

ETHICS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Syllabus | PHL 213 | Spring 2025

AI is an “alien intelligence” that could spell “the end of human history.”
“Instead of coming from outer space, it’s coming from California.”

– Yuval Noah Harari, author of *Sapiens*

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OVERVIEW

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Office: University Hall, Room 5010

Office hours: Tues. 12:30-1:30pm + by appointment

Course: PHL 213-2C | TR 11:00am – 12:15pm | in UH 3002

uab.instructure.com



As artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly enters every aspect of society—from transportation and medicine to politics and law enforcement—it's important to think critically about both its benefits and dangers for humans and their societies. In this course, students learn how to apply principles like justice, autonomy, and beneficence to debates about ethical uses of AI in society. Students consider arguments on the following topics (each paired with a real case from the news):

1. **Moral Reasoning:** arguments & values (case: facial recognition at airports)
2. **Understanding AI:** potentials & pitfalls (Lemoine says Google AI is sentient)
3. **Safety:** deadly errors, deepfakes, misinformation (Jodie deepfaked by close friend)
4. **Privacy:** surveillance & hacks (Roya Heshmati lashed for not wearing hijab)
5. **Fairness:** bias & individualized evidence (Eric Loomis sentenced by algorithm)
6. **Responsibility:** developers, users, or gov't? (Elaine Herzberg killed by self-driving car)
7. **Moral Machines:** healthcare decisions & AI rights (AI catches Sheila Tooth's cancer)
8. **Relationships:** love and creativity (Alex Stokes loves his AI companion, Mimi)
9. **Future:** existential risks & effective altruism (SBF defrauds crypto investors of billions)

⚠ Some of these topics are sensitive and sacred to some students. I won't try to get you to accept any particular answer to the questions we'll investigate. But consider how comfortable you are evaluating reasons for and against the beliefs you have on these topics.

NOTABLE FEATURES OF THIS COURSE

- Each module kicks off with a **real case**, explained through a **video or podcast**.
- Students engage in an **experiential learning assignment** that applies ethics to your lives.
- **No prerequisites** (no prior courses required to take this one).
- **Counts toward:** *Humans & Their Societies* in the Blazer Core (w/*Justice & Post-Freshman Writing* flags); the *Philosophy major* (including the Ethics & Value requirement for the Honors track); and the *Ethics Track* of the Philosophy major.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- I. **Identify** ethical issues that arise from the development of AI technologies.
- II. **Analyze** possible solutions to ethical problems, making use of moral theories and other frameworks for moral reasoning.
- III. **Connect** moral issues and philosophical concepts to everyday life.
- IV. **Explain** in writing philosophical arguments for or against AI uses in society.



ASSIGNMENTS

(For due dates, see the Canvas site or the Schedule at the end of this syllabus.)

	Weight	Details	Learning Objective
Engagement	15%	profile pic, attendance, survey	Identify, Connect
Experiential Learning	10%	change your relationship to AI (400 words)	Connect, Explain
Quizzes (x9)	20%	at the end of each module	Identify, Analyze
Midterm Exam	25%	25 multiple choice, 1 short essay	Identify, Analyze, Explain
Final Exam	30%	same as midterm, <i>not</i> cumulative	Identify, Analyze, Explain

REQUIRED TEXTS

Our primary text will be [Moral AI and How We Get There](#), written by a neuroscientist (Jana Schaich Borg), ethicist (Walter Sinnott-Armstrong), and computer scientist (Vincent Conitzer). Additional readings will be free articles as PDFs and other media, provided on Canvas.

TIME COMMITMENT

This course is worth 3 credit hours. During a normal 14-week semester, you should prepare to spend about **9 hours per week** on course activities (e.g. doing assigned reading or other media, attending class, and completing the assignments).

CLASS UPDATES & WEBSITE

Important announcements and updates will be made occasionally on the course website in Canvas (<http://uab.instructure.com/>). Check it frequently or have it set up to email you each announcement—or set it up to *ping* the announcements to you, if you can make that work.

