Abstract:
Social media platforms are often celebrated for their capacity to connect; yet expressing one’s identity, and seeking as well as providing support on these platforms can be difficult when people experience distress and stigma. I use mixed methods and theorize social media behaviors such as sensitive disclosures and interactions around them, and provide design guidelines for social technologies that foster human wellbeing. I concentrate on forms of human suffering that can be isolating and lead to distress, such as abuse, mental illness, and pregnancy loss. In this talk, I discuss three contributions of my research: (1) an examination of how people use visual and textual media to communicate about psychological vulnerabilities and how others respond, (2) a decision framework explaining stigmatized disclosures on social media and a mobile app prototype, and (3) a decision framework explaining why people respond or do not respond to sensitive disclosures on social media. I conclude with future directions about social technologies in service of a more empathetic and inclusive world, where vulnerable individuals are empowered and their wellbeing is enhanced.

Bio:
Nazanin Andalibi is a Ph.D. Candidate in Information Studies at the College of Computing and Informatics at Drexel University. She has also worked as a Ph.D. research intern at Yahoo Research and holds an M.S. in Socio-technical Systems and a B.S. in Computer Science. She conducts research in Human-Computer Interaction, Social Computing, Computer-Supported Cooperative Work, and Health Informatics. Drawing on mixed methods and multiple disciplines, Nazanin addresses how we can design social computing systems that facilitate disclosures of difficult human experiences and enable supportive interactions to form around them. Her publications have received two Best Paper Honorable Mention Awards and she is the receiver of Drexel University’s Outstanding Promise Award.

Friday, February 2, 2018 @ 2:30 pm  McAdams Hall, Room 119