

Course Outline for Writing and Artificial Intelligence

WRITING DEPARTMENT

Note for students: This short course outline is provided for planning purposes only. Course information is tentative and subject to change; the final course syllabus will be available by the first day of classes.

Course Code: AP/PRWR 2010 3.0 Writing and Artificial Intelligence

Course Instructor: Professor Blair Miller

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Office Hours & Location: TBD

Course Time & Day: Wed, 2:30pm

First Nations peoples have lived on this part of Turtle Island for millennia, stewarding the land, the water and all that contributes to life in this region. Today, the culture and presence of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples enrich the lands and people of this territory. More than two centuries ago, the Mississauga people welcomed settlers to this territory, providing sustenance and engaging in trade and commerce. Between 1781 and 1820, eight treaties were signed between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who opened their territory to settlement. Today, York University's Keele Campus is located on Toronto Purchase Treaty, No. 13 lands and is situated on the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee. Treaty history is foundational, and it is our collective responsibility to honour the land, as we honour and respect those who have gone before us, those who are here and those who have yet to come. We are grateful for the opportunity to be learning, working and thriving on this land, and we commit to learn the truth and be active in the process of reconciliation (York University Land Acknowledgment).

Course Description

Thinking and dealing with Artificial Intelligence (AI) are inherently philosophical acts. This course does not shy away from that, prioritizing nuance and moral/ethical discourses. It frames AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) within a broader examination of digital technology and its place in writing, the classroom, and the history of media technology. Since writing is itself a process, and AI is meant to carry out processes for users, how can the two work together? How can we collaborate with AI and/or LLMs in ways that are both ethically sound and (in turn) maintain authors' authentic voices? This course focuses less on AI training and more on AI literacy in the sense of context, issues, strengths and weaknesses. As a result, when students engage AI, they will feel better equipped to use and experience it on a critically literate level.

We will draw in part from literature, current events, films, and intersections in the field(s) to empower students to find their own way through the anxieties and overconfidence around AI. Students will have a chance to build effective approaches and habits involving philosophical concepts and AI literacy, prior to hands-on use. As a safe space for open discussion, concepts covered include the methods of LLMs, ethics of AI use, AI refusal, deregulation and unpaid labour, the Turing Test and AI's supposed likeness to human intelligence, as well as the crisis in confidence in reality/truth amplified by AI.

Course Delivery

Delivery Mode: [LECT] In-person 2 Hour Lecture / In-Person 1 Hour Tutorial. Lectures and interaction in Tutorial will work from the program's principles that inform second-year theory courses, to, "Develop the conceptual and ethical frameworks necessary to understand and respond to present-day professional writing issues" with respect to AI and/or LLMs, the distinction between those two terms making up a key perspective in the course.

The end portion of lectures will be earmarked for student-inclusive learning, to introduce more practical and analytical experiences that will help dissect students' relationship with AI/LLMs. These lecture discussions will supply part of the given week's tutorial discussion. (This will be conducted on a bi-weekly basis in the first year of the course's existence.) In-person tutorial participation and ongoing peer review are an important part of the course.

Assignments and engagement will incorporate options to suit students' desired degree of direct hands-on engagement with AI.

Course content and assessment details are uniquely tentative, given the considerable development speed of the subject/technology. Maintaining the original spirit of the course and being responsive to these changes will be balanced.

Course Materials

This course has 2 required books that will be ordered for students via the bookstore:

Doctorow, Cory. *The Reverse Centaur's Guide to Life After AI—How to Think About Artificial Intelligence Before It's Too Late*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2026.

Frankfurt, Harry G. *On Bullshit*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Most of the materials for this course are provided on eClass, apart from one or two films, including *Ex Machina* (Garland, 2014), each of which will be screened in class or made accessible to students at no additional cost.

A few sample readings, all linked online, are provided below:

Hicks, Michael T., James Humphries, and Joe Slater. "ChatGPT is bullshit." *Ethics and Information Technology* 26:38 (2024) <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-024-09775-5>.

(Selected chapters) Horvath, Jared Cooney. *The Digital Delusion: How Classroom Technology Harms Our Kids' Learning—and How to Help Them Thrive Again*. Easton, PA: Harmony Press, 2025.

Hui, Yuk. "ChatGPT, or the Eschatology of Machines." *e-flux* issue 137 (2023): 1-8.

Phillips, Brian. "Stop AI-Shaming Our Precious, Kindly Em Dashes—Please." *The Ringer*, August 20, 2025, <https://www.theringer.com/2025/08/20/pop-culture/em-dash-use-ai-artificial-intelligence-chatgpt-google-gemini>.

A wide array of supplemental/optional readings will be available via eClass as well, with a focus on new/recent publications. There is no mid-term or final exam in the course.

Tentative Grade Breakdown and Deadlines

Assessment	Weight	Mode	Tentative Deadline
Tutorial Participation	15%	In-Person	All term
Belief & Mission Statement (x2)	10%	Outside of class	Start & end of term
Maj. Assignment 1: Book Assessment & AI Annotations	25%	In-Person	February 24
Self-Scouting & Discussion Talking Points	20%	In-Person	Throughout term w/deadline options
Maj. Assignment 2: AI Assessment (choice of AI interaction: collaborate/critique/hybrid)	30%	In-Person	April 5
	100%		