

SMU Faculty Guidelines on the Use of Generative AI in Courses¹

These guidelines and the links to resources are meant to help faculty make an informed decision about the allowed use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in their courses and communicate their policy to their students. Please note that these guidelines are a living document, open to revision as AI technologies continue to evolve.

Decision-Making

The decision to incorporate Generative AI into academic coursework lies with individual faculty members. This approach respects the diversity of disciplines, teaching methods, and pedagogical goals across our institution. Faculty members are responsible for making informed decisions, supported by training and resources, to align with their course objectives, the university's academic integrity standards, and their own principles. Some other issues to consider include the following:

- ubiquity and undetectability of Generative AI tools, including in apps SMU provides students;
- potential issues with accuracy, bias, privacy, respect of intellectual property;
- environmental impact;
- potential for enhanced efficiency and creativity of faculty in course design and delivery;
- potential for positive (or negative) impact on student learning.

You can learn more about these topics and find training and resources on the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Artificial Intelligence in Teaching & Learning [webpage](#).

Communication

Faculty must clearly communicate to students the permitted and/or prohibited use of Generative AI in their academic coursework, and the rationale for these decisions.

¹ This document is based, with permission, on content found on the University of British Columbia's Generative Artificial Intelligence [webpage](#)

Student use of Generative AI outside of these stated rules may be considered a violation of our academic integrity regulations.

Consider also that there are various kinds of Generative AI tools, including functionality built into existing applications such as grammar checkers, word processing tools, and others. It is helpful to be as specific as possible about what kind of Generative AI functionality is or is not permitted.

Faculty members should also inform students in the course outline if they will be required to use Generative AI tools in the course.

Course Outline Statements

It is important to set clear expectations around the use of Generative AI tools in the course outline, as with any other tool or mode of working (group work, etc.), and reinforce this messaging throughout the term. Students may be navigating differing levels of Generative AI permissions in multiple courses, so communicating expectations in a clear and straightforward manner is essential.

The CETL Artificial Intelligence in Teaching & Learning [webpage](#) has sample course outline statements can be used and adapted to communicate to students the permitted and prohibited use of Generative AI in courses.

Citation and Attribution

If Generative AI tools are allowed in coursework, faculty should make it clear when and how students should acknowledge their use, such as through citation, and students should follow those guidelines.

Faculty should consider the range of Generative AI tools available, including those that are embedded in other tools such as grammar checkers; they should make clear whether and what kinds of uses of Generative AI should be cited.

The Patrick Power Library's [Artificial Intelligence Guide](#) provides information on AI, and how to cite the use of Generative AI tools.

Academic Integrity Processes

As a first step, faculty are encouraged to facilitate discussions on academic integrity and the role of Generative AI in the course, to promote shared understanding and critical engagement.

If instructors suspect the unauthorized use of Generative AI in students' academic work, they should follow existing academic integrity processes, found in the [Academic Regulations](#).

Detection

The use of external applications to detect AI-generated content is strongly discouraged at this time, due to concerns about privacy, effectiveness, accuracy, bias, false positives, and students' intellectual property.

SMU's Academic Integrity Officers do not consider evidence from AI detectors to be compelling in itself. Faculty should consult with the university's Privacy Office before uploading any student work into an AI detector.

Designing Assessments to Support Academic Integrity

Some educators may choose to have more in-class assessments to mitigate the unauthorized use of Generative AI on assignments and tests.

For research and writing assignments, direct students to the Library Research Help Desk and the Writing Centre for assistance, and to the Academic Integrity Foundations course (LIBR 2000).

Educators can test the resiliency of their own assignments and assessments against the capabilities of Generative AI tools, by submitting their assignment instructions to a Generative AI platform to understand its capabilities and limitations. Note, however, that your privacy might not be guaranteed and that your work might be used to train other AI tools.

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