

Course Number: COMM 489  
Course Title: Responsible AI in the Future of Work  
Section: 500  
Time: 1:50 -2:40 pm  
Location: BLOC 135  
Credit Hours: 3

### *Instructor Details*

Instructor: Lu Tang, Ph.D.  
Office: BLTN 309F  
E-Mail: ltang@tamu.edu  
Office Hours: Noon-1:30 pm Monday and Wednesday.

### *Course Format*

*This course uses a hybrid of in person and online instructions.*

- *On every Monday and Wednesday, we will have an in-person class in BLOC 135.*
- *On every Friday, the class is online and asynchronous. You will watch a video or movie and complete a discussion (due at the end of Friday, 11:59 pm). Materials for Friday will be posted to Canvas on by noon of Thursday.*

### *Course Description*

*Selected topics in an identified area of communication. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: None.*

*Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the workplace. Responsible AI in the Future of Work explores responsibility, transparency, and accountability in AI systems. Students will gain AI literacy, practical insights, and critical perspectives to prepare for the evolving job market and collaborative workplaces of tomorrow. This is part of a multi-university initiative supported by the National Humanities Center and Google.*

### *Course Prerequisites*

None

### *Course Learning Outcomes*

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

- 1. Gain foundational knowledge of AI's history, functionality, and responsible AI use.*
- 2. Critically analyze ethical frameworks, fairness, intellectual property, and privacy issues.*
- 3. Assess the role of AI in communication and collaboration in the workplace.*
- 4. Explore AI adoption in specialized domains such as healthcare and reflect on broader social and ethical impacts.*

### *Textbook and/or Resource Materials*

*Teaching slides and supplemental readings will be provided via Canvas. No textbook required.*

### *Grading Policy*

#### *Grading Breakdown (100 points in total):*

- *Discussion Posts: (24 points). There are 13 discussion posts administered online for each Friday, and you will have to complete 12 of them (2 points each\*12 discussions). Please follow the instructions to write your discussion posts and respond to one of your classmates' posts.*

*If you miss any discussion post after its due day, you will receive a grade of zero for the discussion. No make-up discussion posts except excused reason as outlined by [Student Rule 7](#).*

- *Exams (20 points each \*2=40 points). Two exams will be administered throughout the semester. The exams are not cumulative. They are closed-book and closed-note. Exams are given in-person during regular class. You will need a bluebook for each exam.*

- *Research Survey (1 point). During the first week of class, you will complete a Research Survey. This survey helps the faculty members who designed this course better understand our students. (You will get the 1 point as long as you complete the survey. It will not be graded.)*

- *Final Presentation (20 points). You will make a final presentation at the end of the semester. Detailed instruction will be provided via Canvas.*

- *Participation (5 points). Participation is based on active, thoughtful, and respectful engagement in class discussions and activities, both in person and online.*

- *Attendance (10 points). Attendance contributes to a portion of your course grade. In accordance with Student Rule 7, students are expected to attend all in-person class meetings unless they have an excused absence as defined by the University. Attendance will be recorded at each in-person class session. For each unexcused absence, 1 point will be deducted from the attendance grade, up to a maximum deduction of 10 points. Students with excused absences will not be penalized and may be eligible for make-up work as outlined in Student Rule 7.*

### *Grading Scale*

*The following grading scale is used for determination of final letter grades in the course and as a general rubric for how student assignments are evaluated.*

*The following is a general description of expectations for assignments:*

- *A – Your work is of impeccable (or almost impeccable) professional quality in both content, design, and format, with no major weaknesses in any area. It provides adequate information that readers need and effectively fulfills the intended purposes. Few, if any, mechanical errors appear in the deliverable.*

- *B – Your work is of high quality in most of the major areas. It fulfills your intended purposes quite effectively. Presentation is professional. There are only a few mechanical errors.*

• *C – Your work is of reasonable quality in most areas. It fulfills your intended purposes to a large extent, although major deficiencies are observable. Presentation is of semi-professional quality. There are some mechanical errors, but not to the extent of seriously affecting readers' comprehension. In graduate school, this is considered a failing grade.*

A = 90–100 points

B = 80–89 points

C = 70–79 points

D = 60–69 points

F = below 60 points

### Late Work Policy

Assignments are due as listed in the schedule. Discussion posts and video presentations cannot be made up.

Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy ([Student Rule 7](#)).

