AI in Education
Creating Your Course Policy

DATE
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CONTACT

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hf31GkNuytKJkgqttQ3SBjDiD5CKtBs8/view?usp=sharing
Today’s primary learning objectives

- Reflect on the purpose(s) of syllabi and course policies.
- Compare different AI policy syllabus statements.
- Determine an appropriate policy for your course.
- Begin drafting an AI policy statement for your syllabus.
For the sake of transparency and to model best practices, here are some AI tools that I used when developing this workshop.

I used ChatGPT, and Midjourney and DALL-E, Designer in PPT. Oh yeah, I also have Grammarly installed. And if we mean algorithms and machine learning, not strictly LLM. Then I technically should say I used Google a lot too. I also used Outlook for event planning, it has AI features too. And Smartsheet for the registration forms. Zoom! Zoom has AI features too.

Yes, I am being melodramatic! But my intent is to suggest, hopefully in a humorous way, that there are fuzzy and ambiguous lines of distinction here. And warm us up to this topic. This is an ambiguous, and often contradictory topic. We are entering a twilight zone.

Acknowledgements

- ChatGPT for summarizing, brainstorming, and suggestions on the content.
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- Designer feature within PowerPoint to suggest slide layouts and stock images.
- Grammarly for spelling, grammar, conciseness, word choice, and so on.
- Smartsheets for automating registration.
- Outlook and Zoom for event coordination.
- Google for web search...
This is a big topic so we can’t cover it all. Also, because it is so emergent, nobody has all the answers. Those answers are emerging in places like this. So, thank you for joining the discourse!

Everyone is at a different starting point. Some may be learning the very basics, some may be already thinking about bigger issues, or have begun adapting your course. Some of this you may already have heard, other parts might be new to you. Wherever you are, let’s be mindful that different people are at different points and be flexible about where we might end up today.

The benefit of being together here is that we can share our thoughts with each other. This workshop will generate more questions than answers. It is a starting point for you to engage further with each other, CTL, and your own learning.

My expectation is the we will improvise a bit and hop around different topics that interest you. So let me know as we go, what you are thinking, if we want to skip ahead or circle back. Maybe even things that aren’t on here yet!
By making things clear for our students, we are creating a stable and trusting learning environment, where they can focus on learning and connecting, rather than being confused, unsure, or worried about what to do. Same for us! We want clarity and guidance so we can focus on teaching. And I’m hoping to model that in this workshop as well.

Every discipline has different needs. In some areas it is important for students to gain tech literacy skills, to learn how to use AI tools, and so on. In other areas it is important for students to first master fundamental skills before using AI. In some areas AI tools might simply not be that applicable or useful. You know your course and your students best.

Lastly, campus guidance leaves it to instructors to decide. I often hear that Stanford is highly decentralized. And that checks here too. It makes sense when you have a highly diverse community, with a history of innovation, cutting edge research, entrepreneurship, and achievement. So, at least for now, we are tasked with deciding our own course policy.

Why do you need an AI course policy?

• Students want clarity and guidance
• Every course is different, no one size fits all
• Campus policy guidance leaves AI use to instructors to decide
We have a saying in CTL, “good pedagogy is good pedagogy”. To me this means that a well-designed course and solid teaching methods are going to serve you well against most challenges or disruptions. For example, if your course has clear goals and assignments, your teaching is active and engaging, and students feel connected and care about the course, then you are on solid ground regardless of what new AI tools become available.

A lot of what we will talk about today is just good pedagogy. Of course, we will look at things through the lens of AI in education, but hopefully many of the underlying principles you take away today are familiar, seem sensible, and resonate with your own teacherly wisdom and experience.
Our goal today is to think about and ideally make a first draft of the AI policy for our individual courses, so naturally we are centering around the syllabus, which is typically the main way we record and communicate course policies.

By show of fingers, how many of these elements do you currently address in your syllabus, or perhaps in your Canvas course or other course materials?
As we each start thinking about what we will put in our own AI course policy statements, keep in mind these general strategies for syllabi.

The goal is to make things clear for students. Aim for conciseness, clarity, and priority of information. Also, think about readability and visual organization.

A syllabus can also set the tone for your course. Consider what you include and how you express it. Are your policies only a list of intimidating “Thou shalt nots” or does it also include positive expectations? In courses that are closely tied to student identity and biography, or that address controversial issues, do you express respect and commitment to inclusive learning? You might imagine the different kinds of students typically in your class and write the syllabus with that audience in mind.

A syllabus is in some ways the first impression for your course. It can get students engaged and motivated from the start. Your course description might briefly touch upon why the topic is interesting, or relevant. Perhaps you highlight an assignment or lesson that is particularly interesting or fun or challenging. The syllabus can also start a dialogue by prompting questions via the lesson titles or reading list.
Here we will compare a few examples. I chose these examples because they take different approaches and include some elements that I thought are illustrative.

The examples do not represent all the possibilities nor a comprehensive range of disciplines. The resource linked above has over a hundred examples, so I encourage you to check it out for more ideas.
EDLD 710 Professional as Writer & Researcher
Andrew Longhofer, Pacific University

"While there is a place for technology in the scholarly writing process, this course holds the philosophical position that writing is primarily a human social pursuit. The writing that students submit must consist exclusively of the product of their own cognitive, creative, interpretive, and decision-making processes.

The goal of this course is to "practice writing skills," and students are expected to "demonstrate the ability to produce writing that is clear, concise, and mechanically proficient." The use of generative artificial intelligence or other automated methods for producing text directly contradicts these goals. Additionally, the use of generative artificial intelligence in scholarly writing risks the so-called "hallucination" of plausible-sounding references that do not actually exist, undermining the scholarly basis for the work.

Submission of text generated by artificial intelligence or other automated methods, whether or not mediated by human revision, cannot demonstrate achievement of course or activity learning objectives.

If the use of generative artificial intelligence is suspected, instructors will check the revision history of documents to verify that the writing was generated iteratively over a period of time realistic for human production, and references will be checked to verify authenticity. If suspicions persist, instructors will discuss their concerns with the student and with the Program Director to determine the appropriate course of action."

Syllabus Policies for AI Generative Tools. (n.d.). Google Docs. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RMVwzjc1o0Mi8Blw_JUTcXv02b2WRH86vw7mi16W3U/edit?usp=sharing
"Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined, for the purpose of this course, as any computer system or program that simulates, substitutes, and/or enhances problem-solving that typically requires human intelligence. While students may use simple AI, such as built-in features of a word processor like spelling and grammar checks, they are not permitted to utilize Generative AI at any stage of completing work (graded or ungraded) unless explicitly noted in the instructions for a deliverable. Generative AI is defined here as AI which has the capacity to ideate, summarize, generate, rewrite, or validate content; including, but not limited to, tools such as ChatGPT, Bard, and DALL-E.

Students may formally request, in writing, an exception to the above. Such requests must include:

1. which assignment the student is requesting to use AI with
2. which specific AI tool the student wishes to use
3. what they plan to use the tool for (e.g. to generate ideas, summarize a longer document, create a unique scenario, etc.), and
4. why, specifically, they are requesting the exception (e.g. to reduce time spent on a tedious task, to identify relevant sources for further investigation, to experiment with AI, etc.).

Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In the event of any exception (whether it is an individual exception, or that a given deliverable permits the use of Generative AI), the professor will specify guidelines, if any, upon which the student’s use of Generative AI must be documented.”

Syllabi Policies for AI Generative Tools. (n.d.). Google Docs. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RMVwzjc1o0Mi8Blw2oZYTcXv02b2WRH86vw7mi16W3U/edit?usp=sharing
"GenAI can be a powerful tool. When using genAI, such as large language models (ChatGPT, etc.), for course assignments for this course, you must (a) use genAI only as additional tools and in limited ways; (b) always critically (question and check the results); (c) think hard about how you use it & your prompts; (d) genAI outputs can never replace your intellectual inputs; (e) you must add a note about how you use genAI.