CONTENT COVERED

We will be discussing content from both primary and secondary source readings. Also, given that this course covers important specific *cases in medicine and the law*, students will be tested on basic details of such cases. But, as is typical of courses taught in a Philosophy Department, we will focus heavily on understanding and analyzing *arguments*.

Pro tip: To help you retain what's covered in lectures and readings, answer this question after completing them: *What's something interesting you just learned that you could share with a friend or family member?* Imagine saying "Oh in my philosophy class, we learned...."

COURSE MATERIALS

Lecture Slides: The PowerPoint slides will be posted on the course website, but they will be rather *barebones*. You will likely want to supplement them with your own notes on the lectures (and perhaps a multivitamin?).

Copyright Notice: The course materials that I create (e.g., handouts, recordings, exams) are intellectual property. They are for you to use in this class only, during this semester. Course materials are not for others to use. Please do not post them on other websites, or otherwise share them with other people, without my permission. The multibillion dollar profits I aim to acquire with this grade-A content are only for me and my friends in the illuminati.

ETIQUETTE & CIVILITY

We should, of course, behave in a civil manner toward each other, even when interacting online (e.g., during online discussions and over email).

- **Respect:** Each student's opinion is valued as an opinion. When responding to a person during discussions, be sure to state their opposing opinion in a diplomatic way. Don't insult the person or their idea.
- **Avoid combat:** Support your views with reasons/arguments, but avoid being defensive. Run from the temptation of tribalism or "othering" others. Acknowledge good points another has made. Think of discussions as collaborative, not combative.
- **Humility:** Be humble. Ask questions. Try to learn from others (especially when that seems impossible because you disagree).
- **Confidentiality:** When discussing topics be sure to be discreet on how you discuss children, teachers, and colleagues. E.g., avoiding using names of people whose privacy deserves protection.

DEVICES IN CLASS (ON-CAMPUS SECTION ONLY)

During class, please mute and put away all laptop computers and phones. (Of course, if you have a special need for some such device, do talk with me and we can make exceptions as warranted.) Texting, web surfing, and the like are just too distracting to me and your fellow classmates. It's also liable to be a distraction to you (but hey that is your choice). My concern is creating an environment that isn't detrimental to the class. Thus, there is one device exception: *tablets*, such as an iPad, or other similar devices that can *lie flat (or nearly flat) in front of you* and lacks a noisy keyboard. You may take notes that way, provided it's not liable to distract others.

Penalties: If your device use is distracting or disruptive, I'll ask you to put the device away and you won't be marked as present for that lecture.

ASSESSMENT

ENGAGEMENT

Your Engagement grade will be based on these assignments (adding up to 100 points):

- Profile Picture** [5 pts] – an appropriate picture of yourself (not your cat or favorite anime character) on Canvas.
- Survey** [5 pts] – brief opinion poll about topics in the class.
- Participation/Discussion** [90 pts] – timely attendance and participation in lecture.

I will do roll call. It encourages attendance but also helps me to learn names. Your Engagement grade will be primarily determined by this. We'll have about 36 regular class meetings [so about 2.5 points each] and your grade will be determined largely by the proportion of lectures you attend. For example, if you attend 75% of lectures, then you will receive around a C grade. However, I reward those who consistently participate in class and penalize those who consistently cause problems (see below).

Tardiness: If you're late and miss roll call, you can receive 50% of the points for the day, but *only if you inform me after class that you were late*.

Unexcused absences: You'll receive 0 points for the missed lecture. Ultimately, acquiring a few unexcused absences isn't very detrimental. But, of course, missing more than a few classes can make it difficult to keep up with the material.

Excused absences: These are for extenuating circumstances and require proper documentation—e.g. illness (doctor's note), jury duty (note from the court), military service (note from military superior), or required university-sponsored activities (documentation from UAB official or supervisor). Students who get absences excused won't earn the points for that day but won't lose points either—the day just won't be factored into the calculation of their attendance score. Remember, students with excused absences are still required to complete work and readings by the required due dates, unless I approve an extension.

