



CRISIS STUDY GUIDE

*LEEDS MODEL UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE 2016*

CONTENTS

OF MACHINES AND MEN

3	INTRODUCTION
4	HISTORICAL INFORMATION
6	RECENT HISTORY
12	EXPERT REPORT
14	CRISIS GUIDELINES

OF MACHINES AND MEN

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the LeedsMUN 2016 Crisis. The crisis is set in early 2020 and is based around the loss of control of an Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), along with the social crisis caused by more limited Artificial Intelligences taking the traditional roles of humans in the workforce.

The two cabinets in the crisis will be the United States cabinet, and the European Union. Both cabinets will be facing internal and external problems during the crisis. This will create a situation where there will be competing views and intentions, as well as the US and EU cabinets attempting to place themselves in the best possible position at the end of the crisis.

The following study guide will give you some background information on AI, a brief summary of 'historical' events between the present day and the point where the crisis is staged, an academic assessment of the theoretical limits of an AGI and a brief guide to crisis simulations.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

“My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.”

– Psalm 139:15

The concept of artificial intelligence, and more broadly intelligent design, has existed in human thought since the first civilisations developed. Cultic images of humanoid automatons can be found in the remains of the ancient Egyptian and Greek civilisations, and there is a clear fascination with the idea of creating artificial lifeforms. The rise of Christianity saw this concept condemned to blasphemy, as only God was capable of intelligent design, but that did nothing to quell humanity’s fascination with creation.

Artificial intelligence as a field of research and development established itself in the late 1950s, hatched from the minds of the leading computer scientists John McCarthy, Marvin Minsky, Allen Newell, Arthur Samuel and Herbert Simon. They envisioned a world where computers would be able to carry out and complete any task that a man could also do. They started with – for all intents and purposes - basic programmes, but even those demonstrated the then previously untold potential of intelligent machines: they were beating humans at checkers, solving advanced algebra problems, providing logical theorems and even speaking in English.

This small-scale demonstration caused the newly established field to captivate and reignite the common everyday man’s fascination with intelligent design, and as it caught the interests of the people, it also caught the interest of their leaders. At the height of the Cold War, the biggest contributors to the funding of AI research were the US Department of Defense and British Ministry of Defence; however this came to an abrupt end in the late 1980s and led to a brief period known as the “AI winter”.

Investment in AI technology sprang back to life as private corporations began to take more of a lead in the advancement of technology. Companies such as Microsoft, Apple, Sony, IBM and more began to heavily invest in the development and distribution of advanced computer technology not just in areas of science and defence, but also personal individual use. Continued investment and development has led to many innovations in the field of artificial intelligence, namely the question answering system Watson and the personal assistants Cortana and Siri. A further development of this investment in the AI is the growth

in AI led infrastructure in many areas in economically developed countries. One the areas that have seen major development is that of agriculture in which AI systems monitor and control all aspects of the growing environment for the crop in order to maximise yield. These are programmed in such a way that they resist any attempt by the operators to diverge from these conditions and to operate independently of input for long periods.



A Greek depiction of an automaton

RECENT HISTORY

The crisis is set in 2020, and delegates should be aware of the history from February 2016-February 2020.

Late 2015 – US

The ongoing US election campaign results in the Republican nominees sliding to more reactionary and isolationist positions.

Late 2015 – EU

Ongoing debates about the status of the UK within the EU and various proposals to discourage immigration to the more economically developed countries of the block.

January 2016 – US

A speech by Donald Trump in which he calls for mass deportations of 'undesirables' within the US drives the Republican Party to remove him from their ballot. In response, Trump sets up his own party, the Trump Party in order to contest the US presidential election.

Early 2016 – EU

Discussions continue regarding economic migration from poorer to richer countries within the EU. Discussions often become heated as the delegates from the poorer countries accuse the richer ones of using the EU to benefit themselves whilst undermining the fundamental principles of the union.

Feb 2016 – US

The Trump Party gains support amongst the Tea Party wing of the Republican Party and gains a large following on social media. The split from the GOP leads to the policy ideas being put forward becoming even more economically and politically radical.

March 2016 – EU

The discussions within the EU come to an end. The proposal includes greater restrictions on migration from EU countries to the UK. This causes some consternation with the countries of Eastern Europe. The major aspect of these restrictions cover new migrants to Western Europe from Eastern Europe needing to have a job pre-arranged and not being eligible for in work benefits for the first 6 months of their stay and out of work benefits for the first year of their stay.

