

FINAL PROJECT PREP

// CLASS 21

FALL 2015 / SECTION 02 / HOLLY BUCK

REVIEW SLIDES ADAPTED FROM DR. CYNTHIA
MATUSZEK

WHAT'S YOUR ANGLE?

(MINGLING / NETWORKING EXERCISE)

1. 3 groups: AI people (front), Book Report People (back table near door), Everyone Else (middle).

2. Pretend you're at a conference reception.

Find a small group of people within your larger group, and make your 1-2 minute "elevator pitch" for the topic you're working on.

3. Listeners: follow up with the speaker, commenting or asking intelligent questions.

- Does it sound too ambitious?
 - Is there one sub-topic that would be more interesting?
- Conversely, does it sound substantial enough for a 6-8 page paper?
 - Does it have multiple angles? What are they?
- What are the proposed cases? Are they relevant to the topic?

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES

1. Definition of terms

It's important to understand how we define Cognition. Cognition as Bostrom and Sandberg puts it can be split into five subsystems: perception, attention, understanding, memory, and motor/reasoning skills (312). Cognitive enhancements as defined by Bostrom and Sandberg, is enabling a human to compete with a greater performance in any of the above subsystems (312). This is not to be confused with cognitive therapy, which is repairing one of the subsystems that has been damaged in some way (Bostrom & Sandberg, 312). This is an important distinction to understand.

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES

2. Mapping the territory: presentation of content / information

There are many ways to augment one's cognition, whether using pharmaceutical concoctions, special software, or even simple learning strategies. ... Different forms of cognitive enhancement can be roughly divided into two categories: those which do not directly affect a person's mental skills or performance, but augment their capabilities in some way ("augmentative"), and those which improve the behaviour or performance of the mind ("modifying").

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES

3. Analogies with something more familiar

In any highly competitive environment it is no wonder that people seek to gain advantages over their competitors at any costs. This is most popularly seen with illegal steroid usage in the competitive sporting community. However, more apparent than physical enhancements, is the rampant epidemic of “academic doping” or usage of cognitive enhancing drugs among students.

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES

4. Interesting facts or anecdotes

Cognitive enhancers such as supplements and drugs are already in use by students. It is estimated that about “30% of students use stimulants non-medically” with “more than 90% of users doing it for this purpose” (Yanes).

In 1967, a singular invention changed the educational landscape forever. With the introduction of the first handheld electronic calculator, Texas Instruments had unwittingly created a device that, while making basic arithmetic a much less strenuous process for humans, forever changed the way educators think about teaching mathematics.

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES

5. General statement (that reader can relate to)

People often dream of a pill that will turn themselves into a genius.

How would you feel handing your child a handle of vodka as you see them go off to school?

Humans have been using technology to expand their capabilities since the first human used a stick to fight off a wild animal, or used a rock to break open a nut.

WRITING A CLEAR THESIS

To mitigate some of the potential misuse of cognitive enhancement technologies, educational institutions should implement some form of policies to regulate cognitive enhancements.

While cognitive enhancement should be allowed in educational settings, it should be heavily limited to prevent any negative effects on education.

Not enough to say that “there should be regulation” or observe that “regulation is lacking” – too vague and/or obvious.

- **Write about the who – what – when – where – why – how of regulation.**
- **A good thesis sets up the rest of the paper.**

WRITING A CLEAR THESIS

In educational settings, neural implants should be allowed with proper documentation of the implant and regulations of use in class and during exams.

Unless there are just medical causes, the usage of cognitive enhancing drugs within the academic community is ethically wrong and should not be done because it increases academic inequalities within an already unequal system, and because of the health risks associated with their use.

I propose that such a policy should be focused not on the extent of the enhancement, but rather on the availability and effectiveness of the enhancement once students enter the workforce.

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK CONTENT – PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- As a principle of the United States, liberty implies that "competent adults should be free to decide whether or not to use cognition-enhancing drugs," (Mehlman, 2004) and thus any regulatory policy enacted by the government or a university within the United States should be considered unfair and unjust.
- While there are currently no laws regarding specific cognitive enhancements such as brain implants, it is evident that society values cognition.
- Equality, or fairness, would be the first issue people would chose to explore in regards to cognitive enhancements.

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK CONTENT – STAKEHOLDERS

- Future employers (who have to figure out who is skilled)
- Institutions / Universities
- Medical industry, as product creators
- Teachers (who have to grade and potentially police for enhancements)
- Parents (who will pay to get the best enhancements for their kids)
- Future generations
- Society at large
- World leaders & politicians (who may face pressure to be enhanced)

CONSEQUENTIALISM

- Sometimes “Utilitarianism”
- Maximize the overall good:

‘The greatest good for the greatest number’.

- What’s “good?” (What can be maximized?)
 - Happiness
 - Health
 - Security
 - Freedom

DEONTOLOGY

- The *right* is more important than the *good*.

It's about what you do, not what happens.

- What is "right?"
 - The *rights* of others: "respect for persons"
 - Treating others *well*
 - Treating others *as we would wish to be treated*
 - The social contract of rational agents

JUST-CONSEQUENTIALISM

- Core values: What “goods” do we want to protect?
- Provide for autonomy
 - Life, happiness, abilities, security, knowledge, freedom, opportunities, and resources
- Protect justice, rights, and duties
 - Meet societal obligations
 - Keep promises, obey the law, satisfy contractual duties
- Avoid doing harm
 - Causing an individual to lose these is “doing harm”

CONTRACTUALISM

Contractualism (contract based)

Do things where a rational agent would want to live in a world where people did those things.

A "social contract" is...

Our shared agreement to do those things!

How do we determine what a rational person wants?

RIGHTS

What WHYs (values & principles) have we discussed?

- Happiness
- Respect
- Health
- Autonomy
- Security
- Life
- Freedom
- Security
- Knowledge
- Opportunities
- Abilities
- Resources

Respect for persons - Treating others well or as we would wish to be treated

Contracts - Our shared agreement to do those things
Keeping promises, fulfilling obligations, obeying the law

FINAL PROJECT

- I should have your topic!
- How presentations work: 5 minutes each, 8 minutes if in pairs
- Deliverables:
 - Topic (already)
 - Worksheet (Nov 24th)
 - Slides (18 hours before your presentation!)
 - Presentation (as scheduled – Dec 1, 3, 8)
 - Final Paper (Dec 7th via Blackboard / Dec 8th, Hard copy)

PRESENTATIONS – WHAT TO COVER

By the end we should know:

1. Your topic and primary ethical question
2. What makes it an ethics question?
What sides are there? What's the ethical dilemma?
3. Your stance / policy / answer
4. Pros and cons of your answer
Why it's the best / a good answer, AND its downsides

Ordering of these points & presentation style: up to you

More about this as the time comes

ETHICAL ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Ethical Analysis goals:

- Define your question: What are you focusing on?
It's not "everything about cryptocurrency."
- Take a stance – this is not an "overview" paper
- Justify it! WHY is this the "right" action/policy?
-

Discuss everyone's answers in turn for the questions in this order, and write down your own answers on your sheet:

Questions 4, 1, 2

TITLE BRAINSTORM

By now you know a bit about your teammate's topics.

What makes a good title?

Go around in a circle and spend a minute brainstorming, **ON PAPER**, possible titles.