

GenAI, Digital Tools, and Writing with Integrity

Critically thinking about the role of online resources in the writing process

Created by the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program
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Definitions

Writing with Integrity

Writing with integrity means ***maintaining control*** of your work by ***taking responsibility*** for:

1. The ideas in your text
2. The reasoning, argument, and evidence produced and/or included in your text
3. The sources you choose to use
4. The organization of your text
5. The words and style you choose to use in your text
6. Working within the relevant constraints of the specific writing task
7. Seeking and using feedback in ways that do not infringe on your maintaining ownership of your work
8. Your name being the one assigned to the text

Put another way: all of the above can reasonably be understood as yours.

Potential Academic Honesty Violations

Academic Honesty Policy

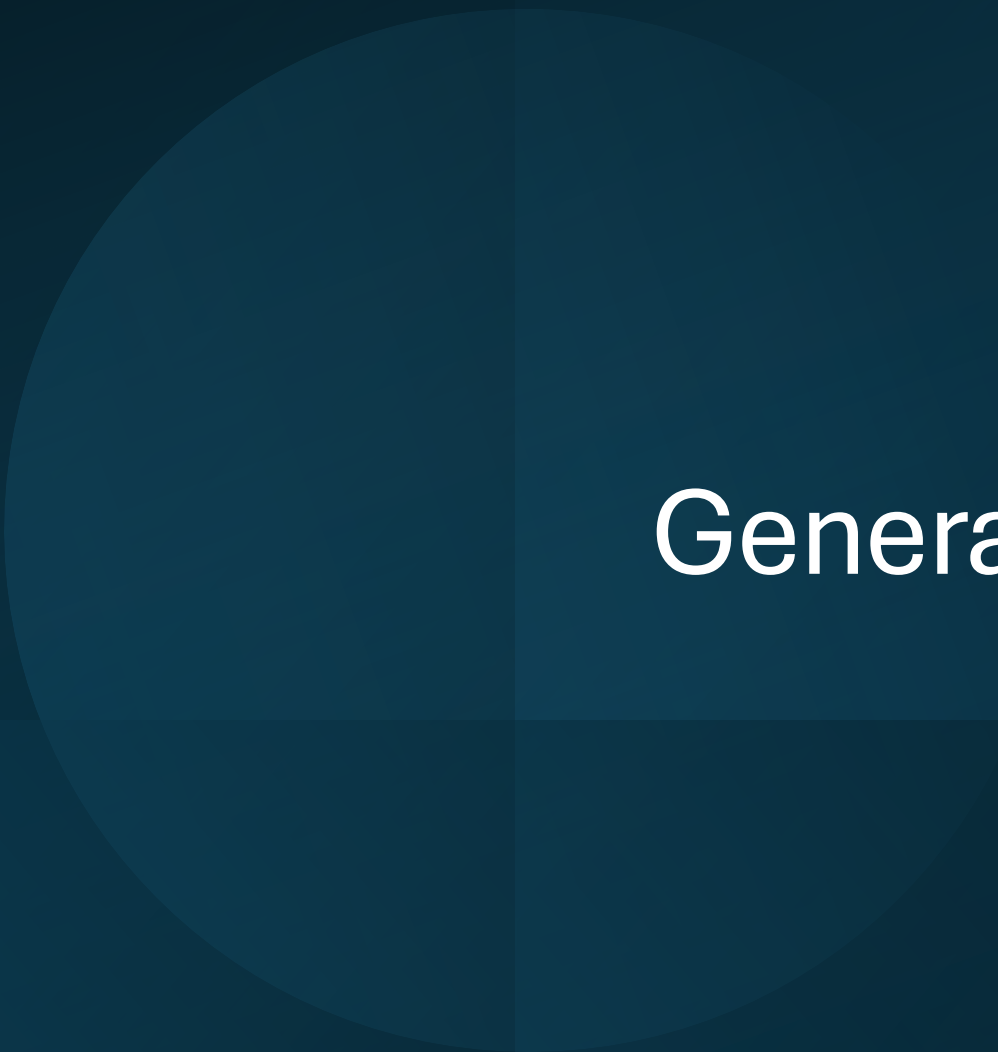
Generative AI and other
online resources
put writers *most* at risk for:

Plagiarism:
"The representation of
another's work as one's
own."*

Receiving Unauthorized
Aid:
"Receiving, using, or having
access to materials that
violate this policy."