Let me explain the reasoning: Applications, such as ChatGPT, may give you an output that looks and reads good but (a) genAI can perpetuate social biases (gender, race, etc.); (b) genAI can hallucinate, that is, ChatGPT makes up stuff; and (c) the outputs it generates are almost always incomplete. For this reason, if you use genAI fact-check everything, rethink everything and polish the language...

The final output (a memo, analysis, program proposal, or reflection) is not the main reason for course assignments. The assignments and the process of writing them are meant to train you. Possibly in 10-20 years, AI programs can do most of the writing and thinking, but if you enter the job market in 1-2 years, key skills and determinants for success in the job are the ability to come up with innovative ideas, discuss and evaluate alternatives, write in a compelling way, analyze and conceptualize analysis, etc. Make sure the convenience of genAI does not rob you of a learning opportunity!

As mentioned above, for transparency, if you use genAI for any of the assignments, you must add a short note about how you used genAI.
What else might you include in a course policy statement?
What to include in your policy

• The policy and specific tools it applies to
• Conditions or contexts where AI is allowed or not allowed
• Process for compliance
• Consequences for non-compliance
• Rationale and reasoning for the policy
• Support resources for students
• Statement of support for student well-being
Considerations when deciding your policy

Campus Policy

Instructor Readiness

Pedagogy

Student Readiness

**Pedagogy**

What are students learning to do in my course?

How do I assess learning in my course?

**Readiness**

How ready are my students to use AI?

How ready am I and my course to support AI?

**Logistics**

Can I provide equitable access to the AI tools in question?
Stanford’s AI policy guidance

OCS—AI guidance

Instructors can decide their own AI course policy and should communicate it in their syllabi.

Absent any course policy, AI use is considered same as assistance from another person.

Students, when in doubt ask the instructor and disclose use.

• What specific behaviors do we mean by “assistance”?
• Who is the other person giving assistance?
• When do you already allow or prohibit assistance from another person?
• How might that inform how we think about AI?
The way I read this, is that if I don’t say otherwise in my syllabus, students can use AI if they cite and acknowledge it. That makes sense right?

But a lot of questions remain, and the campus policy doesn’t really say anything particularly new or insightful.

I get why there isn’t campus-wide policy yet. The whole situation is challenging, but understandable. AI is unique, it is moving quickly, and it takes time to develop and get buy-in on any widely impactful campus-level policy. There could be unintended consequences or missteps. I get it.

Yet, you must dig around to find and interpret some of these policies, and they are just a balancing act between existing policies. It can be unclear for many students and for teachers too.

Ultimately, I must decide for myself what is best for my course. And I will do a better job than some campus policies by making things as clear as possible for my students.
Many of these considerations fall into the category of “good pedagogy”

If I am thinking “Actually, AI could probably easily pass the course and ace the assignments”. Then I would surely implement a stricter AI policy and not allow AI for those assignments.

But I shouldn’t let myself off the hook either. I would at the same time be thinking deeply about the course. Do I need to expand the learning objectives so I’m teaching them skills that AI could not do? Do I need to rethink the assignments and grading criteria and try a different approach? Maybe I need to rethink the design of this course and do a major overhaul. If so, then how would I design my new course?

But on the other hand, if I’m thinking “The learning objectives are pretty sophisticated. My assessments are multi-layered and effective. Students need to think critically, and a heavily AI-generated submission would do terrible.” Then I might go for a more open AI policy.

Again, I wouldn’t just end there. I would at the same time be thinking: What additional supports or guidance will my students need? How can I model to them how to use AI
effectively? How can I improve my rubrics? And so on.
Student readiness for AI

- Can I help develop their study and digital literacy skills?
- How can I foster intrinsic motivation to learn?
- How can I foster a sense of belonging, trust, and connection to me, each other, and the course?
- Is there equitable access to AI tools?

