Generative AI and HSS

[October update] The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies has gathered some feedback about changes we are making in course design and evaluation because of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT. SCUGS will use this feedback to assess where policies and regulations need to be changed or expanded. So, we also need to alert SCUGS to gaps, loopholes or unwarranted obstacles in existing regulations. The section of the Calendar most directly relevant here is: [University Regulations (Undergraduate) 6.12.4 Academic Offenses](https://www.mun.ca/university-calendar/university-regulations-undergraduate/6/12/#6.12.4) and the parallel section for SGS, [4.12](https://www.mun.ca/university-calendar/school-of-graduate-studies/school-of-graduate-studies/4/12/)). Please continue to inform your Department Head and or Undergraduate Program Director, or send details to me directly at pdold@mun.ca.

I invite all instructors to Brown Bag Lunch sessions on Teaching during the “free hour,” 1-2 PM the second Wednesday of every month starting October 11, in the HSS Boardroom. Very informal; come as you are and we will see where it goes.

Check CITL’s [Instructor Series](https://www.mun.ca/citl/instructor-series/) for further discussions on genAI.

The Nexus Centre’s Nexus Exchange Series includes a session on Chat-GPT:

Dec 6 Chat-GPT and Academia (12:00-1:30 PM in SN 4022)

[Back by popular demand] What are the potential risks and rewards of CHAT-GPT for the academic community? Can we harness its powers for the greater academia good? How does it change the way we approach evaluation, assignments, and research?

**A few recommendations regarding generative AI from the HSS Dean's office:**

1. We recommend that all instructors include a statement on generative AI tools such as ChatGPT on all syllabi. The statement might be a full prohibition on the use of such tools, or it might limit or place conditions around the use of genAI. For example:

* The use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT is not permitted in this course and will be treated as cheating, impersonation, and/or plagiarism in accordance with the definitions of Academic Offences ([University Calendar 6.12.4](https://www.mun.ca/university-calendar/university-regulations-undergraduate/6/12/#6.12.4))

Or

* The use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT is not permitted in this course except as specified and then only with appropriate attribution and/or citation. Apart from this, the use of genAI will be treated as cheating, impersonation, . . . .

And/or

* Include the phrase “generative AI tools such as ChatGPT” in a definition of plagiarism that you include (as recommended) on your syllabi. Here is the suggested wording from our HSS Syllabus Template, adjusted for genAI:

“Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas or work(s) of another person (or of any genAI tool) as one’s own. This applies to all material such as essays, laboratory assignments, laboratory reports, work term reports, design projects, seminar presentations, statistical data, computer programs, research results, and theses. The properly acknowledged use of sources (including genAI tools) is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without acknowledgment is contrary to accepted norms of academic behaviour. Information regarding acceptable writing practices is available through the Writing Centre at [www.mun.ca/writingcentre](http://www.mun.ca/writingcentre)”

It is noteworthy that some genAI tools insist on [proper citation or other acknowledgement](https://openai.com/policies/usage-policies) (even though they acknowledge no specific authors!).

Or

* We will discuss as a class how, when, and why we will/will not make use of generative AI in this course and together will draft our policy on generative AI for this course.

1. Talk with your students. Generative AI is changing quickly. Concerns around copyright and genAI are driving legal cases. Many institutions, including MUNL have some guidance and resources available (see CITL’s [here](https://blog.citl.mun.ca/instructionalresources/artificial-intelligence-ai-text-generation-considerations-for-teaching-and-learning/) and also [QE II on Academic Integrity and AI)](https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/integrity/) but these can quickly become out-dated. Perhaps the single most useful thing to do is to talk with your students about the ethical and educational issues in play. Are there ways to use genAI transparently to avoid misrepresenting our work? Should we set aside genAI to ensure we preserve/develop skills or learn course content most effectively? Can we use genAI to clear time for other intellectual or creative work? On the other hand, what exactly is genAI—is it a tool that grows as we use it—and is it therefore a threat to human intellect and intellectual work?
2. Many are recommending instructors counteract genAI by shifting the weight of course work back toward in-class work (tests, essays), class participation or instructor-student ‘interviews’ about submitted essays. Final exams, perhaps especially in first and second-year courses, might be heavily weighted and the syllabus could specify that students must pass the final exam to receive a passing grade in the course. (For online courses, CITL requests as much advance notice of invigilation requirements as possible.) One difficulty with this approach is it might disadvantage some students more than others.

Another approach seeks to train students to use AI critically and ethically. Many are developing assignments that include use of genAI along with discussion and critique of both the tasks submitted and the text generated.

