Appalachian
S T A T E   U N I V E R S I T Y

Initial Recommendations on
Generative AI Policy and Philosophy
Prepared by Task Force on AI 1

Introduction

During the Fall 2023 semester, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Heather Hulburt Norris formed a steering committee on artificial intelligence (AI) to study the issue in light of its rapid proliferation in business, government, higher education, and virtually all aspects of life. The committee is leading the development of recommendations for the university across the full spectrum of academic areas that could be impacted. The committee is led by Vice Provost Mark Ginn, Senior Vice Provost Neva Specht and Interim Vice Provost of Research and Innovation Christine Hendren.

Within that committee structure, Provost Norris also charged two task forces to develop university guidelines for AI.

- **Task Force 1** is focused this fall on AI as it relates to teaching and learning. In the spring, the task force will turn its attention to understanding the potential impact of AI on research, scholarship and creative activities. This group will deliver a number of helpful resources — including general principles and guidelines for faculty members, as well as draft AI statements they can use in their syllabi for the spring 2024 semester. Next academic year, Task Force 1 will develop AI guidelines for conducting and evaluating research.
- **Task Force 2** is exploring the near-term and long-term effects of generative AI on the higher education landscape. The task force will articulate a broad vision for the impact AI could have on the teaching, learning, research, productivity, and other work activities of App State faculty and students in the years ahead — as well as how AI could eventually transform pedagogical approaches and overall philosophies of education and teaching.

The task forces have broad representation across faculty and staff in App State's colleges and schools, as well as staff members from University Libraries, the Dean of Students Office, Information Technology Services and University Communications.

Task Force Members

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Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to provide App State instructors (faculty and staff) with assistance in managing students' appropriate use of AI to complete course assignments. This document offers principles and guidelines to help instructors determine how/if students should be able to use AI for such assignment, as well as sample "Appropriate AI Use Statements" for instructors to include in their course syllabi. This document *does not include* recommendations about how instructors should use AI in their teaching practices, or how they should use AI in conducting research.

Principles and Guidelines

In reviewing AI-related guidance published by a variety of organizations in higher ed and other industries, Task Force 1 made several observations. First, the continuously evolving nature of AI defies any hard and fast rules for its governance. Second, appropriate student use of AI varies significantly from one academic discipline to another. Finally, even within academic disciplines, individual instructors vary in the pedagogical values and intended academic outcomes they bring to the task of teaching. As a result, the task force proposes several general principles and corresponding guidelines for faculty and staff to consider as they finalize syllabi and prepare for classes in the spring 2024 semester.

For the purposes of this document, we define **principles** as values to keep "top of mind" as instructors think about how they want students to use AI (if at all) for their classes. **Guidelines** are actions that instructors can consider taking to support students' appropriate use of AI for their classes and that embody the principles we recommend.

Principle 1: Shift from a rules-based "honor code" approach to a values-based "academic integrity" approach.

- Guideline 1: Be proactive in clearly defining how and when students can use AI in your class, including why it may be appropriate in some instances and why it is not appropriate in others. Include this guidance in your syllabus and discuss it with your class at the start of the semester.
- Guideline 2: Align your AI use policy with your pedagogical values, goals, and philosophy. For example, a restrictive, no-use policy might not be aligned to a value of student agency.

  The following is a sample statement that exemplifies a values-based academic integrity approach to AI from a Texas A&M University Center for Teaching Excellence document called Generative AI Syllabus Statement Considerations.
  > *Using an AI-content generator (such as ChatGPT) to complete coursework without proper attribution or authorization is a form of academic dishonesty. If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please contact your instructor to discuss the issue. Faculty, students, and administrative staff all share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at Washington University in St. Louis.*

Note: AI violations are typically cited as "unauthorized assistance" in universities' academic integrity codes. In App State's Academic Integrity Code, this is located in Article V, Prohibited Academic Conduct, 5.01 Cheating: Using, attempting to use, or giving unauthorized assistance or materials in an effort to gain academic advantage.

Principle 2: Promote transparency and accountability in the use, reporting, and citing of AI. This includes stating how faculty might use AI-detection tools in assessing students' work.

- Guideline 1: Establish open lines of communication about the use of AI for your class and foster a collegial environment to encourage students to talk to instructors when they feel inclined to use AI on assignments.
- Guideline 2: Engage students in a collegial conversation about how they produced the work and what role AI might have played.
- Guideline 3: Disclose any intended use of AI in the assessment of student work and ask students to opt in or out to having their work added to a public database in this way.

