

Political Science 3390 – Politics of AI

Land Acknowledgement

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Calls to action:

- Read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission findings and the Commission's calls to action, then find a way you can support the fulfillment of [those calls to action](#)
- Read the national inquiry into [missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and the 231 calls for justice](#)
- Take time to learn more about the history and continuing experiences of indigenous peoples
- Remove colonial monuments
- Call on institutions to decolonize, indigenous scholarship and knowledge systems continued to be marginalized and erased
- Encourage contribution to indigenous led organisations, in particular, the Indian Residential School Survival Society <https://irsss.ca>

Course Title: Politics of AI

Instructor: Dan Bousfield

Office Hours: Thursday 9:00am-11:00am via Zoom - link in Brightspace

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Telephone: 289-620-6665 text only

Course Week: Tuesday - The course week will be from Tuesday at 12:01am to 11:55PM on Monday.

All weekly content will be due on MONDAY AT 11:59PM.

Prerequisite(s):

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

EDIDA Statement

Western University is a colonial institution operating on the traditional territories acknowledged above. The modern university, including the discipline of political science, was built to produce knowledge within a European framework, historically displacing Indigenous and non-Western epistemologies. This course carries that history in its founding questions and canons, and this statement outlines how we work both within and against that structure.

Course Commitments:

- Contextualizing the Canon: Standard canons are treated as political claims to debate, not settled inheritances.

- Epistemic Autonomy: Arguments built from Indigenous, diasporic, and anti-colonial knowledge systems are assessed on their own logic, not on conformity to Eurocentric academic styles.
- Citational Practice: Disciplinary exclusions are treated as evidence. Indigenous, Black, and anti-colonial texts are read on their own epistemic terms.
- Baseline Access: Materials prioritize built-in accessibility (e.g., screen-readable texts, captions). Formal accommodations are managed through Accessible Education.
- Active Revision: The syllabus is adapted annually in response to student feedback.

Western EDIDA Resources:

- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI): <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/about-us/resources/>
- Decolonization (D): Decolonization and Citational Politics: <https://www.ssc.uwo.ca/about/edid/decolonization.html>
- Accessibility (A): https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Introduction:

Students will learn about the major actors and infrastructure driving generative AI, algorithmic bias, and digital surveillance. They will also learn about how technology alters democracy by examining the historical context of platform capitalism, hybrid warfare, and online activism. The students will also be required to consider how digital manipulation and big data affect marginalized communities, labor markets, and societal norms. Finally, students will learn about how AI can be effectively regulated and how to ethically integrate large language models into their own academic research and writing.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the relevant actors involved in the development, governance, and regulation of key political technologies.
2. Evaluate significant events or issues related to the impact of technology on politics.
3. Gain historical context on technological innovations and their subsequent regulation.
4. Analyze the impact of technology on public policy, focusing on ethical considerations and regulatory responses to digital challenges.
5. Critically evaluate the role of AI tools, such as large language models (LLMs), in academic and professional contexts.
6. Develop and justify frameworks for the ethical and effective integration of LLMs in writing and research.
7. Design and apply self-assessment rubrics to academic work, ensuring accountability and alignment between planning and execution.
8. Engage with academic literature to inform decisions about the use and assessment of AI tools in research and writing.

Course Materials

All readings are available on-line, on the university's online library reserve, or through the library search.

AI tools <https://ai.uwo.ca/>

Methods of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Weekly Participation 15% (pass/fail)	Weekly Participation 15% (pass/fail)	Weekly Participation 15% (pass/fail)
Term assignment 25% (Options A, B or C)	Term assignment 25% (Options A, B or C)	Term assignment 25% (Options A, B or C)
Essay 40% - Due at the end of Week 9 (November 25th, 2026)	Written responses + Peer assessment 20% - (250 words minimum/week) + calculation assignment due December 9th, 2026.	Essay 40% - Due at the end of Week 9 (November 25th, 2026)
Exam 20% - online exam during exam period	Exam 40% - online exam during the exam period	Written responses + Peer assessment 20% - (250 words minimum/week) + calculation assignment due December 9th, 2026.

For all written work in this course:

This course requires a minimum of 2500 words of academic prose to meet university requirements for 3000-level half courses. This includes all essay-style paragraphs (weekly responses), the term assignment, and any additional written assignments.

Paragraph structure

Basic paragraph structure is an important part of writing. Failure to use basic paragraph structure will result in repetitive, unstructured, and illogical arguments. Paragraphs help to structure our thoughts, our ability to make claims, and provide a framework for writing. The topic sentence and concluding sentence of each paragraph should be in your own voice (no direct references, quotations, or citations). Relevant academic evidence requires specificity, rather than language in the text that conforms to your claims. Relevant academic evidence will generally have specific events or instances that provide foundation for your claim. A basic paragraph structure for the body of your work should follow this template (however introductory paragraphs and concluding paragraphs should primarily be in your own voice outlining how you are arguing/have argued throughout the paper):

- Topic/introduction, in one or two sentences
- Major point with factual evidence, one or two sentences (one sentence with **relevant** academic citation and one sentence explaining the relevance in your own words, demonstrating individual voice and reflection)
- Major point with factual evidence, one or two sentences (one sentence with **relevant** academic citation and one sentence explaining the relevance in your own words, demonstrating individual voice and reflection)
- Major point with factual evidence, one or two sentences (one sentence with **relevant** academic citation and one sentence explaining the relevance in your own words, demonstrating individual voice and reflection)
- Summarizing sentence of overall significance to the overarching thesis of the paper and
- Concluding sentence which restates the topic sentence and bridges to next paragraph.

Failure to use basic paragraph structure throughout your work will result in the inability to receive full marks.

These paragraph formatting requirements are not arbitrary. There is a specific reason that I want you to use peer-reviewed academic sources, a MINIMUM of THREE DIFFERENT ACADEMIC SOURCES per paragraph. WHY?

- First, the difference between opinion and argument is the provision of evidence.
- Second, for an academic argument to have veracity, it needs to have an arm's length perspective, it needs to draw on peer-reviewed sources because individual interpretation is prone to error.
- Next, if we have more than one academic source per paragraph if one of those sources is weak or questionable the other two will supplement it.
- Moreover, multiple sources prevent summary or representation of someone else's ideas as your own, if you must interpret multiple data sources.
- Finally, academic sources have explanatory frameworks that link them to underlying theoretical concepts and ideas. News sources, data points, and journalism provide evidence without analysis, academic work provides analysis with evidence. If you don't have that consistently throughout your writing, you are going to run into problems of the veracity of your claims because they lack substantiation.

If any of your sentences, paragraphs, or quotations lack a specific foundation, you will not receive credit for those submissions.

Lack of data is a lack of foundation. In the era of LLMs, inaccurate citations will be treated as no citation at all. LLMs routinely summarize sources without accessing the underlying data. Citations need to be consistently formatted, readily available, in English, with precise page numbers (no inclusion of p.23-44), or consistent citation across pages (i.e. p.118-119). **Failure to directly quote sources with quotation marks followed by an explanation in your own words will constitute a lack of sufficient citation. Paraphrasing is no longer sufficient justification for including a citation;** you must use specific and precise language, including nouns (specific people, places, and things), as generalized summaries of sources are often hallucinated, inaccurate, and incomplete when suggested by LLMs. You can paraphrase throughout the work, but it cannot serve as a basis of an evidentiary foundation of your claims (i.e. you can include it, but it won't be counted as evidentiary argument).

General information about missed coursework

Attendance and Scheduled Participation Requirements

This course does not assign a separate attendance grade. However, regular attendance is required because many course requirements depend on scheduled in-class participation, including discussion, group work, peer assessment, presentations, and other weekly engagement activities.

Participation components are time-bound and must be completed during the week or class meeting in which they are assigned. Students may not replace missed in-class participation, peer assessment, presentation work, or group activity with after-the-fact written submissions unless an alternative has been approved in advance or is required through an approved academic consideration or accommodation process.