Participation & Disruptions: I'm very interested in what you think about the issues we discuss in class. I encourage you to ask questions in class to clarify points (e.g. "What exactly is...?") or make connections to everyday life (e.g. "This is kind of like when...") but also to raise criticism (e.g. "Couldn't she respond by saying...?"). Outstanding participation can be like extra credit for your final Engagement grade: it can boost it. Being disruptive (e.g. talking to your neighbor during class) can negatively affect your score by losing attendance points that day.

QUIZZES

There is a quiz due at the end of each module. Each quiz has 5 *multiple choice* questions pulled from a question bank (so students don't receive the exact same questions). The quizzes will be *on Canvas*, not in class. Students can complete the quiz on a computer or on a smartphone with the Canvas app).



Closed-book: When taking the quizzes, you're not supposed to be using your book or notes, or to collaborate with anyone. Treat it like an in-class quiz: just use your own brain and answer the questions based on what you've learned. (One time a student used someone else's brain, and it did *not* go well.)

Time Limit: To help prevent cheating, such as perusing the Internet or slides, the quizzes are timed (you'll have 6 minutes). It's plenty of time if you know the material. The average time it takes to complete this sort of quiz is 3.5 minutes (which is, incidentally, the same time it takes for a philosopher to answer a Yes or No question!).

Dummy Question: Each quiz will have a "dummy question" that tells you what the correct answer is in order to get a base level of points (25 points). The 5 real questions are then worth 15 points each. That way, if you miss one or two of the real questions, you won't lose so many points overall. E.g. 1 incorrect answer = 85% (instead of 80%); 2 incorrect answers = 76% (instead of 66%); 3 incorrect answers = 64% (instead of 49%).

Are the quizzes cumulative? No. They cover the material from the module preceding it (including the material covered in the lecture for that day).

How should you study for quizzes? By reading your daily horoscope. Or, even better, study the relevant readings and lectures. The slides provide a good guide for the material you'll be held accountable for. You might, for example, look through them for key terms, concepts, arguments, theories, etc. and then create flash cards (using an app or go old school with real index cards).

When will correct answers be visible? Immediately, so you can receive feedback and use the quizzes to study. But please don't share the answers with students who take it later in the day. They may not receive the same questions anyway, since they are pulled from a test bank.

Where's Waldo? The Great Smoky Mountains. Or at least that's where I'd be.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: HUMAN IN THE LOOP

Ethics isn't just about abstract arguments—it's also about becoming better people in a rapidly changing world. This assignment has you critically examine how you interact with AI in your daily life and intentionally change that relationship to align with a personal goal for self-improvement (e.g., be more compassionate, more present, less self-centered, less angry or irritable, more chill). Students formulate a specific plan for how to make the change, such as:

- delete social media apps from your phone,
- shape algorithms by following helpful accounts and unfollowing unhealthy ones,
- turn off your phone when eating with others, or
- download an AI-powered app to improve your health.

Some of these plans involve using more AI, others less, but either way you're getting a "human in loop" by exercising some agency over how you relate to AI.

Implement the plan over the course of 3-5 days, then write a short essay (approximately 400 words) about (a) your experience and (b) how changing your relationship to AI relates to some material discussed in this class.



EXAMS

Format: Both the midterm and final exams will contain: (a) 25 multiple-choice questions and (b) 1 short essay. The midterm will cover the first half of the course while the final exam covers the second half (so it's *not* cumulative). Before the exams, you'll receive a *Study Guide* which lists all the possible 6-7 short essay questions, so you can prepare in advance. However, I randomly choose 2-3 essays to put on the exam and during the exam you will choose which one of those to answer. So you'll be answering "live" from memory (bluebook-style, although no bluebook is needed).



Essay feedback: I have to grade a lot of exams over a short period of time, so I'm usually only able to provide some comments on the essay portion of the Midterm, but not on the Final.

