# The Psychology of Effective Altruism

**Course Syllabus**

[Updated April 19, 2023]

## Spring 2023, Psychology Department, University of New Mexico

**PSYC 450 section 5, CRN 58342**

**PSYC 650 section 7, CRN 58910**

## Thursdays 1:00 – 3:45 pm

**Logan Hall 125, UNM Main Campus**

## Instructor:

## Geoffrey Miller, Associate Professor of Psychology

Office hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:00 pm, Logan Hall 160

[gfmiller@unm.edu](mailto:gfmiller@unm.edu)

**Welcome**

Welcome to my course on the psychology of Effective Altruism! I am happy that you’re taking it. This course includes some of my favorite ideas, findings, and ethical perspectives, and I love teaching it. I’ve been involved in the Effective Altruism movement for about 7 years, and I think it’s one of most fascinating and useful applications of psychology I’ve ever encountered.

This seminar will cover the psychological challenges of how we can help others more effectively, given the limited resources and trade-offs of a complicated world. It is centered around a new moral movement called ‘Effective Altruism’ (EA), which aims to use reason and evidence to increase well-being and to decrease suffering for sentient beings such as humans, other animals, and other possible sentient beings, such as advanced AI systems.

EA is a fast-growing movement closely allied with the rationality, consequentialist, evidence-based charity, and animal welfare movements. Its focus is on finding large-scale, neglected, solvable problems, and then trying to develop, test, and implement effective solutions -- rather than addressing the suffering of one individual at a time, as is often done in clinical psychology and medicine. We'll address topics such as moral psychology, utilitarianism, charity effectiveness, global poverty, global public health, animal welfare, and existential risks (e.g. nuclear war, bioweapons, Artificial General Intelligence). And we’ll consider issues over many time scales, from handling global pandemics in the next few years, to promoting sentient flourishing throughout the galaxy over millions of years.

Where does the psychology come into play with EA? Well, one problem with trying to do good is that our evolved minds are not very good at figuring out who needs our help the most, or how best to help them given limited resources. We’ll explore the psychology of empathy, compassion, decision making, rationality, cognitive biases, and moral blindspots as they relate to real-world altruism.

This course is most suitable for juniors or senior with a good background in psychology, moral philosophy, decision theory, and/or public policy. The class may be especially interesting to students who are unsure what to do with their lives and careers. We’ll discuss some options you may not have considered, that could result in a much bigger positive impact than more obvious choices.

  Classes will mostly be small-group discussions. There is no required textbook. Required readings will be a mixture of journal papers, book chapters, popular articles, and EA Forum posts. There will also be several required videos to watch before each class. Grades will be based on class discussion and one term paper completed in three stages. We may have a few guest lectures from Effective Altruism experts.

## Background and scope

## This is one of the first classes on Effective Altruism taught at an American university. I’ve taught it three times before at UNM, in 2018, 2019, and 2020. It will be a very interdisciplinary class, drawing ideas, insights, and findings from a wide range of fields and perspectives, including insights from:

* evolutionary psychology, evolutionary biology, biological anthropology, sociology, economics, and behavior genetics.
* the Rationality Movement, including judgment and decision-making research, cognitive biases, Bayesian updating, debiasing training, and critical self-reflection
* moral philosophy, especially utilitarianism, deontological ethics, virtue ethics, and moral signaling
* moral psychology research on moral foundations, the moral circle, empathy vs. rational compassion, and ethical dissonance
* research on charity effectiveness, ethical consumerism, ethical investment, and the psychology of charity, altruism, and consumer choice
* research on global poverty and public health
* research on existential risks (X risks), including nuclear war, engineered pandemics and bioweapons, autonomous lethal weapons, and psychological challenges in thinking about X-risks and far-future well-being
* research on Artificial Intelligence safety, machine ethics, and anthropomorphism
* moral and cognitive enhancement; embryo selection, biomedical interventions, and applied bioethics
* ethics of autonomous humanoid robots, whole brain emulations, virtual reality, the Simulation Hypothesis, and the Singularity
* animal sentience, behavior, and welfare; factory farming, veganism, speciesism, the logic of the larder, wild animal suffering
* career guidance research on the most effective ways to do good through your choice of work, social network, and lifestyle
* the future of altruism, longtermism, ethics for the distant future

**Inclusiveness and diversity**

I want this course to be genuinely inclusive, not just in terms of students’ demographic diversity (across sexes, races, ethnicities, social classes, etc.), but in terms of students’ diversity in intellectual, moral, sexual, political, and religious values and perspectives. You’re welcome in this class whatever your age, race, ethnicity, or national origin. You’re welcome whatever your sex, gender, sexual orientation, relationship orientation (monogamous, polyamorous, open, etc.), and marital status (single, married, divorced, etc.). You’re welcome whether you have kids, or step-kids, or not. You’re welcome whether you’re in the armed services or not, whether you’re a veteran or not. You’re welcome if you’re a student athlete. You’re welcome if you have a disability or mental health issue. You’re welcome whatever your life circumstances, life experiences, and ongoing challenges. You’re welcome whatever your political orientation – whether conservative, liberal, centrist, or other. You’re welcome whatever your views on religion – whether Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Mormon, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, or whatever. You’re welcome whatever your views on other controversial topics.

This course will mostly involve in-class discussion with other students, and it will be important for everybody to try to respect the full demographic, intellectual, and ethical diversity of everybody else.

**Course mechanics**

This syllabus will be crucial to your success in this course. Please read this whole syllabus during the first week of class. Keep it accessible, and refer to it regularly. This is an unusually long syllabus, because I wanted it to include almost everything that might be useful for you to know about the class, right from the start. Students who read this syllabus carefully and repeatedly tend to learn more, and get better grades.

## We will meet once a week for about two and a half hours. I expect you to arrive punctually, with bags unpacked, readings in front of you, and ready to participate, by the start of class. There will be one or two short breaks (5-10 minutes) during each class.

## If you have to miss a class for any reason, please let me know by email as soon as you know you’ll be absent. Unexplained absences will reduce your grade by reducing your class participation score.

Please check your email and Canvas regularly for announcements. I will upload class Powerpoints, readings, and videos to Canvas, and some other useful resources.

This course’s distinctive intellectual, emotional, and moral challenges

Warning 1: Effective Altruism focuses on reducing large-scale suffering and promoting large-scale well-being. This means we will be discussing some distressing topics such as people in developing countries suffering from poverty and infectious diseases, animals suffering in factory farms and in the wild, and ways that humanity might go extinct through catastrophes such as nuclear war, global pandemics, harmful Artificial Intelligence, or other dangerous technologies. This focus on large-scale suffering can be emotionally difficult sometimes. We will also talk a lot about humanity’s potential long-term future over the scale of thousands and millions of years – a cosmic perspective that can be awe-inspiring, but also humbling and dizzying.

Warning 2: Effective Altruism focuses on using reason, evidence, and ethical objectivity to address big, neglected, but solvable problems. It often requires questioning our moral intuitions and cultural values, setting aside our gut-level emotions, considering weird thought experiments, and thinking clearly about issues most people can’t or won’t think clearly about. This requires a lot of self-awareness, intellectual humility, and ethical self-examination. It also requires confronting some hard trade-offs that most people aren’t willing to acknowledge, and prioritizing some issues that are objectively more important ahead of other issues that seem more emotionally compelling.

