




How will ChatGPT affect academics?

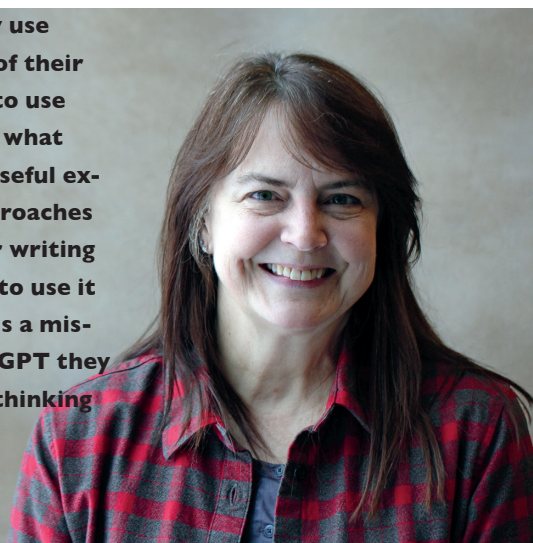
"I think ChatGPT will unfortunately cause challenges for students who are trying to do things too quickly, and we will need to lean into other methods to assess knowledge. There are lots of ways people try to get around completing work. For a long time, teachers have had to be creative in ensuring that students are doing their own work, but ChatGPT will make it a lot harder. AI is a powerful tool."

— MIKE DINARDO, UPPER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



"What a writer loses when they use ChatGPT exclusively is a sense of their own style and the opportunity to use writing as a form of discovering what they think. ChatGPT can be a useful exercise to compare different approaches to writing a thesis statement or writing a paragraph, but for somebody to use it to replace their own creativity is a mistake. If students are using ChatGPT they aren't developing their critical thinking skills which are important."

— ROBYN WESTREM, ENGLISH DEPT. CHAIR



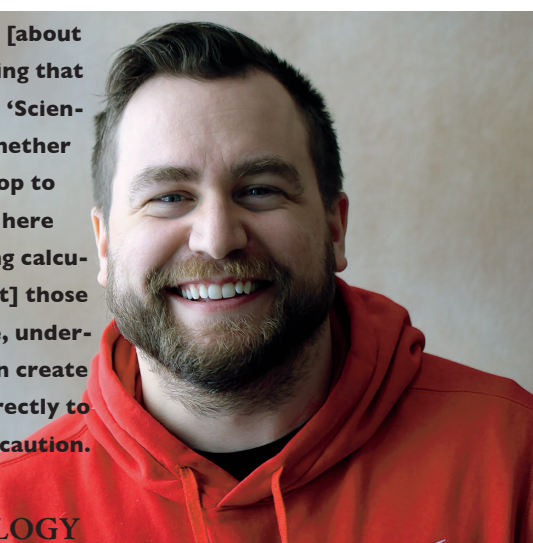
"ChatGPT adds another layer of reflection to the conversation around how we develop our writing craft. It's a tool like many other tools that have come about in years past. When spell checker came out, there were people opposed to using that tool because they thought children wouldn't learn how to spell which is not accurate. We need to engage in thoughtful dialogue about what you are gaining and losing by using ChatGPT."

— KRISTIN HENDERSON, ENGLISH TEACHER



"I imagine some of us are thrilled [about ChatGPT]... others may be recalling that famous quote from Jurassic Park: 'Scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could... they didn't stop to think if they should.' We've been here before with tools like the graphing calculator, Wikipedia, and Google, [but] those tools still required us to consume, understand, evaluate, analyze, and then create — ChatGPT allows us [to skip] directly to 'create'. Users will need to take caution."

— JOE STARKEY, ASST. DIR. OF TECHNOLOGY



Is AI taking over? The ethics of ChatGPT in academics

BY GRACE KASSEBAUM
Staff Writer

Online searches for "AI essay writing tool" increased 2,041% this December according to Google.

Within one week of its launch on November 30, 2022, ChatGPT—the most popular essay-generating artificial intelligence platform—had 1 million users.

Students are using ChatGPT for their English homework. Scientists are using ChatGPT for their research essays. Employees are using ChatGPT to write emails to their bosses. Artificial intelligence is now capable of crafting anything from a love letter for a significant other to a compelling essay at the college level.

Antony Aumann, a professor of philosophy at Northern Michigan University, recalled to the New York Times that the best paper turned in for his world religions course turned out to be written by ChatGPT. In response, many professors are switching to incorporating in-class essays, handwritten work, and oral exams into their courses. On the high-

school level, many districts have blocked ChatGPT on all school computers.