Fabrication:
"Inventing or manipulating
information."

*All quotes come directly from definitions in the Academic Honesty Policy as of July 2026



Generative AI and Writing

(Mostly) Clearcut Situations

Not allowed*

- Generative AI use is prohibited in the course: using generative AI tools is dishonest
- Generative AI use is prohibited in the assignment: using generative AI tools is dishonest

Allowed

- Generative AI is required for completion of the assignment
- Generative AI is explicitly permitted without restrictions in the syllabus

*note that in these cases there still might be some ambiguity or confusion about what counts as "gen AI use" and/or tools. Some complications are included in the next slide, and if you are unsure, always ask your professor or TA before using a resource

More Ambiguous Situations—A Few Examples

Honesty

- If generative AI isn't permitted, can it be used to search for sources?
- If generative AI isn't permitted, can it be used to provide feedback for you on your essay if it makes no direct changes to the text?
- If generative AI is permitted, are there limits to how it can be used in your writing?
- If generative AI is permitted, who is responsible for factual errors it produces?

Integrity

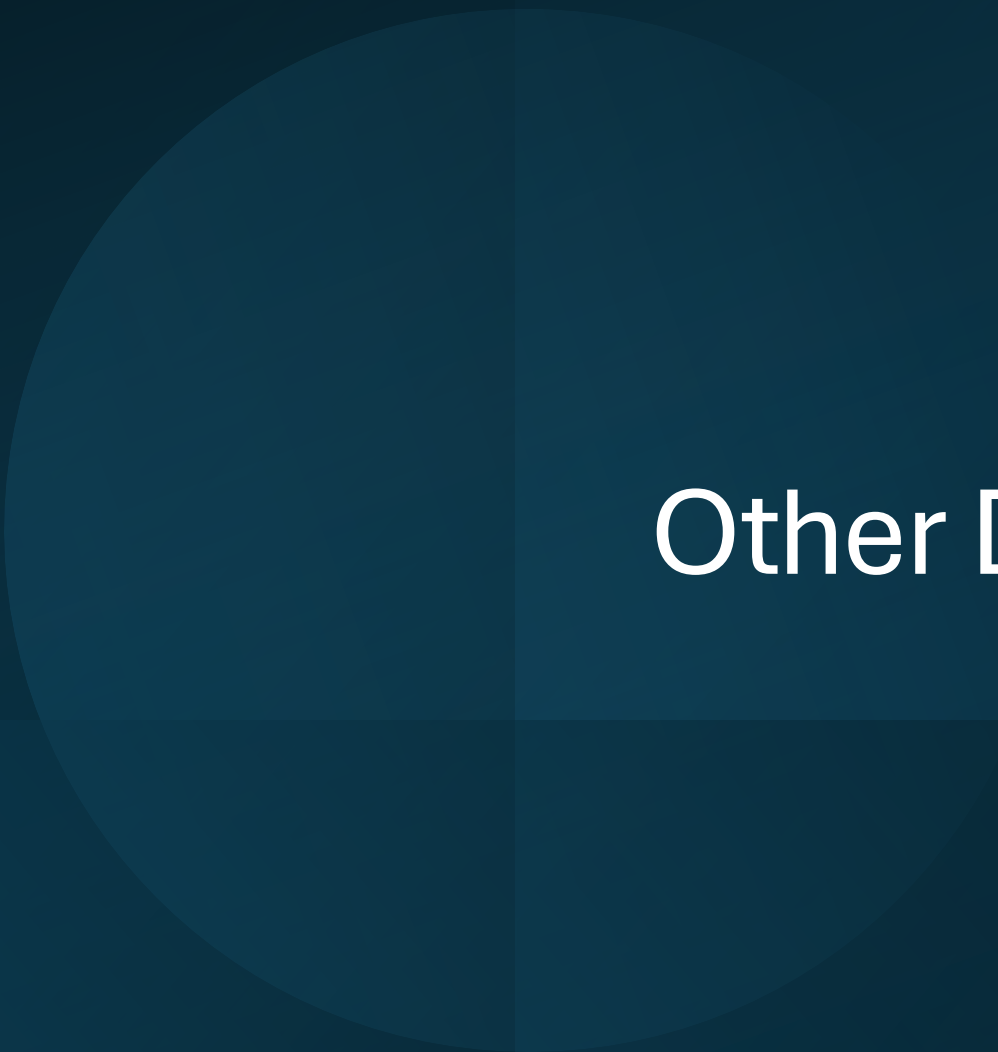
- If generative AI is used, how does that impact
 - your learning and development as a writer?
 - your relationship to your work?
 - your relationship to other people's work?

