

Ethical AI Use in Education: Pillars, Responsibilities & Reflection

Ethic Pillars Defined:

Fairness & Non-Discrimination: This system produces fair outcomes for all students and users.

Transparency & Explainability: Users understand how an AI tool works or why it makes certain choices.

Accountability: Someone is responsible if something goes wrong with this tool.

Privacy & Security: This tool handles data ethically and protects users' privacy.

Sustainability & Environment: The environmental costs of using this tool are justified.

Robust & Reliable: This system is dependable and safe for classroom or campus use.

Ethical Pillars & Pair Responsibilities:

Ethical AI Pillar	Paired Responsibility	Reflection Prompts
1. Fairness & Non-Discrimination	Pattern-Finding & Predictions	How can I help students recognize and critique bias in AI-generated content? Are my assignments inclusive and accessible for all learners?
2. Transparency & Explainability	Responsible Data Use	Do I require students to disclose AI use in their work? How do I explain AI's capabilities and limits?
3. Accountability	Objectives & Goal Alignment	Is AI supporting or replacing meaningful student learning? How do I hold myself and my students accountable?

4. Privacy & Security	Responsible Data Use	Are the AI tools I recommend FERPA-compliant? Do I teach students how to protect their data when using AI?
5. Sustainability & Environment	Environment	Do students understand that AI is a tool, not an authority? How do I create space for human originality?
6. Robust & Reliable	Objectives & Goal Alignment	Does the tool work reliably for academic use cases?

Instructions: For each pillar, consider the paired responsibility and answer the reflection prompts in your own context.

1. Fairness & Non-Discrimination

- Responsibility: Pattern-Finding and Predictions
- Prompts:
 - Where might bias show up in AI tools I use or allow?
 - How can I support students in identifying potential inequities in AI output?

Your Notes:

2. Transparency & Explainability

- Responsibility: Responsible Data Use
- Prompts:
 - Do I clearly communicate when and how AI is used in my course?
 - What policies or statements can I add to my syllabus?

Your Notes:

3. Accountability

- Responsibility: Objectives & Goal Alignment
- Prompts:
 - How do my AI assignments align with my learning outcomes?
 - What mechanisms are in place to ensure student accountability?

Your Notes:

4. Privacy & Security

- Responsibility: Responsible Data Use
- Prompts:
 - What data is collected by the tools I recommend?
 - How can I guide students to protect their privacy?

Your Notes:

5. Sustainability & Environmental Impact

- Responsibility: Environmental Responsibility and AI
- Prompts:
 - Can I reduce unnecessary AI use in my class?
 - How might I raise awareness about digital sustainability with students?

Your Notes:

6. Human Autonomy & Oversight

- Responsibility: Objectives & Goal Alignment
- Prompts:
 - Are students encouraged to think critically alongside AI use?
 - How do I balance AI assistance with student voice and creativity?

Your Notes:

AI Risk Map

Category	Risk Example	Ethical Pillars Affected
Student Privacy	Using AI tools that analyze student writing with non-consented data sharing	Lawful & Private, Accountable
Assessment Fairness	AI grading tools misinterpret style or syntax of non-native speakers	Fair & Inclusive, Robust & Reliable
Transparency in Teaching	Instructors using AI to design lessons without disclosing to students	Transparent, Accountable
Bias in Interventions	AI-based alerts trigger more often for students of certain demographics	Fair & Inclusive, Transparent
Academic Integrity	Overuse of AI detection tools like Turnitin undermines trust in students	Accountable, Transparent, Fair
Environmental Impact	AI models trained on campus servers consume high energy without oversight	Environmentally Responsible

Hypothetical Ethical Scenarios:

For the examples detailed below consider the following:

- What pillars are being compromised?
- How would you approach this as an instructor?

Scenario 1: *An AI system is used to predict which students might struggle in their first year, based on demographics and GPA.*

Scenario 2: *The university rolls out a strict AI detection tool for all major written assignments. Some faculty begin penalizing students based on detection scores alone, despite the tool's admitted false positive rate.*

Scenario 3: *A student submits a flawless essay that matches the tone and content style of a known LLM. The instructor suspects AI use but has no clear policy on whether or how AI tools are allowed.*

Scenario 4: *A university uploads anonymized student writing samples into a third-party AI tool to analyze writing development over time. Students were not notified that their work would be used this way.*

Scenario 5: *A faculty member asks ChatGPT to draft letters of recommendation. The model tends to favor more confident, assertive language for male students and less so for female-identifying or international students.*