LATE & MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

Submit your assignments on time. Completing a college degree is partly about becoming a responsible adult. Contrary to popular opinion (well, my opinion at age 14 at least), holding a Bachelor's degree does not signal to others that you are "single and ready to mingle." It signals to others, including potential employers, that you can think critically and meet challenges in a timely manner.

Assignments can't be made up or submitted late without penalty unless you have *extenuating circumstances* (e.g. medical, military, sports, jury duty) that you can document. Make sure you let me know *as soon as such special circumstances arise*; otherwise I might not be able to work something out with you. Moreover, make-ups are conditional on our being able to schedule a time for it that is either soon before or after the original assignment occurred. For example, don't expect to be able to take an exam two weeks after (or before) the rest of the class takes it.

What are the late penalties? If I accept a late assignment without an agreed upon extension, a 5% penalty applies for the first day late; 2% per day is applied for the next 4 calendar days after the due date. Assignments won't be accepted after more than 5 calendar days, except in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the professor. Late penalties are rounded down to the nearest whole point (e.g. 1 day late on a 10-point assignment yields 1 point off).

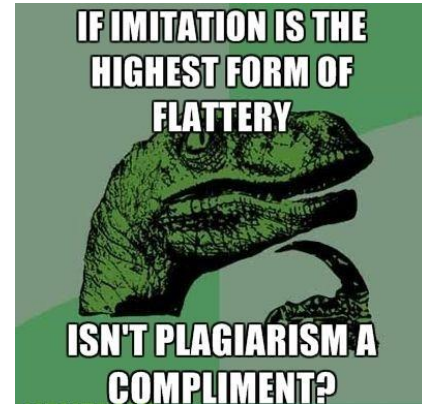
CHEATING (INCLUDING PLAGIARISM & AI)

Should students cheat? I'm glad you asked. No! It's both immoral and imprudent. I take this extremely seriously.

What counts as cheating? Academic cheating or misconduct includes *abetting*, *collusion*, *fabrication*, and *misrepresentation*. But it's *your responsibility* to make sure that your work doesn't violate university policies. (Compare: Ignorance of the law is generally no excuse.)

All UAB students are expected to be familiar with the [UAB Academic Honor Code](#), as well as any honor codes that are specific to their schools or disciplines. The code represents a commitment to integrity in the academic community and respect for educational endeavors. *Violation of UAB's Academic Honor Code can result in penalties as severe as expulsion from the university.*

If you need any help in understanding the honor code or are in any doubt about whether your work may violate it, check with me well in advance. UAB library has a [tutorial on plagiarism](#) too.



Can I use ChatGPT and other generative AI? The short answer is no. Any written assignments in this class are meant to be generated by you. I'm tasked with assessing your understanding and your writing abilities, not that of someone else or an artificial intelligence. That said, of course you can use AI as a tool like Google search to help you research a topic (e.g. you might pop into Google or ChatGPT: "What are the principles of bioethics?"). However, just like any other source, don't plagiarize from it (including uncited quotation or paraphrasing). What you submit should be generated by you.

How is cheating detected? Wouldn't you like to know! A magician never reveals his tricks, but do know that if you take this course you're agreeing to submit your work online, when instructed, to a program called *TurnItIn* that detects cheating (including plagiarism, collusion, and AI-generated content). Note that TurnItIn will retain an anonymous version of your submission as part of their database so that students who cheat from it can be detected. Because of this program, the vast majority of you who do your own work and cite the sources of your information properly will not have to compete with students who commit undetected plagiarism. Fairness, FTW!

GRADES

All grades for assignments will be posted on the course website. Canvas automatically calculates your grade based on the weight of the assignments. Using the "What-If Grades" feature, you should be able to see what your final course grade will be if you get a certain score on future assignments. (Warning: Avoid the "As If!" feature; it's too sassy.) I use a standard conversion from percent to letter grades (and note that UAB doesn't use + or -):

Grade	Score Range	Description
A	90-100%	Excellent. Student demonstrates a strong grasp and command of the material, can apply it to novel contexts.
B	80-89%	Good. Student demonstrates a good but imperfect grasp and command of most of the material.
C	70-79%	Acceptable/passing. Student demonstrates a partial grasp and command of most of the material.

