Reading Journal

CSC – 261 Artificial Intelligence

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Spring 1, 2021

Acknowledgments: Dr. Weinman's Reading Journal activity inspired me to design this deliverable. (I am very thankful for the insight!)

A Single Document

- The Reading Journal is a single document to be delivered by the end of the course.
- Each reading listed on the "Textbook Readings spreadsheet" (book chapter, chapter sections, or paper) should have a dedicated section in your reading journal.
- Each dedicated section must use the frameworks described here as a guidance.
- To help identify sections, your journal must have a table of contents.

Reading Journal: Why?

- As you read the AI textbooks and papers, your reading journal will be a solid friend!
- You will write and use the activity to absorb the content and reflect on it.
- As you read the AI book's chapters, you will see that there are a lot of new terms! Your reading journal will help you to remember those, and bridge the terminology across chapters and topics.
- Your reading journal is supposed to assist you also in the future. If you decide to revisit AI five or more years from now, your journal should be a fantastic reference!

How to Approach your Reading Journal

- In the next slides, I provide some of the questions I created for myself to help me reliably interpret and investigate my materials. I called them “Framework for Book Chapters” and “Framework for Research Papers”.
- I share these questions here to facilitate your interaction with the AI course readings.
- I would encourage you to use both frameworks to guide your reading journal interaction. However, you are free to adjust it to your own use.

Framework for Book Chapters

- What is this chapter about? What is the overarching theme?
- What are the ideas supported in the chapter? Why does it matter?
- What are the most important terms? How do they fit together?
- Create a diagram that summarizes the chapter or described terminology.
- Are there any authors/important references?
- What is the importance of this chapter? What can I do with this knowledge?
- What are the things I want/must remember?
- This chapter makes me think of something… what is that "something"?

Framework for Analyzing Papers

1. What is this paper about?
2. What is the research problem?
3. Do the authors aim to *solve*, or to *approach* the research problem? Why?
4. Create a diagram that summarizes the paper. (suppose you aim to explain this paper to non-CS people using a single and attractive diagram.)
5. What are the main findings? Approach limitations? Ethical considerations?
6. What did you like/dislike about the paper? What makes you uncomfortable about this paper?
7. If you were the author, would you do something differently? What and why?
8. What outcome do you think the authors expect from us, the readers?

What to turn in

- You are free to use either a private doc, slide or spreadsheet. (You can use a non-digital format. Just be very careful to make sure that I can read your images!)
- You can either submit a spreadsheet or a pdf file.
- I will expect thorough notes on each required book chapter/paper (at least 250 words, *and* one diagram).