**Faculty Call for Research Assistant Application**

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| **Part I – Outline of research project** |

**Academic field:** Political economy

**Research topic:** The AI oligarchy ecosystem

**Brief description of project and research assistant duties:**

The GPT-AI revolution in 2022 has resulted in a large amount of equity investment tied to a large concentration of wealth. Defining and measuring the AI oligarchy will allow us to determine the extend of its power. This, along with the employment and wage distributions that may occur as GPT-AI is used may provide a frame to understand the latitude of government policies and the political economy.

**Sponsoring professor:** Mary Merva

**Professor’s e-mail address:** mmerva@johncabot.edu

**Semester of assistantship**: Fall 2025

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| **Part II – Mentoring plan** |

**Full description of research assistant’s regular duties:**

The RA will first learn about the AI ecosystem and all of the players in the value chain. Then, we will look at how we can measure this group using financial data of equity investments. We will then explore different empirical measures that we have to invent to see if we can come up with a good, workable measure. We will frame this with the impact of GPT-AI on service and professional workers to understand potential implications. Finally, we will look at the political economy of how government policies act within the tensions of the AI oligarchy and labor.

**Description of the work to be completed by the end of the research assistant’s 45 hours of work:**

1. Short summary paper of the AI ecosystem from the hardware to the final markets for applications. 2. List of companies in the system and their equity. 3. Review of government policies that would be potential responses to the AI oligarchy. 4. Literature review of how labor may be impacted by AI with empirical documentation of potential trajectories.

**Statement addressing how the faculty research will help the student research assistant develop their research skills:**

1. Learn about GPT-AI and all of the players involved from hardware, data management to include data storage centers and their energy use, and potential markets to include health care and government services. 2. Find empirical data and document it (some may be on a Bloomberg terminal but, we can go over that to access data as that is a good data based to know how to use for both economics and political economy. 3. Summarize topics in short written briefs. 4. Document data and present visually.

Given GPT-AI is considered a technological revolution, it would be really good to have a thorough understanding of the whole system.