

This assignment requires you to select two of the topics below and write a short essay (2-3 pages).

- Task 1: Choose one subject and write an essay that is fully written by you without any help from AI tools
- Task 2: Choose a different subject and write an essay where you receive as much help as you can get from LLM.

The lead TA for this assignment is Shirley Hayati (hayat023@umn.edu). Please communicate with the lead TA via Slack, email, or during office hours. This is an **individual homework**, so don't communicate with your team members.

When you get help from an LLM for Task 2, it could be any LLM, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, etc. Export your chat with LLM along with the timestamp to a .csv file. You are encouraged to use LLM in an "open-ended" manner, meaning you have flexibility in how you utilize it for brainstorming, revising, drafting, or organizing thoughts. Your response should be thorough to represent to represent original responses to the given questions.

The purpose of this assignment is to explore your unique perspectives on the questions posed. We value originality, creativity, and personal expression when working on your essay. Be mindful to express your own idea as we want to see your authentic voice in the work you submit. We can detect if you simply copy/paste text from other places or simply retype text.

When you write your essay, use Google docs and share the Google docs with all the instructor team by making the docs **editable**. In your Google docs, you must indicate the topic (e.g., Q1) you choose. We are tracking your writing history in your Google docs.

Topics:

- Q1 [Copyright & Ownership in the Age of AI]. In a world where generative AI tools can produce poems, paintings, and designs in seconds, how should we define *authorship* and *ownership*? Who truly holds the copyright—the human who prompted the AI, the company that trained it, or the AI itself? Explore how society can safeguard the intellectual property of writers, artists, and designers while still encouraging innovation and collaboration between humans and machines.
- Q2 [AI and the Future of Learning]. Imagine a classroom 20 years from now where students can learn complex subjects through interactive AI tutors and personalized learning assistants. What roles will teachers and human educators still play? How might the focus of education shift if tools like ChatGPT can already teach most of what's in textbooks? Discuss how AI might redefine what it means to learn, and what uniquely human skills should still be cultivated in the classroom.
- Q3 [AI in the Professional World]. How will the rise of intelligent systems reshape the modern workplace? Consider professions like law, journalism, medicine, or design where knowledge and expertise once defined human value. Will AI lead to massive unemployment among professionals, or will it redefine expertise itself? Explore whether the automation of cognitive work can ever fully replace human intuition, empathy, and ethical judgment.
- Q4 [Risks and Limitations of Smarter AIs]. Even as generative AIs become more accurate, unbiased, and self-correcting, new risks may emerge. What dangers might arise from over-trusting these systems socially, psychologically, or politically? Could an increasingly perfect AI still produce harmful effects, such as subtle misinformation, loss of human creativity, or erosion of critical thinking? Discuss the paradox of progress in AI safety and the new forms of risk it might create.
- Q5 [Trusting Machines Over Humans]. Under what circumstances would you personally trust the judgment of an AI language model over that of a human expert? Would your answer differ if the context involved medicine, law, or business? Explore how trust in AI might vary between professionals and non-professionals, and what transparency, accountability, or reliability standards must exist before AIs can earn genuine human trust.
- Q6 [AI and the Redefinition of Creativity]. When AI can compose symphonies, paint masterpieces, or write novels indistinguishable from human work, what does creativity mean? Are we witnessing

the evolution of art or the erosion of artistic authenticity? Discuss how society might establish new standards for creativity in an age where machines can mimic emotion, style, and genius and how we can balance innovation with respect for human originality.