Weeks 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are designated participation-attendance weeks. Attendance in these weeks counts as a form of participation because the scheduled class activities are part of the course's participation-based learning requirements.

To encourage consistent participation across the term, students may offset one missed participation-attendance week from Weeks 7–11 if they have two recorded attendances from other eligible weeks in the course. Eligible offset weeks are Weeks 1–6 and Week 12. Two recorded attendances in those eligible weeks may be used to offset one missed participation-attendance week from Weeks 7–11. This offset applies only to the participation-attendance requirement. It does not replace scheduled presentations, peer assessment, group work, or other assigned in-class components that must occur during a specific class meeting. Students who sign up for presentation, peer-assessment, or in-class activity weeks are responsible for completing those components at the scheduled time. Submitting materials after the scheduled class does not replace the missed in-class component and does not guarantee that the work will be marked.

In a 12-week course, missing three or more scheduled classes will normally be considered a substantial absence. A substantial absence may prevent a student from completing the participation-based, peer-assessment, or in-class requirements of the course. In such cases, the student may be unable to receive credit for affected components, even where other written work has been submitted.

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf.

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

Term Assignment

When a student mistakenly submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** for the assessments listed above or those in the **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility** section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

Coursework with Assessment Flexibility

By policy, instructors may deny Academic Consideration requests for the following assessments with built-in flexibility.

Flexible Completion assignments:

Weekly participation. This course has 12 weekly participation assignments. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration for the first 2 missed weekly participations. Academic consideration requests will be denied for the first 2 missed weekly participation assignments.

Religious Accommodation

When conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible but not later than two weeks prior to the writing or the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDID website for the recognized religious holidays: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Academic Policies- The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

In accordance with policy,

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is

subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Weekly Participation 15% - regardless of which path you choose, all students must do weekly participation.

All weekly participation assignments are pass/fail unless you designate 250-word responses as your 20% assignment (you are effectively double counting them with specific grades calculated at the end of the course).

Students **must** complete a minimum of **two engagement options weekly** (Wednesday 12:01 am - Tuesday 11:59 pm) to fulfill participation requirements. TikTok's can be done each week but do not count towards your word count for the course. You can collaborate with peers on submissions, but they must be submitted individually. A total of 10 weeks of participation is required, allowing students to skip 2 weeks (e.g., weeks 1 and 12). Completing 10 weeks fulfills the full 15%. If you are submitting the same assignment for a second time, make sure to address 'What did I do differently this week?'

Weekly Engagement Options (a minimum of two options required per week) for all students regardless of option chosen:

1. **Weekly group work (if offered)** does not need to be logged.

Weekly group work may be available online or in person each week. It must be completed during the week (as tracked by the Microsoft form). Your name must be on the submission for tracking purposes each week.

2. **Designated attendance weeks (Week 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)** - Attendance during Weeks 7,8,9, 10 and 11 will count as one form of participation for those weeks. If you miss class during Weeks 7,8,9, 10, or 11 the attendance option only can be offset by recorded attendance in TWO classes from Weeks 1-6, or 12 (a second form of participation for the missed week is still required).
3. **Video Responses**
A short (TikTok-style) video exploring a key academic issue from each lesson's content, suitable for a general audience. Videos must reference at least one academic, peer-reviewed source from our reading list and can be uploaded to Brightspace each week (or linked if hosted elsewhere). Public posting is not required. Each video counts for one participation mark.
4. **Infographic** - For the infographic option, students must produce a visually compelling and clearly organized visual argument that shows critical engagement with this week's material. The infographic should draw directly on at least two course readings, including direct quotations that are embedded meaningfully in the visual narrative. It must reflect current debates in relation to the course, using events or policy developments from the past few weeks to make clear why the material matters **today**. The assignment should not just present information but take a position, or offer a critique based on the themes of the week. A bibliography in proper citation format must be included at the bottom or on a final panel. For a sample, [click here](#).

5. **Hero Narrative Article Annotation** - For this option, students must print a physical copy of one assigned academic article from the week and annotate the article's introduction by hand. Once complete, students must take a clear picture or scan of the annotated pages and upload the image or scan to Brightspace. The completed assignment is the annotated article introduction, not a typed summary. Annotations may also be completed on a tablet/iPad using a stylus, as long as the annotations are made directly on the article introduction and uploaded as clear image files, such as photos, screenshots, or image scans.

Students must complete the following annotations directly on the printed article introduction:

- Mark the Motive
 - i. Highlight, underline, or bracket the sentence or sentences where the author identifies the research gap, problem, unresolved issue, or area previous research has not adequately addressed. Label this section "Motive" in the margin.
 - Mark the Objective
 - i. Highlight, underline, or bracket the sentence or sentences where the author states the research question, purpose statement, hypothesis, or what the article will do. Label this section "Objective" in the margin.
 - Identify the Hero Claim
 - i. In the margin, write 1-2 handwritten sentences explaining how the author presents the article as stepping in to address an important unresolved problem.
 - State the Main Purpose
 - i. At the end of the introduction, write one handwritten sentence explaining the main purpose of the article.
 - Highlighting or underlining is acceptable as long as it is clearly labeled. Typed summaries do not count. The uploaded image or scan must clearly show the marked sections, labels, and handwritten notes. Each Hero Narrative Article Annotation counts for one participation mark. (For further information about the hero analysis - Vroom, Jonathan. "Research Article Introductions as Hero Narratives: A Reading Strategy for Undergraduate Students." *Discourse and Writing/Rédactologie* 32 (2022): 48–58. <https://doi.org/10.31468/dwr.917>)
6. **Written Responses + Peer Assessment (250 words per lesson)**
- **Written responses + Peer Assessment can be used for both weekly participation and the 20% assignment.**
 - *Written Responses (250 words per lesson):* A **reflective** analysis engaging with lesson ideas and concepts from lectures, readings, or both. This is not a summary but a critical engagement that links the course content with contemporary issues and events. It must include more than one course reading, and can include one outside source or link (properly cited using in-text citations). Proper essay paragraph structure and in-text citations are required where applicable. Submissions not meeting these standards are ineligible for full credit for the 20% assignment (they will still count for participation). Each written response counts for one participation mark. See detailed paragraph writing criteria below in the course syllabus. When doing the peer assessment, you will need to provide substantive and constructive feedback following the requirements in this course outline and evaluate accordingly. Your peer assessment will count towards your 250-word responses for final calculation of the grade.

- For the first 6 weeks, the instructor will provide feedback on written submissions. For the remaining 6 weeks, written submissions will be marked by peers.

This will be the schedule:

- Weeks 1-6 (you submit a 250-word response marked by the instructor for feedback)
- Week 7 (you mark a peer's week 6 submission, distributed by the instructor)
- Week 8 (you receive the peer feedback and submit a 250-word response)
- Week 9 (you mark a peer's week 8 submission, distributed by the instructor)
- Week 10 (you receive the peer feedback and submit a 250-word response)
- Week 11 (you mark a peer's week 10 submission, distributed by the instructor)
- Week 12 (you receive the peer feedback and reflect on your feedback and the feedback received by your peers)

Course Paths (options one, two and three)

All students must complete the weekly participation for 15% as discussed above.

Option 1 - (students writing an essay and an exam) - all weekly submissions are pass/fail for the 15% of the mark.

Option 2 and 3 - (students choosing not to write an essay or not write the exam) Written responses can be counted for both the weekly participation (15%) and the 'Weekly Responses + Peer Assessment', 20% assignment.

- The grades will not be calculated weekly; they are calculated by you at the end of the course.
- Base submission is a pass/fail 70% of the 20% grade. 80% weekly for written responses that are acceptable but need substantive improvement. 85% for written responses that are mostly acceptable. 90%+ for acceptable written response with the response in Brightspace being 'ok'. Submitting your written response work on the day of class receives a 5% bonus (bringing the base to 75%).
- **A total of 10 weeks of written responses are required**, and we take the top 10 weeks (including the peer assessment weeks). This allows students to skip 2 weeks (e.g., weeks 1 and 12). The total grade is calculated on Week 12 following the requirements below.