April 2016 – US

The electoral competition has become intense with the introduction of a third party. The Democrats and Republicans focus a great deal of attention on the Trump Party. The split of votes looks to be close between the Democrats and Republicans with the Trump Party coming a moderately distant third.

Mid 2016 – EU

After the proposals are finalised, the campaigns in the UK for the yes and no camps of the EU referendum pick up pace and still focuses mainly on the issue of immigration.

June 2016 – US

The end of the primary campaigns results in the Democrats unsurprisingly choosing Hillary Clinton as their presidential candidate, and the Republicans choosing Jeb Bush. The Trump Party of course had Donald Trump as their candidate.

Mid to late 2016 – US

As the presidential campaign starts in earnest, now the candidates have been finalised, it becomes known as the ‘Campaign of the Dynasties’ given the presidential history of the families of the two main candidates.

October 2016 – EU

The UK’s referendum on the EU question takes place, and the result is overwhelmingly to stay in the EU given the new limits on immigration from the EU. The final percentages are 87% to stay in the EU, 13% to leave

Late 2016 – Syria

After a number of stinging defeats to the Kurdish forces and the defection or targeted killing of a number of high profile commanders, ISIS falls into factional infighting and begins to quickly lose territory in Syria and Iraq.

November 2016 – US

The US presidential election is held with Hillary Clinton winning with 42% of the popular vote. Jeb Bush gained 37% of the popular vote, and Donald Trump won 18% of the vote, which surprised many pundits. Other independent candidates won the remaining 3%. In terms of the Electoral College, Clinton won 278 to 260 for Bush. Trump does not win any Electoral College votes.

January 2017 – US

Hillary Clinton is inaugurated as the 45th president of the United States. Whilst Jeb Bush accepts this result and congratulates Clinton on her victory, Donald Trump spends some time and money contesting this victory through the court system.

February 2017

A conference is held between the P5 nations in which the Syrian situation is discussed. A deal is agreed where Assad is able to stay as president whilst a transitional government is formed. When that government is able to take over, Assad will be expected to retire to Russia.

Early 2017

The representative and senate elections of the US are finalised and result in no one party fully controlling either house. This makes Hillary Clinton's ability to pass legislation extremely limited. It also becomes apparent that the Republican and Trump Party legislators are becoming more isolationist.

April 2017 – China

A series of losses on the Chinese stock market causes a series of losses around the world. Though these are quickly recovered, it causes tension in the world's financial markets and further entrenches the growing isolationist tendencies around the world.

April 2017 – France

Republican, Nicolas Sarkozy gains 42% of the first round vote. The National Front got 32% of the vote, with the socialists being knocked out of the first elimination round only getting 23% of the vote. Other parties gained 3%.

Mid 2017 – EU

With increased military action in Syria due to ISIS's weakness and fragmentation, the number of refugees attempting to get to Europe increases drastically. The EU responds to this by increasing border patrols and attempting to restrict the ability of refugees and migrants to get to Europe. Limited financial aid is given to Turkey to try to stem this flow.

May 2017 – EU

The Republican Party are elected with Nicolas Sarkozy president with 68% of the vote. Marie Le Pen gained only 32% of the vote, but getting to the second stage of the presidential election and gaining a reasonable amount of the vote is seen as a victory in itself for the National Front.

June 2017 – US

Hilary Clinton's government has been unable to pass any of their flagship policies and begin discussions with the moderate Republican factions to consider a bipartisan government.

July 2017 – US

The previously unremarkable IT start-up, Vulcan Consortium, holds a press conference to release their latest product, Athena. Having worked with Stanford and MIT research groups, they release an easily modifiable AI program to control systems and quickly process data.

September 2017 – US

The share price of Vulcan Consortium goes from \$8 per share to \$670 per share in the two months since the release of the Athena program.

October 2017 – Turkey

A major riot of asylum seekers and migrants attempting to get to Europe occurs in Izmar, Turkey. The Turkish authorities respond with force, including the use of firearms, resulting in wide spread injuries and 106 people dead. There is widespread condemnation of the Turkish response to the riot, but the Turkish authorities point to the refusal of the world's richest countries to take more migrants and point to this as the cause of the unrest.

Late 2017 – EU

Given the release of the Athena program, debates are held in all EU parliaments on whether governments should legislate on the usage of AI. The general outcome is to see what the impact of the AI is and to legislate as needed.

Early 2018 – US

Early adopters of the Athena program show increased profits and efficiency which they put down to using the AI to cover the data processing and other administrative tasks of their companies.

