

## Brief Course Outline

**Course Title:**

**Human Rights, Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity**

**Course Number and Section**

POLISCI

3395G 550

**Instructor Name(s):**

Dr. Laszlo Sarkany

**Instructor Email(s):**

lsarkan@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

**Course Description:**

The aim of this course is to introduce students to critical social issues at the intersection of human rights, artificial intelligence, and cyberwarfare. The emphasis in this course will be on understanding how 'actual' artificial intelligent systems impact such critical aspects of human rights as privacy, discrimination, inclusion, transparency and accountability. Emphasis will further be placed on the nature and phenomenon of cyberwarfare, and the challenges of governing cyberspace. Key questions that will animate our discussion this term will be the following: should artificial algorithmic systems, not only remember our names and tell us what the weather is like outside, but also decide – without human input – who should be hired in the public and private sectors, what social services should be available to what groups in society, and when weapons should fire and at what targets – and did we mention, do all this without any human input? With regards to cyberspace and cyberwar, what is cyberwar, how is it fought, how can we defend against it, and to what extent is it different from conventional warfare? Finally, what are the challenges of regulating and governing cyberspace?

**Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry**

- a. Develop a thorough understanding of (the non-technological) aspects of artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, and how they relate to social justice and international relations
- b. Understand the key links between AI and a range of key human rights issues such as privacy and democratic governance
- c. Understand the phenomenon of cyber conflict and warfare, and how international relations scholars have attempted to make sense of this new/old phenomenon
- d. Critically evaluate existing policy approaches to regulation of AI and cybersecurity
- e. Evaluate the challenges of governing cyberspace

**Textbooks and Course Materials:**

\*\*\* All three textbooks are required.

Kaplan, J. (2020). Artificial intelligence : what everyone needs to know. Oxford University

Press. [Available on the UWO library webpage.]

P.W. Singer and Allan Friedman, 'Cybersecurity and Cyberwar: What Everyone Needs to Know.' Oxford University Press; 2014. [Available on the UWO library webpage.]

Zwitter, A., Gstrein, O. J., & Edward Elgar Publishing, publisher. (2023). Handbook on the politics and governance of big data and artificial intelligence (A. Zwitter & O. J. Gstrein, Eds.). Edward Elgar Publishing. [Available on the UWO library webpage.]

**Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry**

| Assignment           | Due Date mm/dd/yy | Weight - % |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Class participation  | 04/01/2026        | 20         |
| Seminar presentation | 04/01/2026        | 25         |
| Essay proposal       | 03/03/2026        | 20         |
| Class essay          | 04/07/2026        | 35         |

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Thursday, December 18, 2025

# Huron Brief Course Outline

**In-course Costs** \$000.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
  - Or include the weblink of the textbook's publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].