Discussing Student Use of AI at the University of Portland

Introduction:
Generative Artificial Intelligence technologies (GAIs) are computer systems that can generate various forms of traditionally human expression in the form of digital content such as text, images, video, and music. Large Language Models (LLMs) are a subset of GAIs that can generate text-based formats such as prose, poetry, and programming code. ChatGPT is currently the most notable LLM, but there are many others.

Risks to Students:
- Students miss opportunities to practice writing, reading, and critical thinking when they submit AI outputs as their own work or rely on it for summaries.
- Students may not be able to discern the difference between AI-generated text and text written from a human perspective. They may not realize that AI-generated text is unreliable and/or uninteresting.
- Students may spend more time worrying about academic integrity, surveillance, detection, and penalties than engaging in the work of their courses. This alienates them from their instructors, their peers, and the mission of the university.
- Because AI can easily mimic the surface features of human writing, students may devalue reading and writing as essential components of the critical thinking process (a process that AI does not engage in or model).

Benefits to Students:
- Students can use AI as an editor to proofread and revise their writing, allowing them easy access to "Standard Written English" or the "language of power."
- English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) students can create translations and ask questions about text in another language.
- Writers can experiment with AI to produce models of prose with differences in genre, tone, diction, and style.
- Students can overcome psychological obstacles to brainstorming by using AI as a conversant.

Ethical Problems:
- **They are unreliable.** LLMs like ChatGPT can't assess whether the text they are generating is true or false. They often make up facts and fabricate credible-looking sources, complete with citations of non-existent books and articles. For this reason, using GAIs for research is generally a bad idea.
- **They reproduce biases.** GAIs are trained on huge datasets scraped from the internet, which includes all the racist, sexist, ableist, and otherwise discriminatory language and images found there. If used carelessly, GAIs simply reflect and perpetuate systemic biases.
- **They exploit workers.** Although tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney seem to be able to produce text and images with little effort, they rely on vast amounts of human labor from data annotators. Data annotation centers (sometimes referred to as 'AI sweatshops') are predominantly located in South-east Asia and Africa and routinely pay their laborers less than the minimum wage to label and annotate the data on which AI relies.
- **They can infringe on copyright and intellectual property.** GAIs are trained on text and images scraped from the internet, including works presumed to be protected by copyright. These technologies give users the ability to write and produce art in the style of other authors and artists without the original creator's permission.
- **They harm the environment**. GAIs require massive server farms to provide sufficient data for training and computing. An average user's conversational exchange with ChatGPT amounts to dumping a large bottle of fresh water out on the ground.

When is it ok to use AI in my courses?
- There is no single answer to this question. Different instructors and courses will have different rules for AI use. There are two key principles, however:
  - **Consult your instructor** to determine whether and how use of AI is permitted.
  - **Cite all AI-generated text and disclose all AI-activities used in an assignment.** Transparency is vital.

What does UP's Code of Academic Integrity say about AI?

- **"The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT without attribution constitutes plagiarism. Students must cite any AI-generated text and ideas and disclose any activities (e.g. brainstorming, editing, translating, etc.) for which AI was employed. Students are expected to demonstrate sound judgment in discerning when and how to utilize AI ethically across their academic work, upholding standards of citation, originality, and integrity. The misuse of AI to shortcut academic requirements will be considered a breach of academic integrity. Students who have questions about when and how to use AI should talk with their instructor."**

How can students cite AI and disclose their use of AI functions?
- All academic disciplines have extensive conventions for citing the work of outside sources and ideas that are not the author's own. The most common are APA (used in Education, Psychology, and the Sciences), MLA (used in the Humanities), and Chicago (used in Business, History, and the Fine Arts). Citations are generally used to credit the work of other people and to point readers toward original sources. Because ChatGPT and other AI programs create text that is non-reproducible and non-retrievable and no single human is responsible for it, citing it requires care. The board for each citation style has already published extensive guidelines and examples for doing so online. There are several basic principles:
    - **Cite** a generative AI tool whenever you paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into your own work **any content** (whether text, image, data, or other) that was created by it
    - **Acknowledge all functional uses** of the tool (like editing your prose or translating words) in your text, a note, or another suitable location (such as an appendix)
    - Take care to **check** the secondary sources it cites

- Example references:
    - APA: OpenAI. (2023). *ChatGPT* (Mar 14 version) [Large language model]. https://chat.openai.com/chat
    - MLA: "Describe the symbolism of the green light in the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald" prompt. *ChatGPT*, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 8 Mar. 2023, chat.openai.com/chat.
    - Chicago: ChatGPT, response to "Explain how to make pizza dough from common household ingredients," OpenAI, March 7, 2023.

Closing Consideration:
- Consider the purposes of your assignments. While everyone wants a good grade, faculty don't create assignments just to grade them. They create assignments to get students to think in ways that are relevant to the field and to life. In other words, the goal across all majors and disciplines is critical thinking: the ability to examine information or ideas, recognize their potentials and limitations, take a position, and articulate new ideas in response. AI can either help you think critically or not. Reflect on the kind of person you want to become, the kind of career you want, and the role thinking and learning will play in your future. (Christopher Basgier, Auburn University)

This handout was drafted by Sarah Weiger (Director of the Writing Center) and Joshua Swidzinski (English) and relies on ideas and language drawn from the following sources:

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Tan, Rebecca and Regine Cabato, "Behind the AI Boom, An Army of Overseas Workers in 'Digital Sweatshops'," *The Washington Post*, August 28, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/08/28/scale-ai-remotasks-philippines-artificial-intelligence/>