

POL 526: Technology, AI, and Ethics in Policy and Public Administration

Time & Location	MWF: 8:30-9:20 AM Beering Hall 1245
Professor	Dr. Daniel S. Schiff dschiff@purdue.edu Beering Hall 2228
Office Hours	Mon & Wed 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (or by appt.) https://calendly.com/dschiff-qt4/office-hours Zoom or in-person. Please reach out for any reason!

Course Description

Technology and data analytics are rapidly transforming government operations, decision-making, and engagement with the public. This course examines how emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), automated decision systems, and digital platforms are being adopted in the public sector. It explores the benefits as well as ethical risks and challenges associated with implementing these technologies in areas like healthcare, education, child welfare, and criminal justice. During this course, you will analyze governance strategies, policies, and administrative procedures to promote responsible technology use in government. Topics covered include transparency, accountability, discretion, bias, and trust. Through case studies, activities, and a guided research project aligned with a topic of your interest, you will identify best practices for procuring, implementing, and auditing AI systems, as well as engaging with the public and diverse stakeholders on the adoption of new technologies. The course aims to equip you with the insights needed to propose solutions that maximize benefits and minimize harms of AI and technology in policy and public administration contexts at local, national, and international levels.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you will:

1. Summarize prominent forms of digital technology and algorithmic practices that are being adopted in government operations and decision-making.
2. Analyze emerging trends in the use of AI, automated decision systems, and other tools in public agencies and governments, in the U.S., internationally, and at the local level.

3. Assess the benefits as well as risks and challenges associated with implementing these technologies in the public sector, including how the use of new technology is transforming interactions between government and citizens, impacting social welfare, and implicating issues of transparency, accountability, discretion, discrimination, and public trust.
4. Evaluate ethical concerns, biases, and risks to social welfare that may arise from the use of AI and automated decision systems in administering public programs and services, and demonstrate the ability to examine issues from multiple perspectives.
5. Propose governance strategies, policy solutions, and administrative procedures to promote responsible and ethical use of AI and other emerging technologies in the public sector, such as best practices for procurement, implementation, auditing, and public engagement.
6. Locate, evaluate, and integrate reliable, diverse, and high-quality sources of information.
7. Demonstrate effective professional delivery by organizing presentations and communicating your ideas with effective supporting materials.
8. Exercise intellectual autonomy and agency in your critical thinking and dialogue.
9. Model social, ethical, and political sensitivity as you grapple with complex issues.

Teaching Philosophy

It's a privilege to be teaching you this semester about AI and other emerging technologies, and their role in policy and public administration. As a policy scientist and one of the earliest scholars of AI policy and ethics, I have come to appreciate how important, complicated, and fascinating these topics are. I hope you will too during this course.

Whether as 'merely' an informed citizen or as a professional in government, industry, academia, or the non-profit sector, you may very well have the chance to influence how technology is utilized to impact your life and the issues you care about. You will certainly use these tools and be shaped by them. Shaping the direction of technology is harder than it may initially appear, and doing so well requires thoughtfulness, sensitivity, and the ability to approach issues with rigor and from multiple perspectives.

My aim in designing this course is to help you learn the skills you really need to pull this off as a thoughtful scholar and professional, emphasizing your ability to independently find, evaluate, synthesize, and communicate ideas and bring them to fruition. This course therefore emphasizes gradual and ongoing work through projects, collaborative learning and feedback, and quality over quantity of learning.

I know that life can be busy, difficult, and complicated. You might be tempted to skip assignments or do them at the last minute. You might prefer to socialize with friends or check on social media in lieu of doing readings. You might be focused on getting good grades and wondering how each assignment affects your final score, such that you might not "see the forest through the trees."

My strong recommendation for you is to *engage with the material and not worry so much about grades*. If you engage meaningfully in the course, my belief is that you can ‘forget’ about grades, discover what interests you, and learn to enjoy the process, while gaining valuable knowledge and skills.

In short, my main encouragement to you is that **what you get out of a course depends on how much you put into it!** I look forward to learning together with you.

Course Materials

All course materials are in digital format and will be made available via [Brightspace](#); I’ve endeavored to select materials that do not require you to spend additional money to learn.

