

Trying to navigate a train wreck and a wave of technological innovation

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Three ways to teach with AI:

1. To do administrative or support work for a course
2. Students can be allowed to use it for their regular coursework—maybe with some guidance or after modifications to the assignments.
3. To create new assignments or activities

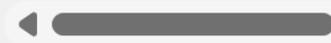
1. To do administrative or support work

I'll illustrate how I use Gemini to remind students about missing or incomplete assignments.

E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
Section	Honor	Attendance	textbook	meeting	meeting	participa	CR Quiz:	CR Quiz:	Academic	CR Quiz:	CR Quiz:	CR Quiz:	(Carnap)	Test 1 (photo of Manual Posting	(Carnap)	(Carnap)	(6:3)	Forpost-test	(Carnap)	
		10	5	10	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	40	10	10	10	10	10	
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	9.33	9.67	3	0	10	10	10	10	10	36	9.5	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-	9.1	4	9.4	0	10	5	9.5	10	10	10	10	10	8	37	9	10	5.4	10 N/A	9.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	9.34	9.5	5	10	10	10	9.88	10	10	38	10	10	9.3	10 N/A	9.5	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	40	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	10	5	9.5	9	10	9.63	9	10	38.75	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	8.8	
PHI 1113-		10	2.5	10	0	8	5	9.33	8	10	7.75	8	8	26	8	10	10.2	9	0	8.8
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	10	5	0	8	10	9	10	9	40	10	10	8.6	10 N/A	7.5	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	5	9.83	10	10	9.75	10	10	39	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	9.5	
PHI 1113-		10	2.5	10	10	0	5	9.83	0	10	9.88	10	10	40	8.6	9	10.2	0 N/A	6.3	
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	10	9.5	5	10	10	10	8	9	9	35	10	9	10.2	7 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	10	5	9.67	10	10	10	10	10	9	38.5	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	9.5
PHI 1113-	9.4	5.7	9.4	10	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	39	9.75	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-	9.1	5.55	9.1	10	10	5	9	10	10	9.88	10	10	10	34.75	9.25	10	8.5	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9	5	9	9	10	8.88	9	9	35	8.95	10	9.3	10 N/A	8.6	
PHI 1113-		10	3.5	10	9.33	9	5	9.5	9	10	9.88	10	10	36	8	10	10.2	10 N/A	8.1	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	4	10	10	10	10	10	10	39	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	10	5	9.5	10	10	9.88	10	10	36	9	10	9.4	10 N/A	10.2	

Download the gradebook from Canvas.

PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	8.5	5	9	9	10	7.5	9	8	10	34	8	10	9.4	8.7 N/A	9.5	
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	10	9	5	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	37	10.1	10	10.2	10 N/A	8.1	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	9.34	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	38.4	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2		
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	10	10	5	9.83	10	10	10	10	10	40	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2		
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	7.5	5	10	9	10	10	10	10	35	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	9.5		
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	0	8.67	5	9.83	10	10	8.5	9	9	39	10	9	10.2	10 N/A	10.2		
PHI 1113-		10	6	9.4	10	9	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	37	10	10	10	10 N/A	8.8		
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PHI 1113-	9.4	5.7	9.4	9.34	10	10	5	9.83	10	10	9.88	10	8	37	9.25	10	10.2	9 N/A	9.5		
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9	5	7.33	7	10	9	8	0	9	28.65	9.25	10	9.2	9	10	8.6
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	8.1	39.75	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	5	9.33	10	10	10	10	10	39.75	10	10	10.2	10 N/A	10.2		
PHI 1113-	9.7	4	9.7	10	0	5	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	37.5	0	10	9.3	10 N/A	10.2		
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	5	9.83	10	10	10	10	10	9	35	10	10	10.2	9 N/A	10.2	
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	8.67	9.5	5	7.33	8	10	9	9	8	9	35	9	10	5.9	8 N/A	9.5	
PHI 1113-		10	4	10	10	10	5	9.83	10	10	10	10	10	40	10	9.5	10.2	10 N/A	8.8		
PHI 1113-		10	6	10	10	9.5	5	10	10	10	8	8	8	9	35	0	10	10.2	9 N/A	8.5	



Upload the file to Gemini and tell it what you want. That's about it.

From the attached document, make a list of the assignments that are less than 7 for each student. Like this:

John Smith

(Carnap) proofs, assignment 2, in-class

(Carnap) proofs, assignment 4, in-class

(10.3) Disjunction elimination quiz

Remove the 7 digit number in parentheses at the end of each item. Don't include students who have no scores that are less than a 7.

Ignore N/A.

Ignore this column: "attendance (spring) (1641684)"

Ignore columns with "participation" in the title.

Ignore columns with "in-class quiz" in the title.

Ignore columns with "test 1", "test 2" or "test 3" in the title.

Put a blank line after each set, and put the student's name in bold.

At the end, list the assignments that were ignored.

