

Dr. Samira Shaikh
Assistant Professor – Computer Science

“CCI is actively promoting interdisciplinary work to meet new demands and trends in data science. The work that I and others undertake at CCI is directly addressing the changing market environment and the needs of our students.

“CCI’s entire approach is innovative,” Shaikh says. “Along with producing great results, we are committed to being more inclusive, addressing ethical issues and having greater consideration for the well-being of our entire community. Doing so requires welcoming the different perspectives that different disciplines, including social science, bring to the table.”

Shaikh, who also serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology, is an emerging star in the study of social media persuasion. Her work, which recently earned funding from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and Army Research Laboratory, examines the effectiveness and even ethical implications of using chatbots capable of influencing people’s opinions in online discussions.

“Our understanding of human behavior on social media has not kept pace with technological advances,” Shaikh says. “My background in social sciences, especially psychology, allows for an innovative perspective how humans behave on social media.

“Interactions on social media are part of a broad conversation. Even though it might seem as if we are posting in a vacuum, our interactions on social media affect human behavior in subtle, often misunderstood ways.”