JC2066 Assignment 2: Philosophy Paper

In this assignment, you are asked to write one "Philosophy Paper" (part 1) and one reflection essay (part 2). The deadline to submit your answers to Canvas is **Dec. 22nd (Friday), 2023, 23:59**. Please note that this assignment accounts for 20% of your final course score. You need to finish both part 1 and part 2. Please include WORD COUNT (not including footnotes/bibliography) for all your writings.

Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism frequently happens unintentionally, so if you are in doubt about your use of external sources, ask the teaching team.

Special Requirements:
1. Before drafting your essay, we ask you to adopt at least one *prewriting strategy* that you would like to use to brainstorm and organize ideas, e.g., freewriting, clustering, looping, outlining, etc. You should **include your prewriting results** in your submission, along with your essays. (No need to make it beautiful. Photos of handwritten texts or even sketches are fine.)
2. Although we do not restrict you from using ChatGPT in your writing, if you choose to use it to assist you in writing, we do expect you to **fully document** how you used ChatGPT when writing (e.g., take screenshots of the full conversation flow, show clearly what content you used in your writing and what you do not, annotate the text that is not directly written by yourself, etc.) You should NOT use ChatGPT to generate more than 20% of your essays. If we find that you use ChatGPT but do not disclose or clearly document it, it will be counted as academic misconduct and subject to further investigation.

PART I: Philosophy Paper
Choose **ONE** of the following topics and write an essay of 1400-1600 words. Your essay should state and defend a thesis. You must use and cite specific examples from our readings to illustrate and support your argument. Although we encourage you to draw on lectures and seminars to elucidate your argument, you must foreground your own analysis of multiple readings, and demonstrate your use of them beyond merely revisiting quotes or arguments that were discussed in lectures and sections. The different questions also invite further research. You are encouraged to consult recommended readings listed on the syllabus or through your own research.

Topics (please choose **only 1 topic** to write your essay):

1.   AI and Art (this topic is adapted from a similar course taught at Stanford University)

> "*Art is what you can get away with.*" Andy Warhol

Of the potential uses of AI and autonomous systems, one of the most seemingly innocuous and even hopeful might be the use of AI by artists and technologists to create new kinds of art experiences and exhibitions. Some of these integrations of AI into Art have been focused on collaboration and participatory artwork. We have seen increases for instance in Immersive Art experiences, especially in the Bay Area. Companies like TeamLabs produce interactive art exhibits projected on museum walls where visitors can change the artwork with the movement of their bodies. Other art exhibits involving AI remove the human element all

together. In 2019, HG Contemporary Gallery in New York, had an exhibition of prints created entirely by AI which was the first solo gallery devoted to an AI artist.

Write an essay that explains how we ought to think about a future of AI artistic expression. Your essay can explore many different considerations, but it must address the following questions:

- What level of physical materiality is required for something to be art?
- What level of human contribution is required for something to be art?
- Is AI capable of artistic creativity?
- If an algorithm can generate a portrait in the style of some other artist, who is the rightful owner of that work?

2. **AI in Sci-Fi**.
Choose a science fiction film, book, or television episode that features AI or robots. Write an essay explaining the technology in question, the ethical dilemma(s) it poses, whether there are explicit laws/policies already in place to deal with the technology, and finally making an argument for how you think it should be treated from an ethics and policy standpoint. Should there be laws to govern it? Should norms form around the use of it? Are there ethical guidelines that people should follow? Should it not exist at all? Remember that you should be focusing on the technology, **not** on the plot.

Any of the below would work, though other things would work if it's robot/AI-centric.

> **Films**: 2001: A Space Odyssey; AI: Artificial Intelligence; Animatrix; Bicentennial Man; Bladerunner; Her; Ghost in the Shell; I, Robot; Ex Machina; Alita: Battle Angel; Chappy; Avengers: Age of Ultron; Robocop

> **Television Shows**: Battlestar Galactica; Humans; Star Trek: The Measure of a Man; Westworld; Person of Interest; Black Mirror (must be about AI; do NOT use "Be Right Back")

> **Books**: The Culture; I, Robot; Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?

