

**AI Use and Misuse:
Recommendations to Identify and Address Outcomes and Risks for
Our Students and Faculty**

San Diego City College Academic Senate AI Position Paper
by the AI in Academia ad hoc workgroup
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	3
AREAS OF CONCERN.....	5
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	8

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In recent years, technological advancements around Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) as a creation tool have made significant impacts on the human experience, with many outcomes yet to be determined. In our immediate environments within the San Diego Community College District, there have been many opportunities to learn and embrace the ways GenAI can enhance the office or classroom. However, many of our students are using GenAI independently, often in ways that indicate misuse of the technology and in ways that are not in line with academic integrity. As yet, we have no clear data on student learning outcomes or guidelines to address and minimize negative impacts.

In Spring of 2024, the AI in Academia Workgroup convened as an ad hoc committee of the San Diego City College Academic Senate. The group was tasked with examining GenAI use with a critical lens, identifying possible gaps in professional development, identifying challenges and possible ethical considerations, and developing strategies to minimize the impact that AI misuse seems to be having on the student experience and student learning. Over the past year, the workgroup has facilitated more than five Instructional Improvement workshops and offers an ongoing Community of Practice workshop to help inspire instructors, help minimize frustration, and negative course/learning outcomes. The workgroup identifies the need for faculty choice and academic freedom to be centered in all choices regarding AI. This paper does not attempt to delineate appropriate or inappropriate use of AI for faculty. However, this paper will recommend changes to our Academic Integrity policy to include the use and misuse of GenAI. This workgroup defines “misuse” of GenAI technology according to the following actions:

- Using GenAI irresponsibly to replace student voice, thinking, and identity
- Presenting information created by text-generating software as a student’s own work, ideas, and words
- Using GenAI in ways that conflict with the instructor’s usage guidelines or restrictions as indicated in the class syllabus

It is imperative that City College, with the support of the district, continues a careful and critical approach rooted in our core values of academic excellence and equity, and continues to provide instructors with both short-term, compensated support to implement immediate changes in their course and long-term education and support that allows instructors to evaluate trends and changes in student outcomes over time. This is important for the following reasons: GenAI tools are emerging rapidly; both the state and district are trending toward embracing AI technology in our schools; our students are continuing to use GenAI in ways that compromise academic integrity and therefore outcomes; and universities, including UCSD, are raising concerns about the integrity of transfer units incoming from other colleges based on unknowns around GenAI use and misuse (see “Recommendation #3 Protect the Integrity of Academic Assessments” in “Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Education at UC San Diego” by the Senate-Administrative Workgroup p. 12).¹

¹ The passage states, “Additionally, the Senate may need to revisit our processes for approving non-UC San Diego [see next page]

“Writing is not simply a way for students to demonstrate what they know. It is a way to help them understand what they know. At its best, writing is learning.”

The National Commission on Writing

[from previous page] courses for UC San Diego credit in light of GenAI capabilities. When accepting courses from other institutions for academic credit, we must have confidence that the enrolled student, rather than another person or AI, has genuinely achieved the stated learning outcomes. These precautions are necessary to maintain the integrity of our academic standards in an era where GenAI tools could potentially be used to circumvent assessments, especially in remote classes or in-person classes with only remote assessments.”

https://senate.ucsd.edu/media/690309/sawq-report_-impact-of-generative-artificial-intelligence-on-education-at-uc-san-diego.pdf

AREAS OF CONCERN

Any AI policy should consider and mitigate the impact of the following issues:

Profit – The fact that AI companies are profit driven should raise ethical concerns about our district encouraging students to use these tools. It is widely known that AI tools draw on the information of its users to develop, broaden and grow its data. Thus, encouraging students to use AI tools turns student intellectual effort into a commodity that contributes to the value of the AI company. Acceptance of AI tools risks exploiting our unknowing students and faculty.

Since AI companies are for profit, we should remember that their bottom line interests will always be profit and fiduciary, not our students and their communities.

Bias – Due to reliance on datasets used to train language models, AI systems can be biased, and this bias can be harmful to students². Systemic discrimination perpetrated by society cannot be solved with technology that is trained by that same society. For example, training data comes from the global West.

Critical Thinking – Faculty must teach students to think critically about GenAI because it is not trained to be correct; it is trained in predictive modeling. For example, GenAI predicts the next element in a sequence - the next word, pixel, or note. It then aligns predictions with a set of data or expected outcomes.³

Integrity – The allure of GenAI brings with it the temptation for students to cede thinking to AI and receive credit for AI work instead of being assessed for their own achievement of course learning outcomes. Faculty must clearly direct the process of GenAI usage in their classes, and also inform students if they use GenAI in student feedback or grading.

