

Course Syllabus

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MCO 591: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Journalism (2023 Spring - B)

Instructor - Djordje Padejski

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Th 4:30 PM - 7:15 PM

Cronkite 352

Office hours: Fridays 1-3pm or by appointment

Course Overview

Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant future. It has found its way into almost every aspect of our lives— from our bank accounts, shopping carts, and social media feeds to federal and local government services. At the same time, it has the potential to widen social inequalities and amplify biases, a growing concern for society and journalists who cover stories about AI. News organizations are also increasingly using AI in the newsgathering process, in automating news content and distribution. But why is AI so hard to grasp?

This course explores how the increasing use of AI algorithms affects society, from the latest technological trends to broader sociocultural issues surrounding AI and future implications. The course also provides an overview of how AI is affecting the field of journalism, including how news organizations use AI for news gathering, storytelling and distribution. The class features guest speakers, ASU faculty researching AI in society and journalists.

Instructor



Hello there, I am Djordje Padejski, (my name pronounces as Jer-Jay, but Georgie is just fine) — I am a computational journalism scholar working at the intersection of journalism, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence. I am currently the [Associate Director at Stanford University's John S. Knight Journalism Fellowships](http://jsk.stanford.edu/news-notes/2015/padejski-named-fellowship-impact-leader/), where I mentor JSK fellows and alumni as they pursue innovative projects and technologies in journalism. I am a lecturer and educator who teaches journalism classes at Stanford and now at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism.

Prior to Stanford, I had considerable experience working as an investigative/data reporter, editor, and director for a number of news organizations including [the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists \(ICIJ\)](https://www.icij.org/journalists/djordje-padejski/), The Center for Investigative Reporting (now [Reveal](https://www.revealnews.org/)), [Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project \(OCCRP\)](https://www.occrp.org/) and [The Center for Investigative Journalism in Serbia \(CINS\)](https://www.cins.rs/).

I was a core member of the [Offshore Leaks investigation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Offshore_Leaks), the biggest collaborative team of journalists assembled to sift through 260 gigabytes of unstructured data – 2.5 millions of secret records from 10 tax havens and offshore assets of people from more than 170 countries (documents, emails, spreadsheets); an award-winning project by [ICIJ](https://www.icij.org/journalists/djordje-padejski/) which prompted high-profile resignations and criminal investigations.

I founded and developed journalism tools such as a public records platform for investigative journalists called [FOIA Machine](http://www.foiamachine.org/) (now with Muckrock) with more than 2,000 active users and backers on [Kickstarter](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/cir/foia-machine) and news organizations such as the nonprofit investigative center CINS in Serbia.

Course content

There is no textbook for this class. Selected readings will be provided through the Canvas page for the course.

Requirements

No prior computer programming experience or knowledge of AI is required.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students will learn how to:

- Understand the fundamentals of artificial intelligence as interdisciplinary field, including its history, types, and applications

- Develop critical thinking and analytical skills to evaluate the social and ethical implications of AI systems in different contexts
- Develop an understanding of the challenges and opportunities of AI in journalism and how it can be leveraged to enhance reporting
- Prepare a story proposal to investigate an artificial intelligence system
- Develop the ability to identify and evaluate sources of information on AI and its impacts on society, including ethical, legal, and technical aspects.

Grading

Each class session will begin with a guest lecture from a research faculty member, and then you will apply the lesson to a story idea you are interested in pursuing. You should have time to start the assignment in class. If you do not complete the assignment by the end of class you will have until the following Tuesday to turn it in via Canvas.

Weekly assignments: 1000 points (200 points each)

Final project: 600 points (300 points final story memo, 300 points presentation)

Course reflection: 100 points

Grading Scale

- o 97-100 = A+
- o 94-96 = A
- o 90-93 = A-
- o 87-89 = B+
- o 84-86 = B
- o 80-83 = B-
- o 76-79 = C+
- o 70-75 = C
- o 60-69 = D
- o 59 and below = E

*Final grades will not be rounded up.

Y Grades: Students have the option of a Y grade for courses in determining their final course grade. The Y grade signifies “satisfactory” completion of the course and is considered to be the equivalent of a C or above. Y grades allow students to earn course credit but do not affect the GPA. Students opting for the Y grade who do not achieve a “satisfactory” level (70 percent or above) will receive a D or an E, depending on their grades on assessments during the course. **Students must notify the instructor of a decision to select the Y grade option before the close of the drop/add period** (March 15 for this Session B course) and cannot change their selection after the drop/add period.

