

2026



AP[®] Seminar End-of-Course Exam

Scoring Guidelines

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End-of-Course Exam: Part A

15 points

General Scoring Notes

- When applying the scoring guidelines, you should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence (i.e., best fit).
- Except where otherwise noted, each row is scored independently.

0 (Zero) Scores

- Scores of 0 are assigned to all rows of the rubric when the response is off-topic; a repetition of a prompt; entirely crossed-out; a drawing or other markings; or a response in a language other than English.

A1: Argument, main idea, or thesis**3 points**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 1	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point The response misstates the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.	2 points The response identifies, in part and with some accuracy, the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.	3 points The response accurately identifies the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.
Understand and Analyze Argument	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
(0–3 points)	Typical responses that earn 0 points: Are irrelevant to the argument (do not even relate to the topic or subject of the text).	Typical responses that earn 1 point: - Misidentify the main argument or provide little or no indication of understanding of any part of the main argument. - Just state the topic of the argument. - Restate the title or heading.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Accurately identify only part of the argument (part is omitted or is overgeneralized). - Describe all parts, but either vaguely or with some inaccuracy.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Correctly identify all of the main parts of the argument. - Demonstrate understanding of the argument as a whole.
		Examples that earn 1 point: Misidentify the main argument <i>“AI is rapidly reaching the level of human intelligence.”</i> Restate the title or heading <i>“AI is getting more and more powerful.”</i>	Examples that earn 2 points Identify only part of the argument <i>“AI is not yet at the level of human intelligence. Researchers and companies should work together to make more progress.”</i> <i>“Despite current limitations, AI is moving closer to human-level intelligence.”</i> Describe all parts, but either vaguely or with some inaccuracy <i>“People need to work together to make AI better and increase funding.”</i>	Examples that earn 3 points: Include all parts of the argument <i>“New technology is needed for AI to progress to AGI. That can most effectively be achieved through government funding and collaboration between researchers of various fields and technology companies.”</i>
Additional Notes The argument/thesis has three main parts: - Current large language models (LLMs) are unlikely to progress to artificial general intelligence (AGI) on their own. (In place of LLMs accept AI. In place of AGI also accept: superintelligence, human-like intelligence, etc.) - Collaboration among researchers, disciplines, fields of study, “humanity,” and/or companies is needed. (A response must reference a specific stakeholder or group.) - Public funding and/or government involvement is needed to ensure new advancements are beneficial/mitigate risks.				

A2: Explain line of reasoning**6 points**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 2 Understand and Analyze Argument (0–6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for two points.	2 points The response correctly identifies at least one of the author’s claims.	4 points The response provides a limited explanation of the author’s line of reasoning by accurately identifying some of the claims AND identifying the connections or acknowledging a relationship among them.	6 points The response provides a thorough explanation of the author’s line of reasoning by identifying relevant claims and clearly explaining connections among them.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
Typical responses that earn 0 points: Do not identify any claims accurately.				
Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Accurately identify only one claim. OR - Identify more than one claim, but make no reference to connections between them.				
Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Accurately identify some claims but there are some significant inaccuracies or omissions. AND - Provide few or superficial connections between claims (demonstrating a limited understanding of the reasoning).				
Typical responses that earn 6 points: - Accurately identify most of the claims. AND - Clearly explain the relationships between claims (including how they relate to the overall argument).				
Additional Notes - For Rows 2 and 3, score the response based on the content presented, not its location. If relevant explanation of the line of reasoning (A2) or evaluation of sources and evidence (A3) appears in a different section of the response, it must be considered and credited in the appropriate scoring row. Author’s claims: - The development of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) is a pressing issue for AI companies and policymakers. (Provides context for argument and relevance of issue) - LLMs have not yet reached human level of intelligence (AGI). (Suggests a limit to AI companies’ claims) - To reach AGI, AI systems likely need more coherent internal models of the world/need to better represent their environment (ideas from neuroscience and cognitive science could help). (Potential solution to improve AI models) - Researchers from an array of fields need to be involved in AI development to verify system capabilities, check AI companies’ claims, and identify breakthroughs. (Explains benefits of solution) - Researchers have little access to LLMs as the technology is mainly in private industry (due to cost). (Describes limitation/obstacle to potential solution) - Publicly funded research needs to have a key role in AGI development. (Implication of solution, what it would require in practice) - Government agencies spend significantly less to fund AI research but need to do so on a larger scale by pooling resources. (Provides a possible solution and reasoning for government involvement.) - To ensure breakthroughs are not missed and systems are safe, researchers should work together with governments and companies. (Summarizes solution)				

