

POLICY MEMO #1: PRIVACY

You are an ethics consultant hired to analyze the privacy issues surrounding a specific data science project. Your job is to craft a policy memo that describes the project, analyzes the privacy threats at play, and offers concrete policy recommendations to the decision-maker.

Your policy memo should contain the following sections:

- 1) **Background:** Briefly describe the real-life case/project you have chosen to focus on. If you need inspiration, check out these repositories of data ethics case studies: [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). Googling some combination of “privacy,” “data,” and “online” will also give you lots of options. (Note that you cannot use Street Bump as your case, since that’s used in the Sample.)
- 2) **Privacy Considerations:** Explain why the case implicates privacy concerns. Use one or more of the texts we have read to unpack or analyze the privacy issues at play. For instance, you might briefly describe Westin or Regan’s view about the importance of privacy and then explain how their view applies to your chosen project (by explaining what they would say about why privacy is valuable in the case being analyzed).
- 3) **Rejected Action Options:** Consider 1-2 possible courses of action that you *reject*. For each option, briefly explain why someone might propose it and then explain your reasons for dismissing it. (Note: In Sections 3 and 4, you should shoot for quality over quantity. If you only have space to thoroughly explore one potential action you reject and one potential action you support, that is fine.)
- 4) **Favored Action Options:** Consider 1-2 courses of action that you *support*. Explain why you favor each recommendation. To justify the course of action, you may want to respond to a potential objection to it (see Sample for an example).
- 5) **References:** List all of the sources referenced in the policy memo. You may use any formatting style you like for your in-text citations and References section (APA, Chicago, etc.), as long as you are consistent. The References section should not be included in the word count. Be sure to include the source(s) you used to learn about the case in the References section.

Course Readings: Your policy memo should cite and make use of *at least two* of the readings that have been assigned in this class. However, note that you need not agree with those texts. It is perfectly acceptable to discuss a text as representative of a view that you *reject* (e.g., in the “Rejected Action Options” section).

Header: The header should contain the intended recipient of the memo and a brief description of the topic. See the Sample Policy Memo for an example. The header does not count toward the word count.

Formatting and Length: Your policy memo must be 1,000-1,200 words (not including References and header). It should be written in 12-point standard font like Times New

Roman, have 1" margins, and be double-spaced. (Note that I didn't double-space the Sample to save paper, but your policy memo should be double-spaced.)

Deadline: Due on Canvas by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 20th.

Anonymous grading: Your policy memo will be graded by Marshall anonymously. Please do not put your name anywhere in the document that you upload. Canvas will link your submission with your name.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism of any kind (including mosaic plagiarism and patchwriting) will not be tolerated. Please see the university's Academic Honor Policy for more information. If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable use of other people's work, do not hesitate to get in touch with me or Marshall.

Note on the Sample: I have chosen to focus on Nissenbaum's (2010) theory of privacy in the Sample because I don't want to steal your thunder by writing about a text we focused on in class. You are *not* expected to bring in philosophical texts outside those we have read, though you may if you wish.