### Course Schedule (Tentative)

| <b>Date</b>        | <b>Topic</b>   |
|--------------------|--|
| Jan 12 (In person) | Course Introduction  |
| Jan 14 (In person) | What is AI   |
| Jan 16 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Jan 19 (In person) | <b>No class (MLK Day-School Holiday)</b>   |
| Jan 21 (In person) | History of AI  |
| Jan 23 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Jan 26 (In person) | AI Approaches  |
| Jan 28 (In person) | Continued  |
| Jan 30 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Feb 2 (In person)  | AI Ethics  |
| Feb 4 (In person)  | Continued  |
| Feb 6 (Online)     | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Feb 9 (In person)  | Continued  |
| Feb 11 (In person) | AI, intellectual property and Privacy  |
| Feb 13 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Feb 16 (In person) | <b>Exam 1</b>  |
| Feb 18 (In person) | Guest Speaker: Dr. Sophia Fu (Rutgers U)<br>Topic: Hybrid Human-AI partnership in nonprofit work           |
| Feb 20 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Feb 23 (In person) | Attend Guest Lecture of Dr. Wei Peng (Michigan State)<br>Topic: Leveraging AI for misinformation debunking |
| Feb 25 (In person) | AI in human resource management  |
| Feb 27 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion   |
| Mar 2 (In person)  | Continued  |

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mar 4 (In person)  | Organizational Communication and AI   |
| Mar 6 (Online)     | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Mar 9 (In person)  | <b>No class-Spring break</b>          |
| Mar 11 (In person) | <b>No class-Spring break</b>          |
| Mar 13 (Online)    | <b>No class-Spring break</b>          |
| Mar 16 (In person) | Continued                             |
| Mar 18 (In person) | Continued                             |
| Mar 20 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Mar 23 (In person) | Continued                             |
| Mar 25 (In person) | Collaborative AI in the Workplace     |
| Mar 27 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Mar 30 (In person) | Continued                             |
| Apr 1 (In person)  | Continued                             |
| Apr 3 (Online)     | <b>No class-Reading day</b>           |
| Apr 6 (In person)  | AI application in health and medicine |
| Apr 8 (In person)  | Continued                             |
| Apr 10 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Apr 13 (In person) | Review                                |
| Apr 15 (In person) | Exam 2                                |
| Apr 17 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Apr 20 (In person) | <b>Presentation</b>                   |
| Apr 22 (In person) | <b>Presentation</b>                   |
| Apr 24 (Online)    | Watch film and complete discussion    |
| Apr 27             | <b>Presentation</b>                   |

### University Policies

This section outlines the university-level policies that must be included in each course syllabus. The TAMU Faculty Senate established the wording of these policies.

**NOTE:** Faculty members should not change the written statements. A faculty member may add separate paragraphs if additional information is needed.

### Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

### Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor” ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

“The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence” ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

#### *Academic Integrity Statement and Policy*

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

#### *Texas A&M at College Station*

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

#### *Notice of Nondiscrimination*

Texas A&M University is committed to providing safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and work environments for all members of the University community. The University provides equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment or admission, and the public regardless of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. Texas A&M University will promptly, thoroughly, and fairly investigate and resolve all complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), complicity and related retaliation based on a protected class in accordance with System Regulation 08.01.01, University Rule 08.01.01.M1, Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP) 08.01.01.M1.01, and applicable federal and state laws. In accordance with Title IX and its implementing regulations, Texas A&M does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity, including admissions and employment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jennifer M. Smith, TAMU Associate VP & Title IX Coordinator at YMCA Ste 108, College Station, TX 77843, 979-458-8407, or email [civilrights@tamu.edu](mailto:civilrights@tamu.edu). For other reporting options, visit <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr> to locate the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

### *Civil Rights, Free Speech, and Title IX Policies*

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and harassment based on an individual's race, color, sex, (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. This includes forms of sex-based violence, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, dating/domestic violence, and stalking.

Students can report discrimination/harassment, access supportive resources, or learn more about their options for resolving complaints on the [University's Civil Rights & Title IX webpage](#).

Students should be aware that all university employees (except medical or mental health providers) are mandatory reporters, which means that if they observe, experience or become aware of an incident that they reasonably believe to be discrimination/harassment alleged to have been committed by or against a person who was a student or employee at the time of the incident, the employee must report the incident to the university.

