

## ChatGPT and Practical Suggestions to Mitigate Non-Learning/Cheating

### **ChatGPT and AI Assistance**

ChatGPT and similar services can interact in conversational dialogue and provide surprisingly human responses. It can write cogent essays, solve science and math problems, and produce working computer code.

For educators, this has raised fears of academic dishonesty, where students can use such a service to write their assignments, passing off these AI-generated essays and problem sets as their own. Below are helpful suggestions.

### **Course Design and Pedagogy**

As AI-powered tools become increasingly common and sophisticated, instructors may choose to allow its use in assignments and other course-related activities to enhance students' learning experiences and achieve curriculum goals. However, if instructors decide that using such tools is inappropriate, they can consider the following suggestions to address this issue.

- **Talk to your students about your expectations for academic honesty and remind them of the University's policies.** Tell them that using ChatGPT and the like is academically dishonest, and connect its use to your policies and practices around academic honesty. Make it explicit and be frank about your concerns. For most faculty, there is an issue of equity but also learning. What's the point of coming to college, to class, if you don't learn? Open the discussion and share with your students why academic honesty is so important to you.
  - Add a clarifying statement, such as, "Using an AI text generator when an assignment does not explicitly call or allow for it without proper attribution or authorization is plagiarism."
- **Run your assignment through such AI-powered services.** Review that answer and tell your students about your experience (and that you've saved the output).<sup>1</sup>
- **Provide incentives for the behaviors and habits associated with strong learning — for trying — and producing.** If a perfect product (test/paper) is the only way to receive an A, you're setting yourself and your students up to consider cheating. Include all the good processes needed to be a strong learner in your course: reading, viewing, speaking, improving, reflecting on one's learning, etc. Review your grading criteria and rubrics to ensure you're setting your students up to adopt strong learning strategies.

### **Assignment Design**

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<sup>1</sup> These services do not produce the same answer each time it's posed.

ChatGPT and similar tools rely on available text that is not behind firewalls or so obscure or recent that it has not yet been added to the service. The following advice is built on this design characteristic.

- In written assignments, reference class materials and notes or sources not available on the free internet (books or recent articles, behind firewalls). For example, if you write, “Take three course concepts and provide examples of them from your own experiences,” these AI tools will be less able to use the terminology from your class in the nuanced way you described it.
- Include visuals — images or videos students need to respond to — in your assignment. (Be sure to include alt-text for accessibility.)
- Reference or tie in current events or conversations in your field.
- Ask for application or engagement between personal knowledge/experience and course concepts or topics.
- Replace an essay or short answer writing assignment with one that requires students to submit an audio file, podcast, video, speech, drawing, diagram, or multimedia project. Mix up the assignment in ways that make running to these services more work than it’s worth.

Incorporate AI in your assignments. For example, ask students to generate a ChatGPT response to a question of their choosing and then write an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the response. Engage with the tool and discover with your students what it can and cannot do.<sup>2</sup>

### **Extend Flipped Learning: Class Time Can Be for Writing/Creating**

- Ask students to read, view, and digest material at home and then apply, demonstrate, and perform in class. For example:
  - Have students write responses in class. If students have 30 minutes to write brief answers to the kinds of questions you might have provided as homework or even a targeted single paragraph written in class, they will learn a great deal. As a bonus, your subsequent class discussion will benefit from that engaged individual work.
    - Have students respond orally, requiring each student to answer a different question.
    - Have students work in small groups in class to present on topics afterward.
  - Have students develop a rough draft in class and work to expand and polish it at home.

### **When All Else Fails**

- **Require handwritten responses.** Not only will this deter the use of AI, but we remember better when we write by hand.

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<sup>2</sup> Individuals may have reasonable privacy concerns — ChatGPT, for example, acknowledges that they may share account holders’ personal information with third parties, including vendors and service providers. See [Privacy Policy](#).

- **Be on the lookout for AI-produced texts.** Play around with ChatGPT and get an idea of what kind of prose is produced to the questions you typically ask. Not only will you gain insights on how to write your assignments better, but you may get a sense of the “voice” — or lack of voice — of the tools. Users describe the bots writing as follows:<sup>3</sup>
  - Atypically correct in grammar, usage, and editing — notice especially the placement of prepositional phrases — not hanging at the end of sentences!
  - Voiceless — correct and easy to read, but without any sense of a human person — fallible, uneven, passionate, awkward — present.
  - It follows predictable formations: strong topic sentences at the top of paragraphs; summary sentences at the end of paragraphs; even treatment of topics that reads a bit like patter: “On the one hand, many people believe X is terrible; on the other hand, many people believe X is wonderful.”
- **Take advantage of tools for detecting AI.** There are several out there, including [AI Text Classifier](#). (Requires login.) You drop text suspected as AI generated into a textbox and receive a probability reading. (Remember that no tool is perfect and can take a few minutes to run.)

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<sup>3</sup> AI-powered tools can be instructed to take on a voice. For example, you can command it to write like a senior in high school or a marketing executive working in financial services.