

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
Undergraduate Course Outline  
Philosophy 2037G: Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence

DESCRIPTION

Will robots take all our jobs? Will humans become cyborgs? As we rely more and more on machines and other new technologies, they are changing how we interact with the world and one another. In this course we will consider the impact of artificial intelligence on our current lives, and on our future. It has been said that “Philosophy will be the key that unlocks artificial intelligence”—presumably for the better. On the other hand, the Oxford philosopher Nick Bostrom has warned that advances in superintelligence may soon make humans obsolete. Who should we believe? This course will address these and other issues by first considering some traditional questions in philosophy of mind—e.g., Can a robot think? What is the Turing Test? Can machines ever be conscious—before turning to a consideration of some of the ethical and social implications of this new technology.

TEXTS

Cunningham, J., Hillier, S. & O-2 ( 1 Tc -0.d8 (unnbr ( c)4 (o O-2 ( 1 Tc --2 dj 0 Tc 0 Tw 0.8/5.)4 (l)4

- Midterm exam(15%);Final exam(25%)

#### DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The Department of Philosophy Policies which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at

<http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/proceduresappeals.htm>It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

#### ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

## ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Jan 29: Theory of Computation

Readings: Boden Ch 4; Hillis

Before Class: Take online quiz 2

pp. vii-38.

Mar 11: AI and the Law

Readings: BodenCh6; Schwitzgebel & Garza "Designing AI with rights, consciousness, self-respect and freedom" <http://www.faculty.ucr.edu/~eschwitz/SchwitzPapers/AIRights04.pdf>

Eighth Tutorial

Readings: Rini "Raising good robots" <https://aeon.co/essays/creating-robots-capable-of-moral-reasoning-is-like-parenting>

Mar 18: AI and Labour

Readings: BodenCh7; Danaher "Will life be worth living in a world without work? Technological unemployment and the meaning of life"

Mar 21: Ninth Tutorial

Readings: Walsh, "Will robots bring about the end of work?"  
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2017/oct/01/will-robots-bring-about-the-end-of-work>

Mar 25: