Faculty,

As many are aware, new open-access A.I. technologies are emerging (such as ChatGBT) that are able to generate written text based on user prompts. Several of us at Villanova have put this new software through its paces, and we believe that most of the time, it does not generate college-level text suitable for paper submission. At this juncture, its responses to broad essay-style questions lack detail and analytical depth. However, the technology will generate a starting point that a student could potentially edit and expand upon to generate an essay that will meet college standards. Furthermore, it can generate short answers that could be suitable for blogs, discussion boards, and more. We have put together some recommendations that you may consider implementing in the coming semester and in the future as A.I. tools become readily available and more sophisticated.

**Grading and Discussing with Students:**

- Consider placing a statement in your syllabus or on assignments that explicitly stipulates that the use of A.I. technologies to generate text is not allowed and will be treated as an academic integrity violation.
- When assigning a grade penalty for an academic integrity violation, note that the violation must be reported through the formal procedures. This guarantees students recourse to an appeal and makes it possible for the University to track repeat violations. For more information, consult the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- Make a renewed commitment, at the individual and disciplinary level, to Villanova’s grading standards, which can be found [here](#). Avoid assigning an A or B to work that is not “distinctive,” “outstanding,” “considerably above acceptable standards,” or demonstrating “a very high degree of understanding” or “unusual effectiveness.” Consider including these standards on your course syllabi and discussing them with students early in the semester. Emphasize that the value of a Villanova degree hinges on the University’s maintaining these standards.
- Talk to your students about A.I. text-generating technologies and the importance of doing their own work. Discuss how the writing process nurtures skills and abilities that are necessary to their employability and success after graduation.
- Use the free detection tools that are becoming available (such as the one [here](#)), and inform students that detection tools will be evolving right along with A.I. technologies. Note that these are not 100% reliable but can be useful. Currently, SafeAssign and TurnItIn cannot detect A.I.-generated work.

**Department/Program Actions:**

- Meet as a department early in the semester to discuss this topic and run some tests together to develop strategies that are specific to your discipline and student population. Include adjuncts in these conversations, as many adjuncts teach introductory-level courses and courses for non-majors.
• Consider forming a standing departmental committee on academic integrity whose purpose is to keep current on developments in digital technologies and detection tools pertinent to your discipline, to report those developments to the department, and to suggest ways to address them.

Best Practices/Help for Beating A.I.:

• Formulate your writing prompts to require responses that are currently difficult for A.I. to answer well (adapted from Dan Cannity, UMass, Amherst):
  o Use prompts that are very specific or require application of a concept to a unique problem or phenomenon. Avoid very general questions or questions that invite generalization.
  o Require that students offer detailed support from course material and/or class discussion.
  o Use recent topics. ChatGPT's data is about a year old, so asking about something more recent means it won't have good information about it. We do expect this data to be updated and the system to continue to learn and improve, so stay vigilant.
  o Ask questions that ChatGPT cannot discuss. It is programmed to be limited (for now, at least) to avoid controversial topics like the current war in Ukraine. If the course material allows for this and doing so is appropriate, adding in questions to which the bot cannot respond will mitigate its use.
  o Focus on process questions rather than informational ones. Examples: "Which applies better and why"; "explain a statement and why you think it means that"; "which solution to a problem is more appropriate and why." The chatbot cannot coherently explain its rationale to specific problems the way a human can.

• When assigning and evaluating discussion board posts, emphasize the quality of students' engagement with each other's work.

• Try using ChatGBT with your essay prompts to see what it generates and learn how to identify its output. Test a given prompt multiple times, as each text generation by the software is unique. Narrow and adjust your prompts to find the limits of what the technology can competently produce.

• Submit student work through Safe Assign in Blackboard. This software checks for plagiarism and will help deter students from using A.I. generated text as that text is often repeated and could be matched to other students' work.

Class Activities/Assignments:

• Consider using the tool to generate text and have the students analyze the results and discover its shortcomings. Show them how easy it is for you (and them) to tell something was generated by A.I.

• Consider using class time for writing so you can work with students and observe their processes. Move other class content online to compensate for this.
• Use multi-step writing assignments (such as abstract, draft, final draft, revision) that require students to show their work at various stages.

We will continue to monitor A.I. developments and are discussing possible changes to our academic integrity policy to more explicitly address its use. The Academic Policy Committee (APC) will work on addressing this challenge. We invite faculty to share information and strategies with each other. In the meantime please feel free to reach out to Gabriele Bauer in VITAL for assistance or Mary Beth Simmons in the Villanova Writing Center as they are both prepared to help you.

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