

Honors 296 Essential Questions

Throughout this semester we have covered many different topics, all which made me wonder how they might fit in with my major. Below, I go into each essential question and how it can connect to my major.

What is a computer?

There are many different ways that a computer can be defined, but I would argue that a computer is any system that uses a method to decide on or perform an action. Within this definition, it can be argued that humans are computers. I would agree with this statement! In the criminal justice field, it is so important to make timely decisions, and officers follow many different processes to get to these decisions.



How do we use algorithms in our lives?

Algorithms are very present in our everyday lives because they help us in problem-solving. I think that algorithms can also be seen in the criminal justice field because we must be very knowledgeable about the law and have to use the law in order to make important decisions. When deciding, an algorithm is used to determine possible outcomes and find the best possible outcome.



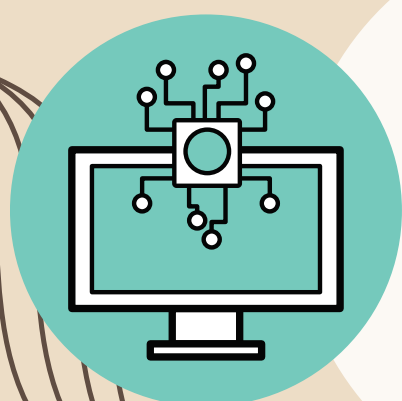
Do humans create or discover algorithms?

I think that this is a very interesting question because both sides can be argued! Personally, I think humans discover algorithms because other people use the same algorithms to get to the same conclusions. I think that this can also be seen in the criminal justice field because officers have to make decisions, and they may discover certain ways to make snap judgments, meaning that they discovered that algorithm, rather than creating it.



How has the widespread use of computing technology and algorithms changed the way we work, play, and interact with other people? How much should we let technology do for us?

Widespread use of technology and algorithms has impacted how we live our daily lives, especially with how we interact with those around us. Because of technology, we may be apt to respond to others in a way that is learned, either from the actual technology or the algorithms introduced to us by the technology. I think the way that we interact with each other has drastically changed particularly because of technology. Algorithms shape the way our brains function because we learn how best to react to situations and the people around us, which is especially seen in the criminal justice field. Because of technology, police are able to access lots of information about different aspects of criminal justice, allowing a change in the framework of the mind. I think technology is very helpful, but we shouldn't depend on technology to make decisions for us. I think that we should make decisions free of technology, for how can we know we're getting a truly genuine response if technology is involved?



What social and legal issues have arisen due to the widespread use of computing technology and algorithms? What new issues are likely to arise in the future?

There are a lot of social and legal issues that have arisen from the use of technology. One of the biggest issues we see with technology use in the criminal justice field is the usage of body worn cameras. While these have been very helpful in court cases, several issues have arisen with the use of these cameras, mostly due to gross manipulation of the cameras by officers. I can see issues arising in the future with technology because the more the police depend on technology the less individuality in decisions we may see.