Effectiveness

- If generative AI is used, how does that impact your audience's reception of the work?

*There are many more ambiguous situations
than there are clearcut situations.*

If you are unsure about what is permissible for a class or assignment, it is *always* a good idea to ask your professors and TAs before using a resource



Other Digital Tools

Not Just Generative AI

Other digital tools that raise potential honesty concerns include but are not limited to:

- Editing programs
 - For instance, Grammarly (though this has now mostly gone full gen AI)
 - Is the program providing suggestions and explanations, or making these choices for you?
- Translation programs
 - For instance, translation programs embedded into Google docs, Microsoft Word, or other programs found online
 - It is never allowed to compose in another language and then hire a translator, so when, if ever, is using digital translation services working within the constraints of the classroom and assignment?

Not Just Generative AI

There are also some more straightforwardly dishonest practices with digital tools, including, but not limited to:

- Publicly posting course materials on platforms
 - For instance, posting lecture notes, assignment prompts, or any other course materials to LinkedIn, Github, Gen AI, or any other online platform
 - Are you providing someone else's intellectual property to a third party without their permission?
- Online "tutoring" services
 - Any site that offers to sell you work or solutions. These are often marketed heavily to stressed undergrads to take advantage of them but they are straightforwardly cheating sites
 - Are you learning the material or are they providing you the materials?

Tips

AKA there's lots of ambiguity and potential problems with a bunch of digital tools, so what should I do?

Reflective

- Think back to the principles of [writing with integrity](#) and what it means for you to maintain control of, and responsibility for, the texts you produce.
- Pay close attention to **context and course rules**. Here are a few examples of how context shapes options:
 - Sometimes group work or certain tools are required, other times they are forbidden based on course goals or community values
 - One community may consider something common knowledge, but it may not be for another group
 - Any translation support beyond a dictionary may be forbidden in a course where one is getting familiar with a language for the first time, while another course may have more permissive policies for translation tools

Practical

- Paying attention to context is not merely reflective: Check each course's policy before using digital tools
- Whether the assistance is from a computer program or a person, if the work starts feeling like it is not your own, pause to reconsider the source of the input or feedback
- If the syllabus or assignment is ambiguous about any given tool, ask a professor or TA before taking action
- **When in doubt, always ask your course instructor before using any AI tools.**

Questions to Ask About AI Use

Here are some important things to discuss with your instructor:

- If you would like to use a particular AI tool, describe what tool you are thinking of using, how you are planning to use it, and how you think it will benefit your learning. This will help the instructor gauge your planned AI use against the learning goals for the course so they can give you a clear answer.
- In the cases that you are permitted to use AI, be sure you understand how you are expected to verify, disclose, attribute and document that use in your work.

Reach Out, Ask Questions, Keep Learning

If you are stressed or under pressure, rather than taking a shortcut that puts you at risk for dishonesty, reach out to University resources:

- Your professor or TA
- Your advisor
- [Writing and Speaking Center Tutors](#)
- [The Learning Center](#)
- [University Counseling Services](#)
- [CARE Network](#)
- [Academic Honesty Liaisons](#)

We are here to help you navigate when and how to use tools while maintaining academic integrity.