Note: Most major style guides have developed their own recommendations regarding how writers should attribute their work to AI. This is likely to be an evolving conversation, but the following sources provide guidance.
- MLA (Modern Language Association)
- Chicago Manual of Style
- APA (American Psychological Association)

Principle 3: Be collegial and collaborative — not adversarial and/or combative — in talking to students about whether or not they used AI to complete an assignment.

- <u>Guideline 1:</u> If you suspect a student may have used AI inappropriately, address these issues/questions from a collegial and collaborative perspective instead of an adversarial or combative perspective. Do not use an accusatory/punitive tone in these conversations, but rather focus on how, when, and why students should use AI in completing their assignments.
- <u>Guideline 2:</u> Promote and engage in open and ongoing dialogue with fellow faculty and staff as well as with students regarding the pros and cons, the knowns and unknowns, and the evolving educational applications and ethical implications of AI. Initiating AI discussions with students at the beginning of each semester will create a spirit of openness, increase shared understanding of what's permitted and what's not, and decrease inappropriate use.

Principle 4: Consider the issue of access and equity if you decide students can use AI for your class.

- <u>Guideline 1:</u> If you permit students to use AI in certain ways for certain assignments, consider if all the students in your class have equal access to AI. Do all students understand when they are allowed to use AI? Do all students know how to use AI? Can some students afford to pay for more advanced versions of AI that will give them unfair advantage over other students?

Principle 5: Do not assume/apply a one-size fits all policy for students' use of AI across all of your courses, or across academic disciplines, as the appropriate use of AI can differ significantly from course to course and from discipline to discipline.

- <u>Guideline 1:</u> Remember that instructors within the same academic discipline and instructors across different disciplines will allow AI to be used in different ways for different types of assignments in their classes. When you are determining permitted use of AI for your classes and communicating it to your students, bear in mind that those same students will be managing different AI expectations/permissions for their different classes.
- <u>Guideline 2:</u> Consider approaching the use of LLM Generative AI heuristically. Allow students to use the tool in applicable ways that make sense for the class. For example, if your class would normally allow students to utilize a peer editor, consider allowing Generative AI to fulfill this role. For instances where original work is indicated, continue scaffolding or breaking an assignment down to smaller components.
- <u>Guideline 3:</u> Initiate and sustain conversations with your colleagues, department leadership, and members of other academic communities regarding the limits and

affordances of generative AI to support both pedagogical goals and disciplinary culture.

Principle 6: Evaluate the role of writing in your class when determining AI use by your students.

- <u>Guideline 1:</u> Writing to learn is an intellectual activity that is crucial to the cognitive and social development of learners and writers. You should consider not permitting the use of AI for those in-class and homework activities in which the act of writing is central to student learning.
- <u>Guideline 2</u>: When determining the format of assignments in a course, consider whether writing is the only or best way for students to demonstrate mastery of learning objectives. In courses where writing to learn is *not* a key learning objective, consider whether AI might be permissible or whether a non-writing-focused assignment might be the best match for your learning objectives.

Principle 7: Focus on what is core to the learning process in your class when defining students' appropriate use of AI.

- <u>Guideline 1:</u> Consider allowing students to use AI when it does not replace fundamental "ways of learning" that you are teaching in your class but rather when AI facilitates, extends, or enhances those ways of learning.
- <u>Guideline 2:</u> Consider allowing students to use AI to perform non-value-add functions that can expedite tedious or menial tasks that support and/or facilitate learning. For example, students could use AI to search for, analyze, and summarize a large list of potential primary sources to include in their research efforts for a paper or project. Students could then use the AI-generated summary to do their own deep dive analysis of those sources that were deemed most appropriate and relevant by the initial AI-powered search.

Sample AI Statements for Syllabi

In reviewing AI-related guidance published by a variety of colleges and universities, Task Force 1 identified a number of useful AI statements used in syllabi. While the task force does not recommend any one of the following samples, we believe they will be useful to instructors wishing to include such statements in their syllabi. The following samples reside on the [Brandeis University's website](#), which curated them from other university websites. They are divided into three subsections: restrictive policies, permissive policies, and mixed policies. [Stanford University's Teaching Commons website](#) also provides useful guidance on creating course policies for AI.

Permissive Policies

- "This course encourages students to explore the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT for all assignments and assessments. Any such use must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. It is each student's responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output that is submitted; you bear the final responsibility. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at Harvard could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course." (from [Harvard University](#))

- "Students are allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course; no special documentation or citation is required." (from Kevin R.Guidry - (*Source*))

- "AI technologies offer powerful tools that can assist you in all stages of the writing process and even in thinking about some of the assigned readings. However, they bring the danger of substituting for your own ideas and the thinking that happens throughout the writing process. I have no objection to the use of these technologies in your writing, as long as they are not used to substitute for your own ideas or drafting process. I recommend that, if you are to use these tools, to do so after you've had the opportunity to formulate and mature your thoughts on the topic you are writing about. And while you will be better served by the [University Writing Center](#), these tools can help you refine your drafts, assist you with formatting your bibliography, and so on.

