Privacy, Security & Opportunity in the Digital Society

Cross-School "Bring Your Own Idea" Proposal

Proposed by

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Description

The Digital Revolution is one of the most important social, technological, and policy issues of our time. We propose to assemble a group of Washington University faculty members to discuss and informally share perspectives on privacy, security and opportunity in today's digital society. As the Internet and connected digital devices mediate a growing fraction of modern life, the treatment of personal information has become complex with many attendant demands and priorities. Notably, the desirable goals of personal privacy, commercial activity and public safety are often in conflict. Moreover, the rapid change of pace of technology frequently invalidates, or renders irrelevant, those tradeoffs that have in the past successfully achieved balance amongst these goals. We seek to support and cultivate the growing, diverse cross-school community examining these issues in order to prepare the ground for multi-disciplinary courses and research initiatives.

Significance to Washington University

Research universities are uniquely positioned to confront problems that are too complex for an individual discipline or industry segment to tackle effectively. Preserving privacy, security and opportunity in today's digital society is one such grand challenge. This proposed activity will bring together faculty members whose research and teaching interests illuminate this topic, including engineers who invent new technologies, scientists who use personal information to enable new research, business scholars who examine the relationships between personal information and commercial activity, legal scholars examining privacy in the light of modern technical realities, and humanists who seek to understand the nature of these transformations. These Washington University scholars represent many of the perspectives needed to understand, explain and develop solutions for this challenge. This cross-disciplinary proposal aims to support the development of this community of scholars, to help prepare Washington University to lead efforts to preserve privacy, security and opportunity in the digital society.

Planned Invitees

1. Seethu Seetharaman, W. Patrick McGinnis Professor of Marketing, Olin Business School.
2. Sanmay Das, Associate Professor of Computer Science & Engineering.
3. Robert Pless, Professor of Computer Science & Engineering.
4. Heather Corcoran, Director, College & Graduate School of Art, Jane Reuter Hitzeman and Herbert F. Hitzeman, Jr. Professor of Ar, Sam Fox School.
5. S. Joshua Swamidass, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Immunology and Pathology (WUSM).
6. Kevin Collins, Professor of Law, School of Law.

7. Elizabeth Sepper, Associate Professor of Law, School of Law.
8. Joe Loewenstein, Professor of English, Arts & Sciences.
9. Trevor Dawes, Associate University Librarian.
10. Betha Whitlow, Curator of Visual Resources, Arts & Sciences.

Preferred Format

(TBD: breakfast, lunch, coffee or cocktail hour)