

Helping Teachers and Students at CVU Use AI Ethically, Safely, and Effectively

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a distant future—it's here, influencing industries, education, and daily life. While there are significant environmental, moral, and ethical implications of this reality, we cannot ignore what has become a major part of our world. As educators, we have a responsibility to teach students how to use AI ethically, safely, and effectively.

Key reasons for understanding AI:

- **AI is Everywhere:** From healthcare to entertainment, AI is transforming what we're doing and how we do it. Students need to understand not just **why** AI matters, but **how** and **when** to use it effectively to solve real-world problems.
- **Critical Thinking and Responsibility:** Using AI isn't just about technology—it's also about developing critical thinking and ethical responsibility. Students must know **when** to rely on AI and **why** their personal judgment still matters.
- **Building Digital Leaders:** Ethical AI use empowers students to become informed digital leaders who make thoughtful, data-driven decisions and contribute positively to the future of technology.
- **Avoiding Misuse:** Without clear guidance, students risk misusing AI, from plagiarism to falling for biased information. Teaching them **how** to use AI responsibly prevents these pitfalls and encourages deeper, critical engagement with technology.

What AI Does Well	What AI Doesn't Do Well
Analyzing/Processing Large Amounts of Data: AI can sift through vast datasets, helping students and teachers analyze trends or information at a speed humans can't match. For example, it can process historical data, scientific data, or student performance metrics to identify patterns.	Lacks Emotional Intelligence/ Human Judgment: AI cannot understand or respond to the emotional needs of students. For example, it can't offer encouragement or empathy when a student is struggling, nor can it handle sensitive conversations or provide nuanced, personal guidance.
Providing Real-Time Feedback: AI provides real-time feedback that helps students improve their work instantly. Whether refining ideas, adjusting essay structure, or exploring creative solutions, AI offers immediate suggestions, keeping students engaged and making learning more interactive and responsive.	Fails to Provide Cultural, Ethical, or Personal Context: AI struggles with complex social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of learning. For instance, it might misinterpret the significance of certain historical events or ethical dilemmas without fully understanding human context.
AI Personalizes and Expands Accessibility: AI helps by simplifying concepts, translating content, and adjusting difficulty, enabling students to engage more fully with material. It offers personalized support or advanced challenges, helping students overcome barriers and make progress.	Cannot Foster Human Connection and Collaboration: AI is unable to replicate the interpersonal connection between teachers and students or facilitate teamwork and collaborative learning experiences that are key to many high school environments.
Automating Routine Administrative Tasks: AI can save teachers time by organizing lesson materials, providing quick feedback on assignments, generating assessments, and tracking student progress. It also automates tasks like attendance and report generation, allowing more focus on personalized teaching and student engagement.	Creativity is Limited to Existing Patterns: AI's creativity is based on patterns from pre-existing data. While it can generate ideas, it cannot truly innovate or create something entirely new in the way humans can, especially when it comes to out-of-the-box problem-solving or artistic expression.

Setting the Tone for AI Integration at CVU

It's essential to establish how AI will be used in the classroom, framing it as a tool that can enhance human thought and creativity, not replace it.

- **Normalize AI as a Tool:** Frame AI as a resource that complements human creativity and thought. Emphasize its role in enhancing learning, not replacing it.
 - **Promote Creative Experimentation:** Encourage students to explore AI's potential in innovative ways while guiding them on when and how it should be used responsibly.
 - **Be Transparent About AI's Role:** Clearly explain how AI can assist with specific tasks, such as generating ideas or offering feedback, and when students need to use their own thinking and creativity.
 - **Ensure a Balance Between AI and Human Input:** Design assignments that allow AI to enhance the learning experience without taking over, ensuring that students remain actively engaged in producing their own work.
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Guiding Principles for Ethical AI Use

To integrate AI into education responsibly, teachers and students need to understand the ethical considerations that come with it. Here are five key principles to guide students and educators in their AI use:

Responsible Use of AI:

- *AI should support our thinking and learning, but the final product must reflect our ideas and contributions. AI is here to assist, not replace, human creativity and effort.*

Critical Analysis and Verification:

- *We need to critically assess and verify AI outputs by cross-referencing with multiple sources. AI can sometimes be biased or incorrect, so it's essential that we evaluate its outputs for accuracy and reliability.*

Responsible AI Usage and Ethical Digital Citizenship

- *As we integrate AI into our work, we must ensure it is used responsibly, considering its impact on society and upholding ethical practices. This includes protecting privacy, being aware of data risks, and fostering fairness and transparency in all digital interactions*

Personal Voice and Creativity:

- *While AI can enhance our work, our personal voices and perspectives should always remain central. AI is a collaborator, but it's up to us to drive creativity and originality in our work.*

Adaptability and Growth:

- *We should approach AI with curiosity and a growth mindset, continually learning and adapting as AI technology evolves. Embracing change helps us stay current and capable of navigating future developments.*

Practical Strategies for Using AI with Students

- **Using AI for Pattern Recognition:**

AI can quickly analyze data, like identifying trends in historical events or scientific studies. Students can then interpret the patterns, such as how technological shifts during the Industrial Revolution impacted society, and apply them to modern issues.

- **Critical Thinking and Bias Evaluation:**

AI can summarize news articles or sources. Have students analyze these summaries for potential biases or gaps in information, encouraging them to compare different perspectives and deepen their critical thinking skills.

- **Guiding Research and Exploration:**

Use AI to provide broad overviews of complex topics, like climate change or deforestation. Students can then narrow their focus by using AI-generated insights to drive deeper research or develop unique solutions based on their findings.

- **Inspiring Creativity in Projects:**

AI can suggest starting points for creative projects, whether it's brainstorming for an essay, art piece, or design. Encourage students to take those ideas further by adding their own personal flair or experimenting with different styles and approaches.

- **Providing Feedback on Writing:**

Students can ask AI for targeted feedback on their writing—whether it's clarifying a main idea, checking verb tense consistency, or identifying areas for improvement. This allows students to revise and strengthen their writing with real-time input.

- **Simplifying Complex Ideas:**

AI is great at breaking down challenging topics, like explaining photosynthesis or economic principles in simpler terms. Afterward, students can use these simplified explanations to apply concepts in real-world scenarios or class discussions.

- **Practicing World Languages:**

AI can simulate real conversations in languages like Spanish or French, giving students a way to practice speaking and listening in a low-pressure, interactive setting, improving fluency over time.

- **Supporting Math Problem-Solving:**

AI can guide students through the steps of solving math problems, from algebra to calculus. After understanding AI's explanation, students can try different problems independently or apply those skills to new contexts, like science or finance.

Discussion Questions to Reflect on AI Use in the Classroom

Here are some sample discussion questions to use after an AI-assisted lesson:

- "What did you learn from using AI that you didn't expect?"
- "How did you ensure that your voice and ideas remained central to the work?"
- "What challenges did you face when using AI in this project?"
- "Where did AI help you, and where did you find it limited?"
- "What are the ethical considerations you encountered while using AI for this assignment?"

These questions help students reflect on their AI usage, reinforcing critical thinking and ethical understanding.