ChatGPT and Generative AI Resources for Writing Program Faculty

This document provides resources for Writing Program faculty navigating issues related to ChatGPT and Generative AI. Since developments are new and changing quite rapidly, this document is intended as a work-in-progress, with collected resources, practitioner lore, tips, policy guidelines, emerging research, and sample assignments.

USD Publications

Report: [USD Generative AI Working Group Recommendations](#)

Slides and Recorded Sessions: [USD Center for Educational Excellence AI Collection](#)

Writing Program Policy Statements on AI

Currently, the recommendation from most institutions (including USD) is that individual departments and programs write their own faculty guidelines and student policies, in alignment with overarching university academic integrity statements.

Beneath the department or program statement (which, typically, does not look that different from the university-level one), individual faculty members are encouraged to include their *own* policy language in syllabi with specific statements on generative AI, in alignment with the guidelines developed by their department or program.

The Writing Program is in the process of drafting its own policy language and guidelines (these will be broad and intended to support faculty as they devise their own approaches) and will eventually offer "boilerplate" language faculty can include and modify in their syllabi.

Examples of Policy Language at Other Institutions

[University of California, Santa Barbara Writing Program AI Policy](#)

[University of Texas at Austin Example Syllabi Statements](#)

Writing Program Official Policy on AI (in progress)

For FYW Students

The Writing Program recognizes that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can be highly useful for a variety of purposes. However, first year writing is meant to help students develop strong critical

thinking and writing skills vital for student success at USD. For this reason, unauthorized, inappropriate, and/or unethical use of AI will be treated the same as any other case of academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes unauthorized, inappropriate, and unethical uses of AI, as described in the course syllabus. If students have questions, they are urged to speak with their professor before turning in written work.

For WP Faculty

The Writing Program is committed to fostering a diversity of effective pedagogical approaches that improve student literacy and help students locate their own voices and contributions within academic discourse. We recognize that our faculty are experts in their areas, and bring rich expertise to their work. We trust faculty to make choices about how to incorporate artificial intelligence (or not) in ways that foster and preserve student critical thinking and literacy, in alignment with the learning outcomes for CFYW. The Writing Program will support faculty as they negotiate cases of academic dishonesty that deviate from the policies outlined in their syllabi.

Example Syllabus Statements

The following examples were inspired by and adapted from syllabi statements provided by the University of Texas at Austin, available here: [ChatGPT and Generative AI Tools, Sample Syllabus and Policy Statements](#)

No AI: Generic Academic Dishonesty Statement

This course assumes all stages of the writing process (brainstorming, planning and organization, drafting, and revision) are performed by students working independently. Academic dishonesty includes any and all of the following activities: purchasing papers or hiring a service to complete, co-writing a paper where another writer produces text and arguments, reusing pre-existing content not authored by you without proper citation, and/or using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

AI with Constraints

This course authorizes students to explore appropriate and ethical ways to incorporate AI into their own writing and critical thinking processes. We will discuss how generative AI tools may be used, and how to properly document and attribute any content that is not your own (whether from AI or other sources). Any use of generative AI outside these guidelines will be treated the same way as any other case of academic dishonesty. If you have questions or feel confused about what qualifies as an appropriate and ethical use of sources in this class, contact me prior to turning in the written work.

What to Look For: Common Flags It's AI

- Most obvious: Off-topic, does not respond to the prompt (whole paper or sections)
- Also suspicious: the student did not participate in informal writing, drafts, or other pre-writing activities, and/or there is evidence they did not do the reading (from quizzes or discussion in class)
- Repeated content, content that seems to be its own self-contained "module" not related to the paper topic, and content that seems aimless or "circular"
- Citations unrelated to the topic or assignment, citations for sources that do not exist, misplaced citations (for example, for common knowledge statements that don't typically require citation or citations unrelated to the argument the student is making)
- From research: Fewer discourse markers, formulaically structured essays, more subordination and complexity in sentence structure than typical of the student's writing, more nominalization, less "modals and epistemic constructions…[that] convey speaker attitude" (Source: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-45644-9#Tab4)
- Tool (With caution): AI text detectors (these are not as accurate as they sometimes claim to be) https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ADoqCSeBFaspv0qqiHqQmsdwazdqLjpASpJTutgmcNU/edit#slide=id.g219e4aed0f0_0_76
- Turn-it-in (integrated with Canvas assignments) will automatically scan content and give a percentage estimate of which content is suspected as AI. Careful: there are false positives, particularly when the percent is low.
- General observations from a paper grader: https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/career-advice/teaching/2024/07/02/ways-distinguish-ai-composed-essays-human-composed-ones?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=191810af3e-DNU_2021_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-191810af3e-238078050&mc_cid=191810af3e&mc_eid=d46ee4424d

How are Students using AI…in papers as well as in life?