Calculating grades for the weekly submissions:

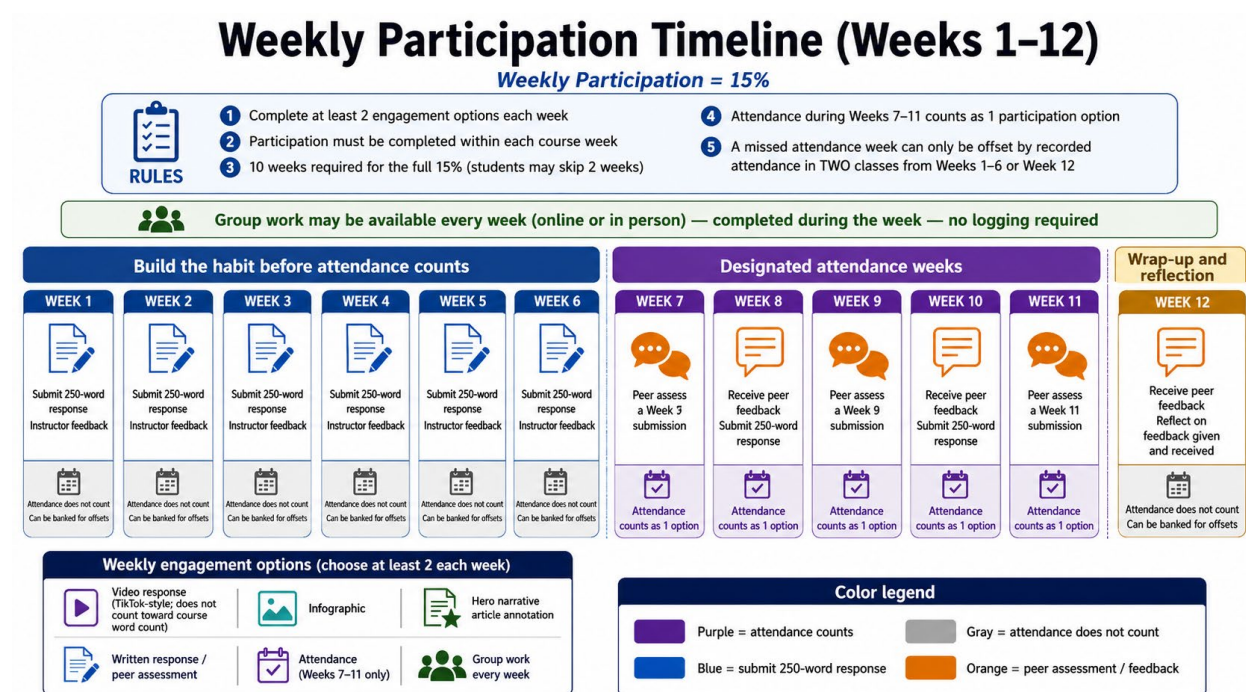
Q: Why do you do it this way? A: We use this structure to reduce unconscious bias and subjective grading. Acceptable submissions are transparent and equitable because grades are based on clear, objective evidence—not attendance, personality, or assumptions. Credit for submissions require documented improvement and, for written work, direct citation of weekly readings.

Q: What does it mean to calculate the written responses? A: Calculating the written responses minimizes unconscious bias, groupthink, halo effects and subjective grading. It creates a clear, fair structure for assessment. At the end of the course, students self-calculate their weekly response grades based on what they submitted each week. We only count your top 10 submissions. If there are any exceptional circumstances, please document them in your final attachment summary and explain how they impact your calculation. I reserve the right to reassess any or all participation during the final calculation.

Sample calculation

w1 85 - 'more precise'
w2 85 - 'more precise'
w3 85 - 'too colloquial'
w4 85 - 'clarity needed'
w5 85 - 'concluding bubble missing information'
w6 0
w7 85 - 'urls and conclusion need improvement'
w8 85 'need for direct quotes'
w9 70
w10 90 - 'ok'
w11 90- 'ok'
w12 0
7 weeks at 85 = $7 \times 85 = 595$
2 weeks at 90 = 180
1 week at 70 = 70

$595 + 180 + 70 = 845 = 84.5\%$



Term Assignment: (requires documentation for an academic consideration)

Option A – Paired Debate

Students must sign up on the link in OWL by the end of week 3 for the debate or essay proposal or they forfeit their grade.

In teams of two ONLY, students should pick a specific issue to the politics of AI related to their area of interest in Week one. The debate should outline the key issues from two opposing sides and points of contention and present each side coherently and convincingly to the class.

The debate should likely be framed in ethical or regulatory responses to contemporary issues in the politics of AI. The responses should try to take two different sides. MAXIMUM 5 MINUTES.

The presentation should highlight:

1. Key actors involved
2. Relevant context or history related to the issue
3. Claims and evidence put forward on both side
4. Likely or actual outcome of the issue and the trajectory of the relations moving forward

Students will need to upload their presentation in an accessible and clear format (such as a series of tiktoks back and forth, youtube, etc) for each week they sign up. Students must present on the week they sign up or else they forfeit their grade. Students are encouraged to think creatively about how they will present the debate and presentations may take alternative formats as long as they accomplish the requirements outlined above. In order to receive an individual mark, students must upload a short (200 word) summary of their role in the debate preparation and execution, assessing their groups' strengths and weaknesses in OWL under 'Assignments'. All written work must use proper essay paragraph structure and conform to the 'criteria for the evaluation of written assignments' below or it cannot achieve full grades.

Option B - Media Assessment

Due at the end of Week 7. This assignment will critically engage with a movie or documentary that deals with AI, technology and politics. A list of acceptable material is available on the course webpage, and all media must have sufficient levels of academic-based argumentation from our class to warrant its use. All media assessments must have prior approval of the instructor and must be signed up on the course website at least 2 weeks before it is handed in. The media assessment must critically engage with the content of the movie for its use in our understand of the course material, as well as base arguments in academic research and debates. You should assess the media for its arguments about technology, and the viability of the arguments given the academic debates on the issue. The assignment should be a minimum of 1000 words (maximum of 1500 words), in proper essay format (with title page and bibliography) and have a minimum of 4 academic sources, drawing primarily from course readings. All written work must use proper essay paragraph structure and conform to the 'criteria for the evaluation of written assignments' in the course syllabus or it cannot achieve full grades.

Option C: AI or Anti-AI assignment proposal

Students will propose to build an assessment either with AI or entirely without. The Proposal will outline in 1000 words (plus or minus 10% strictly enforced) a proposed project for the final submission. This can include the scope of the project (such as a vibe-coded app, or an entirely handwritten submission), how it will intersect with themes of the course, with a minimum of four academic references primarily from course materials. There are no restrictions on AI use or non use, but the criteria for evaluation in the final submission must be clearly outlined in the Proposal. I will grade the final submission using the criteria and rubric you set out here. Failure to outline clear criteria and how they will be used in the final submission will prevent you from completing the final assignment. There should be verification mechanisms proposed in the submission, the goal of the assignment and how it directly relates to the course material and debates. Verification mechanisms must allow me to confirm that the final submission is your

own work, since there are no restrictions on AI use. The form of verification will depend on your project. A handwritten submission can be verified through dated drafts, annotated readings, and handwritten revisions. A vibe-coded app can be verified through the prompts used, version history, and an oral explanation of how it works. The verification should be explicit and detailed, as well as the grading criteria. Failure to propose verification that fits your specific project will prevent you from completing the final assignment. Submission will be assessed for the completeness of the proposal, the engagement with the course material, and the proposed verification systems alongside the grading rubric.

Essay, Policy Analysis OR AI or Anti-AI assignment (part 2) (If Chosen)

35% of Final Grade – Major Essay or Policy Analysis Due in OWL at the end of **Week 10**.