Each week, you should **work your way through the Brightspace Modules as per the syllabus**. Note that this syllabus is subject to change; the latest version will be available via Brightspace. You are expected to **review your e-mail, Brightspace, and the syllabus regularly to stay up-to-date**.

When you are uncertain about assignments, due dates, or course policies, the first place to look is always the syllabus. Then you may consult a classmate and finally me if you are still unsure.

Policies

Attendance and Engagement. Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and should be a priority for you. Our synchronous sessions will include small group discussions, lectures, activities, presentations, and debates, along with ample time to develop and get feedback on projects. Class is thus indispensable for you to learn, reflect, and develop ideas together, all of which are critical for you having the most meaningful learning experience.

Engaging is also about more than showing up to class. You should come to class prepared to discuss and raise questions about the readings and share progress on your out-of-class activities. You should contribute to learning in class through asking questions, helping facilitate small group discussions, and giving suggestions to your classmates. I encourage you to view class as an opportunity to explore ideas and challenge your thinking, not as a check-the-box exercise. Our class is a safe space to raise questions or concerns, to note criticisms, or to explore tensions. There are no dumb questions and I encourage you to push outside of your comfort zone!

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each course period and lateness will be noted. Two late arrivals count as an unexcused absence unless I am notified in advance of an appropriate reason. Late notice regarding reasons for missing class cannot be considered unless there is compelling evidence, as a matter of fairness to all students. I will provide opportunities for students to check their attendance and report any mistakes, so end-of-semester requests may not be considered.

You can miss three classes unexcused without penalty, which provides you with flexibility. However, **each additional unexcused absence will result in a 2.5-point reduction to your final class grade.** This quickly adds up; excellent students have lost 10-30 points in the past for missing class.

Under [academic regulations](#), excused absences may be granted for cases of grief/bereavement, military service, jury duty, Medically Excused Absences like hospitalizations, and parenting leave. For absences such as these, religious observations, or illness, please send me an email as soon as possible. Other activities, like a family wedding, early holiday flight, or dental appointment are not excused absences under university policy. **If permission is not obtained prior to class**, an absence counts as an unexcused absence unless it is an unanticipated emergency. If other situations arise that affect your attendance in a prolonged manner, we can explore options to help you stay on track. You may also contact the Office of the Dean of Students (765-494-1747).

Use of Technology in the Classroom. Use of a laptop is permitted in class to review readings, take notes, look up relevant information, and support class discussions. I would like you to have access to these tools; as a result, I ask and expect you to use them responsibly. Using your phone or laptop for non-academic purposes is harmful to learning and not polite. I invest a lot to help you learn, so please return this effort, resist the temptation to check your e-mail and social media, and know that a lack of respect for the instructor and your classmates will count against your grade in the course. Class time devoted to class projects should thus not be used for other activities without exception.

Controversies. Some subjects may be controversial, but all topics should be discussed with evidence and respect. In many cases, there are no clear “right” answers. Instead, you should do your best to support your position with evidence (qualitative or quantitative). Try to give the benefit of the doubt to others’ statements and positions, and attempt to find the grain of truth in them.

Professionalism and Communication. Course communications should always be treated as professional. For example, emails should begin with “Dear Professor” or “Hello Dr. Schiff” and end with “Thank you, your name” or “Sincerely, your name.” This is standard professional behavior and good practice for life after college. You may refer to further guidance [here](#). Standards are typically different for doctoral students. As a general rule, I encourage you to defer to the most formal approach and title when interacting with someone for the first time, and then ask their preference before opting for more informal communication approach.

Regarding timeliness, I will do my best to respond to your messages within 24-48 hours but may not respond during evenings or weekends, so messages sent on Friday may not get a response until Monday or Tuesday. These policies help preserve work-life balance and health, something I encourage for you as well. Please note that your professors, like you, are very busy, so I appreciate making good use of our time (e.g., please read the syllabus before asking a basic logistical question). Finally, just because I may send a message at a non-working hour does not mean you need to.

