AI Summarizer - Assignment Sheet
CA 459: New Media and Society

Assignment Value: XX % (XX points)

Due: <deadline date and time>, via Canvas

Assignment Description
You will respond to one of our weekly readings by submitting a short summary. You will then use AI tools to generate summaries of the same reading, and then assess the quality of the AI writing to reflect on the experience of using this new media technology.

The AI Summarizer will contain 5 paragraphs: 3 written by you, and 2 written by AI.
(Grad students should submit 6-8 paragraphs: 4-6 written by you, and 2 written by AI)

Why are we completing this assignment?
We want you to demonstrate your critical thinking and active reading skills by exploring key theories and ideas about new media, and we want you to gain experience using AI tools to complete a task.

How do I complete this assignment?

1. Select one of the weekly readings that we have already completed for this class.
2. Write a paragraph (in your own words) which summarizes the reading.

Ask yourself: what is the central statement or theory the author is attempting to prove in this article? Even though the author may make multiple arguments, it is your job to identify the one (or two) key arguments that stand out as most important or that unites the author's other points. Attempt to summarize the article's thesis in just one or two sentences in your own words. Then, expand on some of the details of this main thesis. Are there a few terms, concepts or arguments that stand out as interesting or significant to the reading/the rest of the course material? You can (and should) quote from the article, but be sure to include the appropriate citations, including page numbers.

(Grad students should write a 1-2 paragraph summary, and make references to other readings. Explain how your chosen reading compares to other perspectives and theories about new media)

3. Select two AI services, and use their tools to summarize the article.

Some potential AI Chat Bot options include:

- Microsoft Copilot
- OpenAI ChatGPT
- Google Gemini
- Anthropic Claude
- Meta AI (on Instagram)
- Snapchat "My AI"

With each Chat Bot, come up with a prompt that gets the AI to generate a 1 paragraph summary of your selected reading.

Optional: Use follow-up prompts to "fine-tune" your output. For example, "Add a direct quote from the text to the summary" or "Revise that summary to include definitions of key terms." If you use follow-up prompts, make sure to note those in your final submission too.

Once you have two summaries written by AI, copy and paste those into your summary document. Please be sure to provide an introductory sentence to transition from your own writing to the AI's output, and add transition phrases to contextualize where the text comes from (See the examples for more details).

4. Write a paragraph (in your own words) which assesses the quality and accuracy of each AI summary.

In this paragraph, you should make comparisons between the two chat bots and their output. Your assessment can include a discussion of each bot's "writing style" if you would like, but *must* include an evaluation of the factual accuracy of the output. Was the AI output accurate? What parts, if any, were incorrect? Was its discussion of the reading vague? Or did it incorporate any specific details? If you used them, how did your follow-up prompts change the final output? Based on what you know about how generative AI works, why do you think it came up with the response that it did? Does the output and its quality align with what you know about the company that owns/develops the chat bot?

(Grad students should write 2-3 paragraphs assessing the quality and accuracy of the AI outputs—this should include some original research about the bot's corporate ownership)

5. Write a fifth paragraph as a conclusion to your summarizer.

Your conclusion paragraph should reiterate how you summarized the reading in your paragraph, as well as include your thinking on what it was like to work with AI to achieve this similar task. As appropriate, this paragraph can also include more direct comparisons between the AI output and your own writing.

How will we be graded on this assignment?
A detailed rubric will be posted to Canvas, and you will have a chance to review and discuss the grading criteria during class before the submission deadline. The rubric will include the following criteria:
  - Human-written summary: (can be similar to the 346 summarizer)
  - AI-generated summaries
  - Reflection and Analysis
  - Length, Formatting, Grammar and Spelling

Is there an example of what a complete version of this assignment looks like?
Yes! The Canvas assignment page includes a link to an example AI Summarizer. We will also review and discuss this during class before the submission deadline.

How, when, and where do I submit this assignment?
Please save your completed AI Summarizer as a Microsoft Word file (.doc or .docx) and submit it via Canvas. Please be sure to include your name at the top of your document.

What additional resources are there to help me with this assignment?

For additional help and resources on using AI tools, please consult the UW-Madison IT website: https://it.wisc.edu/, or meet with your instructor during office hours.

For additional help with writing—at any stage of the process—consider making an appointment with the UW-Madison Writing Center: https://writing.wisc.edu/