Call for Applications: Data, Culture, and Society Workshop

Applications due March 16, 2022

The College of Arts and Sciences is pleased to announce a call for applications for the Data, Culture, and Society Workshop. The workshop is designed to bring faculty from the humanities and the humanistic social sciences at UNC together to explore how data impacts our lived realities. Data analysis now shapes almost every aspect of human life from the movement of financial capital to decisions on legislation and policing practices to how groups communicate and find information. As such data holds immense power in shaping our lives in profound ways and is in desperate need of humanistic analysis. The Data, Culture, and Society Workshop intends to bring faculty across the college together to explore ways that we can center issues of data and power in our teaching and scholarship. These conversations will include how to create new courses or repurpose existing courses that can be included in the Data, Culture, and Society concentration within the new Data Science Minor, how to create teaching material relating to data collection and analysis, and how to foster collaborations among faculty, students, and staff throughout the college.

While data is often figured as numbers, in reality, it can consist of words, images, artifacts or any information that can be organized, cataloged and analyzed. Scholars in the humanities and humanistic social sciences also work with data, though it is not always defined as such. A major goal of this workshop is to serve faculty interested in data theory and analysis but have not yet had the time to explore such issues in their research and teaching. Therefore, no prior experience or training in data studies or data science is needed, though those with such training are also encouraged to apply as a diverse group of participants will make for robust conversations.

Details and Funding

Selected participants will begin the workshop with a two-day in-person kickoff event in mid-May shortly after commencement. Participants will continue to meet once a month virtually over the summer and early Fall through a mixture of in-person and remote meetings, though all meetings over the summer will be virtual except for the kick-off event.

All participants will receive a $2000 stipend. Additionally, using the GRC program as a model, participants will receive an additional stipend of $1000 that will support a graduate research assistant to help with course development or research for a total of 30 hours of work.
Workshop Goals

- Support course development in data science and data studies
- Introduce new courses that fulfill data science minor’s requirements in data, culture, and society.
- Identify issues in ethics and social responsibility related to data gathering, data visualizations, algorithms, privacy, surveillance, and applications
- Prepare research materials for teaching uses and research collaborations
- Connect faculty, archivists, research scientists, and data science support staff to facilitate humanists’ access to services and their experiments with managing primary research materials
- Explore models of data-digital materials management for multi-party participation in research—students, scholars, communities, and professional practitioners.
- Set up collegial conversations among humanists and data scientists to understand new research frontiers that data aggregation, access, and streaming is making possible when it comes to society, politics, economics, culture, and history.

Selection Criteria

The selection committee is interested in participants with diverse disciplinary interests as well as a wide range of skills and experiences in data studies, data science, and data related research and teaching. We desire participants who already have robust communities of collaborators in data science, together with those with little experience in data methods and theories but are eager to learn data-focused approaches in teaching and research.

All faculty in the Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences at any rank, including tenure-track, teaching-track, and research-track as well as postdoctoral instructors and researchers are invited to apply.

To apply please click here to complete a short application. Applications are due by March 16, 2022. For any questions, please contact the Programmatic Director of the Data, Culture, and Society Workshop, Dr. Courtney Rivard (crivard@email.unc.edu).