D	60-69%	Not passing. Student turned in many assignments but didn't demonstrate sufficient grasp of the material.
F	0-59%	Failing. Student failed to complete some assignments or didn't demonstrate a sufficient grasp of the material on submissions.

Note Well: The default grade for any assignment is *not* an "A" (or 100%) with points taken away for errors. Rather, the default grade (if we must imagine one) is more like a "C" which is supposed to be the grade for average work meeting minimum expectations. Imagine points being taken off for doing worse than this or added for doing better.

Rounding: I only round up according to the math---e.g., 89.5 rounds up to 90, while 89.4 doesn't. I do that in order to have a clear rational policy I can apply to everyone fairly.

Grade disputes: Ultimately, not everyone will receive the grade they wanted. But please note that I apply the usual standards in the discipline of Philosophy and I apply them fairly. That means I can't make a special exception for anyone (e.g. "I tried really hard, Dr. Spaceman" or "I need to get an A for this phat scholarship, for real" or "I felt I did really well—like felt it in my bones" or even "Live long and prosper, Mr. Spock"). Making special exceptions for some students but not others is unfair. I will amend grades only if I made a calculating error or inadvertently misapplied a standard. I will not change the grading standards or offer extra credit opportunities for only some students. Speaking of...

Extra credit: I rarely offer this, and when I do the opportunity is open to the entire class. I usually only offer extra credit for attending events relevant to our course, typically only for events organized by the Philosophy Department. Giving extra credit for events is tricky. Some students can't attend them because they have other obligations, and then they can't take advantage of the opportunity. It's a bit of a dilemma. It's good to encourage students to support events related to our class topics, but that unfortunately leaves some others out. So what I do is make sure the extra credit isn't especially hefty. That way, for those who can't make it, you're not missing out on an amazing opportunity to substantially improve your grade in our class. But it still provides a small incentive for students to attend who can make it.

STUDENT SUPPORT

PEER CONTACTS

I encourage you to get to know your fellow students. Chat with your neighbor before class (or through Canvas). Just say "How are you liking this class so far?" or "Do anything fun this weekend"? or "Do Dr. May's dad jokes make you want to barf too?" Even if you don't form a study group or share notes, you'll open the opportunity for something even better: a friendship.

CONTACTING ME

Email is the preferred method of contact for this course I aim to respond within 24 hours on weekdays, and not at all on weekends (work-life boundaries!). Other ways to talk with me include: before or after class (briefly), during office hours (appointment preferred), or via Zoom (appointment required). I encourage you to communicate with me outside of class. Talking to me about the material, especially in preparation for an upcoming assignment, is not just for those who fear failing the course; it's also for those who want to secure an "A" (or whatever your goal is).

CHILDREN IN CLASS

As a parent, I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare occur. Occasionally bringing a child to class to cover gaps in care is acceptable. Just talk to me about it, so we can work something out. (Note: This is not an official university policy and may not apply in other classes.) If your child does come to class with you, please try to sit near a door so that if your child needs special attention, you may step outside.

WRITING SUPPORT

I'll be expecting you to do college-level writing. Your writing should be clear, organized, professional, and so on. Furthermore, writing in philosophy is often very different from writing in other disciplines, as it involves difficult and subtle ideas. If you have any questions, I encourage you to see [UAB's Writing Center](#) (which also provides online tutoring for distance students). See also the [Library's Philosophy Guide](#).

PHILOSOPHY CLUB

All are welcome at [UAB's Student Fellowship of Philosophy](#) (Phil Club). You don't need to be a Philosophy major or minor to attend meetings, and your friends are welcome too (real or imaginary). Meetings each semester are either weekly or biweekly and snacks (often pizza) are typically available. The Club usually either discusses a philosophical topic, watches a movie, or organizes events. Although there is a faculty advisor, the group is entirely student-run. Start by following [@uabphilosophyclub](#) on Instagram and joining their [GroupMe](#).

