

UF Honors (un)Common Read
I, Robot: Imagining Artificial Intelligence in the 20th Century
IDH 2930 Section #27170
Class Periods: Thursday (R) | Period 6 | 12:50 PM - 1:40 PM
Location: Little 117
Academic Term: Spring 2026

Instructor:

Dr. Hubert Wagner
hwagner@ufl.edu

Peer Instructor:

Amogh Allani
aallani@ufl.edu

Office Hours: T, F | Period 6 (12:50 PM – 1:40 PM via Zoom)

Note:

The primary point of contact for this course is the peer instructor. Please direct all questions to aallani@ufl.edu. If the peer instructor cannot resolve the issue, they will escalate it to the faculty instructor.

Course Description

Credit Hour(s): 1

In the middle of the 20th century, Isaac Asimov ideated his Three Laws of Robotics, which would govern his genre-defining stories of human-robot coexistence. Now, as we make our way through the 21st century, a robotic future has started to take shape. An analog to Asimov's Positronic brain, artificial intelligence has automated essay writing, self-driving cars, and more. This course will examine Asimov's model of robot ethics in I, Robot and its lasting relevance in policies of corporations and governments around the world.

In this course, students will participate in a conversational style discussion of the course material in each class. Before each class, students will submit a brief reflection on the discussion content for the upcoming class. There will be two major assignments for this class: a media reflection assignment and a final project.

Course Pre-Requisites / Co-Requisites

N/A

Course Objectives

1. Discuss how Asimov leverages the Laws of Robotics to tell his stories.
2. Critique modern use cases of artificial intelligence by identifying societal consequences of technology.
3. Analyze historical attitudes towards robotics and artificial intelligence by reading Asimov and exploring his contemporaries in fiction and science.
4. Interpret new developments in artificial intelligence in terms of frameworks developed by Asimov, his contemporaries, and others.
5. Propose guidelines for artificial intelligence by understanding modern day issues and through modeling Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics.

Materials and Supply Fees

N/A

Required Textbooks and Software

- I, Robot
- Asimov, Isaac
- Apr 29th, 2008, Reprint

- ISBN: 055338256X

Recommended Materials

N/A

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Week	Topic	Assignment/Homework (Due Before Class)
Week 1 (Jan 15 th)	Syllabus & Course Introduction	
Week 2 (Jan 22 th)	'Robbie'	Read the syllabus and 'Robbie' Syllabus Quiz Reflection
Week 3 (Jan 29 th)	'Runaround'	Read 'Runaround' Reflection
Week 4 (Feb 5 th)	'Reason'	Read 'Reason' Case study: Analyze a real-world robotics incident Reflection
Week 5 (Feb 12 th)	'Catch That Rabbit'	Read 'Catch That Rabbit' Reflection
Week 6 (Feb 19 th)	'Liar!'	Read 'Liar!' Reflection
Week 7 (Feb 26 th)	'Little Lost Robot'	Read 'Lost Little Robot' Reflection
Week 8 (Mar 5 th)	Contemporaries of Asimov and Discussion	Read "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" Robot Media Breakdown Due Reflection
Week 9 (Mar 5 th)	'Escape!'	Read 'Escape' Reflection
Week 10 (Mar 12 th)	Contemporaries of Asimov and Discussion 2	Read 'Evidence'
Week 11 (Mar 26 th)	'Evidence'	Spring Break
Week 12 (Apr 2 nd)	'The Evitable Conflict'	Read 'The Evitable Conflict' Reflection
Week 13 (Apr 9 th)	Robotics and Society Today	Read '... That Thou Art Mindful of Him' Personal Artificial Intelligence Reflection
Week 14 (Apr 16 th)	That Thou Art Mindful of Him	Read 'The Last Question'

		Submit Laws of Robotics Project
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Any updates to the course schedule will be made available on Canvas.

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. See:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Make-Up Policy

For up to a maximum of (1) unexcused absence: A reflection-style assignment will be allowed as a make-up for For any other extenuating circumstance, please contact the peer instructor as early as possible to discuss accommodations.

Late assignments will be accepted for up to one week after the submission date. There will be a 10% penalty per day after the submission date.

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Total Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Weekly Reflection	100 each	30%
Attendance	100 each	40%
Robot Media Breakdown	100	10%
Laws of Robotics Project	100	20%
		100%

Attendance

Attendance will be taken within the first ten minutes of class, following the policy stated previously. Attendance points will be fully satisfied by attending the class.

Weekly Reflections

Students will write weekly brief reflections (100 words minimum) in response to the reading assignments.

Reflections will be submitted weekly on canvas.

Unless otherwise specified, students may consider responding to the following questions, which may also help guide in-class discussion:

- Which of Asimov's ideas most captured your attention this week?
- Do you think anything from this week's reading is relevant to your life today?

Additionally, students may pose a topic or question to share with the class in their reflection.

Robot Media Breakdown

An essay or project related to depictions of robots in media- (Written Component: 750 word minimum). Further details given in class, and a rubric will be available on canvas.

Laws of Robots Project

The final assignment where the student will get the opportunity to develop their own laws of robotics and envision

their impact on society (Written Component: 1000 word minimum). Further details given in class, and a rubric will be available on canvas.

Grading Policy

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
90.0 - 100.0	A	4.00
87.0 - 89.9	A-	3.67
84.0 - 86.9	B+	3.33
81.0 - 83.9	B	3.00
78.0 - 80.9	B-	2.67
75.0 - 79.9	C+	2.33
72.0 - 74.9	C	2.00
69.0 - 71.9	C-	1.67
66.0 - 68.9	D+	1.33
63.0 - 65.9	D	1.00
60.0 - 62.9	D-	0.67
0 - 59.9	E	0.00

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards Honors Completion Requirements. Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Requirements module to earn Honors Milestone / Completion credit.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>.

Honors Program Contact Information

- Honors Program, Honors Village Complex #4, 352-392-1519
- Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu
- Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/UFHonorsAdvising>
- Honors Program Event Calendar: <https://www.honors.ufl.edu/news--events/calendar-of-events/>