Privacy Policy Justification Worksheet

1. Briefly describe the website you are building (its purpose/functionality/etc.)

I am building a social platform based around movies. Users can browse a large collection of movies available through OMDb API. Users can also mark specific movies as favorites and leave reviews for each available movie. The purpose of the website is to provide information and facilitate fun discussion about movies.

2. Identify the stakeholders (direct and indirect) whose interests are relevant to your website.

While the website is not built for monetary purposes, I am a direct stakeholder as I am interested in the website doing well. The users who visit the website are also direct stakeholders as they use the website for information and entertainment. The users also rely on me not to violate their privacy with the data that I am able to collect from the website. The indirect stakeholders may include those who make the movies that are featured on the website. If the website were to be used my many users, the number of people who go to see movies could be affected by the reviews left on the website. Companies who make movies may also be interested in the data that I collect as it could be used to analyze what types of movies many people enjoy.

3. What data will you have access to, and what might this data reveal about its subjects?

I will have access to a user's username, password, email address, favorited movies, and reviews written. I will also be able to track a user's activity on the website through the use of cookies. The user's password is, of course, very sensitive as many people use the same password for multiple accounts. The data would also reveal the user's taste in movies. This could possibly be used to analyze overall trends in movie opinions when aggregated with other users' data, or even to draw conclusions about the individual user. As Professor Magnani mentioned in lecture, even things that seem completely unrelated could have a statistical correlation that reveals something about the user.

4. What values are relevant to your website and its privacy policy? (Note that the relevant values will depend in part on the kind of website you are building).

Respecting users' privacy is the most important value relevant to my website. I do not want to collect any data that does not contribute to bringing a better experience to the user. I also do not want to share users' data with anyone who does not need to be shared with. At the same time, it is still important to deliver a good user experience, thus some user data is going to need to be

collected and shared. I also want to respect the autonomy of the users; thus, I want to ensure that the privacy policy clearly states what data is collected and how it is being used. It is also important that users can still interact with the website without giving any data.

5. What counts as "success" for the website you are building?

Success for my website means that no one's privacy is violated. On the very small chance that the website gets many users, if I were to sell users' data to third-parties for profit I would consider this a failure.

6. Describe how you took the relevant values into account in writing your privacy policy (e.g. what decisions and tradeoffs were made, and why).

When writing the privacy policy, I wanted to honor the values written above (minimizing data collected and shared), but I also wanted to provide a good service and consider future developments as well. In order to allow users to make persistent changes to their profile, they must be able to create accounts. This means that I must at least get a username and password. I also decided to allow (not mandatory) users to give an email, as I would like to be able to integrate functionality with emails in the future. Cookies are also vital in allowing users to make persistent changes during their sessions. While third-parties may be able to get valuable information from users' data, this website is not meant for profit or to facilitate a large user base. Thus, I decided that it is important that user data is never shared with third-parties.