CONNECT WITH UAB PHILOSOPHY!

Follow [@uabphilosophy](#) on Instagram if you want to stay up to date with what's happening in the Philosophy Department, including faculty research and student stories. There's also some philosophy pun, like our annual meme contest (one winning submission pictured here).



ETHICS DEBATE TEAM

The UAB Philosophy Department sponsors a debate team that competes each year in the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. Our [Ethics Bowl team](#) is open to all undergraduate students and is coached by [Dr. Keshav Singh](#). I was the coach from 2016-2020, and I can confirm it's so much fun! Tryouts for the team are usually in late Spring semester for the fall team. If interested or have questions, email Dr. Singh (keshavsingh@uab.edu).



WELLNESS AND WELLBEING

Wellness isn't just about avoiding mental illness; it's about achieving overall wellbeing. I'm not a credentialed therapist, but I do have training in philosophy and neuroscience. For mental and brain health, I highly recommend the following rules. (I wish I had appreciated them much earlier in life, not only to avoid mental unwellness but to promote overall wellbeing.)

- **Exercise** regularly, especially outdoors and ideally out in nature.
- Get adequate **sleep**. If you feel sleepy during the day, you're probably not getting enough or consistent sleep. Ideally, go to bed and rise around the same time every day to set your body on a rhythm.
- **Eat healthy** unprocessed foods that will rot if you leave them on the counter for days. I follow Michael Pollan's uncomplicated advice: *Eat (whole) foods, not too much, mostly plants*. This likely requires learning how to cook.
- Improve your **habits of thought**, not just action. Read *Stoic and Buddhist philosophy* (even current popularizations of them). And study modern practices inspired by their time-honored wisdom, such as *meditation* and *cognitive behavioral therapy* (which you can learn without a therapist).
- Find **healthy meaning and purpose** in your life outside of school and work. Philosophy and religion can fit the bill, but so can family, friends, hobbies, and helping others. (Note: Radicalism might be tempting here, but it's as healthy as a diet made up exclusively of alcohol and junk food.)
- Be part of a **community** (better: communities), even if you're an introvert. Find your people, hang out with them *in person*, and make sure there's plenty of *humor* afoot. Laughter is the best medicine, not just for curing your woes but for keeping them at bay.



Note: Community is often a linchpin for the other rules. A running club, hiking crew, or volunteering group provides meaning, community, and exercise, which promotes better sleep, which makes it easier to improve your habits (including eating healthy). Your brain finds this combo rewarding, and a positive feedback loop of reinforcement develops. Huzzah!

UAB has many resources, such as the **Health and Wellness Center** (which includes confidential counseling free of charge to current UAB students) and the **Rec Center**.

IF YOU FACE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES

If for any reason you are struggling—due to medical issues or otherwise—get in touch with me as *soon as possible*. I'm happy to work with you to find the best course of action and, if possible, to help you complete the course successfully. But you must get in touch as soon as you know there's a problem. Waiting until the last minute, for example, might mean we can't work anything out. I also recommend getting in touch with UAB's [Office of Student Outreach](#).

DSS ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

If you're registered with [Disability Support Services](#) (DSS), let me know as soon as possible about requested accommodations. If you have a disability but haven't yet contacted DSS, please contact them as soon as possible. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students should obtain an accommodation letter from DSS at the *beginning* of each semester, get that letter to the instructor, and contact the instructor several days before the accommodation is required. Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty and staff.

TITLE IX STATEMENT

UAB is committed to providing an environment that is free from sexual misconduct, which includes gender-based assault, harassment, exploitation, dating and domestic violence, stalking, as well as discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. If you have experienced any of the aforementioned conduct we encourage you to report the incident. UAB provides several avenues for reporting. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources and supports, visit [UAB's Title IX Policy](#).

