025.

Distinction in Doctoral Pre-Candidacy Paper and Oral Defense (**top 10%**). U-M School of Information, 2023.

Racial Equity in Tech Policy Accelerator (**\$3,000**). Federation of American Scientists & Kapor Center, 2023.

Distinction in Mathematics Senior Exercise (Pomona College Thesis Award), 2018.

## TALKS

- University of Iowa. AI Evaluations in Policy. Guest lecture for CS4980/LAW9871. April 2025.
- Participatory AI Research & Practice Symposium. Algorithmic Transparency and Participation through the Handoff Lens: Lessons Learned from the U.S. Census Bureau's Adoption of Differential Privacy. January 2025.
- OpenDP Community Meeting. Differential Privacy Beyond Algorithms, invited discussant. August 2024.
- Law and Society Association Annual Meeting (LSA). Keywords on the Datafied State Roundtable, panelist. June 2024.
- Data & Society. Keywords and Frames. Public Technology Leadership Collaborative, invited talk. April 2024.
- Northeastern University. Upstream Assumptions in Responsible AI: An Empirical Assessment of Racial Categories in the Algorithmic Fairness Literature. Network Science Institute, invited talk. February 2024.

## OTHER WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- Sociotechnical Approaches to Measurement and Validation for Safety in AI. Northwestern Center for Advancing Safety of Machine Intelligence (CASMI). July 2023.
- Methods for Inclusivity in Data Collection. Partnership on AI. May 2023.
- Keywords on the Datafied State Workshop. Data & Society. March 2023.
- Who Has an Interest in "Public Interest Technology"? *ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (CSCW). November 2022.
- Doctoral Colloquium. *ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency* (FAccT). June 2022.
- Governing Everyday Misinformation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. November 2021.

## SELECTED MEDIA & POLICY COVERAGE

- Dispelling Myths of AI and Efficiency. Policy Brief, Data & Society.
- An Empirical Analysis of Racial Categories in the Algorithmic Fairness Literature. The AI Ethics Brief, Montreal AI Ethics Institute.
- Ensuring Racial Equity in Federal Procurement and Use of Artificial Intelligence. Day One Project, Federation of American Scientists & Kapor Center.
- Amina Abdu is challenging assumptions at UMSI. Faces of UMSI, University of Michigan School of Information.

## TEACHING

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### **SI 301: Information Ethics**

*Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan*

Fall 2025

*Ann Arbor, MI*

### **SI 206: Data-Oriented Programming**

*Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan*

Winter 2024

*Ann Arbor, MI*

### **SI 110: Introduction to Information Studies**

*Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan*

Fall 2022

*Ann Arbor, MI*

### **MATH 060: Calculus I**

*Teaching Assistant & Curriculum Design, Pomona College*

Fall 2016, Fall 2017

*Claremont, CA*

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### **Antitrust Advocacy Associate**

*Consumer Federation of America*

April 2020 – August 2021

*Washington, D.C.*

- Led portfolio on digital platform governance including competition law, data collection and privacy, discrimination, content moderation, and intermediary liability

### **Research Associate**

*Harvard Kennedy School of Government & Harvard Business School*

July, 2018 – March, 2020

*Cambridge, MA*

- Conducted data management, statistical analysis, and research for economic health policy scholarship regarding public insurance, hospital networks, and regulation of the pharmaceutical industry

### **Computational and Applied Mathematics Researcher**

*University of California, Los Angeles*

Summer 2017

*Los Angeles, CA*

- 2017 Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) in Computational and Applied Mathematics (NSF Award #1659676)
- Built descriptive and predictive mathematical models for research on homelessness and policing in Los Angeles

## REVIEWING

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2025: ACM AIES; ACM FAccT; NeurIPS Workshop on Regulatable ML; Statistics and Public Policy

2024: ACM AIES; ACM FAccT

2023: ACM FAccT

## SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

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Doctoral Committee Student Representative, U-M School of Information, AY 2025-2026

Steering Committee Student Representative, U-M Science, Technology, and Society Program, AY 2025-2026

Co-organizer, Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop on Science, Technology, and Society, 2024-present

Reviewer, U-M School of Information Ph.D. Application Feedback Program, 2023-present

Peer mentor, U-M School of Information Ph.D. Program, 2022-present

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS

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Society for the Social Studies of Science

OpenDP, Differential Privacy Beyond Algorithms Working Group

U-M Center for Ethics, Society and Computing