CS 435 - The Great Ethical AI Debate 2025

Adnan Masood, PhD.

Rules of the Debate and Detailed Instructions

You will participate in a structured debate on one of three ethical dilemmas in generative AI, reflecting your learning from the **CS435 Ethical and Generative AI**. The debate pits two teams—**Team For** and **Team Against** (proposition and opposition)—against each other to argue a specific resolution. Your arguments must draw on course concepts such as **AI privacy** (e.g., differential privacy, anonymization), **security** (e.g., adversarial training), **regulations** (e.g., GDPR, EU AI Act), **Ethics**, and **real-world examples**.

Debate Structure

- **Group Size**: Each debate involves 10 students, split into:

  - **Team For**: 5 students supporting the resolution.
  - **Team Against**: 5 students opposing the resolution.

- **Initial Poll**: Before the debate, the audience (classmates) votes "Yay" (for the resolution) or "Nay" (against the resolution) to set a baseline.

- **Debate Rounds** (8 minutes total per team):

  1. **Opening Arguments** (2 minutes each):
     - One student from **Team For** presents their initial argument.
     - One student from **Team Against** presents their initial argument or a rebuttal.
  2. **Second Round** (2 minutes each):
     - A different student from **Team For** offers a new argument or rebuttal.
     - A different student from **Team Against** responds with a new argument or rebuttal.
  3. **Third Round** (2 minutes each):
     - A third student from **Team For** presents a new argument or rebuttal.
     - A third student from **Team Against** responds with a new argument or rebuttal.
  4. **Fourth Round** (2 minutes each):
     - A fourth student from **Team For** presents a new argument or rebuttal.
     - A fourth student from **Team Against** responds with a new argument or rebuttal.

- **Final Poll**: After the debate, the audience votes again. The team that shifts the most votes in their favor wins (e.g., if "Yay" drops from 60% to 50%, **Team Against** wins with a 10% shift).

- **Timekeeping**: A moderator (instructor or designated student) ensures each speaker adheres to the 2-minute limit.

Rules

1. **Novelty**: Arguments must be unique and non-repeating within and across teams. Reusing points results in point deductions.

2. **Participation**: Each team member must speak once unless there are not enough people in the team (absentees); the fifth member is the timekeeper and manages the poll.

3. **Course Relevance**: Arguments must reflect course learnings, including:

   - **AI privacy and security tools** (e.g., differential privacy, federated learning, encryption, explainable AI, transparency).
   - **AI regulations** (e.g., GDPR, UNESCO AI Ethics, EU AI Act).
   - **Real-world examples** (e.g., ChatGPT in schools, autonomous drones in warfare).

4. **Preparation**: Each Teams should prepare a 1-page preparation document outlining planned arguments and rebuttals to share among each other.

5. **Conduct**: Respectful discourse is required; interruptions or personal attacks result in penalties.

6. **Audience Role**: The audience listens actively, votes impartially, and may ask one clarifying question per team post-debate (time permitting).

Deliverables

- **Debate**: Live participation adhering to the structure and rules.

- **Post-Debate**: Individual rationale on why you did or did not change your opinion. You will log your opinion here.

CS435 - The Great Ethical AI Debate 2025 Vote Sheet

If a team member is not present for the debate, adjust by redistributing roles among present students. If fewer than 4 members remain, one student may deliver two rounds. Also a debater can also serve as timer and poll manager, tracking 2-minute limits.

I have provided some suggestions for roles corresponding to everyone's name but feel free to choose your own roles.

Trigger Warnings: When a topic necessitates a triggering statement in a class setting, deliver it succinctly and objectively, prefacing it with a brief warning to prepare students. For example: "This next point may be unsettling—evidence shows AI misidentification in military drones has caused civilian deaths." This approach minimizes emotional escalation, maintains focus on the topic, and respects diverse sensitivities while fulfilling academic rigor.

Resolution 1 - AI in Classrooms

Schools should openly permit unrestricted use of generative AI by students and refrain from penalizing its adoption, as it represents the inevitable future of education, enhancing learning without compromising or harming critical thinking skills.

