

MECHENG 4A13/6A13
Applied Artificial Intelligence
Undergraduate Studies
Fall 2024
Course Outline

CALENDAR/COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the principles of modern Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a practical, hands-on way. Students will build practical, real-world AI-powered applications across a diverse range of sectors, including autonomous vehicles, business analytics, energy systems, financial technologies, and healthcare. Concepts such as Generative AI (GenAI), Natural Language Processing (NLP), Deep Learning (DL), recommendation engines, and computer vision will be covered. The course also covers AI ethics and key ingredients to build responsible AI systems. By the end of the course, students will have a comprehensive portfolio of AI-driven projects demonstrating their ability to harness the power of AI. This course equips students with the practical skills and knowledge needed in the AI industry and positions them as sought-after professionals in the era of the AI revolution.

The course will be taught using lectures delivered both in person and virtually (hybrid). **The university rules on academic dishonesty and originality (outlined below) will be strictly enforced.**

PRE-REQUISITES AND ANTI-REQUISITES

Prerequisite(s): level IV or above in any engineering program
Antirequisite(s): None

INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Ryan Ahmed
ryan.ahmed@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours:
1 hour following each lecture in-person or via MS Teams

TEACHING ASSISTANT OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

TBD

COURSE WEBSITE/ALTERNATE METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

- All course material (lecture notes, code scripts, and assignments) will be posted on A2L.
- Lectures will be delivered in person and/or virtually, and notes will be made available on A2L.
- Primary mode of communication and virtual lectures will be through MS Teams and/or A2L.

COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Gain a solid understanding of AI's basic concepts, theories, and principles, including its history, evolution, and current state.
- Develop proficiency in modern AI technologies such as Generative AI (GenAI), Natural Language Processing (NLP), Deep Learning (DL), recommendation engines, and computer vision.
- Understand how to leverage the power of AI to build practical, real-world applications for autonomous vehicles, business analytics, energy systems, financial technologies, and healthcare.
- Learn to design, implement, and evaluate generative models and machine learning algorithms, understanding their applications in creating new content and driving decision-making processes.
- Gain expertise in leveraging NLP for language understanding, sentiment analysis, and conversational AI, as well as using computer vision for image recognition and object detection.
- Understand the theory and intuition behind state-of-the-art deep neural networks.
- Develop Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs) models and train them in Google's Colab while leveraging the power of GPUs and TPUs.
- Evaluate trained AI models on testing data using various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Understand the intuition of transfer learning techniques in AI to speed up the training process.
- Learn how to perform exploratory data analysis, handle missing data points (null elements), and perform feature engineering using Pandas, Matplotlib, and Seaborn libraries.
- Build, train, and deploy state-of-the-art XG-Boost algorithms to solve regression and classification problems.
- Optimize AI models and perform hyperparameter optimization such as grid search, randomized search, and Bayesian optimization.
- Learn how to use Auto Machine Learning (AutoML) tools to build, train, and deploy AI models, which requires almost zero coding experience.
- Explore AI technologies' ethical considerations, societal impacts, and governance. Understand the principles of building responsible AI systems that are fair and transparent.

MATERIALS AND FEES

Required Texts: None

Recommended Additional Texts:

- "Machine Learning for Beginners", by Chris Sebastian
- "AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order", by Kai-Fu Lee
- "Deep Learning", by Ian Goodfellow, Yoshua Bengio, and Aaron Courville

Calculator:

Only the McMaster Standard Calculator will be permitted in tests and examinations. This is available at the Campus Store.

Other Materials:

Python will be primarily used, and it is an open-source program. Some projects will leverage MATLAB programming, which requires a license. Students must obtain a valid program and license for MATLAB.

COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS

The course is organized as follows:

- 3 x 50-min lectures per week
- 5 assignments based on lecture content (total 35%)
- 1 in-class midterm based on all course content (25%)
- 1 course project (40%)

Note for 6AI3 students: an additional course project (to be discussed at the start of the term) will be required and assessed at 20%. In this case, the 4AI3 course project will be assessed at 20%.

COURSE SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

Posted on Avenue to Learn.

ASSESSMENT

| Component | Weight |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Assignments (individual) | 35% |
| Midterm (individual) | 25% |
| Final Project | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Note for 6AI3 students: an additional course project (to be discussed at the start of the term) will be required and assessed at 20%. In this case, the 4AI3 course project will be assessed at 20%.

ACCREDITATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Learning Outcomes defined in this section are measured for Accreditation purposes only and will not be directly taken into consideration in determining a student's grade in the course.

| Outcomes | Indicators |
|---|------------|
| Selects appropriately from the relevant knowledge base to plan appropriate data collection methods and analysis strategies. | 3.1 |
| Synthesizes the results of an investigation to reach valid conclusions. | 3.2 |
| Composes an effective written document for the intended audience. | 7.2 |
| Actively contributes to the planning and execution of a team project. | 6.1 |
| Defines the problem by identifying relevant context, constraints, and prior approaches before exploring potential design solutions. | 4.1 |

For more information on Accreditation, please visit: <https://www.engineerscanada.ca>.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Every registered student belongs in this course. Diversity of backgrounds and experiences is expected and welcome. You can expect your Instructor to be respectful of this diversity in all aspects of the course, and the same is expected of you.

The Department of Engineering Physics is committed to creating an environment in which students of all genders, cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to education and are welcomed and treated fairly. If you have any concerns regarding inclusion in our Department, in particular if you or one of your peers is experiencing harassment or discrimination, you are encouraged to contact the Chair, Associate Undergraduate Chair, Academic Advisor or to contact the [Equity and Inclusion Office](#).

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

For a list of McMaster University's resources, please refer to the [Student Wellness Centre](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. improper collaboration in group work.
3. copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

McMaster is committed to an inclusive and respectful community. These principles and expectations extend to online activities including electronic chat groups, video calls and other learning platforms.

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent

on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

COURSE POLICY ON MISSED WORK, EXTENSIONS, AND LATE PENALTIES

1. It is the students’ responsibility to regularly check the course webpage (ex. Avenue to Learn) for updates and announcements.
2. Assignment submissions overdue by less than 48 hours from the deadline will be marked out of 50%. The Dropbox on A2L will not accept assignment submissions later than two days.
3. The weight of all MSAF’d assignments and/or midterm exams will be transferred to the final exam.

SUBMISSION OF REQUEST FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

1. **Relief for missed academic work worth less than 25% of the final grade resulting from medical or personal situations lasting up to three calendar days:**
 - Use the [McMaster Student Absence Form](#) (MSAF) on-line self-reporting tool. No further documentation is required.

- Students may submit requests for relief using the MSAF once per term.
 - An automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate the opportunity for relief.
 - The MSAF cannot be used to meet a religious obligation or to celebrate an important religious holiday.
 - The MSAF cannot be used for academic work that has already been completed attempted.
 - An MSAF applies only to work that is due within the period for which the MSAF applies, i.e. the 3-day period that is specified in the MSAF; however, all work due in that period can be covered by one MSAF.
 - The MSAF cannot be used to apply for relief for any final examination or its equivalent. See *Petitions for Special Consideration* above.
2. **For medical or personal situations lasting more than three calendar days, and/or for missed academic work worth 25% or more of the final grade, and/or for any request for relief in a term where the MSAF has been used previously in that term:**
- Students must report to their Faculty Office to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate **supporting documentation**.
 - If warranted, the Faculty Office will approve the absence, and the instructor will determine appropriate relief.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.