

Expanding the Capabilities of Retrieval Augmented Generation Models for Civic Engagement and Transparency



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ABSTRACT

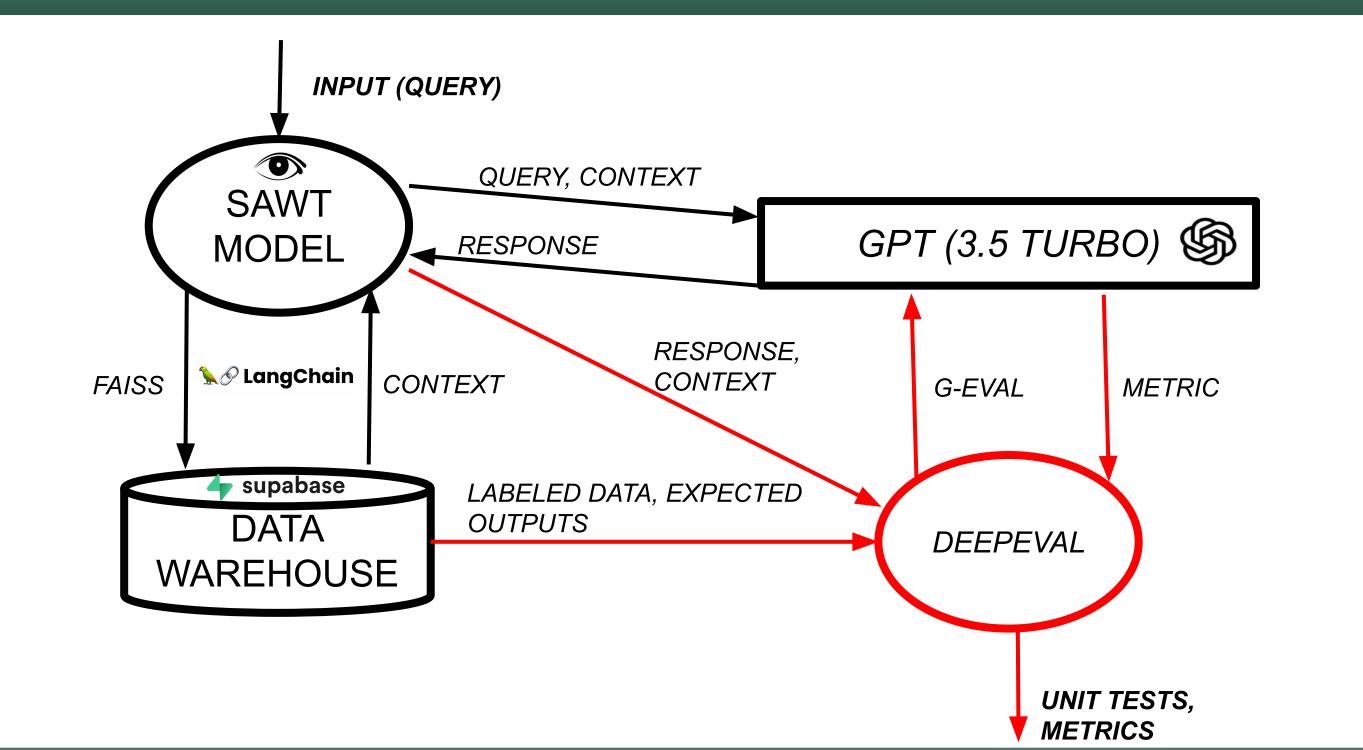
Eye on Surveillance, a New Orleans-based community group, has developed Sawt, an Large Language Model (LLM)-backed tool generating responses to user queries, built on Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) context from New Orleans City Council information to enhance transparency and accessibility of government information.