Writing and Language Usage. Communication is an essential skill and this course requires that you make an effort to effectively communicate your ideas. This includes finding and using resources to assist with research, organization, and presentation of ideas. [Purdue's OWL lab](#) is a world-renowned resource; you can refer to it for guidance on many topics (writing quality, citation formats) and [I encourage you to make a student appointment at some point during the semester.](#)

Formatting. Unless otherwise specified in the assignment, citations in written work must follow the [APA](#) format, which is commonly used in social science and can help you in future classes and beyond. All written work (except perhaps bullets and tables/graphics) should be double-spaced in Times New Roman font, and have 12-point font with 1" margins all around. Citations should be in-line with a References section at the end of your writing. Consider using a reference manager like Zotero, EndNote, or Mendeley to make management of references easier.

Late Policy. Unless an exception for unusual circumstances has been agreed upon with your instructor at least 72 hours in advance, a late assignment will result in a one-half grade penalty to the letter grade (e.g., 5 points) if the assignment is submitted later that day, followed by an additional letter grade penalty (e.g., 10 points) for each subsequent 24-hour delay. Assignments later than 48 hours late may be rejected and receive no credit. I want all students to be successful, and I am willing to accommodate illness and emergencies, but this must be communicated well beforehand. [If you are prone to procrastination](#), I recommend scheduling time to work on assignments well before the due date. Let me know if I can help you with time management. That said, if you are debating between possible misconduct to get an assignment in on time versus submitting an assignment late, [always choose the latter and reach out to me.](#)

Grade Appeals. Grade appeals will be accepted no *earlier* than 24 hours and no *later* than 5 days after you receive a graded assignment. Each appeal must include a written explanation of the reason for the appeal and responses to comments on the original assignment. I reserve the right to adjust grades in either direction (i.e., increase or decrease your grade) in response to the appeal.

Extra Credit. I may offer occasional extra credit opportunities involving additional activities related to the course, e.g., attending special events or presenting at a conference. You can also reach out if you identify a worthwhile opportunity. End-of-semester requests will not be considered.

Honors Course. If you wish to participate in the course under the Honors Grade Mode (H), you are responsible for advancing the procedure and all deadlines in a timely fashion according to the guidance [here](#). If you are interested in this option, contact me to discuss the additional assignments and adjustments to the syllabus and grading [no later than the end of the first week of the course.](#)

Academic Integrity. Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. This class abides by the [Purdue Honor Pledge](#): "As a boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue."

All assigned work is expected to be individual, except where indicated otherwise. You are encouraged to discuss assignments with your classmates; however, what you hand in should be your own work. You should review policies on [Student Conduct here](#). This includes the Code of Honor, Statement of Values, Statement of Integrity, Code of Conduct, Bill of Student Rights, etc.

Citations should be used for ideas, statements, comments, etc., that are not common knowledge or your own original thought. Err on the side of avoiding any possible plagiarism. Refer to the [guide](#) from Purdue OWL and ask if you are unsure. In general, you should not be copying text directly, adopting major ideas, or borrowing more than a few words without using quotes and citing the original source. Instead, focus on paraphrasing and citing sources. Credit others for their work!

Having to meet with students and report them to the Dean of Students for plagiarism is the worst part of my job and often the worst part of a student's college experience, so please do us both a favor and remember the shortcuts are not worth it. Remember: don't plagiarize, just use quotes!!

Policy on Chatbots, LLMs, and/or Generative AI. You are permitted to use these tools for particular purposes: background research, to answer specific questions you are curious about, and to generate ideas *after you have done so yourself*. You are not permitted to use these tools to create shortcuts in your work that minimize your engagement with important learning, including becoming a better writer, editor, and coming up with original ideas.

Impermissible usages include: summarizing core course readings instead of reading yourself, auto-generating text (such as class comments) to insert into assignments, auto-improving/modifying text you write, answering homework questions directly, generating ideas or outlines before you have done so yourself, and attempting to pass off AI work as your own.

Permissible usages include: brainstorming after you have brainstormed yourself, background research on any topics or concepts of interest, providing feedback on assignments or drafts, or suggesting edits to your work (provided you include a robust summary of your conversation with the AI system and edits). *If you use these tools in any graded assignment, you are required to submit an addendum* transparently communicating what tasks you engaged in and which tasks AI engaged in, and critically analyze your contributions and the quality of the contributions of the AI.

As a scholar of AI policy and ethics, I take this topic seriously; violations will constitute violations of the Academic Integrity policy. I recommend adhering to the guidelines and asking me when unsure. I also use AI tools as part of my teaching practice, including as part of grading. For example, Perusall uses AI to grade the quality of your comments, though I review your work personally as well.