### *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy*

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Resources office on your campus (resources listed below) Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

To request academic accommodations, contact the designated ADA office based on your location:

- Texas A&M University, College of Nursing, College of Dentistry, Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy College Station, College of Medicine, School of Public Health, Institute of Biosciences and Technology, EnMed Program, Bush School in Washington DC, Mays Business School – CityCentre, TAMU Engineering Academies, Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen and Texas A&M University at Galveston should contact [Disability Resources](#) at (979) 845-1637 or [disability@tamu.edu](mailto:disability@tamu.edu).

If you are experiencing difficulties with your approved accommodations, contact the office responsible for approving your accommodations or the Texas A&M ADA Coordinator Julie Kuder at [ADA.Coordinator@tamu.edu](mailto:ADA.Coordinator@tamu.edu) or (979) 458-8407.

### *Pregnancy Accommodations*

Texas A&M provides reasonable accommodations to students due to pregnancy and/or related conditions, such as childbirth, recovery and lactation. Students should contact the University's [Pregnancy Coordinator](#) as soon as they become aware of the need for accommodation. Depending on the circumstances, accommodations could include extended time to complete assignments or exams, changes in course sequence, or modifications to the physical classroom environment. Texas A&M will also allow a voluntary leave of absence, ensure the availability of lactation space, and maintain grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex

discrimination. For information regarding pregnancy accommodations, email [TIX.Pregnancy@tamu.edu](mailto:TIX.Pregnancy@tamu.edu).

#### *Statement on Mental Health and Wellness*

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors influencing a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care practices by utilizing the resources and services available through [University Health Services](#) on its [mental health webpage](#). The [TELUS Health Student Support app](#) provides access to professional counseling in multiple languages anytime, anywhere by phone or chat, and the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers 24-hour emergency support at 988 or [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

#### *Texas A&M College Station*

Students needing a listening ear can contact University Health Services (979.458.4584) 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) or at [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

#### *Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records by limiting access to these records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Currently enrolled students wishing to withhold any or all directory information items can do so within [howdy.tamu.edu](https://howdy.tamu.edu) using the Directory Information Withholding Form. The complete [FERPA Notice to Students](#) and the student records policy is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage. Items that can never be identified as public information are a student's social security number, citizenship, gender, grades, GPR or class schedule. All efforts will be made in this class to protect your privacy and to ensure confidential treatment of information associated with or generated by your participation in the class.

Directory items include name, UIN, local address, permanent address, email address, local telephone number, permanent telephone number, dates of attendance, program of study (college, major, campus), classification, previous institutions attended, degrees honors and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, medical residence location and medical residence specialization.

#### *Optional Syllabus Statements*

##### *Free Speech and Civil Discourse*

Texas A&M recognizes that the pursuit of truth through open and robust discourse is critical to academic inquiry. However, as a community of scholars, the university has an aspirational expectation that such discourse will be conducted in accordance with Aggie Core Values. In this "marketplace of ideas," we encourage civil dialogue creating an environment that allows individuals to express their ideas and to have their ideas challenged in respectful and responsible ways. Students can learn more about Freedom of Expression and Free Speech on the University's [website](#) about the [First Amendment](#).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, Copilot) are powerful resources, but in this class they must be used responsibly and transparently. To help guide you, here's a traffic-light system of

what is not permitted (Red), cautiously permitted (Yellow), and permitted (Green) when working on assignments.

#### Artificial Intelligence Statements

##### Red Light (Not Permitted)

These uses are not allowed and will be considered academic dishonesty:

- Using AI to generate direct answers to discussion or assignment questions.
- Copying/pasting AI-generated content and submitting it as your own work.

##### Yellow Light (Permitted with Caution)


You may use AI in these ways, but you must clearly cite the tool and explain how you used it:

- Brainstorming ideas or perspectives on a topic.
- Asking AI to provide references, citations, or summaries—but you must verify the accuracy.
- In discussion posts or video presentations, clearly indicate which ideas, perspectives, or facts came from AI.
- Example citation statement: “I used ChatGPT (OpenAI, August 2025) to brainstorm possible perspectives for this topic. I reviewed the suggestions and selected the ones most relevant to my argument.”

##### Green Light (Permitted and Encouraged)

You may use AI to improve the mechanics of your writing, but you must still cite the tool:

- Polishing your writing (improving clarity and flow).
- Checking or correcting grammar, spelling, or formatting.
- Rephrasing for tone or style while keeping the ideas your own.
- Example citation statement: “This paragraph was revised with the help of ChatGPT (OpenAI, February 2026) to improve clarity and correct grammar.”

 Bottom line: AI can be a helpful tool, but it cannot replace your own critical thinking, creativity, or responsibility for your work.