If you’re OK with handling these challenges, then I think this course can be a fascinating growth experience, both intellectually and morally. If you’re not OK with these challenges, this might not be the right course for you.

**Readings**

Each week there will be several required readings, mostly short journal papers, book chapters, technical reports, or EA Forum posts. There will also be several required videos to watch. These should all take about 3 hours on average per week – sometimes less.

Please do not take this course if you cannot commit about 3 hours a week to doing the readings and viewings. The educational benefits of the course depend on you doing the readings and viewings on time, so you can contribute to class discussions. If you don’t read and watch the assignments, you won’t learn much; if you do read and watch them attentively, you’ll learn a lot. Some of the assignments are harder than others; some weeks require more time than other weeks.

In the course schedule at the end of this syllabus, I will include both the required readings and required videos for each week, plus some optional readings and videos that might interest some of you, or that might be useful for your term papers. (The assignments for Week 2 are already included. I’ll add the required readings and videos for Weeks 3 onwards soon, then I’ll send an updated syllabus.) For each reading, I will also include word-counts of the actual text to read (not including bibliography references), and expected reading time (assuming you can read about 200 words per minute). For the videos, I include the time lengths (in minutes and seconds format, like mm:ss), so you can plan your viewing time. I also add up the subtotals of expected reading times and viewing times for each week. For each reading and video, I include links to sources that you can download or watch.

I recommend printing out hardcopies of the readings so you can highlight and take notes more easily, and bring the highlighted readings to class. It can also be helpful to record and print out some screenshots from the videos, so you remember their contents during class discussions.

I expect all of each week’s required readings and videos to be completed well before class, so you have time to digest them, think about them, compare and contrast them, and prepare intelligent comments and questions about them. Last-minute reading and video watching will not result in good comprehension or good in-class discussion. If you see a word, term, or concept that you don’t understand when reading or watching, don’t just gloss over it and hope for the best; instead, look it up through Google search or Wikipedia. I’ve tried to find good, short, recent, interesting readings and videos that aren’t too technical, but there will be some jargon that you’ll need to look up.

**Videos**

There are three types of videos relevant for this class: required ‘classtime’ videos I’ll play in class, required ‘homework’ videos for you to watch outside of class, and optional videos that might be relevant to your term paper or your interests. I’ve worked hard to find videos that are scientifically accurate, informative, and up-to-date, but that are also clear, funny, entertaining, and visually appealing. Videos can sometimes be better than lectures: many of the videos I’ve assigned are more polished and visually sophisticated, and pack a lot more information into each minute, than any class lecture could.

For the required ‘classtime’ videos that I’ll play in class, I’ll include them in the Powerpoint slides that I post on the Canvas website, and in the Canvas notes for each class. These videos will typically be quite short (usually 2-10 minutes), so they’ll be easy to rewatch later (e.g. at 1.5x speed), to remind yourself of their contents, or when working on your term paper. These will mostly be videos from other researchers, popular science sources, and YouTube channels.

For the required ‘homework’ videos that you should watch before each class, I’ll link them in the Powerpoints, include them in the Canvas notes for each class, and add them to the course schedule at the end of this syllabus (which I’ll update periodically). You should take these required homework videos as seriously as you take the required readings. You should prepare discussion points about them before each class. Expect to watch about 30-60 minutes of required videos per week outside of class.

For the ‘optional’ videos that you can watch outside of class, I’ll link them in the usual ways (Powerpoint, Canvas, course schedule), but they’re truly optional. Mostly they’re suggested in case they’re relevant to your term paper topic. But these can also give you a deeper understanding of the course content, and they might address issues that are personally relevant to you. Some of them are more light-hearted and humorous than the required videos. Others are edgier and more provocative. Some might even be fun to watch and discuss with friends or significant others. You can do very well in the class without watching any of the optional videos. But students who watch at least some of them tend to have more to talk about class discussions, develop a deeper understanding of their term paper topic, and often enjoy the course more.

Note that the videos don’t just repeat the readings: Most of the videos supplement and complement the assigned readings, rather than just repeating the same ideas in the same way. The best way to master complex or abstract ideas is to see them presented in different ways, written and in video, explained by different people, using different stories, metaphors, and illustrations. You’ll need to both read the required readings and watch the required videos to succeed in this class.

**How to get the most out of the videos**

When you’re watching the homework and optional videos outside of class, or

reviewing the in-class videos later, it’s good to be thoughtful about your video-watching experience, so you get the most out of the videos. Here are my recommendations:

* Use good internet speed. If you have higher-speed Internet (at least 50-100 Mbps), the videos will play more smoothly, at higher resolution, so they’ll look awesome. Many internet service providers now offer student discounts on their service plans – it pays to shop around; you can often get higher speeds for less money than you’re paying now.
* Get a YouTube account. Most of the videos are on YouTube. I recommend creating a free [YouTube account](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/161805) if you don’t have one yet. This makes it easy to save each video to your own playlists, so you can keep them organized, and see what you’ve watched and what you haven’t. You could even set up a different playlist for each week of class, or separate lists of ‘videos I’ve watched already’, ‘videos I need to watch this week’, ‘optional videos that look fun’, etc. To avoid YouTube ads, I also recommend upgrading to a [YouTube Premium](https://www.youtube.com/premium) account. This is normally $12/month, but you might qualify for a [YouTube premium student membership](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/9158808) for about $7/month.
* Big screen: The best way to watch the videos is to stream them to a full-sized TV at home, so you can see all the visual detail and have a full audiovisual experience like you would in a lecture hall or a movie theater. The second best is to stream them on a PC screen, laptop, or tablet. The worst is to try to watch them on your phone – you just won’t see enough of the visual detail for the videos to make much sense, and you’ll be too distracted to pay attention. It’s usually best to watch the videos in full screen mode, without any other distractions on your screen or any other browser tabs open.
* Headphones: If you live with other people, and especially if you’re listening at higher playback speeds and pausing the videos to take notes, it’s considerate to watch the videos with headphones. That can also help you concentrate on the videos without distraction. It can also keep your significant other and/or housemates much happier.
* When to watch: Treat the video-watching seriously, like you would take an in-class lecture seriously. Personally, I find that I pay the most attention to videos if I’m watching on my computer at my desk, on a laptop at a dining table, or on a full-size TV sitting on a sofa, with phone off and no distractions.
* Pace yourself: Don’t try to binge-watch all the assigned videos for each week in one sitting. Take some breaks. Many of the videos are quite short, but they pack in a lot of information. Give yourself a little time to think about each one, and to take some notes, before you watch the next one.
* Playback speed: Some of the videos are presented at a leisurely pace, or they’re interviewing people who talk a bit slowly, so you can play them back at a higher speed. When the video’s playing on YouTube, click on the gear icon (for settings) in the lower right under the video, select ‘playback speed’, and try it at 1.25 (25% faster than normal) or 1.5 (50% faster than normal) if you want to speed it up. Or try .75 (75% of normal speed) if you need to slow it down. Watch at whatever speed maximizes your understanding of that particular video.
* Watch twice: I recommend watching each video once, all the way through, to soak in the overall themes and ideas. Then, a day or so later, watch it a second time, maybe at a higher playback speed, and pause it whenever you want to make some notes, or Google a term you don’t understand, or refer back to your required readings. Students who watch the videos with this strategy tend to offer better comments and questions in the class discussions.
* Research the speakers: Many of the videos include talks or interviews with researchers mentioned in required readings – or who wrote the required readings themselves. It can be useful to Google these researchers to find out a little more about them. You can even email the researchers and ask them questions! Many researchers like hearing from students. Spreading their ideas is the whole reason they did the videos, talks, or interviews in the first place, and it’s rewarding to know that students out there in exotic New Mexico are paying attention.
* Take good notes: For class discussions, it’s much harder to review videos than to flip through your printed readings. One way to supplement your notes is to take a few screenshots from the videos, and have them ready to hand.

