GUIDANCE ON GENERATIVE SOFTWARE, OR "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE":

June 25, 2025

With the release to the public of various sorts of generative software (often referred to simply as "artificial intelligence" or "AI") beginning with ChatGPT in the fall term of AY 2022-2023, the sophistication of these systems' outputs has led to pressure on educational models and institutions. Part of this intrinsic tension derives from the automation of information retrieval and production on the one hand and the humanist and Catholic, Jesuit vision of education's purpose on the other. This purpose has been reärticulated in the Vatican's recent document, *Old and New*: "education 'is never a mere process of passing on facts and intellectual skills: rather, its aim is to contribute to the person's holistic formation in its various aspects'…in keeping with the nature and dignity of the human person" (§77). Given Marquette University's Catholic, Jesuit identity, the question of using generative software systems in academic work must be considered within this understanding of education. At very least, as *Old and New* states, "a decisive guideline is that the use of [generative software] should always be transparent and never misrepresented" (§84).

Whatever our personal opinions on the merits, value, implications, and legitimate uses of generative software in the larger world and in education, we as a university community must find new ways of navigating our educational mission together in this new context. One may embrace a maximalist approach that invites complete integration of generative software into classroom learning and assessments; one may avoid its use entirely (or anywhere in between). However, one element that has not changed and will not change in this new set of circumstances is that academic communities, including Marquette University, are built upon mutual trust among its members. Learning and knowledge take place in social contexts; regardless of the presence and sophistication of the tools and services we employ, honesty and transparency concerning how we do our work, and the reliability of our methods, is at the core of students, faculty, and staff co-creating a trusting and flourishing learning environment.

The university wants to provide clarity regarding the use of generative software, while also allowing for a variety of opinion and practice as colleges, departments, and individual

instructors see fit. Regardless of where an instructor falls in the spectrum of use and integration of generative software into their courses, the university strongly recommends that each instructor make clear both in a course's syllabus and during class time what the specific expectations for that class are with regard to these systems.

- More generally, to provide provisional guidance to the university community, the current baseline expectation remains that, unless otherwise clearly attributed, a student is expected to have produced their own text and other content in submitted coursework. As the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins stipulate beginning in AY 2025-26, *like the unattributed use of any other source, the unattributed use of content produced with generative software in coursework violates academic integrity under the current definition of plagiarism*. Colleges, departments, and instructors are welcome to invite the use of generative software in their coursework, but if they do so, they ought to make explicit in syllabi (and, ideally, in assignment sheets and verbally as well) what is expected of students regarding this use on specified assignments. In keeping with the necessary honesty and transparency of academic work in general, academic work that allows for generative software use should still attribute such use, as with any other source that scholars use to aid their work. **Instructors should consider FERPA guidelines before submitting student work to generative AI tools like chatbots (e.g., generating draft feedback on student work) or using tools like Zoom's AI Companion. Proper de-identification under FERPA requires removal of all personally identifiable information, as well as a reasonable determination made by the institution that a student's identity is not personally identifiable. This includes single or multiple releases and must take into account other reasonably available information that might be available online. Depending on the nature of the assignment, student work could potentially include identifiable information if they are describing personal experiences that would need to be removed before it could be considered properly de-identified (used with permission from Johns Hopkins University, July 2025).** [**Marquette FERPA Guidelines**](#)

Where appropriate, generative software should be cited using the instructions found on [this](#) or similar sites, and adapted as needed for different models. Instructors permitting or requiring generative software use should also make clear that such permission does not apply outside the assignment(s) or course(s) for which the exception has been made.

- More specifically:
  - If you are considering **encouraging your students to use generative software to develop their class work**, then you should consider if doing so may in practice encourage your students to perform less personal evaluation and reflection. The Ignatian pedagogical paradigm (IPP) calls us to encourage our students to ask themselves "who am I becoming?" as they develop their class work and complete their academic programs. Experiences of paying close attention and practicing critical thinking help our students grow as whole persons in the service of God.
  - If you are considering **using generative software to evaluate if your students' work was created using generative software**, then you should consider if using generative software in this way may share your students' work with unauthorized third parties. The university vets approved software like Turnitin. Software the university has not vetted and approved may share content with unauthorized third parties, violating FERPA and students' privacy rights. FERPA protection begins after a teacher accepts an assignment from a student for feedback or grading.
  - If you are considering **using generative software to provide feedback on or grade your students' work**, then you should consider if using generative software in this way may decrease the value of the university's educational product. If you use generative software in this way, then may some students and their families feel like they're not receiving the educational product the university promises them in exchange for the price and cost of tuition?

It is hoped that this general way forward will allow instructors in the various disciplines to utilize and experiment with generative software in their courses if they so choose, while maintaining a baseline of clarity on expectations regarding this use with regard to course work, learning outcomes, and academic integrity broadly understood. The deployment, development, and integration of these technologies into various sectors of society continues to change and evolve, and this statement of guidance will be revised and altered as the university deems appropriate in light of the changing situation.

Finally, we encourage instructors to embrace this new set of circumstances from a place of trust and transparency, inviting students into dialogue about the goals of higher education and working toward them together. Drawing on Ignatian principles of reflection and education, we have an opportunity to meditate upon what our disciplines, methodologies, and pedagogies are really about and to discern what our learning outcomes for our students really are. Fully entering into this discernment process can lead to creativity and hope rather than despondence or turning away from the challenges of the present moment in education. We believe that increased surveillance and suspicion will not lead us to improved student learning and a culture of academic integrity, but rather the fostering of candor and cooperation will do so, as we engage in the labor of academic work side by side.

Note: Those who view plagiarism as an unwarranted categorization for generative software use that lacks attribution are asked to revisit the definition of plagiarism and to note in addition that—while the specific text or images produced by generative software for a particular prompt may be superficially novel—the models generative software systems are founded upon do not generate their own responses whole-cloth but are trained on prior humans' texts and other data, and guided by teams of workers who label that data. That is, other humans' labor and intellectual property are always implicated and always in use when generative software is employed, however anonymous and depersonalized those humans become in the black box mediation of generative software. In addition, generally speaking, the initial human labor and intellectual property was used without those humans' consent or compensation.

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