3. **Platform Policy**.
Choose a subreddit, or a Discord server, or other online forums on a topic of your choice. You are part of a startup that is building a new online platform for the community of people represented by that online community (not just those who are on reddit or Discord server, but who might join a discussion on that topic elsewhere). Because you were smart enough to take a class that covers tech policy, you've been asked to consider what kinds of polices the platform should have (i.e., the provisions that will appear in the terms of service and privacy policy).

Write an essay that lays out policy suggestions for this platform. Your essay should briefly describe the community of people you are designing for, and then make suggestions for specific policies (e.g., "data scraping is not allowed" or "our platform will not sell data to third parties") along with reasoning behind these policies that is based on specifics of that community (e.g., "this is a vulnerable population so their privacy is critical," or "misinformation on this topic would be disastrous") and/or general best practices that

you have gathered from your readings and class discussion (e.g., "federal regulations in some countries require that users be told what data about them is being collected").

> You should pick at least three of the following five topics to cover in your essay:
> - Data collection/scraping / guidelines for researchers
> - Harassment and/or hate speech
> - Intellectual property
> - Misinformation
> - Privacy

Finally, address some suggestions for how policies should be presented in terms of format, and for how rules for the community should be enforced, in terms of content moderation (i.e., community moderators, commercial moderators, automated moderation, or a combination – and why).

PART II: Final Reflection Essays

Please write a reflection essay. The essay should be 500-800 words. You should choose one of the prompts (#1-3) below. For citations, use any style you'd like but remain consistent throughout. When citing lecture materials, cite the lecture date (Lecture, 2/28) in-line or as a footnote depending on your citation style.

1. Please review the **ACM Code of Conduct** that we discussed in the lecture. Review it considering our discussions over the course of the quarter.
   - What are three significant changes or additions you would make to the substance of the ACM code of ethics?
   - When and how should technologists first be introduced to and agree to the code? What consequences, if any, should there be for violating it?

2. **Diversity and Inclusiveness**. There is active concern that the "culture" of particular Silicon Valley companies and VC firms - like many other industries in the United States - privileges the perspectives of white men over people of other backgrounds. We've discussed the depth of these realities in the lectures. Imagine you are launching a new start-up and want to establish an inclusive culture. What concrete steps would you take in designing and launching the company to create a culture that recognizes the value of diverse perspectives and experiences?

3. **Equality and Inclusiveness**. In this class, we saw numerous examples of how the impacts of technologies are not distributed equitably across different populations, notably by race, gender, and socio-economic status, and in fact reflect or reproduce disparities in evidence in other contexts. Using examples from class (lectures, seminars, and the recommended readings) argue for two interventions that you think are among the most important in promoting more inclusive outcomes in the design and/or deployment of the technologies they develop.

Appendix: Some Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper

For any student who has never written a philosophy paper before, we strongly encourage you to read the paper writing guides shared on Canvas. Many students believe that writing a paper in philosophy is unlike any other kind of writing. This is an exaggeration. Writing a good philosophy paper is very much like writing a good paper in history, economics, literature, or biology. A good paper requires a particularly careful use of language and a particularly close examination of ideas and arguments. Because a good paper is a good paper, the guidelines sketched here apply with equal force in other courses as well. It is important, however, to stress just how central good writing is when doing philosophy. As a general matter, your writing is a good measure of your ability to communicate ideas. But in philosophy, the quality of your writing is not just a measure of your ability to communicate; it is also a measure of your ability to think. If you cannot express your thoughts in writing in a clear, concise, and cohesive manner, then your thoughts themselves are not clear, concise, or cohesive. Philosophical writing exercises your thinking; learning to write better is inseparable from learning to think better. In philosophy, becoming a good writer is the same thing as become a good thinker.

In addition, there are many excellent online resources for doing further research in philosophy. We especially recommend the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy ("the most interesting website on the internet").