**Other optional resources**

At my [personal website](http://www.primalpoly.com), you can find lots of further information about my research, books, journal papers, magazine articles, talks, collaborators, interviews, podcasts, art exhibitions, consulting work, other classes, and recommended readings. In particular, there’s a list of over 400 recommended [nonfiction books](https://www.primalpoly.com/recommended-books-nonfiction) with brief descriptions, organized by topic, including many EA-related topics. Good summer reading! I also have a [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/geoffreymillerphd) with about 30 videos, mostly on evolutionary psychology and sexuality topics.

**Grading.**

There will be no tests or exams in this course. Instead, your grade will depend on two kinds of work:

* **40%: class attendance, participation, and discussion points** (see below)
* **60% of grade: one term paper**, due in three stages (see below)

# Class attendance, participation, and discussion points: 40% of final grade

Most of our class time will be spent discussing the readings and videos. Sometimes I’ll give little mini-lectures for a few minutes on particular ideas or findings that might need explaining.

So, I expect regular attendance, knowledge of assigned readings and videos, active participation and intellectual engagement, and thoughtful questions and commentaries about the readings. I will keep records of who attends each class, who asks good questions and makes insightful comments, who seem to have done the readings conscientiously, and who contributes to making this class an intellectually vibrant and rewarding experience for the other students.

**Before each class, you should write down at least one good discussion point about each assigned reading and video**. Since there are usually three to six assigned readings and three to six videos for each class, you should have at least six to twelve discussion points ready to go.

Each discussion point can be just a sentence of two. It could be a thoughtful comment, question, critique, or comparison to other readings, theories, or findings. It should not just summarize the reading or video, but should show that you have understood it, and developed your own thoughts in response. It should not just be a personal reaction or anecdote vaguely related to the assigned, but it could relate its ideas to current events, controversies, or real-life issues. Of course, your discussion points can also integrate two or more readings and videos – for example, comparing and contrasting different views from different authors or presenters, or finding hidden common ground between readings or videos that seem not to agree with each other.

The best discussion points do not just show off how clever you are, but are effective at getting other students engaged in the intellectual life of our class. You’ll learn as the term progresses what kind of comments are good discussion-sparks.

If you haven’t understood the reading or video well enough to prepare a discussion point, that’s OK. But you should be ready to say what specific theories, concepts, or findings you found most confusing, and why. If you didn’t understand something, other students probably didn’t either, and we should discuss and clarify it!

You should write down these discussion points before each class, expressed clearly and concisely enough that you can read them our loud quickly. If you’re a bit introverted, or speak English as a second language, knowing that you have good discussion points written down ahead of time will make it easier for you to speak up without feeling awkward.

I won’t collect these discussion points, but I will call on students to read them aloud to the class. If I call on you and you haven’t done that particular assignment or prepared a thoughtful comment, your participation grade will be lower for that class. If I call on you and you have a great comment that sparks a lot of discussion, your participation grade will be higher.

Class rules

Your classmates deserve your civility, respect, and cooperation. Many UNM students have worked hard to get to this university, work hard to get the grades and pay the tuition to stay here, and have many conflicting responsibilities, such as part-time work, children, spouses, elderly parents, volunteer work, sports, etc. Please appreciate how much your classmates are paying to be here, the sacrifices they have made to attend UNM, and the value of their time.

To help everybody learn as much as they can from this course, there are some class rules, which I enforce strictly:

* Do not arrive late. Near the start of each class, I’ll take attendance. It is best to have a seat and be ready for class by five minutes before class. Learn how long you’ll need to find parking. (Of course, we’re all late sometimes, for valid reasons, and that’s OK, but I want to strongly discourage habitual lateness.)
* Do not leave early. Do not start to pack up your notes and books before class ends, unless we’re clearly finished with class early, or if you have a genuine emergency.
* During discussions, be thoughtful, respectful, and constructive. Remember my section about the diversity of student backgrounds and viewpoints, and the section on this course’s distinctive challenges.
* Do not eat food in class. It’s distracting to other students. Safely sealed drinks (e.g. water bottles or coffee cups with lids) are OK to bring and to drink during class.
* Minimize use of phone and electronics in class. This will be a small seminar class where any use of phones or electronics can be very distracting to other students. So, keep your mobile phone in silent mode, screen off, and tucked away out of sight. Do not use your phone during class to call, text, or engage with social media (except during breaks). If you must remain available for a child or other dependent, set your phone to vibrate silently. Any other use of phones or tablets in class can be very annoying to other students around you. Every class will include one or two breaks when you can check your messages and text your friends. If you want to use a tablet or laptop to take notes during my lectures, that’s OK, but please keep your typing as quiet and unobtrusive as possible, and remember that you won’t need to type anything that’s already on Powerpoint slides, which will be shared through Canvas.
* Do not come to class if you are too tired or ill to participate properly; do not come if you have a cold and are likely to be infectious. I’ll generously give excused absences for illness; just email me and let me know.
* If you are a student athlete or active duty military, please let me know in advance when you will need to miss classes and quizzes due to travel, events, or other duties.
* If someone else in class is violating any of these rules: please raise your hand to let me know, or speak to me privately during the break or after class.

## Term paper due in 3 stages: 60% of final grade

The term paper determines 60% of your course grade, and will be developed in three stages that will be graded separately. You can choose any topic related to the course content. The final paper should be about 3,000 words, plus references – that’s about 12 pages double-spaced. I care more about clarity, insight, research, and the flow of argument than about length per se.

The final term paper must be in standard APA (American Psychological Association) research paper format. If you’re not familiar with APA style, skim the *APA Publication Manual* for details, or see one of the online sites that summarizes its key points, such as [this](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/). All three stages should be printed single-sided on standard size white paper, with 1 inch margins, double-spaced, in 12 point Arial or Times Roman font.

For graduate students, my goal is for you to produce a paper that could serve as a useful part of your master’s thesis, comprehensive examination, or dissertation – or that you could develop into a paper that you could submit to a decent journal as a review or commentary piece.

For undergraduates, my goal is for you to produce a paper that you’d be proud to share in job applications or applications to graduate schools.

To make sure that you are thinking, researching, and writing the paper on a good schedule throughout the semester, you’ll submit the three assignments about one month apart. I’ve used this system in many previous classes, and it really helps students pace their work and avoid any last-minute panic about their papers.

Stage 1 (due in Class Thurs Feb 23): Provisional title, abstract, and annotated bibliography due in class (10% of final course grade).

Turn in a hardcopy document in class that day, including:

1) A provisional title, ideally about 8-20 words, that concisely explains what you think you’ll write about for the rest of the term. (Also include your name!) The title should be clear, concise, detailed, and take a stand on some issue in emotions research. A bad example title would be “The end of factory farming” – it’s too vague. A better example title would be “The consumer psychology of ethical food choice: How much will lab-grown meat reduce demand for factory-farmed meat?” If you change your mind about your topic later, no problem, just tell me in an email later. Pick a topic that you feel passionate about – you’ll have to live with it for several months!