  Ultimately, I trust you all to follow the Academic Integrity Code and do the challenging work that this course will ask of you because these are some of the ways in which you will learn what this course has to offer. (from Leonardo Flores - ([source](#))

- "Within this class, you are welcome to use foundation models (ChatGPT, GPT, DALL-E, Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, GitHub Copilot, and anything after) in a totally unrestricted fashion, for any purpose, at no penalty. However, you should note that all large language models still have a tendency to make up incorrect facts and fake citations, code generation models have a tendency to produce inaccurate outputs, and image generation models can occasionally come up with highly offensive products. You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit regardless of whether it originally comes from you or a foundation model. If you use a foundation model, its contribution must be acknowledged; you will be penalized for using a foundation model without acknowledgement. Having said all these disclaimers, the use of foundation models is encouraged, as it may make it possible for you to submit assignments with higher quality, in less time.

  The university's policy on plagiarism still applies to any uncited or improperly cited use of work by other human beings, or submission of work by other human beings as your own." (from Ryan S. Baker - (*Source*))

- "I expect you to use AI (ChatGPT and image generation tools, at a minimum), in this class. In fact, some assignments will require it. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I provide tutorials in Canvas about how to use them. I am happy to meet and help with these tools during office hours or after class. (from Ethan Mollick - (*Source*)

Restrictive Policies

- "We expect that all work students submit for this course will be their own. In instances when collaborative work is assigned, we expect for the assignment to list all team members who participated. We specifically forbid the use of ChatGPT or any other generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools at all stages of the work process, including preliminary ones. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at Harvard could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course." (from Harvard University)
- "Students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools." (from Kevin R.Guidry - (*Source*))
- "Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student."
- "Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. Ethics still matter and plagiarism is a serious Salem State University offense." (from Lis Horowitz - (*Source*))

Mixed Policies

- "Certain assignments in this course will permit or even encourage the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT. The default is that such use is disallowed unless otherwise stated. Any such use must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. It is each student's responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output that is submitted; you bear the final responsibility. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at Harvard could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course." (from Harvard University)
- "Students are allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course if instructor permission is obtained in advance. Unless given permission to use those tools, each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools." (from Kevin R.Guidry - (*Source*))
- "Writing is integral to thinking. It is also hard. Natural language processing (NLP) applications like ChatGPT or Sudowrite are useful tools for helping us improve our

writing and stimulate our thinking. However, they should never serve as a substitute for either. And, in this course, they cannot.

Think of the help you get from NLP apps as a much less sophisticated version of the assistance you can receive (for free!) from a Bentley Writing Center tutor. That person might legitimately ask you a question to jump-start your imagination, steer you away from the passive voice, or identify a poorly organized paragraph, but should never do the writing for you. A major difference here, of course, is that an NLP app is not a person. It's a machine which is adept at recognizing patterns and reflecting those patterns back at us. It cannot think for itself. And it cannot think for you.

With that analogy in mind, you will need to adhere to the following guidelines in our class.

Appropriate use of AI when writing essays or discussion board entries:
- You are free to use spell check, grammar check, and synonym identification tools (e.g., Grammarly, and MS Word).
- You are free to use app recommendations when it comes to rephrasing sentences or reorganizing paragraphs you have drafted yourself.
- You are free to use app recommendations when it comes to tweaking outlines you have drafted yourself.

Inappropriate use of AI when writing essays or discussion board entries:
- You may not use entire sentences or paragraphs suggested by an app without providing quotation marks and a citation, just as you would to any other source. Citations should take this form: OpenAI, chatGPT. Response to prompt: "Explain what is meant by the term 'Triple Bottom Line'" (February 15, 2023, https://chat.openai.com/).
- You may not have an app write a draft (either rough or final) of an assignment for you.
- Evidence of inappropriate AI use will be grounds for submission of an Academic Integrity report. Sanctions will range from a zero for the assignment to an F for the course.

I'm assuming we won't have a problem in this regard but want to make sure that the expectations are clear so that we can spend the semester learning things together—and not worrying about the origins of your work.

Be aware that other classes may have different policies and that some may forbid AI use altogether. (from Chris Beneke -(*Source*))

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