Is it possible to create an artificial intelligence (AI)? What about a robot with desires and feelings? Suppose we manage to create an AI with superhuman intelligence. Will we be creating a threat to our own existence? What happens when we form emotional and even romantic bonds with robots? Is it ethical to use robots in warfare? What are the ethical, social, and personal implications of cyborg and enhancement technologies? Are we morally required to enhance our children? Ourselves? These are some of the questions we will be considering in this course.

**Required readings:**

All of the readings are available on UMLearn. Most are in a downloadable pdf format, although a few require internet access.

Please contact me if you require a paper version of the course materials. This can be made available at cost.

Please bring the relevant reading in to class. If you can’t, try to sit next to someone who can.

**Grade Breakdown:**

One of the best ways to get comfortable with writing is to write often.

1) 5 short writing assignments (150-500 words each). Worth 3% each. The first 3 are due Sept. 13, Sept. 20, and Sept. 27. The last two assignments can be handed in any time between Oct. 4 and Nov. 29.

2) 5 writing drills. Worth 1% each.

3) 3 essays (750-900 words each). Essay 1 is worth 20%. Essays 2 and 3 are worth 25% each.

   Due Oct. 4, Nov. 1, December 13.

4) Attendance/Participation: 10%.

**Assignment explanation:**
Short writing assignments:
The purpose of the short writing assignments is to give students the opportunity to practice the different skills involved in writing an essay. This is why the due dates of 3 of the 5 writing assignments occur before the due date of the first essay. The due dates of the remaining short writing are up to you, provided that you hand them in between Oct. 4 and Nov. 29. I recommend that you use these short writing assignments to practice the skills that you found the most difficult from the first 3 assignments.

In class writing drills:
These drills will take place in class. The dates of these drills will not be announced in advance. If you miss class and do not have a documented reason (illness, family emergency), then you missed this assignment. These assignments are graded on effort rather than on the quality of the product.

Essays:
For each essay, you will select an argument from one of the readings and critically evaluate it. 750-900 words is a very short essay, so you will be practicing the skill of writing succinctly. I will give detailed instructions in class on how to structure a critical response essay.

Participation:
Participation marks can be achieved in one of two ways.

1) Offering comments or questions in class that show that you’re engaging the material. It's perfectly fine (and recommended) to ask questions that show that you are confused, but the confusion should be the result of trying to work through the material rather than the result of not bothering.

2) Emailing thoughtful questions or comments to me at least 24 hours prior to our covering the material. I will try to incorporate these questions or comments in the class. The emailed questions or comments must come in on time to count because the purpose of participation is to contribute to the class.

Attendance will be a cap on participation grades. If, for example, you attend 80% of the time, the most you can get for participation is 80%. The participation points system will be explained in class on the first day.

Turning in assignments:
I will be using UMLearn in this course: https://universityofmanitoba.desire2learn.com/ UMLearn will have the journal articles, course slides (under 'Content'), announcements, and dropbox folders. Each dropbox folder will have a name (e.g., Short Assignment 1, Essay 2, etc.). Please upload your assignment in the appropriate dropbox.

Please name your files as follows: Last name, First name, Assignment. For example, when handing in my 2nd short assignment, I'd name the file "MartensRhondaA2". For handing in my first essay, I'd name the file "MartensRhondaE1".
Course Administration:

Attendance is mandatory. Information transmission is only a part of what we’ll be doing in this course. We will also be working together on analyzing the articles and constructing responses to them. We will learn in class how to create a persuasive argumentative essay, and will work on improving our debating skills. These are skills, and skills are best learned through modelling and feedback-guided practice.

Please note: All grades assigned by your professor are considered recommendations. In accordance with University policies, all grades are subject to a review and approval process.

Rewrites and alternate assignments will not normally be granted except on compassionate grounds, and only where the appropriate documentation is provided. Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day (including days on the weekend).

Disruptions due to excessive talking or early departures from the classroom are especially distracting. Please be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of others in the class. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of the class.

Students should acquaint themselves with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, exam personation, (“Personation at Examinations” (Section 5.2.9) and “Plagiarism and Cheating” (Section 8.1)) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/index.html. Ignorance of the regulations and policies regarding academic integrity is not a valid excuse for violating them.

Other University Policies and Procedures can be found along the sidebar on the left hand side of the page here: http://crscalprod1.cc.umanitoba.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx? pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=300&chapterid=3754&topicgroupid=20124&loaduseredits =False

Students with special learning needs (who for legitimate reasons require extra time to write a test or who require aids or other supports) should identify themselves to Student Accessibility Services at the beginning of term in order to arrange suitable accommodations.

Student Resources

Below are some general resources for students.

• The Learning Assistance Centre is located in 201Tier Building. Advisors provide a wide range of services focused on improvement of academic learning skills. In
addition to individual consultations, the Centre offers workshops on test-taking, note-taking, essay and term paper writing, and listening skills.

• **Writing Tutors** operate from both the Elizabeth Dafoe Library and the Learning Assistance Centre and can be accessed either by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Check scheduled hours of availability on-line through the Learning Assistance Centre site or the Elizabeth Dafoe Library site.

• The **Virtual Learning Commons** is a unique learning and social networking site at the University of Manitoba. Students can access Writing Tutors and a variety of Learning Assistance Centre resources on-line at [www.umanitoba.ca/virtuallearningcommons](http://www.umanitoba.ca/virtuallearningcommons).