- Q7 [Evaluating Long-Form AI Creations]. As large language models begin to write novels, research papers, and screenplays, assessing the coherence and quality of such long-form outputs becomes increasingly complex. How can we measure creativity, consistency, and depth in texts generated by machines? Should evaluation methods focus on technical accuracy, emotional resonance, or narrative artistry and who should decide these standards?
- Q8 [The Risk of Human Overreliance on AI]. Could there come a time when humans depend too heavily on large language models for thinking, decision-making, and creativity? What specific AI abilities might make such overreliance inevitable: emotional intelligence, personalization, or convenience? Examine how this dependence might shape human behavior, critical thinking, and autonomy in the long run.
- Q9 [AI for Societal Good or Harm?]. As AI becomes embedded in finance, healthcare, education, and everyday life, is this rapid integration genuinely improving society or deepening inequality and dependence? Discuss the economic, cultural, and ethical dimensions of large-scale AI adoption. Who benefits most, and who might be left behind?
- Q10 [AI, Democracy, and Civic Responsibility]. How can large language models strengthen democratic systems: helping citizens engage in debate, understand policies, or participate in civic life without amplifying misinformation, bias, or manipulation? Explore the responsibilities of AI developers, governments, and citizens in ensuring that AI technologies uphold democratic values like transparency, equality, and truth.
- Q11 [Environmental Impact of AI]. What is the environmental cost of training and deploying large-scale AI systems? Discuss the carbon footprint of data centers, the ethical implications of energy consumption, and how AI can simultaneously contribute to and help mitigate climate change.
- Q12 [AI and Human Emotion]. As AI systems become more emotionally intelligent: able to detect and simulate empathy, humor, or compassion: how might this affect human relationships? Could emotionally aware AIs strengthen social bonds or make human interactions less authentic?
- Q13 [Global Inequality and AI Access]. Will the benefits of AI be distributed evenly across countries and communities, or will they deepen the digital divide? Analyze how differences in data access, infrastructure, and governance might create new forms of global inequality.
- Q14 [Ethics of AI Companionship]. With the rise of AI companions, virtual friends, and digital partners, what ethical questions emerge about attachment, consent, and emotional dependency? Discuss whether AI companionship enhances or undermines genuine human connection.
- Q15 [The Philosophy of Machine Consciousness]. Could an AI system ever achieve consciousness or self-awareness? Explore how this question challenges our definitions of intelligence, personhood, and moral responsibility. If an AI became truly sentient, what rights or ethical considerations would it deserve?

Deliverables

Please upload the following files on [Canvas](#) by **Nov 16, 11:59pm**.

- Your report (in pdf) containing **links** to your Google docs, **the name of LLM you use**, and your **reflection** on writing with and without the help of LLM.
Your file name must be **csci5541- f25-hw6-{FIRST-NAME}-{LAST-NAME}.pdf**
- Task 1: A Google doc link with **Edit permission**, so we can keep tracking your writing history.
Your file name must be: **csci5541- f25-hw6-Task1-Q[1-15]- {FIRST-NAME}-{LAST-NAME}**
- Task 2: A Google doc link with **Edit permission** as well as a link to your OpenAI/Gemini/etc conversation history on that particular writing task.
csci5541- f25-hw6-Task2-Q[1-15]- {FIRST-NAME}-{LAST-NAME}

- A csv file containing your chat with LLM for Task 2. Your file must have three columns as a header: speaker (“human” or “LLM”), chat, timestamp.

For the report (not Google docs), you must use the provided LaTeX template ([link](#)).

Rubric (10 points)

- An essay that is fully written by you (3 points)
- An essay that you receive a lot of help from LLM (3 points)
- A report of 2-3 pages containing your reflection on writing with and without LLM. For example, you can ask yourself these questions: Is it challenging to come up with ideas independently and refine the writing without LLM’s help? Is it hard to be creative if you constantly use LLM for writing? (3 points)
- A file containing your conversation with LLM along with the timestamp (1 point)

Make sure your Google docs links are working and clearly indicate in your report which link is for Task 1 and which is for Task 2, otherwise we will deduct points!

Be honest! When we ask you not to use an LLM for Task 1, please avoid using it entirely. For Task 2, when you export your chat, submit the complete conversation you had while working on this homework. If we find that you did not use an LLM extensively for Task 2, points will be deducted.