

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity

Faculty Guidance

The Standard

On April 1, 2023, the university updated the Liberty Way to provide boundaries for students on the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The standard is that **students should not use AI to generate content for their assignments in a manner that compromises originality and authenticity**. This largely prohibits the use of **generative text AI** features/programs specifically.

The university does not ban the use of AI tools as a whole and does not restrict access to AI products/platforms like ChatGPT on university servers. What is prohibited are AI-enabled acts that may compromise our long-standing expectations of academic integrity in student work.

The principles driving this policy are **originality** and **authenticity**. A professor's decision to allege academic misconduct due to AI misuse should involve informed judgments on whether the AI-involved conduct compromised assignment originality and/or authenticity beyond what is reasonably acceptable.

Preponderance

Any academic misconduct incident should be reported in Beacon when the incident meets the evidence stand of 'preponderance.' The Liberty Way states: **"The preponderance of the evidence standard means the allegation must be proven by the greater weight of the evidence, in other words, a determination of what is more likely than not to have occurred."** Probability is at the heart of this standard. However, meeting that standard should always involve a thorough review of all available information. This information may include comparing the differences in human-written text vs. AI-generated text, analyzing assignment structure, and AI detection results.

AI Detection Tips

Human Written vs. AI-Generated Text

- Humans will write in a unique voice; AI writes in a predictable tone and style
- Humans will express doubt and uncertainty, AI is likely to avoid this
- Humans will speak freely, AI is directed by the prompt
- AI is likely to speak authoritatively
- AI is likely to speak robotically and lacks human 'flavor'
- AI is unlikely to speak with sarcasm or humor unless prompted
- AI rarely uses a passive voice and will tell vs. showing or describing
- AI is likely to use repetitive words and phraseology to establish needless urgency
- AI may produce well-written, but nonsensical content

Assignment Structure

- AI is likely to apply needless formatting or a structure beyond what is expected in the assignment. Look for out-of-place structuring that has a pattern, but does not resemble any existing academic structure (i.e., APA, MLA, etc.)
- Vocabulary repetition

- Citations that are completely AI-generated may be incomplete, illegitimate, and/or non-sensical.
- Over-labeling of points or drawing excessive attention to prompt completion (i.e. firstly, secondly, thirdly; my first point, my second point, etc.)
- In cases of a direct copy/paste from ChatGPT, the font used is Segoe UI as seen below. This is not a commonly used font style in assignments.
 - "Allowing students to use AI to create their assignments raises several ethical, educational, and practical dilemmas."

The Turnitin AI Detector

The Detector's Purpose

The Turnitin AI detector is a tool that provides information to assist faculty in making informed decisions about academic misconduct. The university also views AI detection as a tool to be used by faculty to assist students in understanding boundaries for AI use. AI detection results are a valuable point of discussion between professors and students regarding ethical AI use.

The AI detector is designed to highlight text that is 'AI-like'. That highlighted text may or may not be AI-generated in violation of the Liberty Way. For students who write in a style that mirrors AI, their work is highly likely to be flagged. AI detection results alone are not an indictment regarding the student's conduct. All factors that may reasonably influence the AI detector's results should be considered.

Accuracy

Turnitin's AI detector is highly accurate in detecting AI-like text with a less than 1% error rate for false flags. Turnitin's AI detector evaluates each sentence on a scale of 0.0 to 1.0 for the probability of being AI-generated. All text must meet a 0.8 threshold of probability to be flagged 'highly probable' as AI-generated. Anything below the 0.8 standard will not be flagged. This is the primary safeguard against false flags.

Turnitin tested their AI detector for accuracy using 800,000 human-written papers which produced a less than 1% error rate. Other third-party testing has produced similar results. For more information, please review [Turnitin's white paper](#) regarding testing.

No other AI detector may be used when investigating possible academic misconduct. This is due to the high reliability of Turnitin's AI detector. Additionally, submitting assignments outside of the secure Canvas/Turnitin platforms presents concerns related to student privacy.

Limitations

Even with a low error rate, the AI detector has limitations that all faculty must consider. It is highly recommended to provide students with the benefit of the doubt when these limitations are present:

- The error rate increases at results of less than 20%. 21%-100% results maintain the less than 1% error rate.
- Technical writing in the STEM fields, research methodologies, data-heavy content, and any other project that may reduce the presence of a 'human-like' writing style may produce a false flag at a higher rate.

- Resumes, poetry, song lyrics, lists, outlines, and tables may also produce unreliable results.
- A non-English-speaking student's writing style may be affected by the use of AI-powered translation tools and could be interpreted as AI-generated. Purely human-written content by non-English speaking students should not influence the false flag rate.

Compatibility

Some documents will be incompatible with the AI detector. **Documents with compatibility issues will produce a result with two dashes "- -" and may require the user to modify the document to be compatible.** Please see the following compatibility issues:

- Documents with less than 300 words or more than 15,000 words are not compatible with the AI detector
- AI detection is only available in English
- File types must be .docx, .pdf., .txt., or .rtf
- The file must be less than 100 MB in size

Common Scenarios

Grammarly

The popularity of Grammarly and its reliance on generative text AI should be considered in any discussion with students or decisions regarding AI use and academic misconduct. All Grammarly products provide the opportunity to use generative text AI features in some form. The use of those generative text features will regularly be flagged by the AI detector. **Spelling, grammar, punctuation, and mild corrections to content will not cause that content to be flagged by the AI detector because those features do not use generative text technology.**

Using the generative text features to generate new content or accept extensive paraphrasing are all acts that can be considered academic misconduct according to the Liberty Way. **Students should be encouraged to turn off or not accept changes to their work via Grammarly's generative text AI features.**

Paraphrasing Tools

Many paraphrasing tools also use generative text AI and can be flagged by the AI detector. The use of Quillbot, as an example, is highly likely to be flagged by the AI detector. **The university's standards for academic integrity do not permit the use of paraphrasing tools to the extent that originality becomes compromised.** Students may do the work of developing an assignment initially, but then allow their work to be highly manipulated by generative-text AI-powered paraphrasing tools. This may lead to the assignment no longer being 'in their own words' and therefore conflicts with our expectations of originality and authenticity. This act is considered academic misconduct.