Option A: Traditional Essay or Policy Analysis

The final draft of the paper should be 8 pages (2000 words) in length (plus or minus 10% maximum) (excluding the bibliography) and must be presented in proper scholarly format. Students will write a major research paper (based primarily on academic sources) on a topic of their choice, to be arrived at in consultation with the instructor. Essay topics should be chosen by Week 6 and specified on the sign up sheet. The essay will choose a pre-approved topic and explicitly address an ethical, social, or regulatory challenge related to AI using a specific theoretical framework or approach discussed in the course. The assignment must be in proper formal essay format (no bullet points, short form, or colloquial language; can use subheadings to identify sections; use proper citation; and should NOT INCLUDE ANY FORM OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY). Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and Wikipedia should not be used, and use of web material is subject to the instructor's prior approval. A basic structure for the essay will include:

- **Title, topic, and thesis question or area of interest for potential research.** Preapproved topics and approaches are here.
- **A framework for analysis related to the ethical, social, or regulatory challenge.** The framework will provide the explanatory foundation of the thesis.
- **Three key distinct arguments with evidence in support of the thesis.** Follow the paragraph structure in the course outline. The data should primarily come from course readings, the pre-approved suggested readings, and the suggested texts. Students must engage with at least four course texts to complete the assignment, and the majority of academic sources (50% + 1) should come from the required and optional readings in the course outline.
- **A conclusion that mirrors your title, topic, and thesis question.** Rewrite your introduction after you have written your conclusion. Your conclusion should provide the clear foundation that you have established throughout the essay to demonstrate the validity of your thesis. Therefore, your thesis and conclusion should match one another. Failure to have consistent argumentation will result in the inability to achieve full grades.

- **Properly cited research.** In-text citation is preferred (author-date system, as outlined below in 'guidelines for success in class'). There should be no proxy URLs (<https://www.lib.uwo.ca/>), no search URLs (<http://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/>), or Dropbox URLs (<https://www.dropbox.com/>). Citations need to be consistently formatted, readily available, in English, with precise page numbers (no inclusion of p.23-44 or consistent citation across pages, i.e., p.118-119). Lack of data is a lack of foundation. In the era of LLMs, inaccurate citations will be treated as no citation at all. LLMs routinely summarize sources without accessing the underlying data. Failure to directly quote sources with quotation marks followed by an explanation in your own words will constitute a lack of sufficient citation. Paraphrasing is no longer sufficient justification for including a citation; you must use specific and precise language, including nouns (specific people, places, and things), as generalized summaries of sources are often hallucinated, inaccurate, and incomplete when suggested by LLMs.
- **A title page** with your name, a title for your paper that reflects the thesis and topic of your paper, the date of submission, and the course number on it. If you cannot clearly and simply identify the title and topic of your paper, it is often an indicator of a lack of focus.
- Papers submitted before the deadline can revise and resubmit the assignment. For details on revision and resubmission, see the 'revise and resubmit' tab in Brightspace.
- The Department's rules regarding plagiarism and the submission of similar essays to two or more different instructors are appended to this course outline and should be noted. (See 'Criteria for Evaluation of Written Assignments' below). Students must submit their papers through OWL, and all papers may be processed by Turnitin. Papers submitted after deadlines (including excused late papers) will be marked, but comments will not be provided.

Option B: AI or Anti-AI assignment

(Available only to students who completed the AI or Anti-AI term assignment)

Students will complete the project set out in their proposal, whether it uses AI fully or not at all, adhering strictly to the format, AI-use approach, verification mechanisms, and assessment rubric outlined in that proposal. Your submission will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Adherence to Proposed Format and Verification:** Students must follow the process and verification mechanisms specified in their proposal and document them (e.g., dated drafts, annotated readings, prompt logs, version history, or appendices that show the work is their own). Where AI is used, its use must be documented. Where AI is not used, the process must still be documented through the verification set out in the proposal.
- **Topic Scope:** The project must engage critically with an issue in the politics or regulation of AI, drawing on at least six academic sources, including three course readings.
- **Rubric Implementation:** Submit the final project with the rubric from the proposal applied as a self-assessment. Include a reflective commentary (500-750 words) explaining how the project meets each rubric criterion and how AI was or was not used in producing it and guidance on the expected grade based on your criteria.

Final paper requirements

The final draft of the paper should be 8 pages (2000 words) in length (plus or minus 10% strictly enforced) (excluding the bibliography) and must be presented in proper scholarly format. See the *Criteria for Evaluation of Written Assignments* and the *Essay Evaluation Checklist* for a detailed description of the essay requirements. All written work must use proper essay paragraph structure and conform to the 'criteria for the evaluation of written assignments' below or it cannot achieve full grades.

The Department's rules regarding plagiarism and the submission of similar essays to two or more different instructors are appended to this course outline and should be noted. (See 'Criteria for Evaluation of Written Assignments' below). Students must submit their papers through OWL and all papers may be processed by turnitin. Papers submitted after deadlines (including excused late papers) will be marked, but comments will not be provided.

Final Exam

To be scheduled during the exam period.

The final exam will be cumulative (i.e., will be based on the material covered in lectures, assigned readings, and discussions throughout the whole of the course). The exam may include both a short answer/identification component and questions requiring longer, essay-style responses. A choice of answers and an exam preparation guide may be given. The examination requires a breadth of use of the course readings, examination answers that reference one or two readings fail to demonstrate breadth and cannot achieve full marks regardless of any other criteria. All written work must use proper essay paragraph structure and conform to the 'criteria for the evaluation of written assignments' below or it cannot achieve full grades.

Zoom Etiquette

1. Please pay attention to video, microphone and screensharing settings. Keep chat rooms and images appropriate for an academic setting. Any inappropriate actions, imagery, discussion or chat messages may result in your removal from the meeting at my discretion. Audio recordings may be available as an alternative to synchronous discussion.
2. Please test all WIFI, video and audio before the meetings. Zoom buttons for raising your hand, responding yes and no, asking host to adjust speed, requesting a break and more.
3. Please be conscious of your speaking time and that of others, if you are continuing in a manner that is not fair to your peers, I reserve the right to intervene and put us back on a more focused discussion.

Recording synchronous content (office hours or other meetings)

Any remote learning sessions for this course **may** be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings may be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their

private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings. Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Meeting the Requirements of the Assignment:

All written work must be submitted on time, must be of the appropriate length, must use the required number and type of resources, and, most importantly, must address the issues or questions posed in the assignment. All work must have sufficient academic content and sources related to our course or else it cannot receive full marks.

Non-medical and medical accommodation

Non-medical absences from class, late essays or assignments, will be subject to a 10% penalty per day (weekends included). All assignments must be completed to receive course credit. Further information is found in the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>).

Accommodation for medical illness of work worth less than 10% of the total course grade will require medical documentation. If documentation is required for either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor. Only the Dean's office can determine if accommodation is warranted.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

Guidelines for Success in Class

Since there seldom are definitive answers to the questions we will be asking about the politics of AI, and much of what you will learn in this course will be enhanced by the ideas and perspectives of your colleagues. But for this to work, everyone must participate fully and constructively. Be mindful of the following points, and you will be successful:

- o Come to all classes having read the assigned readings for that week and prepared to participate in discussion. It is useful to remember that some week's readings may be more comfortable

relevant to your research interests than others and focusing on readings that are most salient to your interests will ensure maximum usefulness in the course.

- o Participate in discussions, but do not over-participate. Everyone must be given an opportunity to take part in discussions. Constructive participation involves the raising of *relevant* points and ideas. Online participation will be considered as well in participation marks.
- o Demonstrate respect for the ideas presented by others at all times. This is essential to open discussion and the free exchange of ideas. This does not mean that you must agree with others. Informal debate will teach you even more about your own position while simultaneously exposing you to different viewpoints. Make use of such opportunities, but no disrespectful behavior will be tolerated.

