

PS 2215F – The Politics of Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence

The aim of this course is to introduce students to critical social issues at the intersection of human rights and artificial intelligence – or technological systems with independent decision-making capabilities using ‘big data’. The emphasis in this course will be on understanding how ‘actual’ artificial intelligent systems impact such critical aspects of human rights as privacy, discrimination, inclusion, transparency and accountability. One key question that will animate our discussion this term will be the following: should artificial algorithmic systems, sort of like Siri and Cortana, but with enhanced decision-making capabilities, not only remember our names and tell us what the weather is like outside, but also decide – without human input – who should be hired in the public and private sectors, what social services should be available to what groups in society, and when weapons should fire and at what targets – and did we mention, do all this without any human input?

