

# Course Syllabus

## Digital Humanities M121

## Community Engagement and Social Change (CESC) M 121

Dr. Munia Bhaumik

### “Whose Lives Count?:

### Race, Gender, and Data”

### Syllabus (v. 10.29.24)

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Welcome to DH/CESC M121! I am delighted to teach this course and excited about introducing you to the materials you will find in this syllabus. I look forward to supporting your success and development as digital humanists, writers, social justice activists, and critical thinkers. As such, you will find in this syllabus many readings and activities to foster our understanding of data, society, and justice.

#### 1. Course Description

Increasingly, our daily lives are mediated by digital algorithms and data points. Data is constantly being gathered and codified every time a google search is performed, a purchase made on Amazon, or a census survey question answered. Data also plays a crucial role in political representation, governmental resource allocation, policing, militarization, migration, and policy decisions. Yet, severe gaps and biases appear in institutional data gathering processes and open datasets.

Who are the counted? How are lives, communities, racial groups, and genders codified by data? What do data variables and codes open-source datasets reveal about social inequality? This course will investigate how data does or does not ascribe a quantitative value to a human life, considering especially how “race” and “sex” (which is not the same as “gender”) enter datasets. Specifically, we will probe the history and application of “race” and “gender” U.S. Census datasets. By examining the intersecting variables of race and gender in datasets about health, wages, sexuality, indigeneity, migrations, and labor, you will learn to “read” datasets produced by governmental entities such as the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, United Nations, and Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, we will examine the writings of key feminist scholars, activists, and community organizations who explore and mobilize data for social justice.

At the heart of this quarter, however, is not only reflecting upon the social effects of “Big Data” but also learning to apply and to use data but to address issues of social justice. How can we apply data ethically and justly? What is the thread uniting the readings, lectures, and assignments for this quarter? Moreover, we will be moving from considering historical examples to probing data’s role in contemporary social

contexts; examples covered this quarter include analyzing the effects of data gathering by “Big Tech” and hyper-policed government institutions here in Los Angeles. In this way, the selection of readings for this quarter introduces you to the work of numerous scholars within the emerging fields of Critical Data Studies (CDS) and Critical Internet Studies (CIS) who are thinking of data in society today. Both CDS and CIS ask us to think critically about the detrimental social consequences of “Big Tech” but also the potential of data-based technological applications. As a result, we will examine how algorithms, Artificial Intelligence (AI), data mapping, and machine learning are implicated in racialization, gender, and labor dynamics.

## **2. Meeting Location, Time, and Day**

The course meets in room Rolfe 2118 on Mondays from 2:00-4:50 with a ten-minute break at 3:30.

## **3. Instructor**

Name: Dr. Munia Bhaumik

Email: [munia@college.ucla.edu](mailto:munia@college.ucla.edu) (<mailto:munia@college.ucla.edu>)

Office hours are by appointment

## **4. Land Acknowledgement**

As a land grant institution, UCLA acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands). As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), ‘Ahihirom (Elders) and ‘Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

## **5. Academic Accommodations**

All students have different learning styles and learn differently. Please note that any request for accommodations based on disability will be met. I support different learning styles and needs. If you have a disability that requires you to need extra assistance, extra time or adapted lessons, you are entitled to, and I encourage you to, reach out to the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) to discuss your accommodations. Once you register, please make sure your “Letter of Accommodation” is viewable to me, so I can be notified and ensure that I meet your requirements to support your learning.

Website: [www.cae.ucla.edu](http://www.cae.ucla.edu) (<http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>)

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## **1. Learning Outcomes**

- Consider the limits but also possibilities of data collection and analysis as well as its relation to racialization and gender in society
- Learn about how data analysis reveals social inequalities in an inter-racial city and culturally diverse world by analyzing Los Angeles as a case study
- Visit and access UCLA library resources, including the Data Science Center, to learn about site: finding historical and relevant research sources
- Learn to think of how your education in the UCLA classroom connects to the needs and concerns of the communities surrounding our campus and in the greater Southern California region
- Deepen your analytical skills by detecting racial and gender bias in datasets and gaining knowledge of media histories
- Learn to use and critically assess a suite of digital tools, spatial and quantitative datasets, and mapping/visualization/data analysis software technologies for studying race and gender
- Combine urban, social, computational, statistical and humanist perspectives to investigate data related to racial and gender justice.
- Learn transferable technology skills through collaborative, project-based research, while engaging in multidisciplinary inquiry
- Learn to work in research teams in order to conceptualize, design, carry out, and deliver persuasive arguments through writing, data analysis, mapping, and data visualization.
- Refine your collaborative learning skills (i.e. teamwork)