A3: Evaluate effectiveness of the evidence**6 points**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 3 Evaluate Sources and Evidence	0 points Does not meet the criteria for two points.	2 points The response identifies little evidence. It makes a superficial reference to relevance and/or credibility but lacks explanation.	4 points The response explains various pieces of evidence in terms of credibility and relevance, but may do so inconsistently or unevenly.	6 points The response evaluates the relevance and credibility of the evidence and thoroughly evaluates how well the evidence is used to support the author's argument.
(0–6 points)	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: • Misidentify evidence or exclude evidence from the response. AND • Provide no evaluative statement about effectiveness of evidence.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: • Identify at least one piece of evidence (or source of evidence) but disregard how well it supports the claims. OR • Offer broad statements about how well the evidence supports the argument without referencing ANY specific evidence.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: • Provide a vague, superficial, or perfunctory assessment of how well at least two pieces of evidence support the argument. OR • Explain the relevance of evidence or credibility of sources presented, but explanations lack detail.	Typical responses that earn 6 points: • Provide detailed evaluation of how well the evidence presented supports the argument by • Evaluating the strengths and/or weaknesses of the evidence. AND • Evaluating the relevance of specific evidence, and credibility of sources of the specific pieces of evidence presented.
Additional Notes • A response may evaluate sources and evidence in the second part (Row 2), and/or analyze the argument in the third part (Row 3). Credit should be awarded for this. • Responses that solely evaluate sources of information and not specific pieces of evidence presented from those sources cannot score 6 for Row 3.				

Summary of Evidence		
Source (as provided in text)	Credibility	Evidence/Relevance to claims
Sam Altman	chief executive of OpenAI, a technology firm based in San Francisco, California	<i>“we will have superintelligence in a few thousand days (!); it may take longer, but I’m confident we’ll get there.”</i> Supports claim that AGI is a pressing issue.
Policymakers everywhere		<i>“have questions about AI”</i> Supports claim that AGI is a pressing issue.
researchers who spoke to <i>Nature</i>	<i>Nature</i> 636, 22–25; 2024	<i>“large language models (LLMs), such as o1, Google’s Gemini and Claude, made by Anthropic, based in San Francisco, have not yet delivered AGI.”</i> Supports claim about consensus that LLMs have not yet reached human level of intelligence (AGI).
many say		<i>“there are good reasons to think that LLMs never will”</i> Limitations of LLMs may mean they will not reach AGI.
François Chollet and Subbarao Kambhampati	a software engineer formerly at Google, a computer scientist at Arizona State University	<i>“tested o1’s performance on tasks that require abstract reasoning and planning, and found that it comes up short of AGI.”</i> Supports claim about limitations of LLMs.
some researchers		<i>“think that AI systems would need coherent ‘world models’, or representations of their surroundings that they can use to test hypotheses, reason, plan and generalize knowledge learnt in one domain to potentially limitless other situations.”</i> Supports claim about limitations of LLMs and need for different models.
Yoshua Bengio’s team	University of Montreal, Canada	<i>“is exploring alternative AI architectures that would better support the building of coherent world models and the ability to reason using such models.”</i> Supports claim about limitations of LLMs and need for different models.
some researchers		<i>“the next breakthroughs in AI might come not from the biggest systems, but from smaller, more-energy-efficient AI.”</i> Supports claim about limitations of LLMs and need for different models.
Karl Friston	a theoretical neuroscientist at University College London	<i>“Smarter systems in the future could also require less data to train if they had the ability to decide which aspects of their environment to sample, rather than simply ingesting everything they are fed”</i> Supports claim about limitations of LLMs and need for different models.

