

**80-249: Automation, Artificial Intelligence, and Society**  
**Carnegie Mellon University**  
**Spring 2018**

**Instructor:** Mate Szabo

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**Office Hours:** Thursday 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., and by appointment

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**Office hours:** Tuesday 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., and by appointment

**Course location:** College of Fine Arts, Room 102

**Time:** TR 9:00 a.m.-10:20 a.m.

**Course Description:**

We are surrounded with imagery of artificial intelligence (AI) shaping our future. But for more than one hundred years, our society has already been deeply impacted by automation, computers, and information technology. This course will consider AI and automation from historical, ethical, and public policy perspectives. Our aim is to provide a broad, interdisciplinary introduction to these issues. There is no prerequisite for this course; it open to students from all majors.

Philosophical inquiry is pursued via writing, speaking, and reading. Throughout this course, students will be asked to read texts, write responses, and participate in classroom discussions. No philosophical background is required for this class. However, if you are having difficulty with the readings or assignments, please make an appointment to meet with the instructor.

**Course Texts**

There is no required text. The syllabus, course schedule, participation rubric, and course readings will be available on the Canvas site under the “Files” link on the left side of the page.

**Learning Expectations**

By the end of this course, students should be able to evaluate issues in automation and artificial intelligence from ethical and historical perspectives. In particular, students should be able to:

- Read philosophical articles critically, and be able to summarize the main points of those articles in a classroom discussion.
- Research and explain current technology in automation and artificial intelligence to a general audience.

- Evaluate innovations in automation and AI from an ethical, political, and historical perspective.

### Grading

#### **Breakdown**

##### *Daily Activities*

Participation & Attendance	15%
Discussion Q's and Reflections	15%

##### *Wiki Development*

Wiki post	5%
Quizzes	5%

##### *Final Project*

Final Project	30%
Final Presentation	20%
Self Reflection	10%

#### **Participation & Attendance**

Students will be evaluated on their preparedness for the day's discussion. In order to be successful, a student must have completed the reading, bring the reading to class, and participate in class discussions.

The instructors will give each student a participation grade at the end of the semester. If we remember you as someone who was consistently engaged throughout the semester, you will do well. If we become concerned that someone is not participating sufficiently, we will reach out. The participation grade, minus any deductions for absences (discussed below), will be the student's final participation and attendance grade.

Attendance is required for this course and will be recorded each class. Each student is allowed two "freebies." Every class missed after the first two will result in a five-point deduction from your participation grade. Five or more unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course. You can improve your participation & attendance grade by taking advantage of office hours. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what notes or assignments you missed. We are willing to excuse additional absences due to illness or job events (job fairs, interviews, etc.), but only if we are told about the absence *before* the missed class.

#### **Readings, Discussion Questions, and Short Reflections**

Throughout the semester, you will be charged with reading various texts outside of class. We will discuss those texts together in class. Most days, you will be asked to generate *two discussion questions* the night before class. On other days, you will be asked to write a reflection on the reading or on a class activity. **Discussion questions and reflections are due at 8:00 a.m. on the Canvas site the morning before class listed on the syllabus unless otherwise noted.** Your questions should note something you did not understand from the reading, or raise a concern you

had in light of what you read (such as a criticism, or a clarification question). The reflections will have specific instructions regarding content, but will ask to write about a paragraph.

Your discussion questions and reflections will be graded as follows:

10/10 pts- Two questions/reflection submitted that demonstrate having read the material.

5/10 pts- Two questions/reflection submitted, but do not demonstrate having read the material.

3/10- One question or partial reflection submitted.

0/10 pts- No questions or reflection submitted.

To demonstrate that you have read the material, your questions or reflection should be *specific* and refer to a particular part of the text or particular line of argument. In addition, *you should briefly summarize (in 1-2 sentences) the parts of the text that gave rise to your question.* At the end of the semester, your grades on the discussion questions and reflections will be averaged. This will constitute your Discussion Question & Reflection grade.

### **Wiki Development**

In the first half of the course, each student will write one wiki post explaining a term, person, etc. that is mentioned in the assigned text, but not explained. A wiki post should be about two paragraphs. Each student must answer a multiple choice quiz about each wiki post to ensure that everyone has read it.

### **Final Project**

The final project for this course will be developed as blog posts. You will belong to a group of three or four students who must all contribute to a blog throughout the second half of the semester. Every week, group members will contribute to the blog, and you will have time discuss your findings in class. In this project, you will select a topic or technology related to automation and/or artificial intelligence, explain it, provide an overview of its history, and then create an ethical analysis of your topic or technology. At the end of the semester, you will assemble your blog posts together and edit them such that they become one coherent document or other mode of presentation. You will discuss your project with the class in the final two weeks of the semester. More specific instructions will be distributed after spring break.

## Course Policies

### **Late Work**

Late work will receive a 15-point deduction for every day late. Assignments that are more than four days late will not be accepted.

### **Laptops and Cell Phones**

Research shows that laptops and cell phones inhibit learning not only for the user, but for those around them in the classroom. For this reason, laptops and cell phones should not be used unless indicated by the instructor. We ask that you print course readings and bring them to class. You may bring your laptop to class, but we ask you not to use it unless instructed to do so.

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

We take very seriously the university's policy on plagiarism and cheating. In all original work, you *must* cite every source you use. Please use a consistent, standard system of citation unless otherwise noted. MLA and APA are common formats in the humanities and social sciences. If a student is caught plagiarizing, the student in question will receive a failing grade for both the assignment and the course. In addition, the university will be notified of the student's misconduct.

A short excerpt from the Carnegie Mellon *Policy on Academic Integrity* is listed below:

“In all academic work to be graded, the citation of all sources is required. When collaboration or assistance is permitted by the course instructor(s) or when a student utilizes the services provided by Academic Development, the Global Communication Center, and the Academic Resource Center (CMU-Q), the acknowledgement of any collaboration or assistance is likewise required. This citation and acknowledgement must be incorporated into the work submitted and not separately or at a later point in time. Failure to do so is dishonest and is subject to disciplinary action”

For more information, please read the full *Policy on Academic Integrity*, found at the following link: <http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Academic%20Integrity.html>

### **Statement on Disabilities**

We strive to make the classroom environment as inclusive as possible. If you would like to request accommodations for a disability, please contact the instructors and the Office of Disability Resources at [access@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:access@andrew.cmu.edu) as soon as you are able. You can read about the Office of Disability Resources services here: <https://www.cmu.edu/hr/eos/disability/index.html>.