Generative AI Toolkit: How to Avoid Instances of Misconduct

There is no panacea to keep students from the misuse of Gen AI (or other types of cheating). However, we can incorporate some instructional measures that may decrease student misuse.

Discuss the purpose of education

Early in the semester, talk about why students are here in higher education. If they are to learn material and skills so that they can be successful in a future career, it's important to engage in the "struggle of learning," even when it is hard and uncomfortable. This means not using AI when the learning needs to be done on their own.

Discuss academic integrity

Broader than just the misuse of Gen AI, explore with your class who is harmed when students are dishonest about their work contributions. (Consider not just the student themselves, but peers, the institution, their future job coworkers, and anyone else they may serve within this discussion.)

The Integrity Game is a free resource (European) you can assign to students to "play" before class or during class. (Students start with a case on the home page and choose their own adventure.) While AI is not incorporated into these cases, you can fold discussion of AI use into a debriefing discussion with your class.

Set course expectations together

Create an early-semester activity where students contribute to a Gen AI policy for your class. What are their expectations, and what do they think constitutes "cheating with AI?" You may not agree with their responses, which can be a good starting point for further discussion. However, your students may also surprise you with their suggestions!

Be sure to have a clear syllabus policy

It's hard to have a discussion with students you believe have misused Gen AI if you haven't explained clearly what constitutes misuse in your syllabus. We offer some suggestions for how to do this on the Syllabus page of our Gen AI Toolkit.

Foster an environment of trust, not policing

This article provides a thoughtful discussion about the harmful effects of relying on AI detectors, which are not reliable enough to use as sure evidence of AI misconduct.

False accusations of students, in addition to an atmosphere of mistrust, creates an environment of **policing** rather than **mentorship**. These conditions are far less conducive to the good learning we wish to support in our classes.

Despite the availability of AI detection in D2L, try to avoid using these scores as your "gotcha" evidence. (And remember, while they may be correct in many cases, every once in a while they falsely accuse human writing as being AI-sourced. Would you want to be in that student's shoes? How can they prove otherwise?)

Instead, follow some of the suggestions above and below in this accordion to create a positive course atmosphere. In addition, research indicates that, in comparison to AI-generated writing, human writing is

- Easier to read
- Less complex or syntactically dense
- Longer

Adjust instruction and strategies

See our Advice & Strategies page of this Toolkit for more ideas!

This webpage from Northern Illinois University's CITL also offers some good advice - scroll to What You Can Do Instead/Rethink Assessment.

Have other suggestions? Email us at teaching@etsu.edu so we can consider including them!