Academic Freedom – Because faculty have oversight over their course(s) and program approvals, this position paper will not recommend a uniform policy but will suggest several.⁴

Intellectual Property – Instructors, through the district, own the intellectual property they create for their courses, such as lectures, class activities, and assessment. However, students using GenAI tools to distill class content may violate intellectual property rights and copyright laws. Faculty or students uploading student papers could also violate student rights and copyright laws.⁵

² Policy Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the California Community Colleges System. <https://www.faccc.org/assets/docs/PolicyPapers/24%20June%20FACCC%20AI%20Policy%20Paper.pdf>

³ Marwala, Tshilidzi. (July 18, 2024). *Never Assume That the Accuracy of Artificial Intelligence Information Equals the Truth*. <https://unu.edu/article/never-assume-accuracy-artificial-intelligence-information-equals-truth>

⁴ “Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Education at UC San Diego”. https://senate.ucsd.edu/media/690309/sawg-report_impact-of-generative-artificial-intelligence-on-education-at-uc-san-diego.pdf

⁵ Ibid.

Privacy – GenAI systems can collect data regarding students and instructors, but AI systems are not transparent regarding how the data is used and how it is protected. If personal data is included in a reflective essay, for example, this is a problem.⁶

Potential Loss of Human-Centered Approaches – Humans should be at the center of all AI-enabled learning experiences. For example, where faculty choose to use AI in designing and implementing learning experiences, it should be used as a support. If faculty choose to use GenAI in commenting on student work, we suggest allowing students to comment or give feedback regarding this choice.⁷

Equity – While GenAI can support a more equitable experience for students who are neuro-atypical and/or need assistive AI technologies, GenAI tools can also create inequity if some students have access to more advanced tools via paid versions while other students only have access to less-advanced, free versions.⁸

We must be aware that underrepresented groups are often disproportionately disadvantaged by economic and technological transitions.⁹

Furthermore, students who use GenAI to do their thinking lose crucial thinking and problem-solving skills and may fail to learn necessary material, becoming deskilled. Therefore, they will be at a disadvantage when transferring to a university or at a job.

When students misuse GenAI throughout their courses and across disciplines, this also robs them of the opportunity to engage in meaningful deep thinking. The goals of many disciplines involve more than just acquiring information and facts. For example, the process of writing an essay is an act of thinking *and* feeling that requires - and cultivates - sustained attention. Allowing AI to replace said process alienates students from developing their ability to engage in meaningful deep thinking.

While some argue that GenAI is a democratizing force because it allows students with skill deficiencies to produce work of value they otherwise could not, this not only encourages passive learning but it also merely masks student deficiencies. Furthermore, it divides students into those who can engage meaningfully with writing and those who need the help of generative AI. In a 2023 hearing before the U.S. House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Dr. Emily Bender - a professor of Linguistics - suggested the word “automation” to replace the phrase “artificial intelligence” as a more accurate descriptor of what is actually happening when we use it. If students depend upon automation (GenAI) to produce a finished product (with the

⁶ Policy Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the California Community Colleges System; “Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Education at UC San Diego”.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ California Community Colleges “Generative AI and the Future of Teaching and Learning”.

<https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/report/generative-ai-and-the-future-of-teaching-and-learning-7-17-24-2-a11y.pdf>

exception of intentional-use courses) that is not agency - one of City College's core teaching goals. Overuse and misuse of GenAI can hinder our students' self-empowerment.¹⁰

Lack of research on pedagogical and mental health implications – It is important to note that when social media was first introduced, it seemed harmless by most. However, after more than a decade of social media engagement, critics and researchers are now observing the negative impact on first generation users. Though there is still significant debate about the mental health impact of social media, scholars and critics claim that high social media use contributes to attention fragmentation, loneliness, passivity and commodification of our youth. In fact, some K-12 schools have banned cell phones entirely, and Australia has now banned children under 16 from using popular social media platforms.

In an atmosphere where digital technologies have already degraded our ability to practice deep and focused thinking, data might show that outsourcing our thinking to GenAI negatively impacts critical thinking skills. At this early phase of AI's development, we should practice caution.

Transfer Considerations – The UCs and other universities to which students may transfer to are exploring and adopting GenAI in a myriad number of ways, making AI literacy a skill that students need to learn ethically and critically. However, students also need important in-person skills and foundational self-reliant skills involved in gathering information using the appropriate, most effective tools, not simply the easiest. Our college has the responsibility to transfer students that have done their own work, learned the concepts, and gained the skills taught in their courses.

Pedagogical Realities – AI as a useful teaching tool is not evidence based and may not support cognitive learning theory. The top down nature of AI's move into academia should cause educators concern about its effectiveness for teaching and learning pedagogy. It is important to remember that AI development has not been informed by pedagogical research. In fact, since AI generative tools are a new technology, there is no conclusive evidence that it enriches student learning or contributes to higher order thinking, qualities often cited as central to the values of higher education. It should also be noted that the primary market values of AI contrast markedly to those upheld by our mission statements, course outlines, and many disciplines' values.

Environmental Impact and Sustainability – Since the introduction of AI, it has been widely documented that the amount of water necessary to operate AI is unprecedented. As stewards of the environment with both college and district sustainability committees, we should be concerned with the excessive demand on our natural resources.¹¹

¹⁰ Written Testimony of Emily M. Bender before a U.S. House subcommittee hearing on "Balancing Knowledge and Governance: Foundations for Effective Risk Management of Artificial Intelligence".