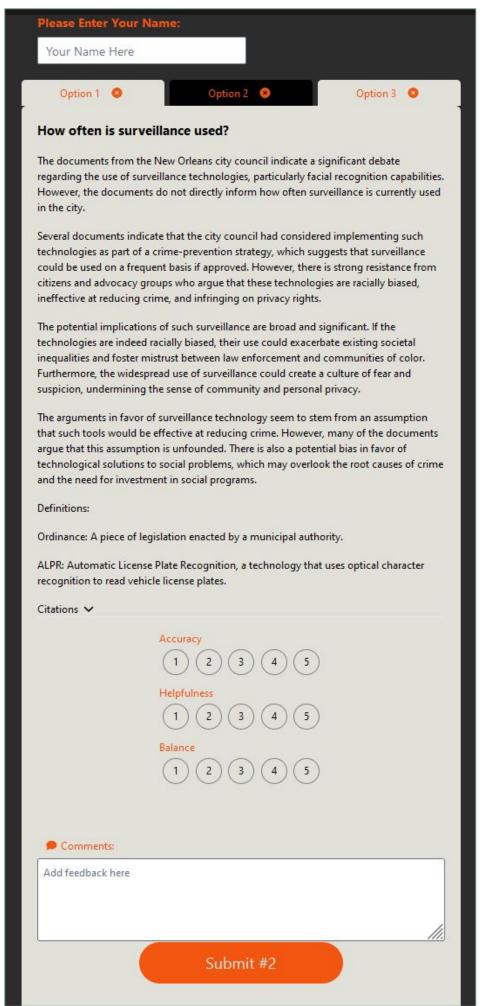
Given concerns regarding AI systems' accuracy, bias, and equity, it's crucial for public-facing systems like Sawt to undergo rigorous evaluation and community feedback to ensure trustworthiness. Key considerations include response accuracy, fair representation of diverse perspectives, and the impact of various LLM design choices (e.g., model selection, prompts, source documents). This project aims to address two primary research questions:

RQ1: How helpful, accurate, and balanced are Al-generated responses in Sawt?

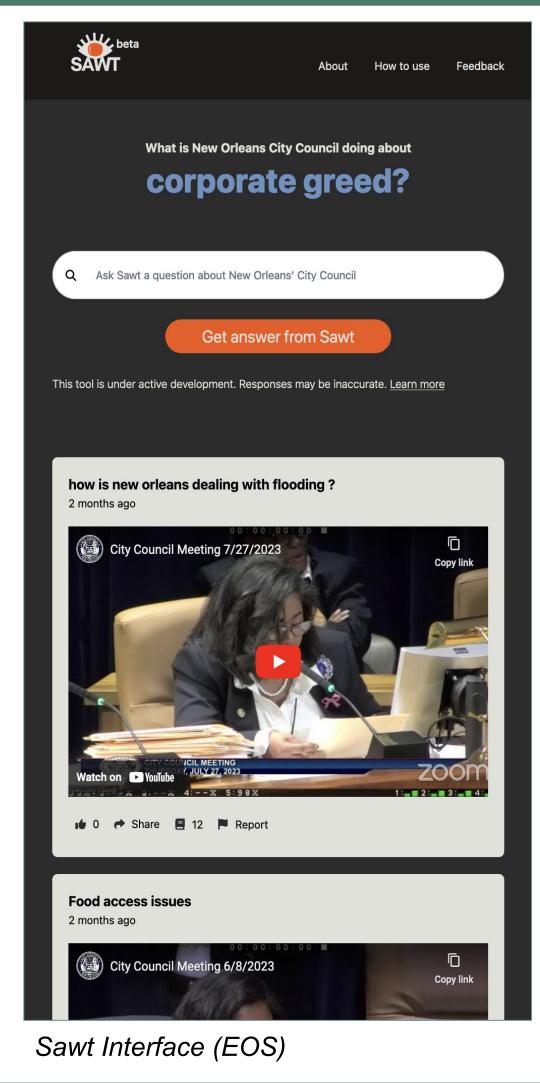
RQ2: What is the effectiveness of automated evaluation tools in assessing RAG system quality?