You are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policies on academic misconduct and AI use. Violations of these policies may result in grade deductions, automatic failure of assignments, and/or automatic failure of the course.

Nondiscrimination Statement. Purdue University [is committed to](#) maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life.

I share these commitments as well as the University's commitment to [freedom of expression](#).

Students with Disabilities. Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

After you have registered through the DRC and as soon as possible, please contact me to [discuss accommodations](#). You can also present a "Letter of Accommodation" to me at any point in the semester. Please know that as someone with a disability myself, I am here to support you.

Mental Health and Well-being. Your well-being is critical to me. School and life can be difficult and *struggling with mental health is extremely common amongst students, staff, and faculty*, so don't feel like you need to struggle alone and *don't be afraid to reach out*. Purdue offers a number of resources, and I am also available to chat or point you in the right direction – just send me an e-mail.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try Purdue's tool called [WellTrack Boost](#). This can provide you some tools, ideas, and resources. If you need additional support and information about other options and resources, please see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 AM – 5 PM).

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, please contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or [go to the CAPS office](#) on the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

If you feel overwhelmed, isolated, embarrassed, or don't know where to start, just contact CAPS.

Support Services. Purdue has many options for both [academic](#) and [personal](#) support that are available. This includes support on food, healthcare, housing, legal services, healthcare, and financial well-being, as well as academic consultations, coaching, and supplemental instruction. You may also contact the [Dean of Students](#) for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Specialists are available to serve students 8 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday.

Violent Behavior Policy. Purdue University is committed to providing a safe and secure campus environment for members of the university community. Purdue strives to create an educational environment for students and a work environment for employees that promote educational and career goals. Violent Behavior impedes such goals. Therefore, Violent Behavior is prohibited in or on any University Facility or while participating in any university activity.

Emergency Preparation. In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or syllabus.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance and Engagement	20%
Course Readings and Notes	25%
Class Debate	10%
Discussion Leadership	5%
Independent Project	40%

Grading Scale

Final letter grades will be determined as follows, with the possibility for bonus points, curving, or penalties depending on your engagement in the course:

A = 100 – 93%

A- = 92 – 90%

B+ = 89 – 87%

B = 86 – 83%

B- = 82 – 80%

C+ = 79 – 77%

C = 76 – 73%

C- = 72 – 70%

D+ = 69 – 67%

D = 66 – 63%

D- = 62 – 60%

F = 59% and below

Bottom Line

My philosophy is that having a meaningful learning experience is more important than your final grade. To have a meaningful learning experience (which should conveniently result in excellent marks as a byproduct), student should plan to complete all assigned readings and be engaged in class. If you can focus on *cultivating* your intrinsic interest and motivation, you can basically ignore grades, and it's a lot more fun! This holds through college and your professional life.

Assignments

Attendance and Engagement (20%)

Please refer to the course policies on attendance and engagement and review them carefully. Consider that this course is built on steady, regular work each week rather than one or two end-of-semester assignments. Plan accordingly. Remember more than 3 unexcused absences results in a 2.5 percentage point deduction to your final grade for each, which can exceed the 20% maximum.

There are also two required surveys that count as 2.5% of your grade each:

Pre-class survey. Prior to the first day of class, you will complete a pre-class survey during which you will provide some information about yourself and your interests to help us get to know one another and to help me make the course better for you.

Midpoint survey. During the middle of the course, you will also complete a survey involving feedback about the course as well as a self-assessment of your own practices and learning.

Additional engagement elements. You may be asked to complete additional activities, like uploading your headshot to your Brightspace account. These are part of your engagement grade. Bonus credit from extra credit assignments and deductions due to inappropriate use of technology in class are also part of your engagement grade.

Course Readings and Notes (25%)

Students sometimes feel they can skip assigned readings. For example, in some technical courses, if you can set up or solve a problem, you may not need to read the textbook to pass an exam.

In this course, readings are not optional. In classes like ours, the act of reading material from new disciplines or grappling with complicated readings *is itself part of the learning*. In fact, in this course, readings are arguably the most important part of the class.