<https://democrats-science.house.gov/imo/media/doc/Dr.%20Bender%20-%20Testimony.pdf>

¹¹ *As Use of A.I. Soars, So Does the Energy and Water It Requires.*

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/artificial-intelligence-climate-energy-emissions>; [see next page]

Increased Workload – The widespread emergence of generative AI in education is creating a significant and unsustainable burden on faculty members. More specifically, the increasing need to address AI and AI misuse has negatively impacted faculty workload. Instructors are now spending more time developing new rubrics and assignments, reassessing student submissions, regrading papers, and facilitating more in-class work to ensure academic integrity. These efforts, aimed at creating an AI-free or AI-responsible learning environment, often require substantial additional labor—much of which may go uncompensated. It is essential that district officials recognize and account for this growing demand on instructional faculty time and resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Guide the adoption of all new AI-related technology.

AI and other education-impacting technology falls within the Academic Senate 10+1, and the district relies primarily upon college faculty to guide this work. Discussions regarding adoption of new technology should start with the academic senate general body, and decision-making must involve an academic senate vote. Ethical considerations and the sustainability of the technology should be at the forefront of all discussions.

Recommendation 2: Collaborate with the district to create a balanced online resource hub. This hub would allow employees and students to find tools and resources related to GenAI, including ethical considerations, guidelines regarding misuse, critical best practices, as well as an anonymous reporting/data collection system for reporting GenAI misuse.

Recommendation 3: Conduct an evolving technology yearly/biannual check in. While GenAI may have dramatically changed our educational terrain, we know that technology will continue to evolve in the coming years. As such, the academic senates should check in with the Vice Chancellor of Innovation twice a year regarding changes in AI and other technology that is impacting higher education. If these changes are significantly impacting students and faculty, a workgroup should be formed to address these changes by policy, professional development, student education and/or other appropriate means.

Recommendation 4: Revise the Academic Integrity policy. Considering the significant potential for harm to student learning, the college should revise their academic honesty policy to include the following:

Misrepresentation: presenting information, images, or writing created by text-generating software (GenAI) as your own words and ideas

Recommendation 5: Support academic freedom and discipline-specific learning in alignment with our core values of academic integrity and excellence in writing all AI policy. All areas of research, recommendations, and workshopping should recognize the diversity of needs by discipline and instructor, and should not assume a “one-size fits all approach.” We recognize that individual instructors will make course decisions regarding AI; however, any decision as to its use should be weighed against established course outlines, institutional standards of academic integrity, transfer standards of academic integrity, accreditation standards, and student learning outcomes. For example, while AI learning might be appropriate in a computer programming course, it should not be a mandatory integration for an English writing course.

Recommendation 6: Encourage instructors to include an AI policy in their syllabi. So as to minimize misuse of GenAI and confusion (many students do not consider misuse of GenAI to complete work as “cheating”), we recommend instructors include a detailed paragraph about their expectations and consider having a class discussion about the topic.

Recommendation 7: Establish a permanent AI in Academia Academic Senate Workgroup. This workgroup would continue a critical approach, investigate trends, keep up with outcomes research, make recommendations, and help set guidelines that are in alignment with core values.

Recommendation 8: Identify and establish one AI Teaching Leader from each department or discipline. Similar to the emergency efforts put in place upon the sudden shift to online teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic, City College should establish and compensate a leader to serve as the go-to expert when instructors need assistance, ideas, or advice around AI use and misuse in the classroom.

Recommendation 9: Hire instructional designers with expert knowledge on identifying and minimizing AI misuse. As GenAI grows in popularity, we will need clear guidance.

Recommendation 10: Develop and incorporate best practices in the district’s online faculty certification program to help minimize GenAI misuse in online courses. Best practices can be gathered based on recommendations by the AI in Academia Workgroup, instructional design experts, the academic senate, and the office of institutional innovation and effectiveness.

Recommendation 11: Suggest that Institutional Research investigate and monitor outcomes affected by GenAI use and misuse alongside its regular monitoring of student outcomes. We recommend identifying the knowns around the use of AI in academia, what we do not know, and clearly identifying what we need to know to make informed decisions along with methods of obtaining that data.

Recommendation 12: Continue to provide compensated faculty development and instructional improvement. We recommend continued instructor access to AI use and misuse

training through faculty development and flex workshops. Professional development offerings should be critical and balanced.

Recommendation 13: Provide training on ethical considerations for students and employees. There is significant evidence that use and development of AI involves a number of serious ethical concerns for educators, students, and the greater community. As a result, the district should support colleges in creating robust standard training regarding ethical concerns. Training should be available and required for all students upon initial course enrollment. Faculty requirements for AI ethics training should be collaborated with AFT.

Recommendation 14: Collaborate with the College and District Sustainability Committees to assess and mitigate how imminent use of GenAI might be impacting the local environment. Emerging research on GenAI and sustainability should be closely monitored, assessed, and shared when making decisions regarding adoption of this technology.

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