Criteria for the evaluation of written assignments

Paragraph structure

Basic paragraph structure is an important part of writing. Failure to use basic paragraph structure will result in repetitive, unstructured, illogical arguments. Paragraphs help to structure our thought, our ability to make claims and provide a framework for writing. The topic sentence and concluding sentence of a paragraph should be in your own voice (no direct references). A basic paragraph structure should follow this template:

Topic sentence one or two lines

Major point with evidence one or two lines

Major point with evidence one or two lines

Major point with evidence one or two lines

Summarizing sentence of overall significance to the overarching thesis of the paper

Concluding sentence which restates topic sentence and bridges to next paragraph.

Failure to use basic paragraph structure throughout your work will result in the inability to receive full marks.

Quotations

Quotations longer than 4 lines should be indented. Try to avoid quotations longer than 4 lines. Assume that I do not read an indented 4-line quotation and make sure the sentence immediately following the quotation summarizes its significance to your argument in your own words. Never include quotations or sources in your introduction or conclusion, your introduction and conclusion should outline the paper structure in your own words.

Citations and Bibliography

We will use the author date system. It keeps footnotes and endnotes to a minimum.

- Text references will be short with the Surname, Date and page number (i.e. Žižek 2002: 342).
- Use this formatting everywhere, including sources from our reading list and in the response papers and any written work.
- Works by the same author in the same year should be cited as Žižek 2002a, Žižek2002b, etc.
- Et al. can be used by sources with three or more authors. The full list must be in the bibliography.
- If you have more than one source in the same sentence you just include them with a semi-colon in chronological order i.e (Žižek 2002: 345; D'Amelio 2018: 212; Swift 2020: 445)

Bibliography

A bibliography must be included in all written work, it should include the complete details of the work and included an 'Accessed' date if it is an online source.

Sample bibliography

Bastos, Marco T., and Dan Mercea. "The Brexit botnet and user-generated hyperpartisan news." *Social Science Computer Review* 37.1 (2019): 38-54.

Dobber, T., R. F. Fahy, and FJ Zuiderveen Borgesius. "The regulation of online political micro-targeting in Europe." *Internet Policy Review* 8.4 (2019): 4.

Grieder, William. "How the swindlers of Silicon Valley avoid paying taxes." *The Nation*, October 17, 2017, <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-the-swindlers-of-silicon-valley-avoid-paying-taxes/>. Accessed August 1, 2020.

Gill, Stephen. "Transnational class formations, European crisis and the silent revolution." *Critical Sociology* 43.4-5 (2017): 641.

Analytical Content and Paragraph structure:

Higher grades will be given to work that demonstrates the ability to interpret, critically assess and develop insights of the material. To determine whether or not your argument is analytical, ask yourself "Am I demonstrating to the reader my insights in an academic way?" If you are simply summarizing or describing in detail phenomena, your work is unlikely to have high analytical content.

Helpful signs you are not developing analytical content: Excessive quotes; beginning or ending a paragraph with a quote; short (fewer than 4 sentences) paragraphs; no sources in a long paragraph; lack of similar argument in introduction and conclusion.

Development of an Argument:

Higher grades will be given to work that has a clearly stated argument and a set of logically developed and reasonably comprehensive points in support of that argument. Academic arguments need not be personal (though in certain instances they can be – check with the instructor), rather they demonstrate the logical progression of the position you are developing. The key here is to attempt to convince your reader of the soundness or feasibility of your argument. Nuanced arguments recognize obvious criticisms and seek to address them logically. Consistency of an argument throughout a paper is important.

Helpful signs your argument may be in trouble: Using the same author or quote more than a few times in successive paragraphs; your introduction and conclusion are not similar; you introduce material in the introduction and the conclusion that cannot be found elsewhere; you have quotes in your conclusion; your attempt to address obvious criticisms contradicts your thesis, you adopt multiple theoretical frameworks; you cannot find any sources that agree with your central claims.

Grammar, Spelling, and Style:

Higher grades will be given to written work that is grammatically correct and is clearly and accurately written, while lower grades will be given to work that is difficult to read or understand due to excessive grammatical and/or spelling errors.

While different approaches work for different people, it is recommended that you try the following every time you have a written assignment: after completing your assignment, put it away for a while (ideally, for a few days); when you pick it up again, read it carefully, slowly, and aloud (when we are familiar with a paper we tend to skim it during proof-reading, thereby missing errors – so make sure you are reading it

word for word). Mistakes in grammar may not always look wrong, but they usually sound wrong. If you need some help with writing style or grammar, there are many resources available on campus.

General

All students must complete all course requirements. Failure to do so (e.g., by not handing-in an assignment or by missing an examination without due cause) will subject the student to the appropriate University regulations. Students must also keep a duplicate copy of their assignments.

Policy on communication

I strive to be accessible and responsive to student inquiries. However, repeated or persistent e-mails/texts/phone calls will overload my capacity to respond to all students equally. As such, I reserve the right to answer initial questions but forego multiple responses or inquires for a 24hour cool-down period. I also may take longer to respond to communications during non-working hours, holidays, and weekends. I appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Late Assignments - Formal Guidelines

Late papers will be accepted but will be subject to a late penalty of 10 per cent per day to a maximum of 5 days, after which they will not be accepted and a mark of 0 will be recorded. In the interest of fairness to all students, there will be no exceptions to this unless you have arranged in advance for an extension. All extensions must be arranged in advance of the day on which a paper is due. **Papers submitted after deadlines (including excused late papers) will be marked, but comments will not be provided.**

Policy on Children in the classroom¹

"It is my belief that if we want women in academia, that we should also expect children to be present in some form. Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff and faculty parents.

All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.

For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.

I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

¹ Policy taken from Dr Cheyney with permission.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20210413194856/https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/childcare/family-friendly-syllabi-examples>

In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom!"

Policy on non-service animals in the classroom

Western University established a [Pets and Therapy Animals policy in May 2020](#) that limits the presence of pets in campus buildings. Service and therapy animals are permitted inside all Western locations, in accordance with accessibility policies, however animals for companionship are not allowed.

Religious/Cultural Observance

Persons who have religious or cultural observances that coincide with this class should let the instructor know in writing (by e-mail for example) by Week 4. I strongly encourage you to honor your cultural and religious holidays! However, if I do not hear from you by Week 4, I will assume that you plan to attend all class meetings.

Point of View

The readings, class lectures, and my comments in class will suggest a particular point of view. This perspective is my own and does not have to be yours! I encourage you to disagree with the ideas in the readings and lectures as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. Please express yourself! A significant part of a university education is learning about the complexity of various issues; therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion.

Academic Sources

A key aspect of the university experience is developing your ability to assess the validity of sources. Academic sources such as those found on Google Scholar should be your primary source of arguments, ideas and claims made in the course. While it may be appropriate to provide anecdotal, non-academic, news, theories from outside the academy as data points, all arguments must be situated in triangulated academic research. By triangulation (you may see a Δ on your assignments) this is the idea that academic peer review provides a foundation for the veracity of the claims being made. If you rely too heavily on one source (i.e. that more than 3 footnotes in a row are from the same source) you may be veering towards summary or plagiarism of that source as it lacks proper verification from other academics who agree with those assessments. Moreover, most sources have implicit or explicit frameworks, understandings, biases which you may not be able to assess without triangulation. While there is no explicit number of sources required on assignments, you will be unable to achieve full marks

if you do not have academic arguments with academic sources. This is a standard expectation of all assignments in this class.

Discussion Guidelines²

In our structured and unstructured discussions and dialogues, we also will have many opportunities to explore some challenging, high-stakes issues and increase our understandings of different perspectives. Our conversations may not always be easy; we sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking and our listening; sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our own ideas and experiences. Always we will need respect for others. Thus, an important secondary aim of our course necessarily will be for us to increase our facility with the sometimes-difficult conversations that arise inside issues of social inequality as we deepen our understandings of multiple perspectives – whatever our backgrounds, experiences, or positions.