Course Policies

Additional Cronkite School policies, including the Academic Integrity Policy, are included [here](https://cronkite.asu.edu/content/cronkite-course-policies) (<https://cronkite.asu.edu/content/cronkite-course-policies>) and in the Canvas navigation at right (See “Cronkite School Policies”). These policies apply to all students in all classes; students must read and acknowledge these policies at the beginning of each class.

Student Expectations: Students are expected to attend all classes for their full duration, as well as examinations as noted by the ASU final exam schedule, on the days and times and in the locations indicated on the class syllabus and myASU. If students experience events or extreme circumstances (e.g. natural disasters, regional emergencies or extenuating personal circumstances such as family deaths or emergent/chronic health issues), they must notify their instructor immediately. That instructor is obligated to report extreme or extenuating circumstances to the Dean’s Office for coordination of student support.

Attendance and Makeup Work: Students are expected to be in every class and to arrive on time. The Cronkite School does not recognize excused absences and does not give makeup work; if you miss an in-class assignment, quiz or test, you will receive a zero. Follow the appropriate University policies to request an accommodation for [religious practices \(http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html\)](http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html) or [University-sanctioned activities \(http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html\)](http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html).

Deadlines: Since this is a journalism class, deadlines are important, and you are expected to meet them. Assignments submitted even one minute past the deadline will not be accepted; they will receive a zero.

Accuracy: Since accuracy is the most important aspect of journalism, we will adhere to rigid standards for all submitted work, regardless of the intent to publish. Any major error of fact – a misspelled proper name, an erroneous phone number, an incorrect address, a libelous statement or a misstatement of a

major fact – in other words, anything that would require a printed correction if the story were to appear in a newspaper – will result in an E (55 percent) on that assignment. Minor misspellings or errors of grammar will bring your grade down. If you are careless, you will lose points fast.

Cronkite School Diversity Principles: The Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication practices inclusivity in student, staff and faculty populations in order to create an academic environment that embraces diversity of thought and acceptance of all people regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation or societal, political, cultural, economic, spiritual or physical differences. To this end, the school directs efforts to the following four principles:

- Actively seek out and encourage diverse populations to become productive members of the faculty, staff and the student body.
- Create and maintain a work, learning and social environment that is cognizant and supportive of a diversity of human differences and beliefs.
- Incorporate within the formal content of the curriculum and in each course an affirmation of the core journalistic values of accuracy, fairness, ethical behavior and sensitivity when reflecting an increasingly multicultural world.
- Foster and support a climate in which events and activities of the school reflect diversity of awareness, sensitivity to and support for people of different origins, orientations and abilities.










Classroom Etiquette: Cell phones and all other mobile devices must be turned off during class. Classroom computers are to be used exclusively for classroom work, not for browsing the internet or messaging friends. Food and drinks are not allowed in the classroom. Please arrive on time and listen respectfully while the instructor, guest lecturer or other students are speaking. Disruptive behavior may result in removal from the classroom at the instructor's discretion.

Collaborations: All in-class and out-of-class assignments must be your own work – from concept to execution, unless some type of collaboration is specified by the instructor. Even in cases where you are assigned to a team, not all elements of the assignment may be team-based. For instance, the assignment may call for a team discussion of a topic, but a writing assignment based on the discussion must be your individual work.





Use of Outside Work: All work, including photos, text, video and other images, submitted for this class must be your original work. You may not submit work done for any other class, or for a previous session of this class.

Course Content: The contents of this course, including lectures and other instructional materials, are copyrighted materials. Students may not share outside the class, including uploading, selling or distributing course content or notes taken during the conduct of the course. Any recording of class sessions by students is prohibited, except as part of an approved accommodation.







Course Summary:




Date	Details	Due
Tue Mar 21, 2023	 <u>Week 1: Story idea</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993729)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 4, 2023	 <u>Week 2: Hypothesis statement</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993730)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Apr 7, 2023	 <u>Week 3: Literature research</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993731)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 11, 2023	 <u>Week 4: Key questions of your story</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993732)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 18, 2023	 <u>Week 5: Method of analysis</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993733)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 25, 2023	 <u>Week 6: Final story memo</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993734)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Apr 27, 2023	 <u>Final presentation</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/3993728)	due by 11:59pm
Sat Apr 29, 2023	 <u>Final reflection</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/4007517)	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Cronkite Academic Integrity Agreement</u> (https://canvas.asu.edu/courses/148660/assignments/4007523)	