April 2018 – US

Unemployment figures released by the US government show a dramatic rise in unemployment since the release of Athena. This reflects a common complaint in the US since its release that low skilled office jobs are being replaced by the Athena system.

April 2018 – EU

Many Western European companies begin using the Athena system to replace low skilled office jobs. However, the impact is less severe than in the US due to more stringent labour laws. Redundancy packages make the process of incorporating Athena more expensive.

Mid 2018 – US

A disparate collection of protest groups begin to gather around a charismatic individual, a radical populist, António Duarte. The newly formed global protest group is named ‘Humanity First,’ campaigning for an end to AI systems replacing human workers.

Late 2018 – EU

Despite the reduced effect of the Athena system on the EU countries, the Humanity First movement captures the imaginations and fears of the working and lower middle class.

Early 2019 – EU

With more unskilled workers in Western Europe not being able to find jobs due to the Athena program, some start to move to Eastern European countries, which have not been able to afford the costs of instigating an AI program as quickly as Western European countries. Along with economic migrants returning home, this causes a surplus of labour in Eastern Europe with correspondingly suppressed wages for unskilled labour.

April 2019 – EU

During a European Parliament meeting, there are heated discussions regarding the new migration from West to East in Europe, with the Eastern European nations now asking for similar protections for their labour markets as Western European countries were asking for just a few years before.

May 2019 – US

An electronic message, claiming to be from Humanity First, makes a series of demands, mainly regarding the elimination of AI from the labour market place. They state that if their demands are not met that they will “take further actions to defend humanity from the blind technocrats playing god with AI.”

July 2019 – US

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Artificial Intelligence Laboratory announce that their work on a learning AI, or Artificial General Intelligence has taken several leaps forward and that they are now beginning the final stages of bringing the AGI online. They refer to this as 'Project Lovelace' after Ada Lovelace.

August 2019 – EU & US

Unemployment protests are becoming common occurrences, with a number on both sides of the Atlantic deteriorating into riots. In some situations, these riots have targeted companies using the Athena platform.

October 2019 – US

Concerns are raised regarding Project Lovelace and what might happen when it 'awakens'. The US Department for Defense demands that a 'kill switch' be programmed into the program.

November 2019 – EU

The question of Ukraine's entry into the EU is deferred for a year due to the ongoing debates regarding migration of workers and freedom of movement within the EU. This deferral was initiated at the request of Ukraine.

January 2020 – US

The AI Lab at MIT attempt to program a 'kill switch' into Project Lovelace. During this procedure, the Lab suffers a power cut and the process is unable to be completed. On recovery of power, Project Lovelace is no longer present in the memory of the AI Lab computers.

February 2020 – Present Day

The researchers at the MIT AI Lab privately inform the governments of the world of the loss of control of Project Lovelace.

EXPERT REPORT

The following is a report on the theoretical limits of the newly discovered rouge AI by Professor David R. Mathis of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Artificial Intelligence Laboratory.

It appears that we are faced, for the first time in history, with a truly strong Artificial General Intelligence (henceforth abbreviated as AGI) thus, a program with the ability to perform general and independent intelligent action, of yet unknown origins.

Despite the very limited information available on this AGI, there is strong evidence that it is able to think and reason by itself. It seems to be able to alter its behaviour significantly if it does not obtain the desired results.

There is evidence that it has achieved sentience and self-awareness and some experts have suggested that some of its behaviours point towards emotional capabilities.

Given the limited information available, it cannot be said with certainty what this AGI is capable of. The following tries to quantify confidence intervals, however, until more is known, all of these must at least be considered a possibility and taken into account during the decision-making process.

There is *very high confidence* that the AGI is capable of “hacking” into computer systems and networks. It does this by finding and exploiting weaknesses in the system, similar to how humans approach this task (though significantly faster) .

There is *high confidence* that the AGI is currently using the internet to connect with the outer world.

There is *medium confidence* that the AGI is able to acquire the skills and hardware necessary for radio communications, which are, for example, used for satellites, air-defence system, missile-defence systems, flight-control systems, etc.

There is *virtual certainty* that the AGI is able to learn and adapt its behaviour accordingly based on trial and error.

There is *medium to high confidence* that this ability extends beyond what its original program intends.

There is *medium to high confidence* that the AGI is able to access and modify at least part of its programming.

There is *medium confidence* that the AGI is capable of synthesizing information from written, oral and visual sources and use this to adapt its behaviour.

