Announcements
- Enrollment limited to PhD and M.S. students
- No auditing permitted

- Course website: [http://www.cs.cornell.edu/courses/cs6742/2021fa](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
   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