Students who are motivated and feel connected are probably going to be more intentional about using AI to enhance their learning. So, if you teach a smaller seminar with primarily students in the major, who have elected to take your course, maybe they are upper-level or graduate students. You have strategies in place that foster a class culture of trust and belonging. Then they may be more ready to use AI in thoughtful ways.

But then again, maybe if you’re teaching a large enrollment lecture course, with many students taking it because it is required, most of them first-year students that feel lost in the crowd. Maybe you’ll have to keep things more structured or streamlined. You may need to have more supports in place, and coordination with the teaching team. AI use might be prohibited or have very clear limitations.

The issue of equitable access is currently in a grey area. Stanford does not currently provide system-wide access to an AI chatbot tool (though UIT is working on it). So, except for specialized tools provided by a department, this might be an AI diagnostic tool used in the School of Medicine, or AI coding tools in CS, there is no universal access. So consult with Academic Tech or IT staff if you are making AI tools required or give students options on which tools they choose to access.
Also, equitable access also applies to the pedagogic side of things too. Think about reliability and consistency with your assessments. Are students who choose to use AI graded fairly compared to students who choose to not use AI?
This first one I think is a big one. We must understand what AI is capable of to make informed decisions. So, I strongly encourage you all to get access to a couple of AI tools and use them to complete your assignments, generate summaries of your readings, create study questions, or however you might use AI if you were a student in the course. Get a feel for those AI tools.

Second, is your own workload. You are all here at this workshop, so it is clear that you are motivated and engaged on the topic. But think about what support you can tap into. Do you have time to redesign the course between quarters? Maybe you’ll put in place a simple AI policy for now and revise the course over the summer.

Third, is this concept of reciprocity. What standards do you hold yourself to? How do you or want to use AI in your own work? Is the policy you put in place for your students, something you yourself can abide by?

Instructor readiness for AI

- How well do I understand how AI tools would be used in my course?
- How much time and resources do I have to work on enhancing my course?
  - Do I have colleagues, teaching team, support staff to help me?
  - Am I motivated and feel positive enough to do the work?
- Can I hold myself to the same standards and policies as my students?
Think of red light, yellow, light green light. What direction are you headed with regard to your AI course policy?
Are you a red light? Thinking to restrict AI use in your course?
Are you a green light? Thinking to allow AI use?
Maybe a yellow light in between?

Or maybe you’re a “2-hour parking, Mon-Fri, except for Tuesdays from 8 AM to 10 AM! It’s up to you! There are no right or wrong answers. Every course is different. We just encourage you to be intentional.
Now that you have a sense of what might work for your course. Let’s create a first draft of your policy statement.

Thinking back to the purpose of a syllabus, and what makes a good syllabus, we want our statement to include the following elements.

We are going to draft them using a worksheet in Google Docs and then use an AI chatbot to generate some draft statements to edit.

While they are exploring the worksheet, I can also prepare my prompt to put in the chatbot.

Don’t forget to be transparent and the concept of reciprocity. For example, If you are using chatbots to assist in writing your syllabus statement that states that students are not allowed to use AI, consider how they might perceive that.

Worksheet for creating your AI course policy statement

1. Make a copy of the Worksheet for Creating your AI course policy in Google Docs
2. Choose snippets of sample language
3. Manually copy and paste your selections together
4. Use the provided prompt and your selections in a chatbot to generate a draft
5. Edit your draft and copy it into your syllabus

Tinyurl.com/AI-policy-worksheet
What are your next steps for your course?
Continue to engage

• Use AI chatbots for your work tasks
• Read the AI Teaching Guide on the Teaching Commons website
• Attend upcoming CTL workshops on AI
• Talk about AI with colleagues and students
Wrap-up activity

Insert QR code and link to your survey here.
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