[Collapse All](#) [View Progress](#) [+ Module](#) ⋮

⋮ Pre-class requirements		Complete All Items ✓ + ⋮
⋮ 	What is Academic Integrity?	✓ ⋮
⋮ 	Cronkite's Commitment to Academic Integrity	✓ ⋮
⋮ 	Cronkite Academic Integrity Agreement 0 pts Submit	✓ ⋮
⋮ 	Resources to Avoid Academic Dishonesty	✓ ⋮

⋮ Week 1: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence		✓ + ⋮
⋮	Required readings:	✓ ⋮
⋮ 	Artificial Intelligence. In E. N. Zalta & U. Nodelman (Eds.), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy	✓ ⋮
⋮ 	Guest speaker: Dr. Suren Jayasuriya	✓ ⋮

⋮  Intro to AI - Padejski.pdf	✓	⋮
⋮  AI Journalism Lecture - Suren Jayasuriya.pptx	✓	⋮
⋮ Optional readings:	✓	⋮
⋮  <u>Turing, A.M. (1950). I.— Computing Machinery and Intelligence. Mind, LIX(236), 433–460. ↗(https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/LIX.236.433)</u>	✓	⋮
⋮  <u>McCarthy, John; Minsky, Marvin; Rochester, Nathan; Shannon, Claude (1955), A Proposal for the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence. ↗(http://www-formal.stanford.edu/jmc/history/dartmouth/dartmouth.html)</u>	✓	⋮
⋮  <u>Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach, 4th US ed. by Stuart Russell and Peter Norvig. ↗(https://aima.cs.berkeley.edu/newchap00.pdf)</u>	✓	⋮
⋮ Week 1 assignment	✓	⋮
⋮  Week 1: Story idea Mar 21 200 pts	✓	⋮

⋮ ▾ Week 2: Understanding and Unpacking the AI	✓	+	⋮
⋮ Required readings:	✓		⋮
⋮  <u>The messy, secretive reality behind OpenAI's bid to save the world. ↗(https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/02/17/844721/ai-openai-moonshot-elon-musk-sam-altman-greg-brockman-messy-secretive-reality/)</u>	✓		⋮
⋮  <u>Here are a few ways GPT-3 can go wrong. ↗(https://techcrunch.com/2020/08/07/here-are-a-few-ways-gpt-3-can-go-wrong/)</u>	✓		⋮
⋮  <u>Gebru, T., Morgenstern, J., Vecchione, B., Vaughan, J. W., Wallach, H., Daumé III, H., & Crawford, K. (2021). Datasheets for Datasets</u>	✓		⋮

[.\(arXiv:1803.09010\). arXiv.](https://arxiv.org/abs/1803.09010)  [.\(http://arxiv.org/abs/1803.09010\)](http://arxiv.org/abs/1803.09010)

Datasheets for Datasets adapted

 [.\(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NC1ewaecfu3xE5canqy7SOqdJC8Ls3zKMfoRuEH-LGg/edit?usp=sharing\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NC1ewaecfu3xE5canqy7SOqdJC8Ls3zKMfoRuEH-LGg/edit?usp=sharing)  

Optional readings:

 [On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots: Can Language Models Be Too Big?](https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3442188.3445922)  [.\(https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3442188.3445922\)](https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3442188.3445922)

 [Language Models are Changing AI: The Need for Holistic Evaluation](https://crfm.stanford.edu/2022/11/17/helm.html)  [.\(https://crfm.stanford.edu/2022/11/17/helm.html\)](https://crfm.stanford.edu/2022/11/17/helm.html)



  

 [Eighteen pitfalls to beware of in AI journalism](https://aisnakeoil.substack.com/p/eighteen-pitfalls-to-beware-of-in)  [.\(https://aisnakeoil.substack.com/p/eighteen-pitfalls-to-beware-of-in\)](https://aisnakeoil.substack.com/p/eighteen-pitfalls-to-beware-of-in)

 <http://algorithmtips.org/>  [.\(http://algorithmtips.org/\)](http://algorithmtips.org/)

 [ChatGPT is great – you’re just using it wrong.](https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-is-great-youre-just-using-it-wrong-198848)  [.\(https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-is-great-youre-just-using-it-wrong-198848\)](https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-is-great-youre-just-using-it-wrong-198848)


  

Week 2 assignment

Week 2: Hypothesis statement

Apr 4 | 200 pts

Week 3: AI in the Field of Journalism














  

Required readings:


 [Moran, R. E., & Shaikh, S. J. \(2022\). Robots in the News and Newsrooms: Unpacking Meta-Journalistic Discourse on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Journalism. Digital Journalism, 10\(10\), 1756–1774.](https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2085129)  [.\(https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2085129\)](https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2085129)