2) A one-paragraph abstract, in APA format, ideally about 150-250 words. Your title alone should give me a clear idea what you expect to write about. This abstract should go into more detail, demonstrating that you’ve already been doing some background reading about your topic, and you’re already starting to develop some of your own ideas. It should give me a sense of how you’ll structure your final term paper, how your flow of argument will go, and what kind of examples and findings you’ll use to support your points. The best abstracts have no wasted words or fluff: they get straight to the point and have real detail.

3) A provisional bibliography, after the abstract, listing about 10 to 20 sources relevant to your topic that you have actually read. Most of them should be journal papers, posts from EA-related online forums such as [EA Forum](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/) or [LessWrong](https://www.lesswrong.com/) (including links), or relatively serious videos; a few could be books (if you really had time to read them). They should not all be from the syllabus here – you should use UNM’s online library resources and Google Scholar to find additional journal papers. In citing them, use standard APA reference format, e.g. as explained [here](http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa).

Also, you should explain each reference’s relevance to your topic with a brief annotation right after the APA citation. A bad annotation would be “Reviews worms, brains, and poverty”. A good annotation would be “This paper critically reviews 18 recent randomized controlled trials testing the effects of deworming on cognitive abilities and economic growth.”

After I get this initial submission from you, I will write comments and suggestions on it and return it as soon as I can (hopefully the next week).

**Stage 2 (due in class Thurs March 30): Revised abstract, outline, and annotated bibliography due in class (20% of course grade).**

Before doing this assignment, you should consider very carefully the comments and suggestions that I gave on your stage 1 assignment. Students who take my feedback seriously tend to get better grades.

The assignment format here is similar: turn in a hardcopy documentin class that day, printed single-sided on standard size white paper, with 1 inch margins, double-spaced, in 12 point Arial font. This assignment should include:

1) A revised title – ideally, more precise, detailed, and exciting than before, but still about 8-20 words; include your name under the title.

2) A revised abstract that shows further research, thought, and organizational strategy, still about 150-250 words

3) An outline, around 2 pages long, that shows the planned structure of your paper. It should clearly show your flow of argument, and the specific theories, findings, and issues that you’ll consider.

The outline should include about 4 to 7 section headings that describe the overall organization of your term paper. A bad section heading would be a vague place-holder, such as “Introduction” or “Conclusion”. A good section heading would be much meatier, e.g. “Introduction: Three cognitive obstacles to consequentialist thinking about long-term X-risk”. Under each section heading, you should have outline entries that show how you’ll flesh out your arguments. A bad entry would be “Singer’s ideas.” A good entry would be “Singer’s support for transhumanist bioethics”. Outline entries can also cite bibliography entries as above. If you develop a really good outline at this stage, the final term paper will be much easier to write.

4) A revised annotated bibliography. This should include about 20 to 30 references that you have actually read, and that you plan to cite in the final paper. Also include annotations (as in Stage 1) that explain the reference’s relevant to your paper.

After I get this second submission from you, I will write comments and suggestions on it and return it as soon as I can. This should allow you to submit a really good final draft, and I hope it will help you improve your writing generally.

##### Stage 3 (due Thurs May 4 in class): Final term paper due (30% of course grade):

This should be the culmination of three months of research, thinking, and writing about a topic that passionately interests you. It should take seriously my feedback on the stage 1 and 2 assignments. It must be in standard APA (American Psychological Association) research paper format; see the *APA Publication Manual* for details. This means double-spaced, single-sided, in 12 point Arial font, with a proper title page, abstract, references, and page numbering. It should be a well-polished document, thoroughly proofread, with very few spelling or grammatical errors.

The final term paper should include the following:

* Title: a clear, descriptive, engaging title, about 8-20 words, and your name
* Abstract: a concise, punchy abstract that interests the reader in your paper, about 150-250 words
* Introduction: Start with a bang. Pose the problem that interests you, and how you’ll approach it. Say where you stand, and why the reader should care. Be specific and clear; mix the theoretical level with real-life examples and issues.
* Body of the paper: depending on what you’re writing about, this could include a literature review, a series of arguments and counter-arguments, an overview of relevant ideas and research from a related area or field, a series of methodological analyses, criticism, and suggestions, or anything that advances your points. If you include literature reviews, don’t do generic overviews of a topic – review the literature with a purpose, critically, as it pertains to your topic.
* Research proposal: towards the end of your paper, sketch out a new empirical study that could resolve one of the issues you’ve raised in your paper. This could be a brief outline of a proposed experiment, an observational study, analysis of an archival dataset, randomized controlled field trial, technical AI safety proposal, or any other approach you think would be appropriate. You should explain what data would be collected, how it would be analyzed (roughly), and how the results would give insight into one of your paper’s key outstanding questions. Typically this research proposal should be one or two paragraphs.
* Annotated Bibliography: This should include about 20 to 30 good, relevant references that you’ve actually read; only some of them should be from this class syllabus. If your bibliography includes good, relevant papers and books that I haven’t read before, I will be impressed. As in Stages 1 and 2, include annotations that indicate how each references relates to your paper’s overall theme.

**Credit Hour Statement**

This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for one 165-minute session of direct instruction for fifteen weeks during the Fall 2022 semester. Please plan for a minimum of six hours of out-of-class work each week, including doing the assigned readings and video watching, preparing discussion points, and working on your term paper.

Support: [Center for Academic Program Support](https://caps.unm.edu/) (CAPS). Many students have found that time management workshops can help them meet their goals (consult ([CAPS](https://caps.unm.edu/)) website under "services").

**Accommodation Statement**

UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact Accessibility Resource Center at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone at (505) 277-3506.

**Academic Integrity Requirements**

We all have shared responsibility for ensuring that learning occurs safely, honestly, and equitably. Submitting material as your own work that has been generated on a website, in a publication, by an artificial intelligence algorithm (such as Chat GPT), by another person, or by breaking the rules of an assignment constitutes academic dishonesty. It is a student code of conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure. Off-campus paper writing services, problem-checkers and services, websites, and AIs can be incorrect or misleading. You can only learn the course material if you complete and submit your own work. UNM preserves and protects the integrity of the academic community through multiple policies including policies on student grievances (Faculty Handbook D175 and D176), academic dishonesty (FH D100), and respectful campus (FH CO9). These are in the [Student Pathfinder](https://pathfinder.unm.edu) and the [Faculty Handbook](https://handbook.unm.edu).

**Safety**

UNM offers several resources to help keep Lobos safe:

* [LoboGuardian](https://loboguardian.unm.edu/) is a mobile app that increases user safety by creating a virtual safety network of friends and family.
* [Lobo Alerts](https://loboalerts.unm.edu/) is UNM’s emergency text messaging system that can inform you of any emergencies, dangers, or criminal activity on campus.
* UNM campus has blue light emergency phones. UNM Police Department, (505) 277-2241, offers a free escort service for safety
* For concerns such as sexual misconduct, bullying, hazing see the [LoboRespect Advocacy Center](https://loborespect.unm.edu/)
* For counseling & health services, see [Student Health and Counseling](https://shac.unm.edu/)
* If you are feeling depressed, anxious, in danger of self-harm, or just need someone to talk to, call the [Agora Crisis Center](http://www.agoracares.org/) at (505) 277-3013.