However, the number of readings is purposefully low so that they are not an undue burden. This is a bit of a bargain, a contract between you and me. As a result, you are expected to complete all assigned work, as this is critical to you having a meaningful learning experience. Not doing readings or doing them incompletely may result in pop quizzes or changes to your grade.

All readings or out-of-class assignments are listed in Brightspace and the syllabus and are **due before each class**. You can use Brightspace's calendar to help keep track as well.

You will additionally be asked to keep and share reading notes, and generate at least one answer to one of your own questions for each reading. The purpose of our focus here is to give you a chance

to critically engage with and reflect on the readings, demonstrate that you have done so, and interact with your classmates and thus learn together. You will also complete the course with a full body of notes for posterity! Engaging with classmates, answering their questions, and bringing in outside information are all strongly recommended. Feel free to discuss your reactions, questions, connections with other ideas or issues, flaws you see, and so on.

Your reading grade will be based on the following: 1) the consistency and quality of your course notes; 2) the asking and answering of at least one key question per reading, 3) your self-evaluation of the quality of your engagement scored from 0-5; and 4) adjustments I make.

- First, each student will be assigned a Google doc, shared with the instructor, with a general template to help guide the creation of course notes. You should cover each reading, though your notes do not need to be extensive, beautiful, or grand essays (think 1/2 page to a page).
 - For example, a series of bullet points or 2-4 paragraphs could be sufficient. Screenshots or outside information are welcome. The important thing is to come up with a structure that works for you; if that involves a different type of software or note-taking approach, I'm happy to discuss.
- Second, for each reading, you are likely to encounter at least one question, such as a concept you don't understand, an issue you aren't familiar with, or some other source of confusion, disagreement, or potential exploration. You should identify this question and then do your best to answer it yourself! You can use outside sources any way you like, but should be able to explain the answer yourself.
 - Be prepared to discuss/present your answer each class day when readings are due as a way to *teach your classmates and yourself*. (You can include your answer as part of your notes if you like.)
- Third, for each reading you will self-score your own reading engagement on a 0-5 scale on the Google doc according to the following rubric, as seems most appropriate to you:
 - 5 - Completed all of the reading and robustly engaged with it; prepared at least one thoughtful question/answer
 - 4 - Completed most of the reading and generally engaged well with it; prepared at least one question/answer
 - 3 - Completed less than half of the reading before class and/or engagement was limited (e.g., skimmed significantly); superficial question/answer prepared
 - 2 - Completed little reading before class and/or engagement was very limited (e.g., only read for a fraction of the necessary time); no question/answer prepared
 - 1 - Completed very minimal reading or no assigned reading before class
 - 0 - No reading completed
- Fourth, I reserve the right to adjust scores if your reading engagement self-evaluations appear too high or low. **Notes are due 8:30am each day of class.**

The purpose of this self-assessment is to encourage self-directed learning and reflection and growth on your own learning process. I hope to defer to your self-evaluation as the primary source of the grade. More importantly, the notes document and question/answer preparation can promote better knowledge acquisition, retention, and collaborative learning.

Class Debate (10%)

During Week 11 on AI, Automation, and the Future of Work, we will host our own in-class debate.

Students will be organized into two teams, either in favor of or opposed to the debate proposition. Teams will alternate and each speaker will deliver a 3-minute opening statement. Then, teams will have 5 minutes to jointly discuss and prepare rebuttals. Finally, teams will alternate again so that each speaker delivers a 1-minute rebuttal/closing statement. You may use notes as resources, but not entire scripts/speeches.

You will be graded on the quality of your 1) arguments, 2) evidence, 3) communication/presentation, 4) flow, and 5) teamwork. (0-2 points each for a total of 10.) Prior to the debate, you will have the opportunity to prepare and practice independently and with your team, and to learn some best practices about debating.

Further details about the debate will be communicated through Brightspace and in class.

Discussion Leadership (5%)

Once during the semester, you will help lead the class discussion. This means you will prepare a 5-10 minute summary of the reading for that day, in addition to some discussion questions (or activities). I recommend PowerPoint or other slides to help summarize your ideas, capture key bullets, screenshots of graphics, etc.

You are welcome to use as much of the class time as you like, but you should use at least 15-20 minutes (with 5-10 being a summary of the reading you lead). You will have the chance early in the semester to pick a class date/reading. You will be scored from 1-5 points.

