PHIL/PSYCH 256 Online: Introduction to Cognitive Science—

Essay Assignment 1

General Instructions

Write a brief essay on the topic given below. The essay should be double-spaced and no more than 1000 words in length (not counting the Works Cited page) by computer word count. Part of the assignment involves explaining the relevant course concepts and advancing your argument *concisely*, so make sure you attend to the word limit. The assignment is **due on Wednesday, May 23, 11:55 pm.**

Submission:

You must submit your work online through the Assignment 1 folder in the LEARN Dropbox. Please note carefully that only ONE file will be accepted to the Dropbox. Therefore, you must not use the Dropbox to store drafts or otherwise incomplete versions of your work. Use only supported browsers to submit your work. See below for detailed instructions on preparing online submissions and submitting them to the LEARN Dropbox.

The following pieces of information MUST be on the front page of your assignment:
- Student ID Number
- Course Name and Number
- Assignment Number
- Date
- Word Count

DO NOT include your name anywhere on the assignment. Your student number is all that's needed.

Late policy:

Late essays will be penalized at the rate of 10% per day late. No exceptions will be made without a documented excuse of sufficient weight (e.g., a medical emergency).

Note on plagiarism:

Passing off the work of others as your own constitutes plagiarism and is a serious offence. All suspected cases of plagiarism are referred to the Associate Dean's office. See the Faculty of Arts webpage on Ethical Behaviour for important information on plagiarism and other academic offences. **See below for instructions on appropriate methods of citation for your essay.**

Topic

In his article "Computing Machinery and Intelligence", A.M. Turing considers several objections to his thesis that a particular kind of machine may be able to "think". One of these objections, a variant of Lady Lovelace's Objection (#6), involves the premise that "a machine can 'never do anything really new'" (p. 450). So stated, the objection appeals to the powerful intuition that human beings have capacities for creativity that machines could never match. Does this objection succeed as a response to Turing's claim that machines may be able to think? Does Turing adequately rebut the objection, or does he overlook significant aspects of it in his reply? Argue for your position, **using references to Turing and chapters 1-3 of Paul Thagard's *Mind*** as needed to support your argument.

The aim of the assignment is to devise a compact but well informed, critical discussion of the issue described in the above topic. Though the choice of how to frame the discussion is ultimately yours, here are a few suggestions about elements it would be reasonable to include:

- A brief description of the imitation game as Turing sees it (no more than a half-page), and how this supports Turing's claim that machines can think;
- A summary of Turing's response to the objection, and your own assessment of whether he succeeds in overcoming it;
- A possible objection to your own perspective, and your response to it, much as Turing does.

In the interest of brevity, your paper's introduction should be kept to a minimum—two sentences succinctly describing the aim of the paper would be entirely sufficient, but be sure to explicitly indicate what you will be arguing for (i.e. have a thesis statement). Your essay should also include a concluding paragraph, but this too should be very brief—i.e., no more than three sentences.

Further Guidelines

Some useful advice on essay writing for a philosophy class can found at the following website, which you may wish to consult before writing your essay: Writing A Philosophy Paper.

In addition, here are some basic points to remember when writing your essay:

- Be aware that a proper engagement with this topic should NOT be conducted solely on the basis of the online *lecture materials* occurring in the LEARN modules. You *must* engage the relevant course readings, especially the Turing article, which should be your central focus.

- State your aim clearly in your introduction.

- Include only material that is relevant to your aim.

- Avoid unnecessary padding and/or digression.

Sources and References

Providing appropriate references is an important part of the task of this essay assignment. Follow the instructions given below carefully. ***Failure to provide adequate references will result in a penalty of up to 10% of your grade on the assignment***. Be aware that references are needed not only for direct quotations, but for any representation of ideas drawn from other authors (e.g. paraphrases, summaries, etc.).

- Use only the relevant course readings as sources for this essay. ***Do not consult outside sources***.

- Direct quotations should be kept brief (one or two sentences) and used only for the purpose of illustrating points you have already encapsulated in your own words.

- Proper citation is required for all academic writing in this course. In-text citations and a Works Cited page are required for all prose **and ideas** that are not your own.

- Use either APA or MLA formatting for in-text references and for entries in your Works Cited page. Refer to library resources for more information on proper citation styles.

- **Your Works Cited is not calculated into the word count of your essay**, so make sure you assess your essay's word count independently of the Works Cited page.

Guidelines for Submitting Papers Online

- Only the following file types will be accepted: **Rich Text Format (.rtf)**; **Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx).**

- Be sure to save your assignment in an appropriate folder or on your desktop for easy retrieval.
- Be sure to save backups of your assignment. Late assignments due to technical difficulties (e.g., laptop crashes) will not be accepted with the exception of the 15 minute grace period explained below.
- Ensure that the name of your file does not include special characters such as symbols or punctuation (e.g., \ / : * ', ? " < > |). Such characters may cause problems with the upload.
- You will only be able to upload **one file per assignment**. Please combine all documents into one file. Check to make sure that you are submitting the correct file.
- Do not zip your files.

How to Submit Assignments Online Using a LEARN Dropbox

- Click on the **Add a File** button within the Dropbox and select **My Computer**.
- Click on the **Upload** button to look for your assignment file on your computer. You can also drag and drop the file from your computer to the upload area.
- Find and select your assignment file and click **Open**.
- Upload your assignment by clicking the **Add** button. When the file has finished uploading, the name of your file will appear under the **Files to submit** area.
- Click the **Submit** button. If you do not click the Submit button, the file will not be uploaded.
- After submitting your file, a confirmation message will appear. This message will include a link to your submitted file. **Please ensure that your submission is visible on this page.**
- If your submission is successful, you will receive an **Email Confirmation Receipt** sent to your @uwaterloo.ca email address. If you do not receive an Email Confirmation Receipt, please double-check your submission and re-submit if necessary.

If you are having difficulties uploading your files, please try the following:

- Check the computer requirements.
- Ensure that your file name does not contain any special characters (e.g., \ / : * ', ? " < > |) and delete any spaces in the file name.
- Ensure that there is an extension at the end of your file name (e.g., Assignment1.**doc**).
- If you are still experiencing difficulties after checking the above items, please contact Technical Support.

In case you are having technical difficulties submitting your assignment at the deadline.

- E-mail **both** instructors at bfreier@uwaterloo.ca and vanessa.lam@uwaterloo.ca explaining your difficulties no later than 15 minutes after the deadline.
- Attach your completed assignment to that e-mail.
- When the technical difficulty with the Dropbox is resolved submit your assignment to the Dropbox as per instructions above.
- NOTE: If an e-mail with your completed assignment is not sent to the instructor within 15 minutes of the deadline your assignment will be regarded as late and you will be subject to a late penalty.

Assignment Return: Your graded assignment will be returned to you through the Dropbox approximately two weeks after the submission deadline. Review the graded file for feedback on your work.