

CS/INFO 6742 – Natural language processing and social interaction

Lecture 1 handout, Aug 26, 2021

Announcements

- Enrollment limited to PhD and M.S. students
- No auditing permitted
- Course website: <http://www.cs.cornell.edu/courses/cs6742/2021fa>
(look for a dusky red; a purple, aqua, yellow or orange color scheme indicates a previous semester)
- Assignment (A1) posted; first deadline (of several) on **Wed Sep. 1.**

Today's outline

1. Why does this course exist?
 - a. Scope
 - b. Implications
Intertwined:
 - “Better” understanding of people. Example: Bryan et al. ’11 voter turnout study
 - “Better” systems. Example: Facebook post ranking involving type of predicted type of subsequent reaction
 - “Better” society?
2. Examples of (long-standing) discussion systems
 - a. Decision discussion: Wikipedia
 - b. Moderation mechanisms: Slashdot
3. Course philosophy: learn about NLP, but also about research
 - a. “Lecture” style: exploratory
 - b. Implications for course structure & coursework
Paraphrasing Eugene Charniak: “The best way to do something is to do *something*”
 - c. Assignment A1 and how it is informed by this philosophy