Student Breakdown

- **Team For** (Supporting the Resolution):

  1. Burhanuddin - 07724 (Opening Argument)
  2. Ikhlas Ahmed - 08308 (Second Round)
  3. Mahwish Ahmed - 07174 (Third Round)
  4. Batool Ali Akbar - 07612 (Fourth Round)
  5. Syed Ahad Ali - 07753 (Timer/Poll)

- **Team Against** (Opposing the Resolution):

  1. Simal Anjum Arshad - 07716 (Opening Argument)
  2. Ali Muhammad Asad - 07190 (Second Round)
  3. Iqra Azfar - 07614 (Third Round)
  4. Kushal Chandani - 07535 (Fourth Round)
  5. Ayesha Eiman - 08013 (Timer/Poll)

Context

This resolution champions the unrestricted use of **generative AI** in education, arguing that tools like ChatGPT or Grok enhance learning without undermining **critical thinking** (e.g., by assisting with personalized problem-solving). **Team For** might highlight adaptability and future-readiness, while **Team Against** could argue over-reliance risks, ethical concerns like plagiarism, and **privacy** threats to student data under regulations like **COPPA**.

Resolution 2 - AI and Job Automation

AI copilots and autonomous AI agents will not take away software engineering jobs but will instead amplify the creativity, efficiency, and innovation of developers, ensuring that the indispensable human ingenuity of software engineers remains central to technological progress, rendering fears of job displacement by these tools laughably baseless.

Student Breakdown

- **Team For** (Supporting the Resolution):

  1. Hijab Fatima - 07068 (Opening Argument)
  2. Syeda Haya Fatima - 07503 (Second Round)
  3. Muhammad Tahir Ghazi - 07593 (Third Round)
  4. Zainab Haider - 07104 (Fourth Round)
  5. Muhammad Khubaib - 07218 (Timer/Poll)

- **Team Against** (Opposing the Resolution):

  1. Asad Muhammad - 07127 (Opening Argument)
  2. Muhammad Mustafa - 08323 (Second Round)
  3. Shayan Shoaib Patel - 07101 (Third Round)
  4. Muhammad Saad - 08063 (Fourth Round)
  5. Hammad Sajid - 07606 (Timer/Poll)

Context

This resolution escalates the stakes by demanding total AI control over jobs, framing human resistance as backward (e.g., Amazon's AI-driven warehouses as the future). **Team For** might champion innovation and economic evolution, while **Team Against** could highlight mass unemployment (e.g., truck drivers vs. Waymo), privacy violations in worker surveillance, and the absence of regulatory safeguards like **ILO standards**.

Resolution 3 - AI Military Applications

Nations must fully embrace autonomous military AI and deploy independent killer robots without restriction, as these systems will drastically reduce human casualties by eliminating the need for soldiers on the battlefield, ensuring safer, more humane wars where only machines bear the brunt of conflict.

Student Breakdown

- **Team For** (Supporting the Resolution):

  1. Dua-E-Sameen - 07138 (Opening Argument)
  2. Ahmed Shoaib - 07313 (Second Round)
  3. Rania Siddiqui - 07494 (Third Round)
  4. Hareem Siraj - 07488 (Fourth Round)
  5. Owais Waheed - 07611 (Timer/Poll)

- **Team Against** (Opposing the Resolution):

  1. Nabila Zahra - 07162 (Opening Argument)
  2. Ali Zain - 07565 (Second Round)
  3. Abeeha Zehra - 07728 (Third Round)
  4. Shayan Aamir - 09503 (Fourth Round)
  5. Burhanuddin - 07724 (Timer/Poll) Note: Burhanuddin reassigned due to student count.

Context

This resolution boldly advocates for unchecked AI weaponry (e.g., Russia's Lancet drones), arguing that military supremacy demands it. **Team For** might emphasize strategic necessity and security via AI precision, while **Team Against** could decry ethical horrors (e.g., AI misfires in Ukraine), escalation risks, and the need for treaties like the **UN's proposed lethal autonomous weapons ban**.