

Department of Computer Science  
Graduate Comprehensive Exam  
in  
Communication  
Spring 2021

- Answer the question on the paper supplied.
- Please use a DARK PEN instead of a light pencil. You will be responsible if words are not recognizable.
- Write on only one side of the paper.
- Write your SIX-DIGIT Texas State ID in the top right corner of each page of your answer. Do NOT put your name anywhere on the answers.
- If the answer is written on more than one page, number the pages consecutively.

Because your opinions are called for, there are no right or wrong answers. Your responses should include justifications for your views, and your analysis should be thorough and communicated clearly.

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Recently, a well-known company filed a patent for creating chatbots based on real people. The company wants to gather data about people from their social media profiles and posts as well as from information provided by friends and family. Then, it wants to use the data to create programs that make it possible to interact with the software in a way that simulates and resembles new conversations with the people whose data was used. Do you think creating chatbots that realistically mimic interactions with specific people should be allowed? For example, would it be okay to create a realistic chatbot of an adult or child who does not wish to or cannot talk to you? Why or why not?

Due to the pandemic, most college courses are being taught online. Some of those classes utilize prerecorded lectures for students to watch at their convenience. Such recorded materials can be used in future courses, even when the professors who presented them are no longer around to teach those classes, while other instructors answer student questions in their place but do not lecture themselves. If the technology existed to create reliable and realistic chatbots capable of outputting novel speech closely resembling that of the original professor who recorded the lectures, should such chatbots be used to answer student questions about the prerecorded lectures or homework instead of other human instructors? Why or why not?

If a company creates a chatbot based on someone's online profiles and posts, which then produces inappropriate, hateful, or violence-inciting speech or lies, should that company be liable for what the chatbot says or for the malicious actions of others that the chatbot encouraged? Why or why not? Should the person on whom the chatbot is based be liable? Why or why not?