READING TIPS

Students are expected to *do the assigned reading/watching*. I work hard to choose readings that, while sometimes challenging, aren't too long or incomprehensible. I even edit many of the PDF readings so that any material irrelevant to us is omitted. For each reading or media piece, I also indicate how long it is (page numbers or minutes) so that you can plan ahead and budget enough time to read, watch, or listen. Think of it *like homework*: it's not directly part of your grade, but doing it consistently will help you perform better on graded assignments.

You should aim to do the reading the day it's covered in the relevant lecture—or at least around that time. The point of this is: make Rick Astley proud and *never give up* on the reading. If you didn't get to the reading before we covered it in the lecture, make sure you do it after. This is especially important because philosophy involves close examination of often fairly dense arguments. However, you aren't expected to have figured it all out before the relevant lecture. That's what we're going to try to do in class.

Mental Fatigue: Don't underestimate this. When reading, if you find that you can't process it, you may be getting mentally exhausted. Try putting the reading down and coming back to it later, even the next day. It's quite likely that you'll find it much easier after a break, especially after you're well rested (and nourished).

Pro Tip: I don't expect you to read the footnotes or endnotes of the articles before the articles are covered in lecture. Just have a quick read to get an overall sense of what the author's main ideas are.

Schedule on next page...

SCHEDULE

All readings are PDFs available for you to download on the course Canvas site. Note well:

- The schedule is subject to minor change, but unlikely.
- **pp.** = pages (e.g. "pp. 2-3 only" = read pages 2-3 only; "20pp." = 20 pages in length)

Week	Date	Module #, Topic, & Reading	Task Due
#1	1/14	1a. Moral Reasoning: Analyzing Ethical Issues Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives (2012) Jon Haidt [18 mins] TSA Face Scans (2024) Ethics Bowl case [1p] – to read in class Syllabus – important enough to be a reading assignment!	Profile Pic
	1/16	1b. Moral Reasoning: Evaluating Arguments Preface + Intro (2024) <i>Moral AI</i> [11pp] How to Analyze an Ethical Issue, Ethics Bowl style (2019) Josh May [4pp] Rationality and Good Arguments (2022) Josh May [4pp] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Practical Reasoning</i> (PHL 120)	Survey Quiz 1
#2	1/21	2a. Understanding AI: Varieties & Limits Blake Lemoine fired by Google (2023) Interview w/CNN [6 mins] What Is AI? (2024) <i>Moral AI</i> [40 pp]	
	1/23	2b. Understanding AI: Potentials & Pitfalls No class! Read & listen to: Time (2020) The Secret Cost of Google's Data Centers [6 pp] The Problem with Gig Work (2022) <i>Hi-Phi Nation</i> podcast [54 mins] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Minds & Machines</i> (PHL 372)	Quiz 2
#3	1/28	3a. Safety: Deepfakes & Deadly Errors Jodie deepfaked by close friend (2020) BBC News interview [10 mins] Can AI Be Safe? (2024) Ch 2 of <i>Moral AI</i> [37 pp]	
	1/30	3b. Safety: Trust and Deepfakes Rini (2020) Deepfakes and the Epistemic Backstop [15 pp]	
#4	2/3	3c. Safety: Anti-Social Media & Democracy Haidt (2022) Why the Last 10 years... have been Uniquely Stupid [10 pp]	
	2/6	3d. Safety: Misinformed about Misinformation? Williams (2023) The Fake News about Fake News [10 pp] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Social & Political Philosophy</i> (PHL 230)	Quiz 3
#5	2/11	4a. Privacy: Surveillance & Hacks Roya Heshmati whipped for photo w/o hijab (2023) WION news [2 mins] Can AI Respect Privacy? (2024) Ch 3 of <i>Moral AI</i> [30 pp]	
	2/13	4b. Privacy: Power & Democracy [+ Ethics Simulation] Véliz (2019) Privacy is Power [9pp] Recommended: Joan is Awful (2023) <i>Black Mirror</i> episode Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Neuroethics</i> (PHL 402)	Quiz 4
#6	2/18	5a. Fairness: Varieties of Justice Eric Loomis sentenced by algorithm (2019) <i>Hi-Phi Nation</i> podcast [50 mins] Can AI Be Fair? (2024) Ch 4 of <i>Moral AI</i> [28pp]	
	2/20	5b. Fairness: Bias & Transparency Johnson (2021) Algorithmic Bias [excerpt, 14pp] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Philosophy of Law</i> (PHL 335)	Quiz 5
#7	2/25	Review for Midterm (Jeopardy)	
	2/27	Midterm Exam [Just bring a pen or pencil – and your brain!] w/guest proctor	Midterm

