DATE: April 2, 2019

TO: Phillip Anzalone, Chair

College Council Curriculum Committee

FROM: Curriculum Subcommittee

Denise Scannell (Chair), Darya Krym, Earl Hill, Nadia Alomari

RE: Final Report for New Course Proposal

**COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER:** SOC 3303 Sociology of Big Numbers

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3 credits, 3 class hours

**PREREQUISITES:** ENG 1101 and [PSY 1101 or AFR 1501 or 1502 or any SOC or ANTH course]

**Catalog Description:**

Focus on social and ethical dimensions of automation and big data use in different industries and social spheres. The course examines how automation shapes social relations, identities, workplaces and institutions. Special emphasis is placed on how automation may contribute to inequalities, including race/ethnicity, gender, age, ability and socio-economic status. Readings engage with diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches to these issues.

**Strengths**

The proposer notes that City Tech has a number of tech degrees that employ algorithms and big data, but none offer a sociological perspective on quantification and automation of decision-making in the private sector and public institutions. Students will have the opportunity to examine the social consequences of emerging technologies. This course will serve as a requirement for the Data Analytics degree that is being developed in the Social Science Department/Economics. The proposer intends to submit this course for inclusion in the Flexible Core in the Individual and Society category, with a writing intensive classification, which will add to the range of courses for City Tech students to select in this core area. A future ID classification is possible.

**Weaknesses**

None

**Issues and Concerns Discussed**

Several minor changes were requested during the subcommittee review, including adding ENG 1101 as a pre-requisite, gathering supporting letters, and minor editing changes. During the meeting with the Provost, the proposer was asked to clarify the pre-requisites, and discuss the 3000 level designation. Additional recommendations included minor changes to the rationale, General Education learning outcomes, and formatting. It was suggested to change the title to Sociology of Big Numbers.

**Subcommittee activities**

On March 14, 2019, the subcommittee met with the proposer, Professor Diana Mincyte, and the Sociology Department Chair, Peter Parides, to discuss minor changes. After receiving a revised proposal, the subcommittee held a meeting with Provost August, Associate Provost Brown, Dean Vazquez-Poritz, Kim Cardascia, Department Chair Peter Parides, and the proposer on March 21, 2019. Final revisions to the proposal were completed after additional suggestions were made. April 2, 2019, the course proposal received unanimous support at College Council Curriculum. No revisions were recommended.