Faculty Colleagues,

Congrats on another great academic year. As the summer tends to be a bit slower, now might be a good time to brush up on Artificial Intelligence (A.I.). A.I., particularly generative A.I., continues to develop at a rapid pace, presenting both ethical challenges and significant opportunities. Given A.I.'s rapid evolvement, we will continue to find ourselves in changing contexts for our academic work. It is very important that we continue to familiarize ourselves with these evolving A.I. tools and how they can be used appropriately in our teaching, research, and business operations. Also, employers are expecting college graduates to have a basic understanding of these tools and will most likely be using A.I. software in their operations.

The University has provided requirements and guidance on A.I. to Villanovans through revisions to the [Code of Academic Integrity](#), [guidelines for faculty](#) around A.I. generators in their courses, and [guidelines for students](#) regarding the responsible academic use of A.I. generators. Villanova data cannot be used in A.I. systems that use input prompts to train their models. Please follow all [data governance standards](#) and policies related to safeguarding University data.

Below are some resources you may find helpful for learning more about the capabilities of A.I. and how we may use A.I. in our academic work.

Resources

- Educause has released its [2024 Horizon Report on Teaching and Learning](#) which provides an overview of some excellent ways to use A.I.
- The University of Florida is implementing an [A.I. across the curriculum program](#) in all of its 16 colleges and has an informational [website](#).
- Ethan and Lilach Mollick, nationally recognized experts on A.I. models in education from Wharton Interactive at the University of Pennsylvania and the keynote speakers last week at the Teaching and Learning Strategies program, highlight [7 great ways to use A.I.](#) in the classroom and explain the pedagogical benefits and risks.
- VITAL offers a comprehensive [webpage on teaching in the age of A.I.](#)   You may also reach out to [Stefan Perun](#) for pedagogical assistance using A.I.

A.I. Tools

Villanova has an enterprise site license for [Microsoft's Copilot](#) chat application, which is built off of Open A.I. Copilot is available to all faculty, staff, and students. no inputted information is used to train the models. Villanova's Career Connections has an excellent [free course](#) to learn the basics of Copilot.

- Zoom's built-in A.I. assistant (details [here](#)) is now available for faculty and staff who want to use it. No inputted information is used to train the models. This assistant can provide generative A.I. results during a Zoom meeting and also provide summaries and more. To have yours activated, contact [UNIT support](#).

- A.I. detectors remain highly unreliable and should not be the only means of proving an academic integrity violation. We encourage you to support suspected misuse of A.I. (as outlined in your course policy) with additional information, such as asking the student to authenticate their work by presenting previous drafts/notes, comparing student work to previous writings, asking the student to explain their work, and checking for false references or statements in the work. [Mary Beth Simmons](#) in the writing center can help, as can [Dr. Alice Dailey](#), Chair of the Board of Academic Integrity.

Recommendations

- VITAL and VIRS will continue to offer events on teaching and research uses for A.I. throughout the year. Try and attend!

- Each department should dedicate time to discuss how A.I. can be used effectively, the philosophical and ethical implications of A.I. use in their discipline, as well as when it should not be utilized to achieve your learning and research objectives. Be open-minded and be willing to explore and change your approaches as the technology evolves. Think of ways to teach various aspects of about A.I. in your curriculums.

- Faculty are encouraged to use LinkedIn Learning for comprehensive information about A.I. generators and [prompt engineering](#) (how to give the right inputs to get the desired outputs).

We encourage you to stay informed, experiment with A.I. tools, and bring a flexible mindset to the A.I. conversations. At our Augustinian institution, where liberal arts form the foundation of our students' education, it is crucial to adopt a holistic and discerning stance towards A.I. As we delve into its expansive possibilities, we must also initiate thoughtful conversations about its influence on our core human values, the natural world, and the broader community. This balanced perspective will ensure that our utilization of A.I. tools remains in harmony with Villanova's humanist tradition and intellectual heritage, preparing our students to be the ethical leaders our society needs.

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