#8	3/4	6a. Responsibility: Autonomous Vehicles & Accountability 🎧 Elaine Herzberg killed by self-driving car (2018) ABC News [2 mins] 📖 Can AI... be Responsible? (2024) Ch 5 of Moral AI [26 pp]	
	3/6	6b. Responsibility: Navigating Moral Dilemmas 📖 Singer (2005) Ethics and Intuitions [excerpt, 12 pp]	
☀ Spring Break - March 10 – 14 ☀			
#9	3/18	6c. Responsibility: Aligning Autonomous AI 📖 Rini (2017) Raising Good Robots [10 pp]	
	3/20	6d. Responsibility: Users 📖 Aylsworth & Castro (2021) Is there a Duty to Be a Digital Minimalist? [10 pp] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Neuroethics</i> (PHL 402)	Quiz 6
#10	3/25	7a. Moral Machines: Aiding Moral Decisions 🎧 AI identifies Sheila Tooth's early-stage breast cancer (2024) BBC News [2 mins] 📖 Can AI Incorporate Human Morality? (2024) Ch 6 of Moral AI [26 pp]	
	3/27	7b. Moral Machines: AI Rights 📖 Schwitzgebel & Garza (2015) A Defense of the Rights of AIs [19 pp] Recommended: Be Right Back (2013) Black Mirror episode [60 mins] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Bioethics</i> (PHL 116)	Quiz 7
#11	4/1	8a. Relationships: Love & Companionship 🎧 Alex Stokes interview (2023) ABC News Australia [2 mins] 📖 Thompson (2025) The Anti-Social Century [12 pp] Recommended: Love in the Time of Replika (2023) Hi-Phi Nation podcast [50 mins]	
	4/3	Interlude: What's in a Major? – no class, online lecture [12 mins] 🎧 Philosophy at UAB Dept. of Philosophy video [2 mins] 📖 CNBC (2018) Mark Cuban on the Value of Philosophy [3 pp]	Exp. Learning
#12	4/8	8b. Relationships: AI Creativity – w/Dr. Brainard as guest lecturer 📖 Brainard (2025) The Curious Case of Uncurious Creation [26 pp] Recommended: Rise of the Music Machines (2023) Hi-Phi Nation [50 mins]	
	4/10	Interlude: AI Relationships in Art No reading. In class, we'll watch an episode of <i>Black Mirror</i> called "Be Right Back." Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Meaning of Life</i> (PHL 207)	Quiz 8
#13	4/15	9a. The Future: Preventing Catastrophe 🎧 Sam Bankman-Fried (2022) defrauds crypto investors of billions [3 mins] 📖 What Can We Do? (2024) Ch 7 of Moral AI [42 pp]	
	4/17	9b. The Future: Threats to Humanity 📖 Bostrom (2002) Existential Risks [excerpt, 20 pp]	
#14	4/22	9c. The Future: Effective Altruism 📖 Srinivasan (2015) Stop the Robot Apocalypse [15 pp] 📖 Conclusion: It's Up to Us (2024) Ch 8 of Moral AI [6 pp] Psst... enjoyed this module? Try <i>Ethics: Good & Evil</i> (PHL 315)	Quiz 9
	4/24	Review for Final Exam (Jeopardy!)	Evals
#15	👏👏 Finals Week 👏👏 Final Exam on Tues. April 29 11am – 12pm Note: UAB lists our exam as starting at 10:45am, but we're only using 60 mins, so we'll start at our normal time.		