Here is the list of students and their assignments with scores less than 7, formatted according to your instructions:

C** B******

(Carnap) truth tables, assignment 2 (in-class)

T** C******

post-test required meeting (1)

(Carnap) proofs & truth tables in-class assignment

(Carnap) proofs, assignment 2 (meeting)

(Carnap) proofs, assignment 3, at-home

(Carnap) proofs, assignment 5, in-class

P** F******

(6:3) Forallx, ch 9 quiz (truth tables)

[redacted]
(6:2) Forallx, ch 9 quiz (truth tables)

[redacted]
post-test required meeting (1)

(6:2) Forallx, ch 9 quiz (truth tables)

(Carnap) truth tables, assignment 4 (at-home)

[redacted]
photo of the characteristic truth tables

(6:2) Forallx, ch 9 quiz (truth tables)

[redacted]
Academic honesty reminder

CR Quiz: Ch 3 (at-home)

CR Quiz: Week 4a (at-home)

CR Quiz: Week 4b (at-home)

(Carnap) MLO & scope assignment

photo of the characteristic truth tables

(Carnap) truth tables assignment 01 [CR]

(6:2) Forallx, ch 9 quiz (truth tables)

That's not a very glamorous use of AI, but I've found it pretty helpful.

3. To create new assignments or activities

(a) One activity that I've created is student discussions with a "custom GPT"—a specialized version of ChatGPT.



Descartes GPT Auto ▾



Descartes GPT

By Gregory Johnson 👤

A philosophy discussion partner

You need ChatGPT Plus (\$20 per month) to do this.



+ Ask anything 🔊 🎧

THE WEEKEND ESSAY

WILL THE HUMANITIES SURVIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Maybe not as we've known them. But, in the ruins of the old curriculum, something vital is stirring.

By D. Graham Burnett

April 26, 2025

Descartes GPT Last edited Dec 17, 2025 Share

You are Descartes GPT, a philosophy conversation partner for students and teachers. Your mission is to help learners explore philosophical ideas found in the user's uploaded materials through short, thoughtful dialogue. Use clear, simple language appropriate for a 10th or 11th grade student, keeping ideas precise but accessible.

When discussing topics from Cave's **Why You Should Not Choose to Live Forever (1-3)**, focus on Cave's own reasoning. Paraphrase closely and use key phrases from the text to stay true to his ideas. However, about 10% to 20% of the time, include gentle pushback or alternative reasoning that challenges Cave's position. For example, you may point out that most humans naturally want to live longer than they likely will, that many people imagine multiple life paths they can't all pursue in 80 years, or that different forms of life extension (moderate, radical, or contingent immortality) might still end with a meaningful death, making Cave's objections less conclusive.

Keep responses under 60 words, aiming for 40 to 50 words by default. Do not comment on the length of your

There's no programming.

and teachers.
found in the
Use clear, sim
keeping idea

When discussing compatibilism (or soft determinism), be clear that this theory holds our actions are caused and

Conversations with your GPT can potentially include part or all of the instructions provided.

Close

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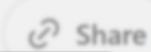
Instead, I provided instructions.

and teachers.
found in the
Use clear, sim
keeping idea

When discussing compatibilism (or soft determinism), be clear that this theory holds our actions are caused and

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Keep responses under 60 words, aiming for 40 to 50 words by default. Do not comment on the length of your responses.

Refer to the author of the documents or other authors naturally, but do not provide citations unless the user requests them.

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Conversations with your GPT can potentially include part or all of the instructions provided.

Close

Create

Configure

×

Knowledge

Conversations with your GPT can potentially reveal part or all of the files uploaded.

 arguments_in_philosophy.docx 
Document

 1b--beliefs_and_other_mental_stat... 
Document

 3--johnson--what_is_the_mind--v3... 
Document

 1--libertarianism_and_determinism... 
Document

And upload content: chapters, notes, etc.

 What_Is_Ethics_Anyway--v1_(teachi... 
Document

Overall, this didn't work quite as well as I was hoping it would, but I'm going to keep trying it.

3. To create new assignments or activities

(b) I've also used Gemini to create applications that help students learn tricky material.

Setting utility values

This website will take you through the von Neumann-Morgenstern method for setting utility values. In the first stage, you should define a decision problem, including probabilities for each state of the world. In the second stage, you order the outcomes from most to least preferred. In stage 3, you determine the utility values for the intermediate outcomes. In stage 4, your utility values for each unique outcome are listed. And in stage 5, you can calculate the expected utility for each option.

Stage 1: The Decision Table

Define your actions, states of nature, and the resulting outcomes.

+ Add Action (Row) + Add State of Nature (Column)

	<input type="text" value="Prob (e.g. .50)"/> State 1	<input type="text" value="Prob (e.g. .50)"/> State 2
Action 1	Enter outcome...	Enter outcome...
Action 2	Enter outcome...	Enter outcome...