Policy on the use of LLMs (AI, ChatGPT, Bard, etc) in the classroom ³

Unless otherwise noted during class activities, you may only use ChatGPT or any other Generative technology to *aid* or *nuance* your thinking, communication, and learning; but not to *replace* or *subvert* it. See the table below for some examples of allowable and non-allowable uses of Generative technology in this class (NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list of examples). Generative technology may be used to assist in assessment throughout the course. If you wish to opt out of the use of generative technology, please let me know.

How generative technology may be used in assessment:

1. Pre-assessment - to provide structural or overall feedback before beginning any grading.
2. Applying rubric - using the rubric from the course outline to apply to submitted assignments to assess the degree of compliance before or during completing any grading.
3. During assessment - to double-check the veracity of claims being made about your submission during the assessment of your material.
4. Post assessment - to find additional examples or instances in your submissions to assist in providing feedback.
5. Refining assessment - suggesting forms of constructive criticism, actionable items, and overarching themes or issues to assist in your assessment.
6. Checking for unauthorized AI use, following University guidelines (and those attached below).

How generative technology will NOT be used in assessment:

No grades will be assigned solely with generative technology at any point in this course. Assessment will always be done by the instructor/graders in accordance with the course outlines, because of the unpredictability and unreliability of current generative technology. No personal or individual identifiers will ever be included in the assessment of material by any generative technology.

Example of an Allowable Use	Why is this Allowed?	Things to Keep in Mind
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² From U-M Faculty Member Alisse Portnoy, English.

Prompting Generative technology to generate ideas for a class project.	This might enhance your thinking by exposing you to other ideas than you might come up with on your own.	It is important to start with brainstorming your own ideas first (to aid your creative thinking), rather than letting Generative technology do that initial work for you. Also, beware that Generative technology might introduce biases (tends towards liberal consensus) into the topic when prompted to generate ideas.
Using Generative technology for writing support (e.g., to improve writing quality, clarity, and expression).	Generative technology writing technologies, like ChatGPT, can provide ideas for how to revise a sentence or word, begin a paragraph, or express your thinking more clearly. Used in this way, Generative technology might support the development of your communication skills.	Make sure to get your thoughts written down first rather than asking Generative technology to write the first draft. Writing and thinking are interconnected processes, if you prompt Generative technology to write the first draft for you, you are not actively engaging in thinking about the material. NOTE: We also have a wonderful Writing Center on campus that provides writing support!
Using Generative technology as a study or assignment aid .	Generative technology can offer study tips, provide example text/quiz practice questions, design a personalized study guide, design flashcards, give directions for how to complete an assignment, create learning simulations and interactive scenarios to help you think more deeply about the class content, and provide a rubric so you can self-assess your own work.	Generative technology tools are known for making up information and presenting biased output. Make sure to double-check the accuracy, credibility, and reliability of any AI-generated information that you use to support your studying or assignment completion.
Prompting Generative technology to help make information easier to understand (e.g., explaining technical or academic jargon, providing concrete examples of an abstract idea).	Generative technology could potentially be used in ways that reduce cognitive load (see Cognitive Load Theory), such as breaking material into smaller chunks, summarizing and simplifying material, providing an outline of an article to support pre-reading, translating text into your native language, making content more accessible, scaffolding learning, and providing concrete examples.	If Generative technology are used in ways that reduce germane load (the cognitive effort required to make connections between new information and prior knowledge) it can negatively impact learning. For example, if you ask a Generative technology technology to automatically summarize a complex academic article instead of reading and summarizing it yourself, you will miss out on the opportunity to fully engage with, and critically examine, the author's ideas (read: No One is Talking About AI's Impact on Reading). This is a critical skill for college, the workplace, and engaged citizenship!
Using AI and Generative technology is recommended due to different abilities .	Generative technology can be used to make learning more accessible and digitally accessible for differently abled individuals (e.g., transcripts of recorded audio, closed captions for videos, alt text to	If you have a self-identified or registered disability, consider how Generative technology tools might aid your thinking, communication, and learning.

	describe images for blind/visually impaired individuals, interpretations of complex visual data).	
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Example of a Non-Allowable Use	Why is this NOT Allowed?
Prompting a Generative technology technology to respond to a discussion forum prompt for you.	Discussion prompts are meant to incorporate your voice and your thoughts. Participating in discussions is about building community and relationships as well as actively engaging in your own thinking and learning to communicate with others. Using Generative technology for this activity subverts both the social and learning goals of the activity.
Using a Generative technology technology (e.g., Slidesgo) to design a class presentation for you.	Designing a presentation requires you to actively engage in thinking and learning about the material and consider how best to communicate that information to an audience. Prompting Generative technology to do this work for you subverts your learning and the opportunity to develop your creative communication skills.
Modifying AI-generated work slightly to make it appear as if you created it .	Making minor adjustments to AI-generated work only supports surface-level learning, rather than deep learning (learn more), because the focus is on minor adjustments rather than truly understanding the material.
Prompting Generative technology to analyze data for you and submitting the data analysis as your own.	Research has shown that using Generative technology to provide solutions for you (or in this case, provide data analysis output for you) prevents you from actively engaging with, and learning, the material (read: Generative AI Can Harm Learning). Using Generative technology in this way subverts your learning. Additionally, Generative technology tools are not calculators or math machines, they are predictability machines (they guess which words go together to make the most plausible human-sounding response).
Copying AI-generated text word for word into your written work but citing it as written by AI .	Please read " The Case For Not Citing Chatbots As Information Sources " and " Generative AI Has an Intellectual Property Problem " and, instead, find an original source to cite. When you put in the effort to find an original source to cite, you are deepening your thinking and learning about that topic, and you are giving credit to human authors/artists.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways can result in: a failure to receive full grades, the need to resubmit the assignment, need to orally present the assignment in office hours, or a failure to complete the requirements of the course. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

Reading Schedule

Week 1: Tech Roots and Routes

Required:

- Edgerton, David. The shock of the old: Technology and global history since 1900. Profile books, 2011. Ch 1.
- Haraway, Donna. "'a cyborg manifesto'(1985)." Cultural theory: An anthology (2010): 454.
- Townes, Miles. "The spread of TCP/IP: How the Internet became the Internet." Millennium 41.1 (2012): 43-64.

Suggested:

Cordeschi, Roberto. "Cybernetics." The Blackwell guide to the philosophy of computing and information (2004): 186-196.

Faulkner, Wendy. "The technology question in feminism: A view from feminist technology studies." Women's studies international forum. Vol. 24. No. 1. Pergamon, 2001.

Latour, Bruno. "Technology is society made durable." The sociological review 38.S1 (1990): 103-131.

Oudshoorn, Nelly, and Trevor Pinch. How users matter: the co-construction of users and technology (inside technology). MIT Press, 2003.

Sekula, Allan. "The body and the archive." October 39 (1986): 3-64.

Winner, Langdon. "Do artifacts have politics?." Computer ethics. Routledge, 2017. 177-192.

Georges, B. (1999). "Do Politics have Artifacts?" Social Studies of Science 29(3): 411-431.

AI concept of the week: What do we mean by artificial?

<https://www.thecollector.com/automata-ai-comparison-historical-cultural-comparison/>

Week 2: Digital sovereignty and security

Required:

- Mueller, Milton L. "Against sovereignty in cyberspace." International studies review 22.4 (2020): 779-801.
- Nye, Joseph S. Cyber power. Cambridge: Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2010.
- Norris, Pippa. Digital divide: Civic engagement, information poverty, and the Internet worldwide. Cambridge University Press, 2001. Ch 1.
- Suzor, Nicolas P. Lawless: The secret rules that govern our digital lives. Cambridge University Press, 2019. Ch 2 and 4.

Suggested:

Carr, Madeline. "Public-private partnerships in national cyber-security strategies." International Affairs 92.1 (2016): 43-62.