Example: Dr. Max Liboiron and their first year Geography class essay assignment:

@MaxLiboiron: For their final assignment, my students have to work with ChatGPT to write an essay, and then they evaluate that essay in terms of the strength of the argument, its geographical approach, and its ability to meet course objectives. the students are nailing it. 1/6 @MUNGeog

<https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1646105563053301760.html>

The essay by Owen Kishizo Terry, "[I'm a Student. You Have No Idea How Much We Are Using ChatGPT](https://www.chronicle.com/article/im-a-student-you-have-no-idea-how-much-were-using-chatgpt?utm_campaign=20230710&utm_content&utm_medium=chesocial&utm_source=facebook&fbclid=IwAR2xT7-eD3-aQNk-sRfYXpIm_ucNFQDffiYt5Bc0QmR7v_jOwOWTBtvyKHU_aem_AX5adWVdhkCH6RIq4OIbcWPoQEHPCPZVPsRAS5sS5IXHqEGMe_kHGg8HHaZ8qA1gSEg)" has all kinds of implications. It could serve as a foundation for course work that permits or requires use of genAI for specified parts of an assignment, along with a description and critical reflection on the use and results of the tool**.**

[October update] Our colleague, Sarah Martin, has generously shared her “Course Ethics (or how we ethically labour together, otherwise known as academic integrity).” It is appended at the end of this document.

We recommend you do what fits the goals appropriate to your courses, your teaching style, and the time and energy you have available. Departments, programs, or individual instructors might want to consider limiting integration of AI to senior level courses, to allow skill development independent of genAI among students in first and second-year courses.

# MUNL Resources (so far): CITL, the Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning has advice and resources under ["Artificial Intelligence (AI) Text Generation: Considerations for Teaching and Learning"](https://blog.citl.mun.ca/instructionalresources/artificial-intelligence-ai-text-generation-considerations-for-teaching-and-learning/) Check for updates; some new resources coming prior to start of term.

# The QE II Library's [Academic Integrity Resources](https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/integrity/ai/#d.en.67054) (https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/integrity/ai/#d.en.67054) offers some discussion of the ethical use of AI and instruction on how to cite AI tools according to APA and MLA styles. Likewise, [Chicago](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Documentation/faq0422.html) has posted instructions. https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Documentation/faq0422.html

# CITL's [TILE](https://www.mun.ca/citl/teaching-support/teaching-and-learning-framework/teaching-innovations-and-learning-enhancement-fund/) program offers up to $15,000 for research projects on teaching innovation. Research on genAI in the classroom could be eligible. The proposal deadline is Sept 1 for the 2023 competition.

# Some Other Resources:

# *The Guardian* [policy](https://www.theguardian.com/help/insideguardian/2023/jun/16/the-guardians-approach-to-generative-ai?utm_source=eml&utm_medium=emlf&utm_campaign=MK_SU_SOINewsletterv2Canvas&utm_term=Email_ROW&utm_content=variantA), which could be adapted for academic work (e.g., genAI use to be justified for work that far exceeds the capacity of human resources such as summarising massive amounts of data; use of genAI must be transparent and cannot replace human authorship).

# Lissa Cowan, "[AI and the Future of Academic Work](https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2023/05/ai-and-future-academic-work)," CAUT Bulletin, May 2023.

# [UBC's Approach to Academic Integrity in the Age of AI](https://news.ubc.ca/2023/03/01/ubcs-approach-to-academic-integrity-in-the-age-of-ai/): a sample Canadian University policy, links to a useful FAQ page.

# Lance Eaton, "[Classroom Policies for AI Generative Tools](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RMVwzjc1o0Mi8Blw_-JUTcXv02b2WRH86vw7mi16W3U/edit?pli=1)" has gathered, so far, 51 different course policies from probably 51 different institutions. Some are very brief, others, like #50, tremendously detailed discussions, with sources, for how, when, and why to use genAI.

# Annette Vee and Tim Laquintano, "[AI and the Teaching of Writing](https://www.writinginstitute.pitt.edu/teaching/ai-and-teaching-writing)," University of Pittsburgh.

# Sidney I. Dobrin, [*Talking About Generative AI: A Guide For Educators*](https://sites.broadviewpress.com/ai/talking/). Broadview Press, 2023. Free download available from Broadview Press.

# last updated October 24, 2023

**Course Ethics**

**(or how we ethically labour together, otherwise known as academic integrity)**

**by Sarah Martin**

We rarely discuss how to complete our work together in a way that is responsible and just. To build a generative, just, and collegial learning/teaching environment requires that we have a shared understanding of what is ethical course labour. Because citation, also known as gratitude and recognition, is an ethical and a political academic practice,[[1]](#footnote-1) this is where we will start. As you work on this course, I hope you will practice gratitude and recognition and become proficient in citation practices as ethical work.

There are many tools to help and assist our course work. There are institutional supports such as the [Writing Centre](https://www.mun.ca/writingcentre/), and [library](https://www.library.mun.ca/) [resources](https://guides.library.mun.ca/c.php?g=501774) and [experts](https://www.library.mun.ca/askus/) who labour to support our work. Beyond the university there are [reference managers](https://guides.library.mun.ca/citationmanagement) such as [Zotero](https://www.zotero.org/) to help with mechanics of reference styles and research organization. The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) has also become a popular tool that has expansive promises, but may be less a ‘revolution’ and more a short lived [fantasy](https://www.disconnect.blog/p/the-chatgpt-revolution-is-another).