Joe Starkey, Assistant Director of Technology at Minnehaha Academy, expects the capabilities of ChatGPT to continue expanding.

"I expect that further investments [in AI technology] will pave the way for us to run our lives (and do our work) more effectively and efficiently while simultaneously opening up huge ethical questions around integrity, theft, the rights of creatives, and the rights of machines," said Starkey. "Seldom is a technology so disruptive and so quickly adopted. I feel as though we are seeing the first tranche in a series of products that will cause a sea change in our everyday lives. With the pace of progress, it begs the question: are we ready for this?"

A primary concern about ChatGPT is that it will jeopardize the writing skills of future generations. The following is an essay—written by ChatGPT—that addresses this concern.

ChatGPT addresses its own drawbacks

Annotations in red by Grace Kassebaum, student writer, and in green by Reid Westrem, journalism teacher. The ChatGPT text is in blue.

Although this paragraph is coherently written, it fails to perform many of the functions of an introduction. There is no engaging hook, overview of the essay's general structure, or thesis-like statement.

These are reasonable claims against the use of AI. However, this paragraph—and most of the other paragraphs in this essay—would benefit from specific evidence. The arguments written by ChatGPT are overly generic and lack substance. Also, if you submit an essay with the word "homogenization," you should make sure you know what it means first.

Good argument, ChatGPT! Students often think the most important part of a research paper is the final product, which AI can tantalizingly produce with the push of a button. Teachers, however, see more value in the process itself — doing actual research, identifying reliable resources and quality evidence, and working through several drafts in the writing process.

Although this paragraph correctly emphasizes that the use of ChatGPT could lead to confusion and mistrust, it is currently reasonably easy to distinguish between text generated by AI and text written by a human. ChatGPT itself immediately identified that AI produced this essay.

Back to style, I don't think Grace would use a word like "moreover" and certainly not to begin a paragraph. In fact, I checked her past 15 stories, and she used the word once. Using it twice to begin consecutive paragraphs? Embarrassing. Maybe the premium version, GPT-4, would do better.

ChatGPT uses all corners of the internet to form its claims. Therefore, if instructed to, it can derive arguments from extremist websites and, as this essay points out, "perpetuate existing biases."

So, "in conclusion" is ChatGPT evil? No. It could be very useful, for example, for a professional engineer who's an expert in nanotechnology who needs to give a presentation to colleague. He or she could use ChatGPT to help create a clearly written handout based on the expert's information. For students learning to write and do research? Always ask your teacher before using it.

The use of advanced language models like ChatGPT has the potential to greatly impact the way future generations write and communicate. On one hand, the technology can be a valuable tool for helping individuals improve their writing skills and produce more high-quality content. For example, ChatGPT can assist in the editing and proofreading of written work, helping to identify and correct errors and improve the overall clarity and coherence of the text. Additionally, the model can generate new ideas and inspiration for writing, enabling individuals to explore new perspectives and styles of writing.

On the other hand, there are concerns that the widespread use of language models like ChatGPT could lead to a decline in writing skills among future generations. As individuals become increasingly reliant on the technology to produce written content, they may become less inclined to develop their own writing abilities. Furthermore, the use of advanced language models may lead to a homogenization of writing styles and a lack of originality, as individuals simply rely on the model to generate text for them.

Additionally, the technology may negatively impact the ability of future generations to think critically and creatively. With the ability to simply generate text with the click of a button, people may become less inclined to engage in the thinking and reflection that is necessary to develop original ideas and arguments.

Another potential concern is that the use of language models like ChatGPT may lead to a decrease in the overall quality of written communication. As the technology becomes more advanced, it may become increasingly difficult for readers to distinguish between text generated by a machine and text written by a human. This could lead to confusion and mistrust in the information being presented, as well as a devaluation of the writing skills of human authors.

Moreover, the use of language models like ChatGPT may also lead to a reduction in the number of jobs available in the writing and editing field. As the technology becomes more advanced, it may be able to produce written content at a faster and more efficient rate than humans, leading to job losses and a decrease in demand for human writers.

Moreover, the use of advanced language models like ChatGPT may also exacerbate existing societal issues. For example, marginalized groups may be disproportionately affected by the technology as it may perpetuate existing biases in the data it is trained on.

In conclusion, while the use of advanced language models like ChatGPT can be a valuable tool for improving writing skills and producing high-quality content, it's important to be aware of the potential downsides and ensure that the technology is used in a responsible and ethical manner. It's important to balance the benefits of the technology with the need to protect the writing skills of future generations and ensure that the technology is used in a way that benefits society as a whole.

Obviously, we planned to do this story with ChatGPT, but if I didn't know it had been used, as a teacher, I'd be suspicious. Several red flags go up right away. First, while this looks like a decent summary of pros and cons, it fails as a piece of journalism. There's no "feature lead" or "nut graf," which journalism students know would require actual reporting around school. There are no Minnehaha sources quoted, and no quotes at all. No sources are cited. Grace it too good a journalist and writer to hand this in. I did run this through two AI detector websites, and both identified this story as having been written by AI.

Many essays written by ChatGPT contain short, choppy paragraphs that should be combined. These last two paragraphs contain the same general arguments and should be merged into one larger paragraph. Additionally, ChatGPT frequently reaches its maximum capacity of users and, for short time periods, cannot generate any more essays. An individual who is "less inclined to engage in thinking" would suffer during these time periods.

ChatGPT can crank out suitable compositions, but they have the flavor of cold porridge. Its style lacks the unique "voice" and personality of good writing produced by a real human. It's clunky, using too many "zombie nouns" and prepositional phrases, according to the Writer's Diet online test — Google it and test your own writing style!

This would be a good place to insert evidence from a study. For example, Oxford has estimated that platforms such as ChatGPT will endanger up to 47% of U.S. jobs such as copywriters, journalists, customer service agents, paralegals, coders, and digital marketers.

Overall, essays produced by ChatGPT do contain some errors (for example, the phrase "it's important" should not occur in back-to-back sentences in this paragraph), but they are generally well-written. Further, ChatGPT produced good general arguments for and against the use of essay-generating AI platforms. However, when asked to produce an essay on this topic several different times, ChatGPT composed nearly identical essays each time. Therefore, if several students used ChatGPT to write an essay on the same topic, their essays would likely be eerily similar.



What are students' perspectives on ChatGPT?

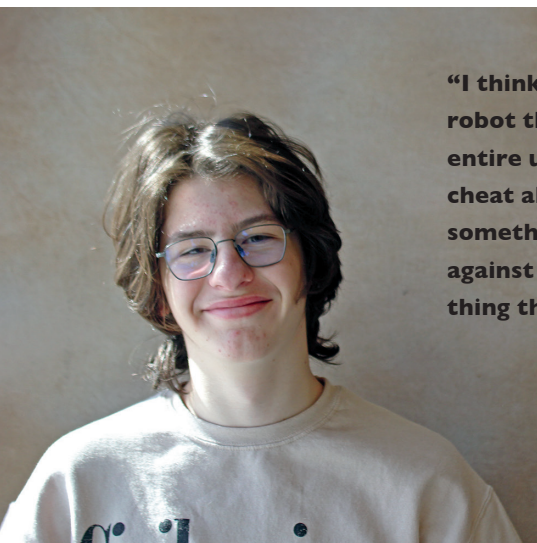
"We need to accept that ChatGPT is a part of the future, and we need to learn how to work around it. It does diminish a lot of the work we've done in English classes, and it takes away people's critical thinking skills. This worries me for future generations. The use of ChatGPT is troubling in scholarly environments such as the college application process—I'm unsure how that will be handled next year."

—BIZZY CORTES WEISS, SENIOR



"I think that ChatGPT is an evil robot that is going to take over the entire universe. People use it to cheat all the time, and I think it is something that will inevitably go against us rather than being something that will actually help us."

— FRITZ REDING, FIRST-YEAR



"I think that ChatGPT can be a useful academic tool as long as you only take ideas from it and not copy and paste the exact wording. The problem is that it takes as much or more work as writing it yourself since you have to check all the sources and make sure that they corroborate with what is said. I don't know if it's worth the effort or the work, but it can be a useful tool. People should not abuse it."

— KATE MAHONEY, SENIOR



"ChatGPT can be very helpful for getting ideas for an essay, but if you have it write your essay and turn it in that's stupid because it's really obvious. If you've read enough of its essays you can recognize that ChatGPT wrote something instead of a human. Let's say if you were to use ChatGPT, you should edit your paper before turning it in and use it mainly for ideas. However, it is academic dishonesty so don't do it."

— ABE BOARDMAN, JUNIOR