**Other support**

UNM has many other resources and centers to help you thrive, including [opportunities to get involved](https://sac.unm.edu/), [mental health resources](https://mentalhealth.unm.edu/), [academic support including tutoring](https://caps.unm.edu/), [resource centers](http://student.unm.edu/) for people like you, free food at [Lobo Food Pantry](https://loborespect.unm.edu/services/lobo-food-pantry.html), and [jobs on campus](https://stuemp.unm.edu/). Your advisor, staff at the [resource centers](http://student.unm.edu/) and [Dean of Students](http://dos.unm.edu/), and I can help you find the right opportunities for you.

**Schedule of topics and readings week by week**

Note: Each reading includes word count and expected reading time (assuming 200 words per minute reading speed). Each video includes duration of content in minutes and seconds (mm: ss).

## Class 1: Jan 19: Course overview and mechanics

Required videos: none

Required readings: none

## Class 2: Jan 26: Introduction to Effective Altruism

Required videos:

* Caring about future people is common sense. Will MacAskill on The Daily Show. (2022). [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkB3Zq3zoR4). (11:56 mins).
* Effective Altruism: A global movement of do-gooders (2022). Global News channel. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uu_w2wCcaWU). (9:23 mins)
* Highlights from EA Global: San Francisco (2022). Centre for Effective Altruism channel. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPfW3JeNfUU). (2:09 mins)
* There are vast tragedies happening right now that we are failing to see (2021). Rational Animations channel. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_ayq66t77U). (7:18 mins)
* Longtermism: An idea that could save 100 billion trillion lives. (2021). Rational Animations channel. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvehj0KvzK8). (6:11 mins)

Subtotal: 38 mins

Required readings:

* Four ideas you already agree with (2022) by Sam Deere. [Link](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/blog/four-things-you-already-agree-with-effective-altruism). (1,400 words; c. 7 mins)
* What is Effective Altruism? (2020) by Centre for Effective Altruism. [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/s/B79ro5zkhndbBKRRX/p/ZhNaizQgYY9dXdQkM). (3,000 words; c. 15 mins)
* 500 million, but not a single one more (2014) by Jai. [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/s/B79ro5zkhndbBKRRX/p/jk7A3NMdbxp65kcJJ). (700 words, c. 4 mins)
* The world is awful. The world is much better. The world can be much better (2022) by Max Roser. [Link](https://ourworldindata.org/much-better-awful-can-be-better). (1,200 words; c. 6 mins)
* Jaeger, B., & van Vugt, M. (2022). Psychological barriers to effective altruism: An evolutionary perspective. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 44*, 130-134. (3 pages, 1,500 words, 8 mins) [Link](https://pure.uvt.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/65618828/SP_Jaeger_psychological_barriers_to_effective_altruism_COiP_2022.pdf)

Subtotal: 7,800 words, 39 mins

Optional videos:

* Welcome to Effective Altruism. Peter Singer. Ethics Lectures. (2022). [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kLhw2ojMR4). (6:39 mins)
* Introduction to Effective Altruism for Christians. (2021). EA for Christians channel. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br8NVfpiUs8). (5:00 mins)
* The Egg: A short story by Andy Weir. (2019). Kurzgesagt. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6fcK_fRYaI). (7:54 mins)

Subtotal: 20 mins

## Class 3: Feb 2: Cause prioritization: Evidence-based analysis

Required videos:

* Bjorn Lomborg: Global priorities bigger than climate change (2007). TED. (17:27 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dtbn9zBfJSs)
* Why farmed animals? Cause prioritization explained. (2019). Animal Charity Evaluators. (2:14 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCH5Es9Avqg)
* What are the most important moral problems of our time? (2018). Will MacAskill TED talk. (11:54 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyprXhvGVYk)
* Our top 3 lessons on how not to waste your career on things that don’t change the world (2018). 80,000 Hours. (6:45 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xsR0XBwyo4)
* Fable of the dragon-tyrant (2018). CGP Grey. (12:43 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZYNADOHhVY)

Subtotal: 51 mins

Required readings:

* Scope insensitivity: Failing to appreciate the numbers of those who need our help. Animal Ethics. (1,300 words; c. 7 mins) [Link](https://www.animal-ethics.org/scope-insensitivity-failing-to-appreciate-the-numbers-of-those-who-need-our-help/)
* On caring. (2014). Nate Soares (‘So8res’), EA Forum (2,900 words; c. 15 mins) [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/posts/hkimyETEo76hJ6NpW/on-caring)
* Marginal impact (2022). Probably Good. (1,000 words; c. 5 mins) [Link](https://www.probablygood.org/post/marginal-impact)
* Global priorities research (2022). Roman Duda for 80,000 Hours. (4,400 words; 22 mins) [Link](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/global-priorities-research/)
* EA Survey 2020: Cause prioritization. (2021). David Moss, EA Forum. (1,000 words, c. 5 mins). [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/posts/83tEL2sHDTiWR6nwo/ea-survey-2020-cause-prioritization)

Subtotal: 54 mins

Optional videos:

* What is triage? (2017). ACCESS Specialty Animal Hospital. (1:18 mins). [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWqx8t5QwXU)
* The Eisenhower matrix: How to manage your tasks. (2012). Eisenhower. (2:24 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tT89OZ7TNwc)
* One billion dollars. (2011). Gustavo A. Rios. (3:25) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJrnf1l2AFQ)
* Why die? (2017). CGPT Grey. (4:35 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C25qzDhGLx8)
* Why age? (2017) Kurzgesagt. (6:48 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoJsr4IwCm4)

Subtotal: 19 mins

### Class 4: Feb 9: Utilitarian philosophy and psychology

Note: This class is cancelled, due to Geoffrey being out of town; material for this class will be combined with Class 5

### Class 5: Feb 16: Moral psychology, the moral circle, empathy, and dissonance

Note: This week includes some material that normally would appear in Class 4.

Required videos:

* Philosophy: Utilitarianism: Peter Singer (2017) Hay Levels (2:54 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRPE0IImxzs)
* Utilitarianism: Crash Course Philosophy #36 (2016) CrashCourse (10:00) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a739VjqdSI)
* The psychology of morality (2022). Professor Dave Explains (16:49 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6MGnSd26XE)
* Joshua Green on learning to use our moral brains (2012). CID Harvard (18:13 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_-vleKVkMec)
* Why I’m against empathy: Paul Bloom (2022) Big Think (4:54 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VUpo28aAks)
* The moral roots of liberals and conservatives: Jonathan Haidt (2012). Ted-Ed. (18:39 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SOQduoLgRw)

Subtotal: 72 mins

Required readings:

* A utilitarian FAQ (2000). Ian Montgomerie. (10,000 words; 50 mins) [Link](http://dragice.fr/utilitarianism/faq.html) [Note: You only need to read the sections through ‘Common questions about utilitarianism’; you don’t need to read the 27 ‘Common criticisms of utilitarianism’)
* Moral psychology for the twenty-first century (2013). Jonathan Haidt, J. of Moral Education, 42(3), 281-297. (7,000 words; 35 mins) [Link](https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1362748/files/81005739/download?wrap=1)
* Empathy and its discontents (2016) Paul Bloom, Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 21(1), 24-31. (4,700 words; 24 mins) [Link](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1120576/files/43931368/download?verifier=2GV3Lz8HfCwwaAcXZOYIBDZwhtWdJbCcMzeeZwYu&wrap=1)
* Is it time to take the ‘you’ out of utilitarianism? (2022) Charles Kenny, Center for Global Development. (1,600 words; 8 mins) [Link](https://www.cgdev.org/blog/it-time-take-you-out-utilitarianism)

