



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Media and Communication Studies

Syllabus

Data Ethics

Course Code:	MKGA99
Course Title:	Data Ethics <i>Dataetik</i>
Credits:	7.5
Degree Level:	Undergraduate level
Progressive Specialisation:	First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements (G1N)

Major Field of Study:
MKA (Media and Communication Studies)

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2020-02-12, and is valid from the Autumn semester 2020 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

General admission requirements plus upper secondary school level English 6 or B, or equivalent

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- distinguish between different categories of data based on ownership, access, and the interests of involved parties,
- identify and describe ethical and policy-based frameworks for data analysis in the contexts of research and organisations,
- critically discuss and develop well-reasoned solutions for problematic cases of data analysis, with a focus on questions of ethics and power, and
- reflect upon the relationships between data, ethics, and society in terms of diversity, equality, social

inclusivity, sustainability, and justice.

Content

The course covers critical and ethical questions related to the use and interpretation of data in the contexts of research and organisations. The first part of the course introduces basic ethical issues and approaches, and students develop a use-oriented understanding of current ethical problems in data analysis. The second part of the course includes discussion of several legal frameworks and industry-specific guidelines in order for students to consider data analysis in relation to the perspectives of different involved parties and understand how data is constructed socially. Students are also introduced to discourses regarding bias in socio-technological systems, the openness and division of responsibilities of algorithms, ideological aspects of data, information asymmetries, and the political economy of data. In the final part of the course, this knowledge is applied to a concrete area of study, focused on the question of how the advantages of data analysis could benefit a more democratic and sustainable development of society beyond established views of effectiveness as a result of automation and rationalisation.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on two written exams and a group project presented orally and in writing in connection with a mandatory seminar. Part of the group project is to perform oral and written peer review of the work of another group.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to special pedagogical support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

Quality Assurance

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

Course Certificate

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

Additional information

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.