Based on reports from both faculty and Writing Center consultants, we are learning that students can perceive AI as similar to other writing assistants they use to correct grammar, and can use it for smaller writing tasks as they work on the larger paper. One report was that students kept a ChatGPT tab open next to their paper as they wrote, moving back and forth between their draft and ChatGPT, using it to generate small components–phrases, supporting evidence, and ideas–not necessarily the whole paper or paragraphs.

Unless they are informed otherwise, students may assume that using AI to generate summaries of assigned readings (a "cliff notes" approach) is acceptable. There have been cases of students then using these summaries to start or add content to formal papers, and then turning in this work as their own.

Another recent development reported by faculty: Grammarly has incorporated something similar to AI generated content, and reports are that students are using this feature in addition to its standard grammar correcting features, assuming that this is permitted. This assumption comes from the fact that some faculty encourage or permit the use of grammarly for sentence-level corrections.

As suggested by faculty in a previous FYW workshop, it could also be useful to learn how students are using AI outside of school. Here's an article discussing some trends.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/06/01/students-chatgpt-ai-tools/

How to Conduct Conversations with Students When AI is Suspected?

Common Approach: Oral Exam, Explain Writing Process, No evidence or justification needed https://ung.edu/center-teaching-learning-leadership/blog/teaching-and-learning/2023/navigating-chatgpt-with-your-students.php

Common Approach: Collect "evidence" of writing that does not conform to prompt, or conflicts with scaffolding or benchmark writing samples, then meet with the student to ask them to explain their writing process.

Report from Writing Program Faculty: the work of collecting evidence to prepare for a meeting with the student, and for drafting the academic dishonesty report to be filed with the administration, can be incredibly labor intensive. Of the Writing Program faculty surveyed in Fall 2023, the amount of time needed ranged from 8 hours to 20 hours of instructor time. The advent of AI and generative content makes it more difficult to gather evidence, and alternative approaches to managing conversations and the amount of labor involved is a topic we need to investigate more. Please contact the writing program if you have information to contribute.

Report from Writing Program Faculty: One trend that is being reported by faculty is that students seem more prone to admit academic dishonesty, and to do so earlier in discussions, since the recent spread of AI. A common claim is that students "did not know" that their particular usage of AI was in violation of academic dishonesty policy. The usual protocol of handling academic dishonesty cases (which involves a preliminary conversation with students, prior to filing a case with the Dean's office) may change, for this reason. If students are freely admitting to AI use early on, the purpose of the interventional meeting may seem unclear. However, at this point, even if students "confess" over email, the Writing Program asks faculty to still have the in-person conversation with them prior to filing a case with the Dean's office–so students have the opportunity to formally discuss details with you and they clearly understand the importance of the situation and what constitutes academic dishonesty in your class policy. The report you fill out if you escalate the issue will ask you to describe the student's behavior in this initial meeting.

How to Discourage AI

Early semester in-class writing ("benchmark" sample)
https://ung.edu/center-teaching-learning-leadership/blog/teaching-and-learning/2023/navigating-chatgpt-with-your-students.php

Writing assignment scaffolding (informal writing, pre-writing)
Informal assignments are highly useful to help you detect writing that deviates from the level of work students normally produce. Also, a common flag for academic dishonesty is when students have fallen behind with informal writing assignments.

Require citation of library and other sources that are behind a paywall
If students need to access articles (academic or popular) that require library access, AI currently will have trouble–sometimes generating fake content and even quotations ("hallucinating").

How to Incorporate Ethical AI Assignments that Foster (Preserve) Critical Thinking

Is it Pandora's box in your classroom? Or the elephant already in the room? For people *who want to do so*, here are some resources to incorporate AI as a topic of instruction. It's being done in other Writing Programs, but that doesn't mean you have to:

- Inviting students to use ChatGPT to generate ONE piece of their paper, and citing it following standard citation guidelines:

    - [How to cite generative AI output (MLA)](#)
    - [How to cite generative AI output (APA)](#)
    - [How to cite generative AI output (Chicago)](#)

- Try an assignment idea from the [MLA and CCCC Joint Task Force on AI and Writing](#): This "community collection" invites "reflections" on pedagogical experiments with incorporating AI into the writing classroom. These reflections include information on the design of the lesson and its effectiveness.