Subtotal: 117 mins

Optional videos:

* The psychology of moral grandstanding: Brandon Warmke (2019). Big Think. (7:18 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNQqst5o3X4)
* Why moral people tolerate immoral behavior: Liane Young (2020) Big Think (5:04 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0K6ZsFM6eIw)
* Why your brain loves feeling outraged and punishing people’s bad behavior: Molly Crockett (2017) Big Think (6:46 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3z3UoO8JdOo)
* Born good? Babies help unlock the origins of morality (2012). CBS News (13:32 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRvVFW85IcU)

Subtotal: 33 mins

**Class 6: Feb 23: Effective charities, ethical consumerism, and virtue-signaling**

##### *\*\*Term paper stage 1 due in class: Provisional title, abstract, and bibliography*

Required videos:

* How to find the highest impact charities (2021). Giving What We Can (12:49 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgZssMf18eM)
* Ethical consumerism (2022) Ethical consumer (2:59 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRqlk1ogCls)
* What makes a company ethical? (2022) Ethical consumer (7:26 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6UB5_x6rTU)
* Effective altruism and virtue signaling: Diana Fleischman interviews Geoffrey Miller (2019). Geoffrey Miller channel. (40:29 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_XcGWm-5BM)

Subtotal: 64 mins

Required readings:

* Process for identifying top charities (2022). GiveWell. (2,100 words; 10 mins) [Link](https://www.givewell.org/how-we-work/process)
* Why is it so expensive to save lives? (2022). GiveWell (800 words; 4 mins) [Link](https://www.givewell.org/cost-to-save-a-life)
* What are the best charities to donate to in 2023? (2023) Giving What We Can (1,800 words; 9 mins) [Link](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/best-charities-to-donate-to-2023)
* Miller, G. F. (2012). Sex, mutations, and marketing. EMBO Reports, 13(10), 880-884. (2,700 words; 14 mins) [Link](https://www.primalpoly.com/s/2012-sex-mutations-marketing.pdf)
* Conspicuous consumption will be considered unthinkable 50 years from now (2019) Peter Singer in Vox. Link (700 words; 4 mins) [Link](https://www.vox.com/2019/3/27/18188801/conspicuous-consumption-luxury-items)

Subtotal: 41 mins

Optional videos:

* What charity really means (2016). The School of Life (4:50 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPjhpXTpHjs)
* Consumer ethics (2016) Isaac Manley (3:21 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMaH5zNtQJk)
* Why invest ethically? (2020). Wealthify. (1:50 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDoeMas0MhQ)
* Sustainable selves (2019, based on a 2013 book chapter) Geoffrey Miller channel (22:10 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gKlSidtsXE)
* Waste is good (2019, based on a 1996 essay) Geoffrey Miller channel (41:48 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhF9JNqe6IA)

**Class 7: March 2: Global poverty and health**

Required videos:

* A selfish argument for making the world a better place: Egoistic altruism (2018) Kurzgesagt (7:14 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvskMHn0sqQ)
* Poverty & our response to it (2017) CrashCourse (8:53 mins) [Link](https://youtu.be/D5sknLy7Smo)
* Overpopulation & Africa (2019) Kurzgesagt (7:42 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMo3nZHVrZ4)
* Is giving money directly to the poor a good idea? (2015) ReasonTV (8:20 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOH9KNPK7lA)
* Cash transfer recipients in Kenya tell their stories (2020) GiveDirectly (3:12 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0fa5fwY8Dc)
* Cardano Africa: A vision for Africa with Charles Hoskinson (2021) Input Output (8:37 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BelJzA4Ihdo)
* Bed nets for Benin (2020) Bill Gates (3:25 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsHymWNurRc)
* The most gruesome parasites: Neglected tropical diseases (2016) Kurzgesagt (5:42 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNWWrDBRBqk)
* The fly catchers fighting river blindness (2016) Al Jazeera English (3:00 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vc_h36BZ7zI)

Subtotal: 56 mins

Required readings:

* Global health and development (no date) Jess Whittlestone. Effective Altruism. (4,000 words; 20 mins) [Link](https://www.effectivealtruism.org/articles/cause-profile-global-health-and-development)

Subtotal: 20 mins

Optional videos:

* Extreme poverty: Choices (2014) USAID Video (2:12 mins) [Link](https://youtu.be/xM7KozmQcSw)
* There is only one way out of poverty (2017) PragerU (4:10 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfE_BrnP5fg)
* A counterintuitive solution to poverty: Stop trying to eradicate it: Efosa Ojomo (2019) TEDx Talks (9:25 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RZv-1TKFMQ)
* Why is it so hard to escape poverty? Ann-Helen Bay (2022) TED-Ed (4:45 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9N7QaIOkG8)
* Joy Sun: Should you donate differently? (2014) TED (7:39 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bArH8r8jJ4g)
* Universal basic income explained: Free money for everybody? (2017) Kurzgesagt (10:05 mins) [Link](https://youtu.be/kl39KHS07Xc)

**Class 8: March 9: Existential risks: Psychology and practicalities**

Required videos:

* The 4 greatest threats to the survival of humanity (2022) TED-Ed (5:23 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WP6T4MH0Dn4)
* The precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity: Toby Ord (2020) Centre for Effective Altruism (20:12 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrMIEz_mSJM)
* Doomsday Machine author Daniel Ellsberg says Americans have escaped self-annihilation by luck (2017) PBS NewsHour (7:00 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8uSaUkat8Q)
* How synthetic biology could wipe out humanity: Rob Reid (2019) TED (16:36 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DDgHq9ewOo)
* Psychology of existential risk and longtermism: Stefan Schubert (2019) Centre for Effective Altruism (26:58 mins; Note: you only need to watch the first 19 minutes, before the Q&A) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FR9lZGKL1Dg) [Note 2: A full transcript of this video is available [here](https://www.effectivealtruism.org/articles/ea-global-2018-psychology-of-existential-risk)]
* Why alien life would be our doom: The great filter (2018) Kurzgesagt (9:35 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjtOGPJ0URM)

Subtotal: 77 mins

Required readings:

* The case for reducing existential risk (2017/2022) by Ben Todd, 80,000 Hours. (7,200 words; 36 mins) [Link](https://80000hours.org/articles/existential-risks/)

Subtotal: 36 mins

Optional videos:

* Peter Singer: Extinction risk & Effective Altruism (2014) Science, Technology, (6:57 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uh8nFrp9FFI)
* Existential risk: Managing extreme technological risk (2017) CSER Cambridge (13:01 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZl32AtvGtw)
* Effective altruism, existential risk, and existential hope: Max Tegmark (2017) Centre for Effective Altruism (35:10 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2f1lmNqbgrk)
* Everything might change forever this century (or we’ll go extinct) (2022) Rational Animations (32:34 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K25VPdbAjU)
* Engineered viruses are the new biological weapons (2019) Seeker (9:18 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBBIfGaml0c)

Subtotal: 97 mins

**(No class March 16: UNM Spring Break)**

**Class 9: March 23: Artificial Intelligence as an X-risk: Psychology and ethics**

Required videos:

* The power of intelligence (2023) Rational Animations. (Based on a 2007 essay by Eliezer Yudkowsky). (7 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9Figerh89g)
* What is Artificial Intelligence? (2019) Simplilearn (5 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad79nYk2keg)
* Journalist had a creepy encounter with new tech…. (2023) CNN (7 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f24JL0nnhcA)
* Slaughterbots (2019) Dust (8 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-2tpwW0kmU)
* Aligning AI systems with human intent (2022) OpenAI (4 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWDUzNiWPJA)
* Is AI a species-level threat to humanity? (2020) Big Think. (17 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91TRVubKcEM)

Subtotal: 48 mins

Required readings:

* Preventing an AI-related catastrophe (2022) Benjamin Hilton for 80,000 Hours. Note: just read up to the section header ‘What you can do concretely to help’ (about 2/3 of the way through the essay). (9,700 words; 49 mins) [Link](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/artificial-intelligence/)
* AI alignment with humans… but with which humans? (2022) Geoffrey Miller for EA Forum. (900 words; 5 mins) [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/posts/DXuwsXsqGq5GtmsB3/ai-alignment-with-humans-but-with-which-humans)

Subtotal: 54 mins

Optional exercise:

* If you haven’t already spent some time using Chat GPT, please use this [link](https://chat.openai.com/chat) and sign up for an account. Once you’re verified, spent a few minutes asking it some challenging questions, and see how it does.

Optional readings:

* AI Principles from the 2017 Asilomar Conference (2017) Future of Life Institute (700 words; 4 mins) [Link](https://futureoflife.org/open-letter/ai-principles/)
* AI Alignment (2023) Wikipedia. (4,800 words; 24 mins) [Link](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AI_alignment)
* The religion problem in AI alignment’ (2022) Geoffrey Miller for EA Forum (3,300 words; 17 mins) [Link](https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/posts/YwnfPtxHktfowyrMD/the-religion-problem-in-ai-alignment)

Optional videos:

* Deep learning in 5 minutes (2019) Simplilearn (6 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6M5VXKLf4D4)
* Science fiction movies: [Ex Machina](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0470752/) (2014), [Her](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1798709/) (2013), [Transcendence](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2209764/) (2014), I, Robot (2004), Blade Runner 2049 (2017), Moon (2009)
* Documentary movies: Do you trust this computer? (2018) [Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CJE6XheubM) [Full Movie](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aV_IZye14vs), iHuman (2020) [Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zo02c70GJnk), AlphaGo (2017) [Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tq1C8spV_g) [Full Movie](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXuK6gekU1Y), The Social Dilemma (2020) [Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaaC57tcci0), We Need to Talk about AI (2020) [Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDksoUFNl5w), In The Age of AI (2019) [Full Movie](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dZ_lvDgevk)

**Class 10: March 30: Moral and cognitive enhancement**

##### *\*\*Term paper stage 2 due in class: Revised abstract, outline, and bibliography*

Required videos

* The scientific and ethical elements of human enhancement (2016) Pew Research Center (3:37 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc6grg9ES2s)
* Peter Singer: Suffering, ethical progress, & moral enhancement (2014) Science, Technology, & the Future (6:55 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhovbMe7nOo)
* Moral enhancement: Julian Savulescu (2016) Science, Technology, & the Future (3:08 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxDA0GKcAgQ)
* Smart drugs: Dave Asprey (2019) Big Think (4:25 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5fIB6X_Mcc)
* Couples therapy with MDMA? Brian Earp & David Rabin (2021) The Doctors (4:58 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VeGCj_a_5s)
* Amber Case: We are all cyborgs now (2011) TED (8:23 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1KJAXM3xYA)
* About genomic prediction (2022) Genomic Prediction (4:57 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkDTTqaIsZk)
* Subtotal: 36 mins

Required readings

* Hendricks, S. (2021) Moral enhancement explained: Can science make us better people? Big Think. (1,200 words; 6 mins) [Link](https://bigthink.com/thinking/moral-enhancement/)
* Dresler, M., et al. (2019). Hacking the brain: Dimensions of cognitive enhancement. *ACS Chemical Neuroscience, 10*, 1137-1148. (5,500 words; 28 mins) [Link](https://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/acschemneuro.8b00571)
* Miller, G. (2013). Chinese eugenics. Edge.org Link (1,000 words; 5 mins) [Link](https://www.edge.org/response-detail/23838)

Subtotal: 39 mins

Optional videos

* What will humans look like in 100 years? Juan Enriquez (2016) TED (15:45 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8lH8tNlAXc)
* Max More: Transhumanism and the Singularity (2012) Science, Technology, & the Future (20:43 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xIQgBXw9-o)
* Psychedelics are fueling a mental health revolution (2020) Bloomberg Originals (11:42 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJNpKaZmidU)
* Cognitive enhancement: Anders Sandberg (2016) Science, Technology, & the Future (15:44 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZA8DPVJHVE)
* Genomic prediction, IVF, and the first baby screened for polygenic disease risk: Steve Hsu (2021) Foo Camp. (6:54 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_qCv24M0AI)
* Genetic engineering will change everything forever: CRISPR (2016) Kurzgesagt (16:03 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAhjPd4uNFY)

Subtotal: 88 mins

### Class 11: April 6: Ethics of robots, brain emulations, and virtual reality

Required videos:

* This is how Boston Dynamics robots evolved in 10 years (2012-2022) (2022) Wefiliates (1:23 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTDlRLeDxxM)
* Ray-Ban Stories smart glasses now work with Spotify (2022) CNET Highlights (3:00 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2K1Zfubarc)
* Ready Player One (2018): the Oasis scene (2018) TrashPanda Movie Clips (4:48 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DFzWmBVNbU)
* Blade Runner 2049 scene (2017) FelixB (4:16 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuV2c-6js8w)
* What would happen if we upload our brains to computers? Robin Hanson (2017). TED (12:16 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Urk3xn7l3AM)
* Is reality real? The simulation argument (2017) Kurzgesagt (8:45 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlTKTTt47WE)

Subtotal: 34 mins

Required readings:

* Jacy Reese Anthis (2023) Key questions for digital minds. Sentience Institute (2,000 words, 10 mins) [Link](https://www.sentienceinstitute.org/blog/key-questions-for-digital-minds)
* Holden Karnofsky (2021) Digital people FAQ. Cold Takes. (4,600 words, 23 mins) [Link](https://web.archive.org/web/20221022224946/https:/www.cold-takes.com/digital-people-faq/) Subtotal: 33 mins

Optional videos

* Are we living in a simulation? Zohreh Davoudi (2019) TED-Ed (4:23 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGfTDcHJHSI)
* Neil deGrasse Tyson explains the Simulation Hypothesis (2020) StarTalk (7:52 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmcrG7ZZKUc)
* Whole brain emulation and neuromorphic AI with Anders Sandberg (2016) Science, Technology, & the Future (10:43 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0_SE9xwqUg)
* Several ‘Black Mirror’ episodes concern life as an Em (an uploaded mind): ‘[San Junipero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Junipero)’, ‘[USS Callister](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Callister)’, ‘[Hang the DJ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hang_the_DJ_(Black_Mirror))’, ‘[White Christmas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Christmas_(Black_Mirror))’,
* Best movies about Ems, androids, and post-humans: [The Matrix](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133093/) (1999), [Blade Runner 2049](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1856101/) (2017), [I, Robot](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0343818/) (2004), [Free Guy](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6264654/) (2021)

