

Guidance for Syllabus Statements on the Use of AI Tools

As Autumn Quarter approaches, the University teaching community is thinking through how to address the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, in their courses. Not unlike the disruptions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the essential strategies for responding to this development is clear, transparent communication with students about our expectations. With the rapid onset of availability and sophistication of AI tools over the past year, students have only had a short amount of time to discover the utility and limits of these tools for their learning as well as expectations of their use in their courses of study. Moreover, the expectations around AI tools will likely vary from one course to the next, making clear and consistent communication of expectations for *your* course particularly important.

This document provides considerations that might shape how instructors craft a syllabus statement about AI tools, followed by example statements covering a range of approaches. The staff in the Chicago Center for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) are always available for one-on-one consultations on using AI tools in your courses, communicating to students about their use of these tools, and writing syllabus statements. To schedule a consultation please email: teaching@uchicago.edu.

Considerations and Examples of Syllabus Statements on the Use of AI Tools

Below are some examples of syllabus statements prepared by the CCTL to help guide your writing of your own statement on the use of AI tools in your courses. This is not an exhaustive list and the statements are generic in nature, with the idea that these examples will provide some ideas and starting points for thinking about how you might want to communicate your own approach on the role of AI tools in your courses. Please feel free to adapt and modify these statements to your particular context and needs. As you draft your own syllabus statement, here are a few considerations to keep in mind:

- Communicate clearly and specifically when AI tools are and are not allowed, and what uses constitute a violation of academic integrity.
- When AI tools are permitted, communicate when and how they should be correctly attributed.
 - [APA guide](#) for citing ChatGPT
 - [Chicago Manual of Style citation guidelines](#) for AI tools
 - [MLA guide](#) for citing AI tools
- As with any course policy, providing reasoning that connects it to supporting the learning process helps students to understand the pedagogical rationale for the policy. Communicate to students how the use of AI tools do or do not support the learning goals for the course. In many courses, the development of foundational skills and knowledge that are integral to a student's academic and personal growth will need to be developed without the use of AI tools. In other cases, the

development of skills and knowledge around the use of AI tools in particular fields may be an important learning goal.

- Consider linking to or referencing the student policy on [Academic Honesty and Plagiarism](#). Every new student at the University is provided with the University's [Student Manual of University Policies & Regulations](#). Under the [policy](#), AI tools that are not explicitly allowed by the instructor(s) of a course, will be considered a violation of academic integrity. While it is the responsibility of each student to make themselves familiar with these policies, it can be helpful to remind them of the specific policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism.
- Consider how word choice and the tone of your statement will communicate and foster trust in your students as they navigate the availability and use of these new technologies.

In general, most instructors will allow or limit the use of AI tools in ways that fall under four broad categories: (1) use prohibited in all situations; (2) use with prior permission; (3) use with proper citation; and (4) free use with no citation required. Below are examples of general statements in each of these categories. These examples are best used as starting points to adapt to your teaching, assignments, course design, and style of communicating with your students.

(1) Use prohibited in all situations:

"In this course, we will be developing skills and knowledge that are important to discover and practice on your own. Because use of AI tools inhibits development of these skills and knowledge, students are not allowed to use any AI tools, such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2, in this course. Students are expected to present work that is their own without assistance from others, including automated tools. If you are unclear if something is an AI tool, please check with your instructor. Using AI tools for any purposes in this course will violate the University's [academic integrity policy](#). I treat potential academic integrity violations by [...]"

(2) Use with prior permission:

"Students are only allowed to use AI tools, such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2, on assignments in this course when advance permission is given by the instructor. Students must submit a written request with an explanation of how they will use a particular tool in their assignment. Students are not permitted to use these tools until permission is granted in writing. The instructor may encourage and give permission to students to use AI tools during class activities and in other contexts when it is considered in support of the course learning goals. Unless given permission to use those tools, each student is expected to complete each course assignment without substantive assistance from others, including AI tools. If you are unclear if something is an AI tool, please check with your instructor. Unauthorized use of AI tools for any purposes in this course will violate the University's academic integrity policy. I treat potential academic integrity violations by [...]"

(3) Use only with proper citation:

“The use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2, for this course is allowed for specific assignments only when determined to be in support of the course learning goals. Assignments in which AI tools are permitted will be clearly identified by the instructor and noted in the assignment directions. You are not required to use AI tools, but if you choose to use them for any part of the assignment (from brainstorming to text editing), you must use proper citation (please use [APA citation](#) format). Failure to properly cite AI tools is considered a violation of the University of Chicago’s [Academic Honesty and Plagiarism](#) policy. If you are unclear if something is an AI Tool, please check with your instructor. I treat potential academic integrity violations by [...]”

(4) Free use with no citation required:

“In this course, students are allowed to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT) on all assignments. No citation is required.”

Additional Resources

To schedule a one-on-one consultation with a member of the CCTL staff, please email: teaching@uchicago.edu

If you are interested in reading more, below are some curated resources to learn more about AI tools and how others in higher education are approaching their use in their courses:

- [“Should You Add an AI Policy to Your Syllabus? What to consider in drafting your own course policy on students’ use of tools like ChatGPT.”](#) by Kevin Gannon
- [“Sentient Syllabus Project”](#)
- [“My Assessments Next Semester – Modified for Avoiding & Embracing AI”](#) by Maha Bali
- [Crowdsource Classroom Policies for AI Generative Tools](#)