## Fall Grade Distribution

<b>Class Participation</b>	25%	Participation in sections will be evaluated based on student preparation for class, demonstrable engagement with class materials, attendance, and class discussions.
		Will include participation by posting in five online discussions on BruinLearn.
<b>Short</b>	20%	2 short papers focusing on one keyword relevant to data analysis
<b>Response</b>		(Students will be writing two one page response papers.)
<b>Papers</b>		

Due dates:

**Classroom Conduct:** All scheduled lectures and section meetings for this course are mandatory. We encourage you to be mindful not only of your own learning needs, but the needs of those around you. This includes coming to class on time, refraining from distracting behaviors (e.g. eating, talking during class), and silence cell phones during class time.

**Deadlines:** On-time submission of all assignments and essays is required. Late submissions are marked down one letter grade per day after the posted deadline.

**Staying Connected:** Please read all email communications from the course. Check your email regularly since we will communicate with you via BruinLearn emails and announcements.

**Syllabus Updates:** After the start of the course, this syllabus is subject to change. Changes to the weekly plan, including resources and specific details of assignments, will be updated on BruinLearn. Please be sure to consult the BruinLearn site regularly.

**Academic Integrity:** All members of the UCLA community, including faculty, staff and students, are responsible for maintaining standards of academic honesty. Students must comply with the University's code of academic integrity, including policies concerning plagiarism. More information is available for your review at: <https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode>  
(<https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode>)

**Requests for Academic Accommodations:** The teaching team understands that students have different learning styles and learn differently. If you have a disability that requires extra assistance, extra time, or adapted lessons, we encourage you to reach out to the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) as soon as possible to request accommodations. If you register with CAE, please make sure your "Letter of Accommodation" is viewable to us, so we can be notified and ensure that your learning is supported. For more information, visit the CAE website at: [www.cae.ucla.edu](http://www.cae.ucla.edu/) (<http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>). You may also reach CAE by phone at 310-825-1501 or visit in person at Murphy Hall A255.

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1. **List of Readings: Selected Excerpts and Chapters will be made available**

1. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia* ....

(\*Please Note: Certain nineteenth-century racialized terms are no longer acceptable in usage today or in our classroom. Hence, the full title of Du Bois's book is not visible.)

Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folks*

(Recommended) Whitney Battle-Baptiste and Britt Rusert, "Introduction" in *W.E.B. Du Bois' Data Portraits: Visualizing Black America*

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial formation in the United States*

Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein, [Data Feminism](https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/) ↗

Safiya Noble, [Algorithms of Oppression](https://safiyaunoble.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Algorithms_Oppression_Introduction_Intro.pdf) ↗

Ruha Benjamin, "Race after Technology" (read [Introduction: The New Jim Code](https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1_0.pdf) ↗)

## **Historical Digital Sources**

[Ida B. Wells Data Justice Lab](https://www.thejustdatalab.com/) ↗

History of US

census: [https://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/overview/1790.html](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/overview/1790.html) ↗

History of racial categories in US Census: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/interactives/multiracial-timeline/> ↗

Redlining datasets and

reports: <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=5/36.457/-88.242&adview=full&text=intro> ↗

[Public Datasets 2022](http://milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu/public-datasets-directory/) (http://milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu/public-datasets-directory/)

- [Los Angeles Open Data - City of Los Angeles](https://data.lacity.org/) ↗
- [Open Data - Los Angeles County](https://data.lacounty.gov/) ↗
- [Los Angeles GeoHub](https://geohub.lacity.org/) ↗
- [USC Neighborhood Data for Social Change](https://la.myneighborhooddata.org/) ↗
- [CalEnviroScreen 4.0](https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40) ↗
- [Open Justice Data Portal](https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data) ↗
- Los Angeles Public Health?
- [California State Geoportal](https://gis.data.ca.gov/) ↗

## Community-Engaged Digital Resources for Enhancing Your Data Literacy

### **Algorithmic Justice League**

<https://www.ajl.org> ↗ (<https://www.ajl.org/>)

### **Asia-Pacific Data Research Center**

<http://apdrc.soest.hawaii.edu> ↗ (<http://apdrc.soest.hawaii.edu/>)

### **GIDA: Global Indigenous Data Alliance**

#### **Promoting Indigenous Control of Indigenous Data**

<https://www.gida-global.org/> ↗ (<https://www.gida-global.org/>)