This activity is an opportunity to practice synthesizing, presenting, and communicating a topic of special interest to you. One of the best ways to learn a topic well is to be confident enough that you can teach it. This will also help you practice for the in-class and final presentations. Feel free to come up with creative activities, visualizations, etc. I will be available to provide guidance and feedback.

Independent Project (40%)

The keynote activity is your independent project. During the course of the semester, you will work on this regularly, generally every week. The main deliverables for the project are:

- Your project proposal (2.5%) and initial progress update (2.5%)
- Two other small progress updates presented to the class (5% each)
- Your final presentation (10%)
- Your final project submission (15%)

The overall purpose of the project is to help you build an exceptionally high-quality final product based on regular work, team support, and to build your skills to do so independently, e.g., gathering and synthesizing data, managing a project timeline, etc.

Policies

Your written assignments must follow course policies on citations, formatting, academic misconduct, and use of AI. Make sure to review these carefully. As an incomplete list:

Your documents should also be formatted professionally, e.g., 12-point font, Times New Roman, including a header with basic information like your name, the name of the assignment, the course and semester, instructor name, and date. The late policy will apply, and projects later than 48 hours may not be accepted.

References should be included in text (“in line citations”) using APA and at the end as a Reference section, and do not count towards page length. Do not submit a paper that fails to properly cite sources or that conveys a sequence of words as your writing when it should be quoted. If you draw on a source like Wikipedia or a blog, either cite and quote appropriately, or use material from a different primary source (preferred). See the plagiarism policy for guidance or the link [here](#) if you are unclear about specific ways to cite, quote, or paraphrase sources.

If you use generative AI tools, you must include an addendum describing in detail how these tools were used, with sections specifying: 1) your particular usages of chatbots/large language models/AI, 2) your extent of reliance on these tools, 3) the role that these tools have compared to your own role, 4) evidence/examples of this process, and 5) your reflections on the impact on your learning experience, including benefits and drawbacks. A transparency report template will be provided to you. As a general rule, a transparency report is particularly important when you are using AI for a major assignment or to a significant degree. On the other hand, if you use AI to generate images or to help with PowerPoint slide design, for example, it may be sufficient to include a brief footnote.

Plagiarism or failing to adhere to the policy on generative AI use may result in a letter grade reduction, automatic failure of the assignment or course, and referral to the [OSRR](#).

Project Proposal and Outline

Your project outline (1-2 pages) is due on Friday (9/6) at 5 PM on the third week of the course. You will have several opportunities during the first few weeks to brainstorm your topic. Even though you will have an independent project, you will have a group of teammates to help you brainstorm and receive ongoing feedback. The project is thus both collaborative and solo.

You can consider a wide range of topics. For example, you could focus on a particular sector (criminal justice, healthcare, education, immigration); a particular topic (administrative discretion, citizen-government interaction, or transparency of AI systems). You may wish to scope your project so it is not overly broad (e.g., “AI in government”) or overly narrow. You can identify a project that is both of interest to you and helps to develop skills you would like.

The final project itself can take a wide variety of formats. For example, a 15-20 page paper, a 35-45 minute podcast, a 20-30 minute video, a well-designed website, etc., are all options. You may produce a research paper, a policy brief, a guide or handbook, a series of op-eds, an analysis of interviews, a software tool, and so on. Consider what kind of project would build skills that you may need or lack given your professional path.

Your project proposal should include the following 1) a description of your focus area with appropriate detail, e.g., particular cases or contexts; 2) a motivation for why this topic is important; 3) a discussion of the personal relevance to you, including what particular skills you hope to advance given your professional path; 4) a well-considered timeline at a reasonable level of detail (for example, when you will start performing interviews, drafting the website, or analyzing data).

You will submit your proposal and timeline on Brightspace and present in class for 4-6 minutes to receive feedback. As you brainstorm and write, consider your strengths and weaknesses and where you may need help to succeed at your goals. Remember, everyone else is here to help, so you don't need to have everything figured out.