A. Khandelwal et al.	Preprint at arXiv, Cornell University; 2024	<i>“accessing the leading AI systems can be difficult for researchers who don’t work at the companies that can afford the vast quantity of graphical processing units (GPUs) needed to train the systems”</i> Supports claim researchers have little access to LLMs as they are mainly in private industry (due to cost).
N. Ahmed et al.	<i>Science</i> 379, 884–886; 2023	<i>“in 2021, US government agencies (excluding the Department of Defense) allocated US\$1.5 billion to AI research and development, and the European Commission spends around €1 billion (US\$1.05 billion) annually. By contrast, companies worldwide spent more than \$340 billion on AI research in 2021”</i> Supports claim researchers have little access to LLMs as they are mainly in private industry (due to cost).
Confederation of Laboratories for Artificial Intelligence Research in Europe	a non-profit organization based in The Hague, the Netherlands	<i>“has suggested building a ‘CERN for AI’ that can attract the same level of talent as AI companies do and so create a cutting-edge research environment.”</i> Supports the idea that larger-scale public investment could help rebalance AI research and create open, cutting-edge environments.

End-of-Course Exam: Part B**24 points****General Scoring Notes**

- When applying the scoring guidelines, you should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence (i.e., best fit).
- Each row is scored independently.

0 (Zero) Scores

- A score of 0 is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the response displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.
- Scores of 0 are assigned to all rows of the rubric when the response is off-topic; a repetition of a prompt; entirely crossed-out; a drawing or other markings; or a response in a language other than English.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 1 Establish Argument (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.	2 points Misstates or overlooks a theme or issue that connects the sources. The response's perspective is unclear or unrelated to the sources.	4 points Identifies a theme or issue that connects the sources. The response derives its perspective from only one of the sources.	6 points The response identifies a theme or issue connecting the provided sources and presents a perspective that is not represented in one of the sources OR brings a particularly insightful approach to one of the perspectives OR makes a strong thematic connection among perspectives.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are not related in any way to any theme that connects the provided sources (ignores theme entirely, off-topic). - Do not offer any perspective or claim (generated by the student).	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Offer a perspective that is unclear. - Demonstrate a simplistic or mistaken understanding of the provided sources. - May be dominated by summary rather than being driven by the student's perspective.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Offer a clear perspective that is derived from a single source or present a perspective that juxtaposes topics pulled directly from sources. - Offer a reasonable understanding of the provided sources. - Present a perspective that is trite, obvious, or overly general.	Typical responses that earn 6 points: - Offer a clear perspective that is either original or insightful. - Offer a perceptive understanding of the provided sources used. - Are driven by the student's perspective.
	Examples that earn 0 points: Ignore the theme entirely "Summer is the best season." Do not offer a perspective "Source A says there are two roads, and Source B talks about networking."	Examples that earn 2 points: Demonstrate a simplistic or mistaken understanding of the sources "What you do in high school is kind of important." Are dominated by summary "The sources say that there are different ways that you can prepare yourself for getting jobs and being happy."	Examples that earn 4 points: Derive a perspective from a single source "When faced with a choice between two things, it may be best to take the choice that looks a little less popular." (Source A) "Changing your career path can help develop important skills and connections." (Source B) "Teenage students should be engaged in the work world as much as possible." (Source C) "Choices about work matter but relationships with family and friends are more important." (Source D) Present a perspective that is trite, obvious, or overly general "You should follow your dreams." "Making decisions is an important aspect of life."	Examples of that earn 6 points: Offer an original perspective "To help high school athletes learn to be decisive in their personal and professional lives, high school coaches should emphasize the mental aspects of performance rather than just physical training." "While modern society promotes the idea of freely choosing one's own path, the outcomes of those choices depend largely on access to experiences and support systems that make informed decision-making possible." Offer an insightful perspective "Although people are often told to make important decisions early in life, choices are more effective when individuals have enough experience to understand their options." Make a strong thematic connection among perspectives "Schools need to provide more career training because the current and future labor market will require a range of diverse skillsets."
	Additional Notes - A perspective is a "point of view conveyed through an argument." - Read the whole response before scoring as an on-topic argument may emerge later in the response.			

