Study Groups – Natural Language Processing

We would like you to form study groups this term that meet regularly to discuss the topics that have come up in recent lectures. The goals of this study group are to i) help you digest and work through the course content, and ii) building a community of learners on the same topic.

Starting September 16, we will release a discussion guide each week for the lectures from that week, which will have a list of suggested activities and discussion questions to go through. Your job is to meet up with your study group to work through these activities, then to write a short summary about the meeting for submission (see format on next page).

You must submit **five** such summaries throughout the term for full marks. The summaries will be skimmed to ensure that you made an effort to work through the activities in the guide and to ensure that the meeting meets the criteria below, but will not otherwise be marked for quality. You are encouraged to meet weekly in your group, or as often as you like, but you only need to submit five reports for the marks.

Criteria

- Each session should be *synchronous* (i.e., you must all be online at the same time).
- Each session should last at least 30 minutes.
- Each session should have between **3 – 6** students.
- Each session should be on a different week from another session; you shouldn't do all the summaries on the same week!
- It is recommended to hold a video chat. However, in case that this is not possible, you can agree as a group to hold a voice chat only for some or all participants. In case that this is also not possible, you can agree to instead have a synchronous written discussion.

How to Form Groups?

You can certainly form groups with people you already know, but this is also a good opportunity to meet new people. We will organize meet ups where you can find group members. Or, post and introduce yourself on the course forum! Maybe include some relevant information, such as:

- What makes you interested in NLP?
- What relevant past experiences do you have, if any? This could be directly relevant (e.g., a past internship or project in NLP), or indirect (e.g., languages you speak).
- What future goals do you have related to NLP?
- What time zone are you in, and when in the day would you like to meet?
- How often and what technological platform would you like to use to conduct these study group sessions on?
- Do you want to watch lectures together?
- I suggest that you form initial groups of 4 – 5 people, in case people need to drop out or join some particular meeting, to keep within the 3 – 6 student requirement.

- You can switch groups if you'd like, but please give your current group a try for a few sessions before doing so. Please contact the teaching team in case of any issues in collaboration, or if you need help to form a group.

How to Organize Meetings?

- One person should take charge to create a schedule
- For example, send a Doodle poll with a firm deadline to reply by
- Be mindful of time zone differences! Send a calendar invitation so that people don't forget and don't mix up the times.
- Decide and agree on whether you will meet regularly, and at what frequency. I suggest that you aim to meet weekly by default, and continue the meetings even after you have submitted all five reports.

Timeline

Now   Start forming groups; get organized for when you will meet

Sep 16 First study group guide will be released

Dec 3   Submit your five summaries by the end of term to receive full marks

Format of a Summary

Use the following format for each summary:

Name:
Student number:
Time and date of meeting (include start and end times):
Week #:
Other students at the meeting:

Brief one- to two-paragraph summary of your activities and discussions.

The entire summary is expected to be between half a page to one page.

- These summaries should be handed in **individually**.