Finally, when you submit your project proposal, you may elect to perform an ‘AI-enabled’ project. This means you could use AI more than you might normally to help create your content. Electing this option means that AI will be ‘unlocked’ for the purposes of your project. However, this comes with three requirements: 1) it will result in higher expectations (e.g., a longer final paper); 2) you will remain accountable for understanding and communicating the content such that AI use should not undermine your learning and ownership; and 3) you are accountable for the accuracy of content including the possibility of AI-generated hallucinations or plagiarism. This may be an interesting and intriguing option, and we can discuss details for students who take this path.

Progress Updates

Three times during the semester, you will present a short progress update to the class. One of those updates is your initial proposal described above. The progress updates occur during Weeks 4, 8, and 12, and are an opportunity for you to show your progress and seek feedback and support.

Each progress update should take about 4-6 minutes total, with (e.g., 4-5 minutes with 1-2 minutes for feedback). I encourage you to create PowerPoint slides to help clearly convey your project and progress to the class, though other approaches may be permissible. The progress update should help contextualize your work, provide examples and demonstrable evidence of your progress, and can serve as an opportunity for you to explicitly request feedback on challenges you are facing.

You will be graded on the clarity of your presentation and evidence of your meaningful progress. It's okay if you need to deviate from your timeline, but you will want to explain how you are doing so thoughtfully to create SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound).

Final Presentation

During Weeks 15 and 16, you will formally present your near-final project to the class. Each student will have 15-20 minutes, with 2-3 presenters per class session. Again, I encourage the use of slides, but other approaches may be appropriate. For example, you may consider playing segments of your podcast, or doing a live demo of your website or software tool. However, you should not simply display a pre-recorded video.

Your purpose during the final presentation is to help your classmates learn what you have learned. Consider how to structure your presentation to explain and contextualize relevant content, to draw out interesting nuances, to motivate the importance of your work, and to explain your findings or recommendations. Imagine you are presenting to a venture capital firm, a policymaker, or another important stakeholder that you care about.

Final Project

The final version of your project is due 5 PM on Wednesday 12/11. Normal policies about lateness, citations, generative AI, academic misconduct, and formatting apply. The final project should reflect the format decided upon with the instructor. The size or length of the project should be proportionate to the format and difficulty. For example, a 15-20 page paper, a 35-45 minute podcast, a 20-30 minute video, or a well-designed website could be equivalent (assuming the website had a similar amount of content). An AI-enabled project comes with higher expectations for quantity and/or quality of output.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week	Date	Readings (Due Before Class)	Activities	Comment
1. From E-Government to AI-Government	M 8/19	Complete pre-class survey	Introductions	First day of class!
	W 8/21	Syllabus	Review of syllabus & project plan	
	F 8/23	Bovens, M. & Zouridis, S. (2002). From Street-Level to System-Level Bureaucracies. <i>Public Administration Review</i> .		Julian presents
2. National AI Policy and Strategy	M 8/26	Mergel et al. (2023). Implementing AI in the public sector. <i>Public Management Review</i> .		
	W 8/28	Dempsey et al. (2024). Transnational Digital Governance and Its Impact on Artificial Intelligence. <i>The Oxford Handbook of AI Governance</i> .		Jasmine presents
	F 8/30	Schiff, D. S. (2023). Looking through a policy window with tinted glasses: Setting the agenda for U.S. AI policy. <i>Review of Policy Research</i> .		
3. Project Brainstorming Week	M 9/2	No readings		No class – Labor Day
	W 9/4	No readings		No class – Conference
	F 9/6	No readings	Project outline & timeline due 5pm	No class – Conference
4. Introduction to AI Ethics	M 9/9	Fjeld et al. (2020). Principled artificial intelligence: Mapping consensus in ethical and rights-based approaches. <i>Berkman Klein Center</i> .		
	W 9/11	Schiff et al. (2021). AI ethics in the public, private, and NGO sectors: A review of a global document collection. <i>IEEE Transactions on Technology and Society</i> .	Class project updates	
	F 9/13	No readings	Project progress	No class – Conference
Week	Date	Readings (Due Before Class)	Assignments	Comment
5. Implementing Responsible AI	M 9/16	Sadek et al. (2024). Challenges of responsible AI in practice: Scoping review and recommended actions. <i>AI & Society</i> .		

