

# Prompting

**CSC2541H1 Topics in Machine Learning, Winter 2025, UToronto**

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# Announcements

- If you are assigned to **present on Feb 28, come talk** about presentations after class.
- Project proposal MarkUs is up. **Please register your groups on MarkUs before the deadline.**
- Office hours today from 1:00-1:30PM and 2:00-2:30PM.

**Questions?**

# Recap & agenda

- Last few weeks: training a large language model on an internet-scale corpus with next token prediction.
- This week: how can we use the model? Prompting.
- **The presentations this week cover various prompting strategies.**

# Take-homes

## Prompting

- The way to reason about prompting is to ask your self: **what does the loss function that I used to train incentivize the network to learn?**
  - Next token prediction: mimic the internet on the text.
- Then ask yourself, **what is the data that the model saw during training and how does that interact with the loss function?**
  - Next token prediction on internet data: if humans tend to decompose problems into step-by-step reasoning on the internet, then we should encourage the model to do the same if we want to “access” that behaviour.