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AI and the Future of Academic Integrity

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Teaching Practice & Need it Addresses

ChatGPT ("GPT" stands for "Generative Pre-trained Transformer") is an artificial intelligence chatbot introduced by OpenAI in November of 2022. ChatGPT is built on a large language model trained on an enormous amount of human-generated text. Educators should be aware that ChatGPT can often generate plausible-sounding answers to user-fed prompts. What's more, plagiarism detectors (such as Turnitin) cannot currently detect AI-generated prose. Our teaching practice is relatively straightforward:

1. We think every educator should be aware of ChatGPT and consider assignments in light of its sudden appearance.
2. We outline which assignments are more or less susceptible to AI generation.
3. We believe that ChatGPT isn't all bad, and thus we close with some positive aspects.

Evidence it Benefits Students

Our evidence that avoiding AI-generated student prose benefits students consists simply in the idea that learning to write well is a critical benefit to students; that writing well requires practice; and that, to the extent that students avoid such practice (with ChatGPT or by some other means), they are worse off for it. Indeed, learning to write well plausibly relates to each of the five University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs), and learning to write well is obviously related to the Communication UULO (see https://www.unlv.edu/provost/gen-ed/uulo)

How Others Can Adopt This Practice

We base our suggestions on ChatGPT's current capabilities. Our suggestions for avoiding AI-generated student submissions will depend on whether one is teaching online or in person. Our suggestions for online teaching will work for face-to-face but not vice versa.

Face-to-face teaching
- The best and most obvious way face-to-face educators can avoid students submitting AI-based responses is to avoid take-home writing-based assignments.

Online teaching
- In general, prompts that include information that is distinctive to the class---e.g., information introduced earlier in the course---produce worse answers than prompts that don't include such information.
- Currently, ChatGPT doesn't output research-based prose that cites sources. Thus, critically, ChatGPT won't output a turn-in-ready research paper. We should note that a student can still use ChatGPT in a piecemeal way and add citations later.
- A family of assignment prompts, which we label "meta-assignments," currently produce low-quality output when fed into ChatGPT. These are assignments that somehow comment on past assignments---often called "scaffolded" assignments---and assignments that comment on the process of producing the assignment itself, which we'll call "reflective" assignments. Reflective assignments ask the student to reflect on the process of producing the content of the assignment itself. For example, one author of this poster asks students in her course to reflect on students' experiences with peer review. Since past student peer reviews are not in the training data for any AI (at least currently), ChatGPT doesn't produce quality answers.
- Extensive use of rubrics that students are aware of beforehand may help abate AI-generated submissions. The rubric would include particular points that the student must make. This approach lends itself to so-called "specifications" or "specs" grading in which a successful student submission must meet certain specifications, which is often paired with a pass/fail grading approach. We learned about the specs approach in relation to ChatGPT from Schultz-Bergin, referenced below. For specs grading in general, see Nilson, also referenced below.

Positive aspects of ChatGPT
- We believe ChatGPT offers a fantastic topic for open and frank class discussion. Articles such as that by Robison-Greene in the references section, which doesn't take a firm stance on whether ChatGPT is positive or negative, provide an excellent jumping-off point. And as the article by Williams, also referenced below, notes, while ChatGPT can produce passable prose, it can't tell whether its output is accurate. Thus, the university's role in equipping students to vet information will only become more critical.

References

Nilson, Linda. *Specifications Grading: Restoring Rigor, Motivating Students, and Saving Faculty Time.* Stylus, 2015.

Robison-Greene, Rachel. "Is Writing for Robots?" Blog of the APA, 12 Jan. 2023, blog.apaonline.org/2023/01/12/is-writing-for-robots.

Schultz-Bergin, Marcus. "Good Writing Design and ChatGPT." *All's Good*, 12 Jan. 2023, allsgood.substack.com/p/good-writing-design-and-chatgpt.

Williams, Tom. "ChatGPT 'A Powerful Tool for Education if Used Correctly.'" *Times Higher Education*, 19 Dec. 2022, www.timeshighereducation.com/news/chatgpt-powerful-tool-education-if-used-correctly.

Acknowledgements

Resources & Where to Find Them

We urge instructors to visit https://openai.com/ and try ChatGPT for themselves. In particular, we encourage instructors to feed ChatGPT past writing prompts and consider what grade the result would receive.

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