### Class 12: April 13: Animal sentience and welfare I

Required videos:

* You can prevent animal suffering. Here’s how (2022) Giving What We Can (10:07 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYm443i3lb8)
* What is sentience? (2020) Animal Ethics (10:59 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Al5zRjvT2gE)
* How do animals experience pain? Robyn J. Crook (2017) TED-Ed (5:06 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5j9Syov0AAw)
* Do insects feel pain? (2018) Draw Curiosity (7:07 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5C68yZmWpKo)
* What fish feel when they are killed for food (2020) NowThis News (3:00 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGTtOdP2DFU)
* Wild animal suffering: An introduction (2020) Animal Ethics (10:09 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Dp6gObE9eA)

Subtotal: 47 mins

Required readings:

* Understanding evolution made me vegan (2013) Diana Fleischman. Dianaverse. (2,000 words; 10 mins) [Link](https://dianaverse.com/2020/04/07/evolutionmademevegan/#more-144)
* Animal ethics and evolutionary psychology: 10 ideas (2020) Diana Fleischman. Dianaverse (2,800 words; 14 mins) [Link](https://dianaverse.com/2020/06/15/evpsychandanimalethics/#more-256)
* Past interventions with promising future welfare applications (2022) Amy Klarup for Wild Animal Initiative (1,400 words, 7 mins) [Link](https://www.wildanimalinitiative.org/blog/past-interventions-future-welfare-applications)

Subtotal: 31 mins

Optional videos:

* Why the insect brain is so incredible: Anna Stockl (2016) TED-Ed (4:22 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQw3TNRnJ1I)
* Invertebrate sentience (2020) Animal Ethics (12:08 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4yOxBnGXiY)
* Should vegans care about wild animal suffering? Jacy Reese Anthis (2021) Humane Hancock (8:25 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA8QocodJG4)

Subtotal: 24 mins

### Class 13: April 20: Animal sentience and welfare II

Required readings:

* Farmed animal fundamentals (2023) Faunalytics (1,300 words, 7 mins) [Link](https://faunalytics.org/fundamentals-farmed-animals/)
* The ethical case for eating oysters and mussels: part 1 (2013) Diana Fleischman. Dianaverse (1,200 words, 6 mins) [Link](https://dianaverse.com/2020/04/07/bivalveganpart1/#more-138)
* The ethical case for eating oysters and mussels: part 2 (2013) Diana Fleischman. Dianaverse (1,500 words; 8 mins) [Link](https://dianaverse.com/2020/04/07/bivalveganpart2/#more-140)
* UK passes its own animal sentience act after leaving EU (2022) Andrew Rowan. WellBeing International. (1,100 words, 6 mins) [Link](https://wellbeingintl.org/uk-passes-animal-sentience-act/)

Subtotal: 27 mins

Required videos

* Why meat is the best worst thing in the world (2018) Kurzgesagt (8:48 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxvQPzrg2Wg)
* Why is chicken so cheap? (2019) The Economist (6:23 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JiYVoHEV5hs)
* What if the world became vegan? (2017) BBC Earth Unplugged (5:58 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytFwytWK1Bw)
* Why are vegans so annoying? (2017) Thinking Out Loud (7:31 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u3IOc0cOBM)
* Rethinking the future of lab-grown meat (2022) Seeker (9:04 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IiSBsFxTsa8)

Subtotal: 38 mins

Optional

* Can lab-grown steak be the future of meat? (2022) Insider Business (8:14 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQejwvnog0M) – good
* Why are vegetarians annoying? (2016) vlogbrothers (3:54 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwKrtNr76BM)

Subtotal: 12 mins

### Class 14: April 27: Career choices and life strategies

Required readings

* 80,000 Hours (2022). The highest-impact career paths our research has identified so far. (1,600 words; 8 mins) [Note: It’s OK to just read the material in this post, but also feel free to do some deeper dives on some of the recommended career paths that sound interesting, by clicking on the ‘read more’ links] [Link](https://80000hours.org/career-reviews/)
* Todd, Benjamin (2021). Personal fit: Why being good at your job is even more important than people think. 80,000 Hours. (1,600 words; 8 mins) [Link](https://80000hours.org/articles/personal-fit/)
* Fastest growing occupations (2021) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (200 words; 2 mins) [Plus, click on a few specific occupations to learn more] [Link](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm)
* ChatGPT may be coming for our jobs. Here are the 10 roles that AI is most likely to replace (2023) Business Insider (1,700 words; 9 mins ) [Link](https://www.businessinsider.com/chatgpt-jobs-at-risk-replacement-artificial-intelligence-ai-labor-trends-2023-02)

Subtotal: 27 mins

Required videos:

* How to find fulfilling work (2015) The School of Life (5:12 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veriqDHLXsw)
* What are you doing with your life? (2021) Kurzgesagt (9:35 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXeJANDKwDc)
* The rise of the machines: Why automation is different this time (2017) Kurzgesagt (11:40 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSKi8HfcxEk)

Subtotal: 27 mins

Optional videos:

* 9 best jobs for the future (2022) Tae Kim (15:17 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCIWYRR-Pgk)
* Want to change the world? Start with your career: Amarins Veringa (2022) TEDx Talks (14:20 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfjorHcFlXc)
* The big debate about the future of work, explained (2017) Vox (9:02 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUmyygCMMGA)
* Will AI take our jobs? Sam Altman and Lex Fridman (2023) Lex Clips (9:57 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qof80Sy3__8)
* The School of Life has many excellent videos about work and careers in its ‘Work + Capitalism’ [playlist](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwxNMb28XmpehnfQOa4c0E7j3GIj4qFEj)

Subtotal: 48 mins

Optional readings:

* Starter Guide (2022) 80,000 Hours. (A free 155 page pdf book on career strategies).
* I also recommend taking advantage of the free one-on-one career advice calls that 80,000 Hours offers. This can be helpful whatever stage you’re at in thinking about your future career [Link](https://80000hours.org/speak-with-us/)

**Class 15: May 4: Last day of class: The future of altruism**

##### *\*\*Term paper stage 3 due in class: Final term paper*

Required videos

* Past predictions of the future every decade (2020) Hochelaga (10:02 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOtb5jUogXw)
* China never sleeps: Rise of the megacities (2021) Reporterfy Media (3:26 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcQAnmibGi4)
* Can we make the future a million years from now go better? (2022) Rational Animations (9:56 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uV3wP5z51U)
* The Egg: A short story by Andy Weir. (2019). Kurzgesagt. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6fcK_fRYaI). (7:54 mins)
* Grand Central Station: Street Lovingkindness (2015) Sharon Salzberg (1:47 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgjHM8ngWrM)
* Subtotal: 33 mins

Optional videos

* Everything might change forever this century (or we’ll go extinct) (2022) Rational Animations (32:34 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K25VPdbAjU)
* Longtermism: An idea that could save 100 billion trillion lives (2021) Rational Animations (6:11 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvehj0KvzK8)
* Why age? Should we end aging forever? (2017) Kurzgesagt. (6:48 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoJsr4IwCm4)
* What if humanity is among the first spacefaring civilizations? (2022) PBS Space Time (20:49 mins) [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTrFAY3LUNw)
* Subtotal: 67 mins

# (UNM final exams are May 11-15, but there’s no final exam in this class)