	W 9/18	Lu et al. (2023). Responsible AI Pattern Catalogue: A Collection of Best Practices for AI Governance and Engineering. <i>ACM Computing Surveys</i> .		Lucas presents
	F 9/20	No readings	Project progress	
6. Public Values in Public Administration	M 9/23	Van Noordt, C. & Tangi, L. (2023). The dynamics of AI capability and its influence on public value creation of AI within public administration. <i>Government Information Quarterly</i> .		
	W 9/25	Chen, Y.-C. & Ahn, M. (2024). Governing AI Systems for Public Values: Design Principles and a Process Framework. <i>The Oxford Handbook of AI Governance</i> .		Chenchen presents
	F 9/27	No readings	Project progress	No class – Conference
7. Discretion and Administrative Accountability	M 9/30	Deng, Y. & Sun, Y. (2024). How does the usage of artificial intelligence affect felt administrative accountability of street-level bureaucrats? The mediating effect of perceived discretion. <i>Public Management Review</i> .		Zaman presents
	W 10/2	de Boer, N. & Raaphorst, N. (2021). Automation and discretion: Explaining the effect of automation on how street-level bureaucrats enforce. <i>Public Management Review</i> .		
	F 10/4	No readings	Project progress	
8. AI Procurement and Auditing	M 10/7	No readings		No class – Fall Break
	W 10/9	Schiff et al. (2024). The Emergence of AI Ethics Auditing. <i>Big Data & Society</i> .		Indira presents
	F 10/11	Sloane et al. (2021). AI and Procurement.	Class project updates	
Week	Date	Readings (Due Before Class)	Assignments	Comment
9. Public Engagement and Participatory Governance	M 10/14	Seger et al. (2023). Democratising AI: Multiple Meanings, Goals, and Methods. <i>AIES</i> .		
	W 10/16	Kuo et al. (2023). Understanding Frontline Workers’ and Unhoused Individuals’ Perspectives on AI Used in Homeless Services. <i>CHI</i> .		
	F 10/18	Mid-point survey	Project progress	

10. Project Presentation Prep	M 10/21	No readings	Project progress	No class – Conference
	W 10/23	No readings	Project progress	No class – Conference
	F 10/25	No readings	Debate prep	
11. AI, Automation, and the Future of Work	M 10/28	Bankins et al. (2024). A multilevel review of artificial intelligence in organizations: Implications for organizational behavior research and practice. <i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i> .	Debate prep	
	W 10/30	Nazareno, L. & Schiff, D. S. (2021). The impact of automation and artificial intelligence on worker well-being. <i>Technology in Society</i> .	Debate prep	
	F 11/01	No readings	Class debate	
12. AI in Education	M 11/04			
	W 11/06	Schiff, D. S. & Rosenberg-Kima, R. B. (2023). AI in education: Landscape, vision and critical ethical challenges in the 21st century. In <i>Handbook of Critical Studies of Artificial Intelligence</i> .		Elizabeth presents
	F 11/08	UNESCO. (2023). AI and education: Guidance for policy-makers.		Class project updates due online Sunday 5pm
Week	Date	Readings (Due Before Class)	Assignments	Comment
13. AI in Healthcare	M 11/11	Solanki et al. (2022). Operationalising ethics in artificial intelligence for healthcare: A framework for AI developers. <i>AI and Ethics</i> .		Ink presents
	W 11/13	Liu et al. (2022). The medical algorithmic audit. <i>The Lancet Digital Health</i> .		
	F 11/15	No readings		Guest: James Prater
14. AI in Social Services	M 11/18	Tang et al. (2024). AI Failure Cards: Understanding and Supporting Grassroots Efforts to Mitigate AI Failures in Homeless Services. <i>ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency</i> .		Jack presents
	W 11/20			Ren presents
	F 11/22	No readings	Presentation prep	No class – Conference

15. AI in Criminal Justice	M 11/25	Oswald et al. (2022). The UK Algorithmic Transparency Standard: A Qualitative Analysis of Police Perspectives. <i>SSRN</i> .	Course discussion/wrap-up	
	W 11/27	No readings		No class – Thanksgiving
	F 11/29	No readings		No class – Thanksgiving
16. Final Projects	M 12/2	No readings	Final presentations	
	W 12/4	No readings	Final presentations	Course evaluation
	F 12/6	No readings	Final presentations	Last day of class!
Final Project	W 12/11	Final Project Due 5PM		