⋮ 	<u>Video: ChatGPT & DALL-E: What Generative AI means for journalism</u>  (https://www.youtube.com/live/d08-lgGt39k?feature=share)	✓	⋮
⋮	Optional readings:	✓	⋮
⋮ 	<u>Prompts</u>  (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C0Fbl8gQ_IHhaWe59vIm2mQo81r4btzsNjW5e0Bi8Ok/edit?usp=sharing)	✓	⋮
⋮ 	<u>The JournalismAI Report</u>  (https://www.lse.ac.uk/media-and-communications/polis/JournalismAI/The-report)	✓	⋮
⋮ 	<u>AP releases new report on AI in local news</u>  (https://www.ap.org/press-releases/2022/ap-releases-new-report-on-ai-in-local-news)	✓	⋮
⋮ 	<u>What Could ChatGPT Do for News Production?</u>  (https://medium.com/@ndiakopoulos/what-could-chatgpt-do-for-news-production-2b2a3b7047d9)	✓	⋮
⋮ 	<u>How WIRED Will Use Generative AI Tools</u>  (https://www.wired.com/story/how-wired-will-use-generative-ai-tools/)	✓	⋮
⋮	Week 3 assignment	✓	⋮
⋮ 	Week 3: Literature research Apr 7 200 pts	✓	⋮

⋮ ▾ **Week 4: Investigating AI** ✓ + ⋮

⋮ **Required readings:** ✓ ⋮

⋮  **Algorithms of Oppression : How Search Engines Reinforce Racism Ch1**
(<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4834260&ppg=32https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4834260&ppg=32>)

✓ ⋮


[**Burke, G. \(2022\). Tech tool offers police ‘mass surveillance on a budget.’ AP NEWS.**](https://apnews.com/article/technology-police-government-surveillance-d395409ef5a8c6c3f6cdab5b1d0e27ef)




Guest speaker: Garance Burke










[**Investigative Reporting Strategy**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11pnwNlyERUim6L99zNoQ1tKzM94otb0svFESNAhwaCo/edit)







Optional readings:




[**How colleges use AI to monitor students protests \(Dallas Morning News\)**](https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/tracked-how-colleges-use-ai-monitor-student-protests)




[**An algorithm that screens for child neglect raises concerns:**](https://apnews.com/article/child-welfare-algorithm-investigation-9497ee937e0053ad4144a86c68241ef1)





[**Government by Algorithm: Artificial Intelligence in Federal Administrative Agencies**](https://law.stanford.edu/education/only-at-sls/law-policy-lab/practicums-2018-2019/administering-by-algorithm-artificial-intelligence-in-the-regulatory-state/acus-report-for-administering-by-algorithm-artificial-intelligence-in-the-regulatory-state/#slsnav-report)




Week 4 assignment




Week 4: Key questions of your story
 Apr 11 | 200 pts
 



















































Week 5: Future of AI



























Week 5 Reading Due



	<u>What can science fiction tell us about the future of artificial intelligence policy?</u>  _(https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-021-01273-2)		
	Guest speaker: Dr. Ed Finn		
	<u>Art by algorithm</u>  _(https://aeon.co/essays/how-algorithms-are-transforming-artistic-creativity)		
	<u>What Algorithms Want : Imagination in the Age of Computing - Ch 1</u> _(https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4819947)		
	Week 5 assignment		
	Week 5: Method of analysis Apr 18 200 pts		

	▼ Week 6: Global Aspects of AI			
	Required readings:			
	<u>AI Colonialism</u>  _(https://www.technologyreview.com/supertopic/ai-colonialism-supertopic/)			
	<u>AI Accountability Network Pulitzer Center</u>  _(https://pulitzercenter.org/journalism/initiatives/ai-accountability-network)			
	Guest speaker: Christina Passariello			
	Guest speaker: Marina Walker Guevara			
	<u>Inside the Suspicion Machine</u>  _(https://www.wired.com/story/welfare-state-algorithms/)			
	Marina Walker class interview.mp4			

	<u>AI Accountability Fellowships Open Call</u>  (https://pulitzercenter.submittable.com/submit/218563/ai-accountability-fellowships)		
	Week 6 assignment		
	Week 6: Final story memo Apr 25 300 pts		

	▼ Week 7: Final Presentations			
	Final presentation Apr 27 300 pts			
	Final reflection Apr 29 0 pts			
	<u>Please complete this Google form in advance of class.</u>  (https://forms.gle/v4WC6rEVwja4cTv3A)	