There is *medium confidence* that the AGI is able to alter the programming of other, less developed AIs.

There is very *high confidence* that the AGI is, at the moment, not able to replicate itself.

There is *low to medium confidence* that the AGI will be incapable of replicating itself given time.

There is *high confidence* that the AGI is be able to pass a Turing Test, therefore we will not be able to identify it purely through interaction as an AGI, as it will be able to pass as human in interactions.

There is no doubt that this is one of the largest challenges and threats humanity has ever faced. However, since very little is known about this AGI's programming, its decision-making process and capabilities, great care should be taken when interacting with it. It should especially be considered that it may copy and learn from hostile behaviour towards it.

CRISIS GUIDELINES

A crisis committee, be it Joint Cabinet Crisis or a single cabinet can be one of the most challenging, but also most enjoyable of Model UN committees. The difficulty in Crisis arises from its research-based setting and the fast paced developments. In order to cope with the ever-changing scenarios, the delegates are advised to thoroughly research the topic and have in mind possible developments from the start. Another difference between a GA and a Crisis is that you will be able to speak more frequently during sessions. Most of all, Crisis requires quick thinking from delegates to cope with the ever-changing situation.

GENERAL PROCEDURE

Unlike in a General Assembly (e.g. DISEC), you will not be working with position papers and draft resolutions. Nor do you require a prepared speech or Moderated Caucus topics. In Crisis, you are required to impersonate an official or government leader. For the sake of explanation, let us assume that you are assigned the role of Secretary of Defence in the US cabinet. A typical crisis simulation is run like an “Unmoderated Caucus” in GA, without set procedures to follow. You are required to make decisions pertaining to your post and your standing on the agenda at hand.

DIRECTIVES

They may also be referred to as action plans or formal orders and are the most common form of communication during sessions. They consist of specific orders or military actions that the committee as a whole wants to take. A directive can be written by any member of the committee. A directive should be in bullet points and be very specific. Be very careful, a vague or broadly termed directives may backfire on your portfolio or even your committee! You need to dig deep into your knowledge to write directives that may be approved by the committee and more importantly, the crisis directors.

An example of a good directive in a recommended format is:

- *Updated orders for the Minuteman III ICBM silo operators:*
- *Arm 50% of missiles in silos within 100 miles of the United States Eastern Seaboard.*
- *Do not fire unless fired upon.*
- *Scramble 35 B-2 Spirit stealth bombers for additional stealth reconnaissance missions over Russian airspace.*

Directives are also used to organise things for your personal character, such as creating personal protection for your character, or secretly investigating another member of your cabinet.

COMMUNIQUÉS

These are messages from the entire committee to another country, organization, person or group of people. These facilitate dialogue with relevant actors in a crisis. Communiqués often include negotiations, threats, and requests for aid or support but are not limited to those topics. Keep in mind that a communiqué needs to be just as well worded as a directive; furthermore, this is the place for your inner linguist to shine. An example of a communiqué is:

Dear Mr. Phillip Hammond,

It has come to our attention that British naval forces are currently forming a blockade across the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea, and blocking United States naval vessels. This is a threat to both our national security as well as economic security and we will not take it lightly. We expect full compensation for damages to trade, as well as full reversal of the blockade. In your capacity as the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for Defence, stop this nonsense or face consequences.

Sincerely,

The United States Cabinet

PRESS RELEASES

These are similar to communiqués in the fact that they are sent from the committee as a whole; the difference lies in the fact that a press release is addressed to the public. Press releases can help sway the opinions of the public or provoke public reactions to crises at hand. They are a great propaganda tool and should be used wisely.

An example of a press release is:

Recent reports from news sources indicate that an alien spacecraft crashed through our atmosphere and landed in the desert near Las Vegas, Nevada. After investigation, the Department of Defence has issued a statement that the downed craft was a prototype Air Force research project. The Cabinet would like to extend regrets over the lives lost in the crash and dispel rumours of alien landings.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN CRISIS

- Make use of the skill set of your character to manoeuvre them into a strong position in the crisis
- Complete any goals of your character profile, and represent your character faithfully
- Work to manoeuvre your cabinet into a position of strength
- Be creative in your approach to problem solving (e.g. in your directives, request: poison the food of your enemy, hire a food taste tester to check all food before you eat it, install recording equipment in the other cabinet, hire a stripper to acquire incriminating photos of the enemy for blackmail) (NB: none of these are detailed enough to be a good directive!)
- Have fun!