

Wikipedia editing guidelines for CSx260

The CS 4260 and 5260 Wikipedia edit-a-thon will be relatively short (2 hours). You can sign up for an account or you can edit anonymously.

The goal in this session is not to make changes or additions to Wikipedia per se, but to think carefully about what changes or additions “should” be made, and how best to make them. Nonetheless, I expect that everyone attending will make at least one change to break the ice. But you will be graded on a list of specific changes or additions that you believe should be made, and which in some cases you have made. **When I say “specific” I mean that you have identified a specific location on a specific page where you think a change, including addition and deletion, should be made, and the specific text that you advocate changing too** (in the case of a longer addition, include a few lines of proposed text and links to references that you would include).

Mature Pages

For example, read through a page that seems very mature, such as the Wikipedia **overview article on Artificial Intelligence**: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artificial_intelligence . In doing so, recognize that while you might have organized a page differently or written in a different style, some number of people have worked to put the page in its current form. **We don’t want our changes to disrespect well-intentioned efforts.** When editing a mature page, as the new kid on the block, you should be cautious about changes to existing text. But if you see a change that should be made, particularly when you can make the change surgically, then do it.

On the main AI page, I read the following from the section on “Tools” and the subsection on “Search and Optimization”

“The solution, for many problems, is to use ‘heuristics’ or ‘rules of thumb’ that eliminate choices that are unlikely to lead to the goal (called ‘pruning the search tree’).”

I see the word “eliminate”, and I know that heuristic search doesn’t typically “eliminate” states per se from the search, but the heuristic serves to prioritize the states that will be examined. So, I changed the text too

“The solution, for many problems, is to use "heuristics" or "rules of thumb" that prioritize choices in favor of those that are more likely to reach a goal, and to do so in a shorter number of steps. In some search methodologies heuristics can also serve to entirely eliminate some choices that are unlikely to lead to a goal (called "pruning the search tree"). “

Note that I retained much of the original text out of respect, even if I think the text could have been streamlined. I also added our textbook to the list of textbook references, as well as a single reference to it from Note 126. You’ll see that I made another, almost trivial change, from “the goal” to “a goal” (because there are usually multiple goals).

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* {{cite book
| first1=David | last1=Poole | author-link=David Poole (researcher)
| first2=Alan | last2=Mackworth | author2-link=Alan Mackworth
| year=2017
| title=Artificial Intelligence: Foundations of Computational Agents
| publisher = Cambridge University Press | edition=2nd
| isbn=9781107195394
| url=http://artint.info/index.html
}}
```

Look under the **History tab** at the top right of the page to see the changes that have been made. However, you would have to look back until December 6, 2017 to see the changes above. You can see my changes from last year more quickly by going to MY history

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Contributions/Douglas_H_Fisher. Look at the reason I gave for the change to the “heuristics” text above (at 18:11, 6 December 2017). Others should understand the reason for the change. Click on my name and see my bio. If you decide to do more with editing Wikipedia, then a bio can bolster trust in your edits. Giving reasons for edits can bolster trust in your edits too, and it can prevent someone who knows less than you do from undoing your edits.

Even mature pages can be changed and tweaked to good effect, but be careful and be gracious, and wait until you are trusted before making a big change that significantly alters someone else’s text (unless you think that text is nonsense).

Undeveloped Pages

Under Note 124 of https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artificial_intelligence, there is a reference to State-Space Search, which links to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_space_search . This page is just a stub, and is a good prospect for expansion.

Before investing a lot of work in expanding the State Space Search page, ask whether prior editors have chosen to expand “state space search” under other labels. I started by clicking on the link to “Search” that is under the “Search and optimization”, which took me to a page that seemed to confound non-AI types of search, with nondeterministic approaches — somewhat strange. After looking further for other pages on search, judge whether its worth expanding the state space search page, and how that page should link to these other search pages.

As with the “Search” page, the page referenced by “heuristic” does not describe a heuristic as it is used in AI. Is the disambiguation page at the top helpful?

Other possibilities for revision and/or expansion

- Are there adequate pages for various search strategies described in our text book?
- Are there adequate pages for various strategies of constraint-based search?
- Theorem proving (e.g., resolution?)
- AI planning?
- Machine learning?
- Minimax search with alphabeta pruning?
- Belief networks?
- HMMs?
- Would examples help on any of these topics?
- Translate or write original text in Wikipedias of other languages (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias).

Generally, you will find entries for many of these, which you can refine under principles of correctness, completeness, cautiousness, and respect for prior efforts and authors.

A strategy is to start with the top level AI page, and follow links (and perhaps adding links), tracing out your own “search tree”, assessing whether a changes are appropriate on the root tree (the AI page) and/or descendent trees.

Main Deliverable

Your main deliverable (on BrightSpace) will be list of **specific changes, either proposed or actual**, as outlined above. At the top of the PDF, include all students you worked with. Each of you should submit a your own copy. Collaboration is encouraged — there will be no loss of points for working in a group.