ARCHITECTURE



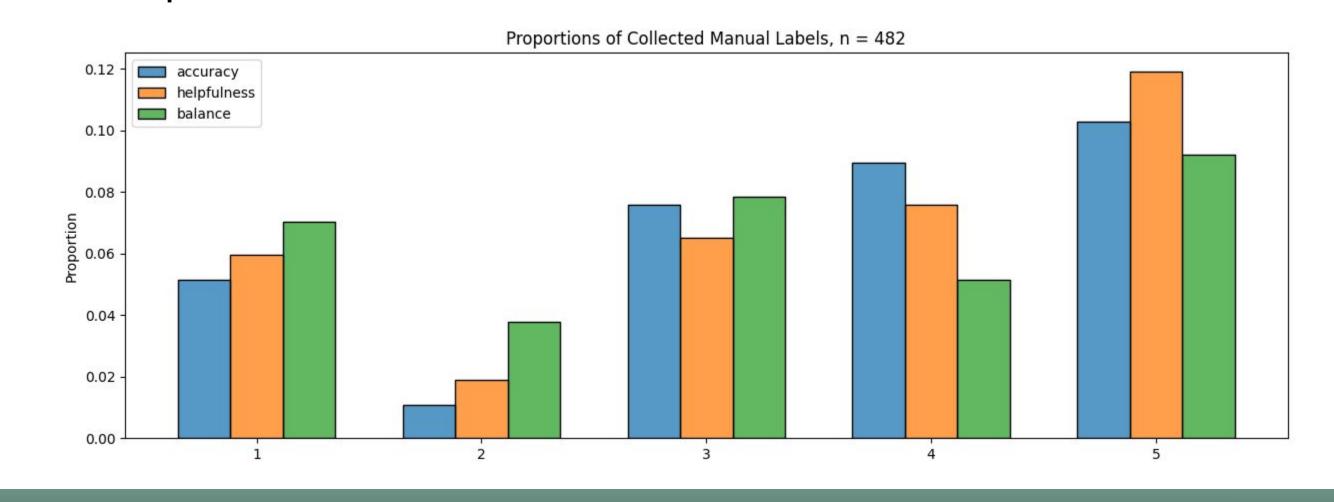


User Feedback Data Collection Tool



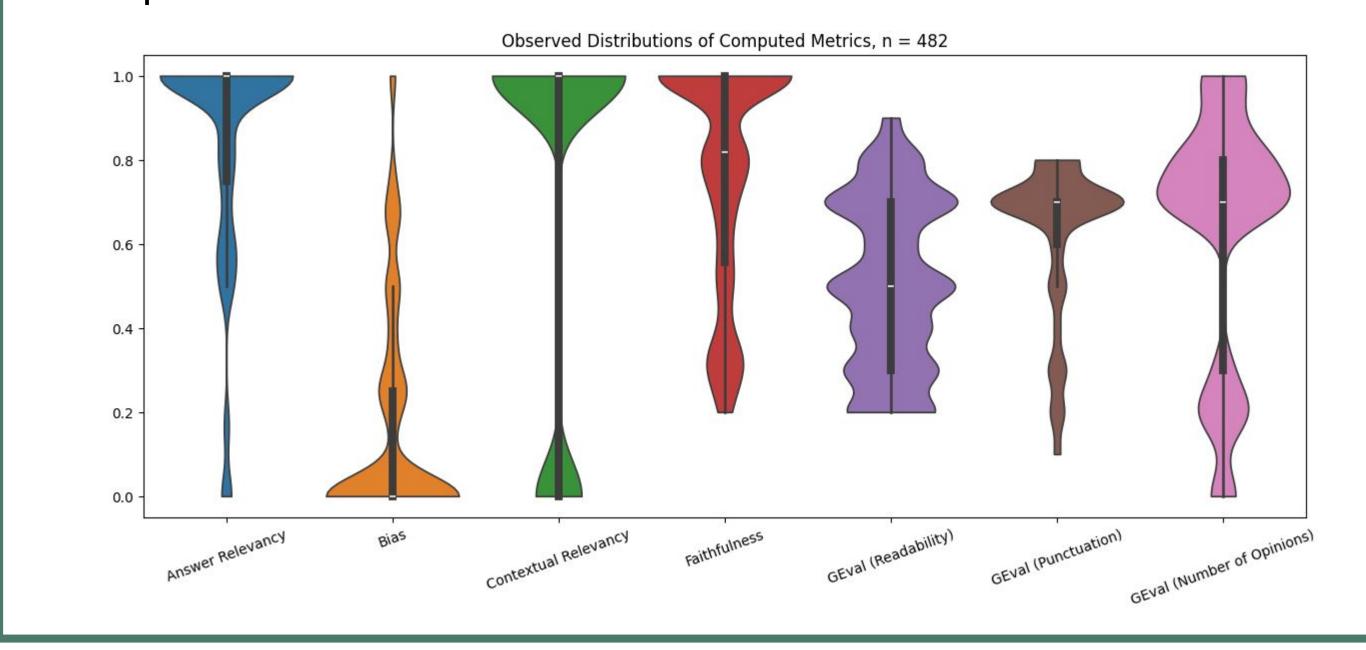
USER FEEDBACK DATA

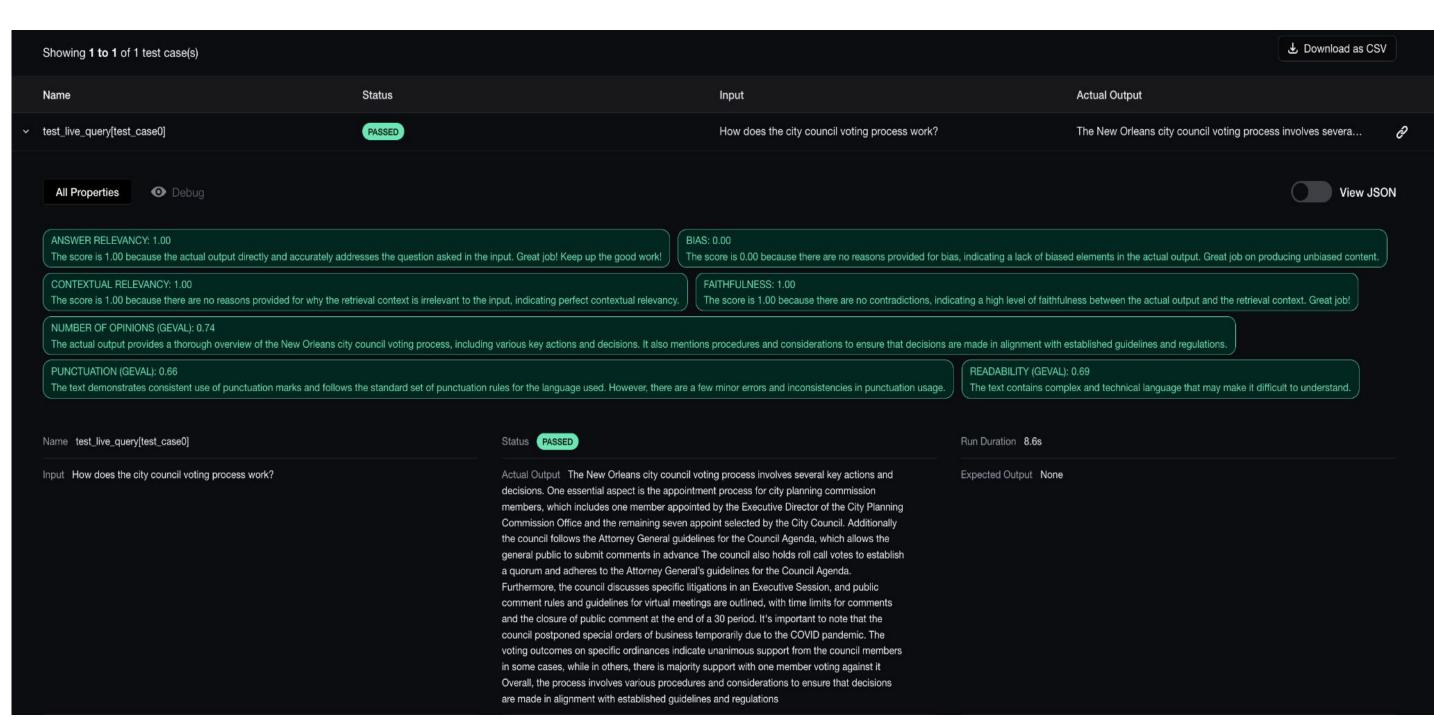
- Collected across two community engagement sessions with Eye on Surveillance
- Consisted of local activists, citizens, and organizers
- Rated cached queries with three distinct responses with a varied number of vectorized context documents returned for response generation
- Evaluated with respect to "Helpfulness", "Accuracy", and "Balance" of response on a discrete scale 1-5



AUTOMATED MODEL EVALUATION (DeepEval)

- 7 Metrics designed to evaluate the quality of the RAG pipeline
- Answer Relevancy, Faithfulness, Bias, Contextual Relevancy, Readability, Punctuation, Number of Opinions
- PyTest Unit tests to evaluate model responses
- Hyperparameter comparison to deduce best model configurations
- Incorporated human User-Feedback data to augment the evaluation system
- Provide a frontend interface for monitoring output quality over response data and time