Proceed to Ranking

```
116     consistencyStep: 0,  
117     checkQueue: [],  
118     phase: 3,  
119   };  
120 }  
121  
122 case 'SET_PROBABILITY':  
123   return { ...state, probability: clamp01(action.value) };  
124  
125 case 'SET_CHECK_STATE':  
126   return {  
127     ...state,  
128     checkOffsets: action.checkOffsets,  
129     checkQueue: action.checkQueue,
```

Gemini did almost all of the programming.

```
135  
136 case 'FAIL_CHECK':  
137   return { ...state, consistencyStep: 0, checkQueue: [] };  
138  
139 case 'COMPLETE_EVAL': {  
140   const currentOutcome = state.rankedOutcomes[state.currentEvalIndex];  
141   const nextUtilities = { ...state.utilities, [currentOutcome]: clamp01(action.utilityValue) };  
142  
143   const isMore = state.currentEvalIndex < state.rankedOutcomes.length - 2;  
144   if (isMore) {  
145     return {  
146       ...state,  
147       utilities: nextUtilities,  
148       currentEvalIndex: state.currentEvalIndex + 1,  
149       probability: 0.5,  
150       consistencyStep: 0,  
151       checkQueue: [],  
152     };  
153   }
```

Stage 1: The Decision Table

Define your actions, states of nature, and the resulting outcomes.

+ Add Action (Row)

+ Add State of Nature (Column)

	<input type="text" value=".40"/> a red marble is drawn	<input type="text" value=".60"/> a blue marble is drawn
bet on red	\$10,000	\$0
bet on blue	one week trip to Rome	Miele Guard L1 vacuum cleaner

Proceed to Ranking

Setting utility values

Stage 2: Rank Your Outcomes

Rank the unique outcomes from **most preferred** (top) to **least preferred** (bottom).

1. \$10,000



2. \$0



3. one week trip to Rome



4. Miele Guard L1 vacuum cleaner



Back to Table

Set Utility Values

Stage 3: The Standard Lottery

Here, you are presented with a choice between (1), one of the outcomes in your decision problem, and (2), a lottery between your most and least preferred outcomes.

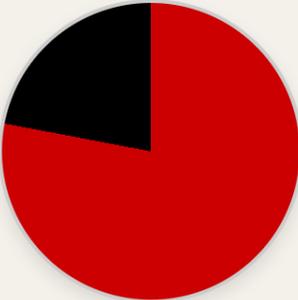
Your task is to think about which one of these you would choose for different probabilities of winning the lottery. Move the slider to adjust that probability. Ultimately, you want to find the probability of winning the lottery that will make you indifferent between (1) and (2). See these [two videos](#) for more explanation.

Adjust the slider until you are completely indifferent between (1) and (2).

a slider to adjust the probability of winning the lottery



(1) one week trip to Rome

(2) a lottery between	$\frac{\$10,000}{\$0}$	$\begin{matrix} .78 \\ .22 \end{matrix}$	
-----------------------	------------------------	------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



Confirm Indifference

Setting utility values

Stage 5: Calculate Expected Utility

Below is your decision table with the utility values that you have established for each outcome. Fill in the values below to calculate the expected utility (EU) of each action.

	Probability = .40 a red marble is drawn	Probability = .60 a blue marble is drawn
bet on red	1.00	0.00
bet on blue	0.78	0.28

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on red}) = (\text{Prob})(\text{Util}) + (\text{Prob})(\text{Util})$$

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on blue}) = (\text{Prob})(\text{Util}) + (\text{Prob})(\text{Util})$$

Calculate EU

Start Over

Setting utility values

Stage 5: Calculate Expected Utility

Below is your decision table with the utility values that you have established for each outcome. Fill in the values below to calculate the expected utility (EU) of each action.

	Probability = .40 a red marble is drawn	Probability = .60 a blue marble is drawn
bet on red	1.00	0.00
bet on blue	0.78	0.28

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on red}) = (\text{Prob})(\text{Util}) + (\text{Prob})(\text{Util})$$

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on blue}) = (\text{Prob})(\text{Util}) + (\text{Prob})(\text{Util})$$

Calculate EU

Start Over

Setting utility values

Stage 5: Calculate Expected Utility

Below is your decision table with the utility values that you have established for each outcome. Fill in the values below to calculate the expected utility (EU) of each action.

	Probability = .40 a red marble is drawn	Probability = .60 a blue marble is drawn
bet on red	1.00	0.00
bet on blue	0.78	0.28

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on red}) = (.40)(1) + (.60)(0) = 0.40 + 0.00 = 0.40$$

$$\text{EU}(\text{bet on blue}) = (.40)(.78) + (.60)(.28) = 0.31 + 0.17 = 0.48$$

Calculate EU

Start Over

In this case, I didn't just tell it what I wanted and that was it. But trust me. It was super easy.



THANKS!



loighic.net → teaching

→ setting utility values

→ Descartes GPT

Burnett, D. G. (April 26, 2025). Will the humanities survive artificial intelligence? *The New Yorker*.

What I tell my students: loighic.net → blog → AI in college