### **The Ida B. Wells Just Data Lab**

<https://www.thejustdatalab.com> ↗ (<https://www.thejustdatalab.com/>)

### **Data for Black Lives**

<https://d4bl.org/about.html> ↗ (<https://d4bl.org/about.html>)

### **Ida B. Wells's Red Record Map**

<https://www.ajl.org/> ↗ (<https://www.ajl.org/>)

### **Million Dollar Hoods**

<https://milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu> (<https://milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu/>)

### **UCLA Hate Crime Map**

(UCLA American Indian Studies Center)

<http://www.hatecrimemap.com/> ↗ (<http://www.hatecrimemap.com/>)


## **Data Justice Lab**

<https://datajusticelab.org>

## **Community Art Practice and Data**

[Collaborative Data Wallpaper for STORY](http://giorgialupi.com/collaborative-data-wallpaper-foi-story)  [.\(http://giorgialupi.com/collaborative-data-wallpaper-foi-story\)](http://giorgialupi.com/collaborative-data-wallpaper-foi-story)

## **Statistics and Demographics on Latinos in the United States**

<https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/data-and-resources/>   
(<https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/data-and-resources/>)

## **Accessing 2020 Census Redistricting Data on data.census.gov: Hispanic or Latino Populations**

<https://www.census.gov/library/video/2021/adrm/accessing-2020-census-redistricting-data-on-data-census-gov-hispanic-or-latino-populations.html>   
(<https://www.census.gov/library/video/2021/adrm/accessing-2020-census-redistricting-data-on-data-census-gov-hispanic-or-latino-populations.html>)

## **Migration Data Portal**

<https://www.migrationdataportal.org>  [\(https://www.migrationdataportal.org/\)](https://www.migrationdataportal.org/)

## **U.S. Census Data on Migration/Geographic Mobility**

<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/migration.html>

## **UCLA Health Policy Institute (See “Publications” Page)**

<https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/Pages/home.aspx> (<https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/Pages/home.aspx>)

(Also offers and has very useful video trainings of race, sexuality, gender and data bias in government databases.)

## 1. Schedule of Readings

### Week 1 & 2 (October 7)

#### **Data are Power: Critical Data Studies frameworks for examining race/gender and challenging power**

- Overview of Course
- Introductions
- Dispel common myths and assumptions about “data”
- “Power Matrix” Exercise
- “Big Data” versus “Data for Justice”

#### **Data, Racialization, and Gender (as Keywords)**

(Lecture)

- Introduce historical examples of descriptive statistics through the work of W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells
- What is a “data portrait”?
- How is photography data?
- How has data been used in social movements?
- What are some frameworks for “doing justice with data”?

Keywords:

“data” (Posner and Klein)

“racialization” v. “race” (Omi and Winant)

“gender” v. “sex” (Butler)

Studio: Data as Description and Portrait

- Critical Data Studies asserts that data’s rhetorical power lies in its power to describe and as a basis for action. This section will focus on data’s power to describe by defining and examining the major types of descriptive statistics and exploring the use of descriptive statistics.
- Imagining and Creating Data Portraits


Websites and Data Trainings Consulted:

- [Ida B. Wells Data Justice Lab](https://www.thejustdatalab.com/)  [\(https://www.thejustdatalab.com/\)](https://www.thejustdatalab.com/) (specifically, look at data visualization projects under “Projects”)




## Week 3

### Gathering, Interpreting, and Mobilizing Data for Social Justice

- Learning from the strategies of Du Bois and Wells
  - Access Du Bois's The Philadelphia .....book at this link:
  - [The Philadelphia ....](https://english.hku.hk/staff/kjohnson/PDF/ENGL9K_KJ_PhilaNegro.pdf) ([https://english.hku.hk/staff/kjohnson/PDF/ENGL9K\\_KJ\\_PhilaNegro.pdf](https://english.hku.hk/staff/kjohnson/PDF/ENGL9K_KJ_PhilaNegro.pdf))
  - <http://doingsts.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/W.-E.-B.-Du-Boiss-Data-Portrai-Britt-Rusert-2.pdf> (<http://doingsts.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/W.-E.-B.-Du-Boiss-Data-Portrai-Britt-Rusert-2.pdf>)
  - Access Wells's book The Red Record under "Course Reading List" in Bruin Learn
  - See original archival book cover at: [The Red Record ar New York Public Library](https://www.nypl.org/events/exhibitions/galleries/beginnings/item/3548) (<https://www.nypl.org/events/exhibitions/galleries/beginnings/item/3548>)
  - Ida B. Wells, recommended you read chapters 1, 2, 9, and 10 in [The Red Record](https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/14977/pg14977-images.html) (<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/14977/pg14977-images.html>)
    - [Ida B. Wells Data Justice Lab](https://www.thejustdatalab.com/) (<https://www.thejustdatalab.com/>)
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- Learning from the strategies of Du Bois and Wells
  - Introduce Open Public Datasets
  - Learning to analyze for race and gender in open datasets
  - Begin working with public datasets by navigating the <https://www.census.gov/data.html>  (<https://www.census.gov/data.html>)

