

Marquette University: Announces Center for Data, Ethics, and Society

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MILWAUKEE — Marquette University has announced the establishment of the Center for Data, Ethics, and Society within the Klingler College of Arts and Sciences to address the ethical, social and political dimensions of an increasingly data-driven society.

Grounded in the university's Catholic, Jesuit mission of social justice, the center will focus on confronting data ethics issues such as the controversies and consequences of our increasingly data-driven lives and spaces, unfair algorithmic biases, the unequal effects of computational decision-making, the privacy threats of ubiquitous surveillance systems, and the role for corporate social responsibility and accountability. The center will take up these concerns through an applied and interdisciplinary approach to research, pedagogy and community engagement.

“The Center for Data, Ethics, and Society is an exemplary expression of our Catholic, Jesuit values as data and the ethics around data management become increasingly crucial topics,” said [Dr. Heidi Bostic](#), dean of the Klingler College of Arts and Sciences. “Addressing fundamental concerns of justice and fairness in our data-saturated world—which particularly affect underrepresented groups—requires a commitment to diversity and inclusion. The center will seek to create inclusive curricula, collaborate with a diverse group of faculty and community partners, and create a welcoming community that expands opportunities for students from all backgrounds.”

[Dr. Michael Zimmer](#), associate professor of computer science, will serve as center director. Under his leadership, the center will engage with the campus community by supporting research and teaching, hosting public events that advocate in matters of public policy, and providing opportunities to work collaboratively on data

ethics challenges that confront community and corporate partners. In addition to a network of interdisciplinary units on campus that address issues related to data, ethics and society, the center and its leadership will also engage community partners, including the [Northwestern Mutual Data Science Institute](#) and other aligned centers throughout the region.

“This center is representative of what Marquette can do differently when it comes to data science,” Zimmer said. “Our Jesuit mission, our expanding data science and analytics offerings, and the transformational education that informs future decision-makers; ethics is at the center of these things. There is a deliberate comma between ‘data’ and ‘ethics.’ We are looking at data much more broadly and the way that data is affecting our society.”

Through the Department of Computer Science, Marquette has already been addressing concerns of data ethics, with undergraduate and graduate course offerings and sponsored programming such as the annual [Ethics of Big Data Symposium](#). The online Master of Science in Computing program is ranked 14th (2022). According to *U.S. News*, the rankings for computer information technology programs are based on factors such as classroom engagement, faculty credentials and training, and student excellence. The Computer Science undergraduate program is ranked 191st (2022).