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 2 Establish Argument (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.	2 points The line of reasoning is disorganized and/or illogical. The response lacks commentary, or the commentary incorrectly or tangentially explains the links between evidence and claims.	4 points The argument is mostly clear and organized, but the logic may be faulty OR the reasoning may be logical but not well organized. The commentary explains the links between evidence and claims.	6 points The line of reasoning is logically organized and well-developed. The commentary explains evidence and connects it to claims to clearly and convincingly establish an argument.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are not related in any way to a theme that connects the provided sources (off-topic). - Do not offer any claim (generated by the student) and/or no line of reasoning is present.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Summarize the provided sources without linking them to one another or to the argument. - Offer very general or confusing commentary, if any, connecting evidence and claims. - Have a line of reasoning that fails.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Are organized well enough to discern the argument. - Provide inconsistent or incomplete explanations linking evidence and claims. - Make a claim that may be only partially supported. - Have a line of reasoning that is difficult to follow at times.	Typical responses that earn 6 points: - Are driven by the argument; points are intentionally ordered AND the links between claims and evidence are logical and convincing. - Are thoughtful or sophisticated (e.g., may address a counterargument, or discuss limitations or implications). - Have a sound line of reasoning.
	Examples that earn 0 points: Are not related to the theme <i>“The weather is beautiful, and I would rather be outside.”</i> Do not offer claims to establish a line of reasoning <i>“An important question for schools to ask students around the age 15 is what type of job they expect to have (Source C). Robert Frost wrote the poem (Source A). People job hop (Source B).”</i>	Examples that earn 2 points: Often stack overly general summaries of the sources without linkage to claims <i>“Source A says you have to take the road fewer people have taken. Source C is about getting involved, and Source D is about being with your family and friends. This makes life impossible.”</i>	Examples that earn 4 points: Often jump from one claim to the next without providing a clear, logical connection between the claims <i>“The job market is constantly changing, and people are encouraged to follow their passions. Because of this, individuals need to make good choices about their future.”</i> <i>“People today often switch careers to improve their opportunities. Some people also focus more on their families. This shows that people need to think carefully about their future.”</i> Often provide less than clear linkage between material from a source and their arguments’ claims <i>“According to Source C, students gain experience by engaging with people in work. This shows that work is important and can help people in their future.”</i>	Examples that earn 6 points: Have a line of reasoning that is made explicit in logical transitions that connect arguments in a thoughtful manner <i>“Professional success depends not only on skill but also on strategic relationship-building. Technical ability may qualify an individual for a position; however, advancement often depends on who is aware of that ability. For example, employees who actively seek mentorship and collaborate across departments are more likely to be recommended for leadership roles.”</i> <i>“Choosing a career path too early can limit long-term success because meaningful decisions require informed experience. Many students are encouraged to select a specific major before they have explored different fields. As a result, they often commit to paths based on limited exposure rather than genuine interest or aptitude.”</i>

				Use insightful commentary to connect claims and evidence • <i>“As the data in Source C shows, many students research careers online, which suggests that they are trying to make better decisions about their future. This approach to decision-making indicates they are being more thoughtful about their choices instead of just picking something without planning.”</i> • <i>“Source B shows that career paths are often unpredictable, which suggests that people need to remain flexible when making decisions. Therefore, planning successfully for the future should involve adapting to change rather than following a fixed path.”</i>
	Additional Notes • Line of Reasoning is “an arrangement of claims and evidence that leads to a conclusion.” • Commentary is “a discussion and analysis of evidence in relation to the claim which may identify patterns, describe trends, and/or explain relationships.”			