Deibert, Ronald J. "Black code: Censorship, surveillance, and the militarisation of cyberspace." Millennium 32.3 (2003): 501-530.

Hansen, Lene, and Helen Nissenbaum. "Digital disaster, cyber security, and the Copenhagen School." International studies quarterly 53.4 (2009): 1155-1175.

Herod, Andrew. Scale. Routledge, 2010. Ch 1.

Stalder, Felix. Manuel Castells: The theory of the network

AI concept of the week: What do we mean by intelligence?

https://youtu.be/3PIpCD_hO-g?si=zOQPi_91bAY4ymda

Broussard, Meredith. Artificial unintelligence: How computers misunderstand the world. mit Press, 2018.

Week 3: Regulation and Governance

Required:

- Noble, Safiya Umoja. "Algorithms of oppression." Algorithms of oppression. New York university press, 2018.Intro and Ch 1.
- Gorwa, Robert. "What is platform governance?." Information, communication & society 22.6 (2019): 854-871.
- Mellamphy, Nandita Biswas. "Humans "in the Loop"?: Human-Centrism, Posthumanism, and AI." Nature and Culture 16.1 (2021): 11-27.
- Neff, Gina. The political economy of digital health. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Suggested:

Ardia, David S. "Free speech savior or shield for scoundrels: an empirical study of intermediary immunity under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act." Loy. LAL Rev. 43 (2009): 373.

Eubanks, Virginia. Automating inequality: How high-tech tools profile, police, and punish the poor. St. Martin's Press, 2018.

Rosen, Jeffrey. "The right to be forgotten." Stan. L. Rev. Online 64 (2011): 88.

Costanza-Chock, Sasha. Design justice: Community-led practices to build the worlds we need. The MIT Press, 2020.

Roberts, Margaret. Censored: distraction and diversion inside China's Great Firewall. Princeton University Press, 2018.

Gillespie, Tarleton. "The politics of 'platforms'." New media & society 12.3 (2010): 347-364.

Van Dijck, José, Thomas Poell, and Martijn De Waal. The platform society: Public values in a connective world. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Benjamin, Ruha. "Race after technology." Social Theory Re-Wired. Routledge, 2023. 405-415.

AI concept of the week: what is a transformer?

<https://blogs.nvidia.com/blog/what-is-a-transformer-model/>

Week 4: Open versus closed source

Required:

- Nafus, Dawn. "'Patches don't have gender': What is not open in open source software." New Media & Society 14.4 (2012): 669-683.
- Steele, Robert David. "Open source intelligence." Handbook of intelligence studies 42.5 (2007): 129-147.
- Carlson, Matt. "The robotic reporter: Automated journalism and the redefinition of labor, compositional forms, and journalistic authority." Journalism in an Era of Big Data. Routledge, 2018. 108-123.
- Mortensen, Mette, and Christina Neumayer. "The playful politics of memes." Information, Communication & Society 24.16 (2021): 2367-2377.

Suggested:

Trittin-Ulbrich, Hannah, et al. "Exploring the dark and unexpected sides of digitalization: Toward a critical agenda." Organization 28.1 (2021): 8-25.

Ireni-Saban, Liza, and Maya Sherman. Ethical Governance of Artificial Intelligence in the Public Sector. Routledge, 2021.

AI concept of the week: what's the difference between pre-training and fine-tuning?

https://youtu.be/zikBMFhNj_g?si=3jktl6jdm_4zCs_Q&t=895

Week 5: Social Media or Anti-Social media?

Required:

- Fuchs, Christian. "Social media: A critical introduction." *Social Media* (2021) ch 1. or <https://stratechery.com/2021/facebook-political-problems/>
- Bousfield, Dan. "Neoliberalism, race, and ignorance in an era of covid-19." *Covid-19 and the Global Political Economy* (2022): 53-67.
- Williams, James. *Stand out of our light: Freedom and resistance in the attention economy*. Cambridge University Press, 2018. Ch 1.
- Venturini, Tommaso. "From fake to junk news: The data politics of online virality." *Data politics*. Routledge, 2019. 123-144.

Suggested:

Zhang, Xichen, and Ali A. Ghorbani. "An overview of online fake news: Characterization, detection, and discussion." *Information Processing & Management* 57.2 (2020): 102025.

Schirch, Lisa, ed. *social media impacts on conflict and democracy: The techtonic shift*. Routledge, 2021.

Banet-Weiser, Sarah. *Empowered: Popular feminism and popular misogyny*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Anderau, Glenn. "Defining fake news." *KRITERION—Journal of Philosophy* 35.3 (2021): 197-215.

Persily, Nathaniel, and Joshua A. Tucker, eds. "Social media and democracy: The state of the field, prospects for reform." (2020).

Grossman, Emiliano. "Media and policy making in the digital age." *Annual Review of Political Science* 25 (2022): 443-461.

Grossman, Guy, Yotam Margalit, and Tamar Mitts. "How the ultrarich use media ownership as a political investment." *The Journal of Politics* 84.4 (2022): 1913-1931.

Napoli, Philip. *Social media and the public interest: Media regulation in the disinformation age*. Columbia University Press, 2019.

Curran, James, and Jean Seaton. *Power without responsibility: press, broadcasting and the internet in Britain*. Routledge, 2018.

AI concept of the week: what do we mean by cognitive offloading?

<https://tcet.unt.edu/cognitive-offloading-media-multitasking-and-artificial-intelligence>

Week 6: Settler Colonialism and Decolonizing Technology

Required:

- Kolopenuk, J. (2018). "'Pop-up' Métis and the Rise of Canada's Post-Indigenous Formation." *World Anthropologies*, 120(2), 333-337.
- Adams, Rachel. "Can artificial intelligence be decolonized?." *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 46.1-2 (2021): 176-197.
- Tunstall, Elizabeth Dori. *Decolonizing design: A cultural justice guidebook*. MIT Press, 2023. Ch 2.
- Alcantara, Christopher, and Caroline Dick. "Decolonization in a digital age: cryptocurrencies and indigenous self-determination in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Law and Society/La Revue Canadienne Droit et Société* 32.1 (2017): 19-35.

Suggested:

Wemigwans, J. (2019). "Decolonizing the Digital." In *"A Digital Bundle: Protecting and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Online"* (pp. 43-69). University of Regina Press.

McMahon, R. (2014). "From Digital Divides to the First Mile: Indigenous Peoples and the Network Society in Canada." *International Journal of Communication* 8: 2002-2026.

Meighan, Paul J. "Decolonizing the digital landscape: The role of technology in Indigenous language revitalization." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 17.3 (2021): 397-405.

Karsgaard, Carrie, and Maggie MacDonald. "Picturing the pipeline: Mapping settler colonialism on

Instagram." *new media & society* 22.7 (2020): 1206-1226.

Crosby, Andrew. "The racialized logics of settler colonial policing: Indigenous 'communities of concern' and critical infrastructure in Canada." *Settler Colonial Studies* 11.4 (2021): 411-430.

AI concept of the week: what do we mean by human labelers?

<https://tribunemag.co.uk/2021/05/how-artificial-intelligence-depends-on-low-paid-workers>

Week 7: Ecological 'technofixes'

Required:

- Stoddard, Isak, et al. "Three decades of climate mitigation: why haven't we bent the global emissions curve?." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 46 (2021): 653-689.
- Wagner, Gernot, and Daniel Zizzamia. "Green moral hazards." *Ethics, Policy & Environment* 25.3 (2022): 264-280.
- Crawford, Kate. *The atlas of AI: Power, politics, and the planetary costs of artificial intelligence*. Yale University Press, 2021.
- Dauvergne, Peter. "The power of environmental norms: marine plastic pollution and the politics of microbeads." *Environmental Politics* 27.4 (2018): 579-597.