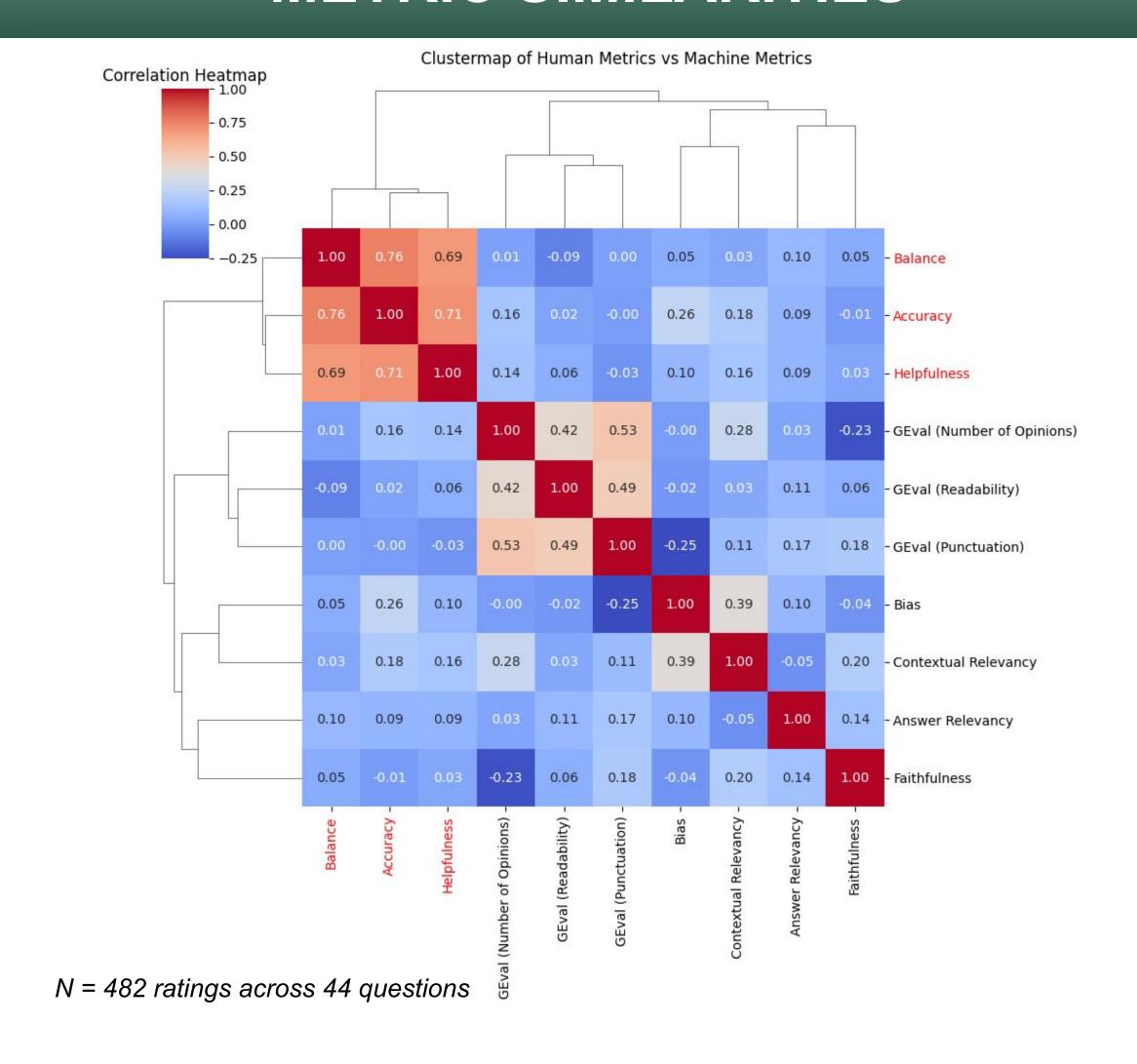


Demo Query Response Metrics in DeepEval Frontend

DATA SOURCES

- New Orleans City Council Meeting Transcripts, Minutes, and Agendas
- Criminal Justice Meeting Transcripts, Minutes, and Agendas
- Public Comment Submissions
- Local News Sources

METRIC SIMILARITIES



Notable Positive Correlations

- Labeled Accuracy & Computed Bias + Contextual Relevancy
- Labeled Helpfulness and Computed # Of Opinions (GEVAL)
- All GEVAL custom metrics

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Hyperparameter Tuning
- Continuous Integration/Deployment
- Additional Community Data Collection
- Multiple Query Formats
- Refining Metric Uncertainty and Calculation Process

THANKS TO:

- Eye on Surveillance New Orleans
- Tulane University Computer Science & Center for Community Engaged Artificial Intelligence



https://sse.tulane.edu/cs/ceal

