

Assignment Overview:

In this extra credit assignment, students will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with staff members from various departments across the school. Through structured interviews, students will explore their interviewees' perspectives on life's purpose and meaning, using a series of questions provided by the instructor. This assignment must be uploaded to Canvas by **11:59PM on March 31 2024**.

Assignment Steps:

1. Selecting an Interviewee: For this assignment you will "interview" one of the free-to-use generative AI systems (e.g. ChatGPT, Gemini).
2. Interview Questions (listed on next page): The questions on the next page are meant to be a starting point. Follow-up questions, questions of your own, etc. are encouraged. These AI's are quite interesting to discuss topics with.
3. Summarizing the Interview: Once you have all of the answers to the questions, students must summarize the key points, insights, and perspective of the AI. Quotes are allowable but should be short and not used often.
4. Personal Reflection: After summarizing the interview, students should reflect on their own thoughts and reactions to the AI's answers. Do you agree or disagree with certain points? Did the interview impact your own thinking about the meaning of life? What surprised you about the interview?
5. Canvas Submission: Students must submit their typed summaries and reflections on Canvas.

Grading Criteria:

Grading for this assignment can be based on the quality of the summary, the depth of reflection, and the extent to which students engage with the AI's perspective. Additionally, you can assess the level of insight demonstrated in their personal reflections.

Interview questions:**Objective Meaning:**

1. Universal Principles: If the meaning of life is objective, could there be universal principles or truths that govern it? What might these principles be?
2. External Sources: Does objective meaning necessitate a source beyond the individual, such as a higher power, natural law, or a predetermined cosmic design?
3. The Role of Discovery: If the meaning of life is objective, is it our role to discover this pre-existing meaning, or could we play a part in shaping it?
4. Moral Implications: Does an objective meaning of life inherently imply a set of moral or ethical guidelines that should be followed?

Subjective Meaning:

5. Individual Creation: If the meaning of life is subjective, how does each person actively construct meaning within their own life?
6. The Power of Choice: Does our capacity for choice and self-determination become central to the creation of a meaningful life in a subjective framework?
7. Shifting Meanings: Can the meaning of life change over time for an individual? What factors might contribute to these shifts in perception?
8. The Influence of Experience: How do our personal experiences, relationships, and cultural context shape our subjective understanding of life's meaning?

No Meaning:

9. The Pursuit of the Absurd: If life has no inherent meaning, does that create freedom to define our actions and values on our own terms?
10. Finding Meaning Within Meaninglessness: Can meaning be found in embracing the potential meaninglessness of existence, perhaps through acts of creativity, defiance, or the simple appreciation of the present?

Let me know if you'd like to focus on one aspect (objective, subjective, non-existent) more deeply or want a new set of questions!