Suggested:

McLaren, Duncan, and Nils Markusson. "The co-evolution of technological promises, modelling, policies and climate change targets." *Nature Climate Change* 10.5 (2020): 392-397.

Brozović, Danilo. "Societal collapse: A literature review." *Futures* 145 (2023): 103075.

Ludwig, David, and Phil Macnaghten. "Traditional ecological knowledge in innovation governance: a framework for responsible and just innovation." *Journal of Responsible Innovation* 7.1 (2020): 26-44.

Rye, Craig D., and Tim Jackson. "A review of EROEI-dynamics energy-transition models." *Energy policy* 122 (2018): 260-272.

Parrique, Timothée, et al. "Decoupling debunked." Evidence and arguments against green growth as a sole strategy for sustainability. A study edited by the European Environment Bureau EEB (2019).

Wiedmann, Thomas, et al. "Scientists' warning on affluence." *Nature communications* 11.1 (2020): 3107.

Borras Jr, Saturnino M., et al. "Climate change and agrarian struggles: an invitation to contribute to a JPS Forum." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 49.1 (2022): 1-28.

AI concept of the week: what do we mean by models?

<https://medium.com/data-science-at-microsoft/how-large-language-models-work-91c362f5b78f>

Week 8: Labor, Automation, and the Gig Economy

Required:

- De Stefano, Valerio. "The rise of the just-in-time workforce: On-demand work, crowdwork, and labor protection in the gig-economy." *Comp. Lab. L. & Pol'y J.* 37 (2015): 471.
- Srnicek, Nick. *Platform capitalism*. John Wiley & Sons, 2017. Intro, Ch 1.
- Zukin, Sharon. *The innovation complex: Cities, tech, and the new economy*. Oxford University Press, 2020. Intro, Ch 1.
- Munn, Luke. *Automation is a Myth*. Stanford University Press, 2022. Intro, Ch 1.

Suggested:

Couldry, Nick, and Ulises A. Mejias. The costs of connection: How data is colonizing human life and appropriating it for capitalism. Stanford University Press, 2020.

Pollio, Andrea, and Liza Rose Cirolia. "Fintech urbanism in the startup capital of Africa." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 15.4 (2022): 508-523.

Nyabola, Nanjala. "Africa's Digital Public Sphere." *Routledge Handbook of African Political Philosophy*. Routledge, 2023. 315-329.

Mindell, David A. *Our robots, ourselves: Robotics and the myths of autonomy*. Viking, 2015.

Dauvergne, Peter, and Genevieve LeBaron. *Protest Inc.: The corporatization of activism*. John Wiley & Sons, 2014.

Fan, Jennifer S. "Woke capital: The role of corporations in social movements." *Harv. Bus. L. Rev.* 9 (2019): 441.

AI concept of the week: what do we mean by 'agency laundering'?

<https://www.technologyreview.com/2014/08/19/74207/in-praise-of-efficient-price-gouging/>

Week 9: CRISPR, genomes and biohacking

Required:

- Greely, Henry T. *CRISPR people: the science and ethics of editing humans*. MIT Press, 2022. Part 1 **or** Wang, Joy Y., and Jennifer A. Doudna. "CRISPR technology: A decade of genome editing is only the beginning." *Science* 379.6629 (2023): eadd8643.
- Ikemoto, Lisa C. "DIY bio: hacking life in biotech's backyard." *UCDL Rev.* 51 (2017): 539.
- Garner, Samuel A., and Jiyeon Kim. "The privacy risks of direct-to-consumer genetic testing: A case study of 23andMe and Ancestry." *Wash. UL Rev.* 96 (2018): 1219.

Suggested:

Morley, Jessica, et al. "The ethics of AI in health care: a mapping review." *Social Science & Medicine* 260 (2020): 113172.

Char, Danton S., Nigam H. Shah, and David Magnus. "Implementing machine learning in health care—addressing ethical challenges." *The New England journal of medicine* 378.11 (2018): 981.

Fins, Joseph. *Rights come to mind: brain injury, ethics, and the struggle for consciousness*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

AI concept of the week: What do we mean by synthetic data?

<https://research.ibm.com/blog/what-is-synthetic-data>

Week 10: Surveillance and Privacy

Required:

- Zuboff, Shoshana. "Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospects of an Information Civilization." *Journal of Information Technology*, April 2015.
- Lyon, David. "Surveillance, Snowden, and Big Data: Capacities, consequences, critique." *Big Data & Society*, July-Dec. 2014.
- Ball, Kirstie, and Laureen Snider, eds. *The surveillance-industrial complex: A political economy of surveillance*. Routledge, 2013. Intro Ch 1.
- Aho, Brett, and Roberta Duffield. "Beyond surveillance capitalism: Privacy, regulation and big data in Europe and China." *Economy and Society* 49.2 (2020): 187-212.

Suggested:

Sadowski, Jathan. "When data is capital: Datafication, accumulation, and extraction." *Big data & society* 6.1 (2019): 2053951718820549.

Smith, Gavin JD. "Surveillance, data and embodiment: On the work of being watched." *Body & Society* 22.2 (2016): 108-139.

Benjamin, Ruha, ed. *Captivating technology: Race, carceral technoscience, and liberatory imagination in everyday life*. Duke University Press, 2019.

Braman, Sandra. *Change of state: Information, policy, and power*. Mit Press, 2009.

AI concept of the week: Are faces, public or private?

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/03/18/magazine/facial-recognition-clearview-ai.html>

Week 11: Hybrid Warfare

Required:

- Hoffman, Frank G. "Hybrid warfare and challenges." *Strategic Studies*. Routledge, 2014. 329-337.
- Johnson, Robert. "Hybrid war and its countermeasures: a critique of the literature." *Small wars & insurgencies* 29.1 (2018): 141-163.
- Ramazani, Vaheed. "Exceptionalism, metaphor and hybrid warfare." *Culture, Theory and Critique* 59.3 (2018): 193-214.

Suggested:

Nye, Joseph. "How sharp power threatens soft power." *Foreign affairs* 24 (2018).

Murray, Williamson, and Peter R. Mansoor, eds. *Hybrid warfare: fighting complex opponents from the ancient world to the present*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Driedger, Jonas J., and Mikhail Polianskii. "Utility-based predictions of military escalation: Why experts forecasted Russia would not invade Ukraine." *Contemporary Security Policy* 44.4 (2023): 544-560.

AI concept of the week: how deep do fakes have to be?

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/3/5/18251736/deepfake-propaganda-misinformation-troll-video-hoax>

Week 12: Digital Diplomacy

Required:

- Bjola, Corneliu, and Marcus Holmes. *Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice*. Routledge, 2015. Intro, Ch 1.
- Barrinha, André, and Thomas Renard. "Cyber-diplomacy: the making of an international society in the digital age." *Global Affairs* 3.4-5 (2017): 353-364.
- Bousfield, Dan. "Revisiting cyber-diplomacy: Canada–China relations online." *Globalizations* 14.6 (2017): 1045-1059.

Suggested:

Manor, Ilan, and Elad Segev. "Social media mobility: Leveraging Twitter networks in online diplomacy." *Global Policy* 11.2 (2020): 233-244.

Adesina, Olubukola S. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy." *Cogent Social Sciences* 3.1 (2017): 1297175.

Duncombe, Constance. "The politics of Twitter: emotions and the power of social media." *International Political Sociology* 13.4 (2019): 409-429.

Dittmer, Jason, and Daniel Bos. *Popular culture, geopolitics, and identity*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

AI concept of the week: what are the ethical considerations when we use AI?

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/ethical-concerns-mount-as-ai-takes-bigger-decision-making-role/>

APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

<https://politicalscience.uwo.ca/undergraduate/docs/outlines/2025-26/APPENDIX%20TO%20UNDERGRADUATE%20COURSE%20OUTLINES1.pdf>

Accessibility at Western: Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

Mental Health at Western: If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.

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[Undergraduate Procedures](#)

[Senate Review Board Appeals](#)

[Procedures](#)

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