What are the ethics and politics of AI such as CHAT GPT? These tools are associated with what I consider bad politics and suspect ethics for a number of reasons. First, while AI promises labour free writing and content to the end users, these outputs rely on exploitative labour practices. Algorithms require feeding, sorting and sifting of information to recognize prompts, and this work is performed by labour in east Africa, India, the Philippines. In short, there is ‘hidden labour’ in the Global South,[[2]](#footnote-2) in ‘digital sweatshops’.[[3]](#footnote-3) Second, AI has a significant environmental footprint due to its energy use, but especially its water consumption. It is estimated every time an AI chatbot is called on it ‘consumes’ a 500ml of water based on its electricity to power the servers and the water required to cool them. Add billions of calls and the water consumption adds up quickly. The larger the AI model the larger the environmental footprint.[[4]](#footnote-4) Third, AI applications take and use author’s and artist’s work without their permission or any compensation. Over 10,000 authors wrote to large AI corporations such as Meta and Microsoft pointing to the “inherent injustice in exploiting our works” without “consent, credit or compensation”.[[5]](#footnote-5) Fourth, AI makes stuff up. Artificial intelligence is neither artificial (it relies on real workers) or intelligent. You may be aware that AI tools make up references, but it also just makes up ‘news’, one example, OpenAI claimed, wrongly, a mayor in Australia had been convicted of bribery and served time in jail.[[6]](#footnote-6) Finally, AI applications reproduce the status quo, a world where massive corporations such as Meta and Microsoft, or ‘Big Tech’ increasingly underpin social, political and economic worlds, and are a “watchword for corporate surveillance, monopoly, and market power”.[[7]](#footnote-7) The fact that the largest and most powerful tech corporations are supporting, selling and profiting off these tools is a concern for privacy, good ethics and politics. As Paris Marx has [written](https://www.disconnect.blog/p/generative-ai-closes-off-a-better): AI “cannot imagine freedom or alternatives”, and it “closes off a better future”.

What to do? In addition to asking you to reflect on the ethics and politics of AI applications, I am asking you to be you. That is, I am interested in your work because I value you, your knowledge and your contributions to this course (besides, reading AI produced work is pretty boring and has a disconnect and remote style that is alienating to read). As Ahmed and others[[8]](#footnote-8) have pointed out, citation practice is less about plagiarism and more about building communities of knowledge and reflecting our experiences. Citational practices are opportunities to build our own community, practice gratitude and recognize other’s contributions both from the scholarship and in the classroom. Ethical course labour is our practice.

**Artificial Intelligence Policy**

If you use AI tools in your work, you must use proper citation and provide a two-hundred-word explanation for each prompt and engagement with the tool, and answer how and why you used the tool, along with the specific prompt or prompts. For example,

Using AI tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism, and your work will be subject to the appropriate Memorial’s Academic Misconduct policy. For more information review the library’s [Academic Integrity](https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/integrity/) and [Artificial intelligence (AI) and your academic work](https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/integrity/ai/#d.en.67054) pages. Proper citation of AI tools can be found [,](https://blog.citl.mun.ca/instructionalresources/citation-and-reference-guide-generative-ai-e-g-chatgpt/) statement on Academic Misconduct can be found here [*University Regulations ( Undergraduate ) – Section 6.1 – Academic Misconduct*](https://www.mun.ca/university-calendar/university-regulations-undergraduate/6/12/) .

1. You will see throughout I have acknowledged my gratitude to other scholar’s work in this syllabus through citations, in this case footnotes. On citation, see Max Liboiron, *Pollution Is Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021); Sara Ahmed, “Making Feminist Points,” feministkilljoys, September 11, 2013, https://feministkilljoys.com/2013/09/11/making-feminist-points/. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Benedetta Catanzariti et al., “The Global Labours of AI and Data Intensive Systems,” in *Companion Publication of the 2021 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing*, CSCW ’21 (New York, NY, USA: Association for Computing Machinery, 2021), 319–22, https://doi.org/10.1145/3462204.3481725. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cabato, “Behind the AI Boom, an Army of Overseas Workers in ‘Digital Sweatshops,’” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2023, sec. Asia, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/08/28/scale-ai-remotasks-philippines-artificial-intelligence/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Vishwam Sankaran, “ChatGPT Data Centres May Be Consuming a Staggering Amount of Water,” *The Independent*, April 13, 2023, sec. Tech, https://www.independent.co.uk/tech/chatgpt-data-centre-water-consumption-b2318972.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Author’s Guild, “Authors Guild Open Letter to Generative AI Leaders,” 2023, https://authorsguild.org/app/uploads/2023/07/Authors-Guild-Open-Letter-to-Generative-AI-Leaders.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Pranshu Verma and Will Oremus, “ChatGPT Invented a Sexual Harassment Scandal and Named a Real Law Prof as the Accused,” *Washington Post*, April 14, 2023, https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2023/04/05/chatgpt-lies/. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Kean Birch and Kelly Bronson, “Big Tech,” *Science as Culture* 31, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 1–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/09505431.2022.2036118. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Columbia University Libraries, “Why Citational Practice? | Teaching Citational Practice: Critical Feminist Approaches,” Teaching Citational Practice, 2021, https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/citationalpractice/whycitationalpractice. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)