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 3 Select and Use Evidence (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)	0 points Uses one or none of the provided sources.	2 points Repeats or misinterprets information from at least two of the provided sources, or the information lacks relevance thereby providing little support for an argument.	4 points Accurately uses relevant information from at least two of the provided sources to support an argument.	6 points Appropriately synthesizes relevant information drawn from at least two of the provided sources to develop and support a compelling argument.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Use only one of the provided sources. - Do not make use of any of the provided sources.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Draw obviously mistaken conclusions from the sources. - Mismatch claims and evidence. - Offer evidence that has no bearing on the claims made.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Present evidence that adequately supports assertions. - Use quotations or paraphrases that generally match the claims. - Interpret the sources in a way that does not substantially contribute to the argument; may pull data or information from the sources but do not utilize that information in a thoughtful or insightful way.	Typical responses that earn 6 points: - Fully integrate the source materials into the argument and put the sources into conversation with one another. - May use a source to clarify points made in a second source, or to make a contrasting point, which is woven into the argument. - Present evidence invoked to support the writer's argument; the evidence is not the argument itself. - Interpret the evidence in a way that adds substantially to the argument.
		Examples that earn 2 points: Draw mistaken conclusions from the sources <i>"In Source D, it says that choices aren't as important as family relationships."</i> Mismatch claims and evidence <i>"Germans are less likely to say that school teaches them stuff that would be useful in a job (Source C), so they aren't as ambitious as Columbians who say their schools do teach them (Source C)."</i>	Examples that earn 4 points: Use quotations or paraphrases that generally match the claims <i>"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, / And sorry I could not travel both" (Source A). This is an example of what it's like to make a choice between two things that both seem attractive."</i> <i>"In Source B, it talks about people who choose to use their free time to take online programs to make themselves more employable. These people are doing everything they can to improve their lives."</i>	Examples that earn 6 points: Provide a thoughtful reading of the sources in light of their context <i>"In Source A, although the speaker claims he took the 'road less traveled,' he also admits earlier in the poem that the two paths were 'really about the same,' suggesting that the idea of one choice being more meaningful may come from how people later describe their decisions rather than the decision itself."</i> Put sources in conversation with each other <i>"Source B shows that career paths are unpredictable, which helps explain why Source D emphasizes maintaining relationships, since those relationships can provide guidance when navigating difficult choices."</i>

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 4 Apply Conventions (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.	2 points Contains many flaws in grammar and style that often interfere with communication to the reader OR the response incorrectly or ineffectively attributes knowledge and ideas from sources.	4 points Is generally clear but contains some flaws in grammar and style that occasionally interfere with communication to the reader. The response accurately attributes knowledge and ideas from sources.	6 points Communicates clearly to the reader (although may not be free of errors in grammar and style) AND the response effectively integrates material from sources into the argument (e.g., it is clearly introduced, integrated, or embedded into the text) and accurately attributes knowledge and ideas.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are not related in any way to a theme that connects the provided sources (off-topic). - Response does not provide enough writing to assess.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Use grammar and syntax that is so clumsy as to make the meaning difficult to decipher. Require multiple readings to uncover meaning or intent. - Use blatant unattributed paraphrases and/or there is an absence of sources/quotation marks/reference to sources or their authors.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Are written in a style that is adequate, if sometimes clunky, but conveys basic meaning. - May contain multiple misspellings or other errors, but not so many as to impede understanding. May attempt elevated word choice but may be incorrect, or may lapse into colloquial language. - Lacks integration of sources. - Refer to sources/authors and use quotation marks or paraphrases appropriately.	Typical responses that earn 6 points: - Feature writing that enhances the argument, are easy to read, and concise. Grammar and syntax need not be perfect. - May demonstrate an understanding of the context of the provided sources. - Weave source material effectively into the argument’s composition. - Accurately cite sources (use quotation marks and paraphrases correctly).
	Examples that earn 0 points: Are off topic “I prefer skateboarding.”	Examples of that earn 2 points: Demonstrate writing that impedes understanding “The job hopping is bad it is just that kind of thing that shouldn’t be like what you want.” On multiple occasions, omit attribution and/or citation “When trying to get ahead, many people are doing online courses and networking. These kinds of choices can make all the difference. That is the kind of preparations teenagers think will help them.” Omit quotation marks “Barbara Bush said you are a human being first and those are the most important investments you will ever make. We must remember that.”	Examples that earn 4 points: Demonstrate writing that may be awkward, wordy, or grammatically incorrect, but these flaws do not impede understanding “From a teenager’s perspective, if there is a situation in which it is right for a person to make some contacts that will help in the future, it is okay for someone maybe to spend extra time doing something like that.”	Examples that earn 6 points: Demonstrate writing that is clear, concise, and compelling “If, like Robert Frost, you take “the road less traveled,” you may find yourself zigzagging through a fascinating career path that enriches your family’s life.” Understand context of provided sources “From its global perspective in 2025, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development provided a comprehensive and timely view of what teenagers around the world are doing to prepare for careers.” Paraphrase and quote sources correctly “According to former First Lady Barbara Bush, you should “believe in something larger than yourself” and get involved in a current issue (Source D).”