Studio: Employing the U.S. Census for Data Analysis

Begin working with public datasets by navigating the <https://www.census.gov/data.html>  (<https://www.census.gov/data.html>)

There are bounds of tools available for people to start working with once you have obtained and understand the data you are given. The section will go over why tools to start with to explore and analyze data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Moreover, you will form groups focused on a social justice issue to being identifying and discussing a research question for your final projects.

## Week 4

### Data Feminism

October 21

Readings, [Data Feminism](https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/)  (<https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/>) by Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein


Focus on “Introduction,” “The Power Chapter,” (1) and “What Gets Counted Counts (4)

Data Feminism:

- Data feminism is about power, about who has it and who doesn't, and about how those differentiations of power can be challenged and changed using data.
- 7 Principles of Data Feminism

**Studio:**

Mapping Migration in Los Angeles

Los Angeles is a vast urban region; it is also the urban space that has been home to some of the largest waves of migration from the entire world but specifically Latin America and the Pacific Rim. This city has also been the birthplace of one of the largest mobilizations and nonviolent protests for immigration rights on behalf of non-citizens. In this week's studio, we will learn from community partners such as the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (<https://www.chirla.org> ) about the history and social movement for immigrant rights here in Los Angeles.

Second, we will investigate and explore datasets and data maps about migration.


**Week 5**

**Black Data Feminism**

**October 28**

- How are algorithms racialized and gendered?

Safiya Noble, [Algorithms of Oppression](https://safiyaunoble.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Algorithms_Oppression_Introduction_Intro.pdf)  ([https://safiyaunoble.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Algorithms\\_Oppression\\_Introduction\\_Intro.pdf](https://safiyaunoble.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Algorithms_Oppression_Introduction_Intro.pdf))

Ruha Benjamin, “Race after Technology” (read [Introduction: The New Jim Code](https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1_0.pdf)  ([https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1\\_0.pdf](https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1_0.pdf)).

Guest Speaker:

Chris Nealson Garcia, PhD Candidate in Information Studies and Mellon Social Justice Researcher

Lecture on the "Digital Divide in Los Angeles"

Skills Training

- Utilizing Census Data to Create a Data Visualization
- Learning from the Los Angeles [Los Angeles Data Hub](https://communityengagement.ucla.edu/programs/los-angeles-data-justice-hub/) (<https://communityengagement.ucla.edu/programs/los-angeles-data-justice-hub/>)

## **Week 6; "Data & Organizing: Learning from Community Scholar-in-Residence"**


### **November 4**

- Complete Online Assignment on "Discussions" before Class
- Lecture by Elsa Barboza, Community Scholar-in-Residence
- Lecture by the Latino Data Hub (UCLA)
- Form Groups for Final Project

### **Skills Studio:**

- Identify a Research Question for Individual Data Visualization
- Identify a Dataset

### **Week 7**

- No In Class Meeting but Online Post in "Discussions" Required
- **Watch the Movie "Coded Bias"**
- **Consider the movie "Coded Bias" in relation to Ruha Benjamin's "Race after Technology"** (read [Introduction: The New Jim Code](https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1_0.pdf)  ([https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1\\_0.pdf](https://courses.complex-systems-laboratory.org/system/files/Race%20After%20Technology%20-%20Ruha%20BenjaminChapter1_0.pdf).)
- How does racial bias enter coding? What are the consequences in the film?

Complete Online Assignment for Class

- Attend Individual Meeting w/ Professor Bhaumik 11/18-11/22

## **Week 8 Race, Gender, and Coding**

### **November 18**

- Learning from the Million Dollar Hoods Project
- How to create a data justice project

### **November 25**

- Studio on completing group project for course

### **Week 10**

### **December 2**

### **Data Justice Final Presentations**

## **Course Summary:**