

WRD 242 **Writing with AI**

Instructor Margaret Poncin Reeves

Email mponcin@depaul.edu
I check this during the day on weekdays

Course Modality

Face-to-Face
DAY/TIME/LOCATION

Drop-in Office Hours

No appointment needed
DAY/TIME/LOCATION

Course Description

In this course, you will learn how to use AI as a writing tool. We'll create compositions in a variety of genres using AI to assist in various stages of the writing process. Further, we'll consider how AI is influencing individuals' behavior and our larger culture. In doing so, we'll explore its strengths and limitations as well as the ethical concerns these tools raise.

Learning outcomes: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify different types of AI applications and evaluate their affordances and constraints as writing tools.
- Explain basic concepts of natural language processing artificial intelligence.
- Compose texts in a variety of genres with assistance from generative artificial intelligence applications at various stages of the writing process.
- Critically analyze AI-generated output and recognize the strengths and limitations of integrating it into their own writing.
- Discuss the ethical dilemmas raised by writing with AI, such as questions of authorship and intellectual property, privacy, bias, and epistemology.
- Discuss how economics, cultural forces, and human behavior are shaping AI development, and how AI is influencing our workplaces, culture and behavior.

Class Policies



Deadlines and late work This course has been carefully structured so that each assignment builds upon the previous one. Additionally, your classmates will often be relying on you to finish your work so that they may complete theirs. For that reason, it's important to stay on track.

Please let me know—in advance if possible—if you aren't able to meet a deadline. Grades on late work will be deducted 10%. Late work not submitted by the next course meeting may not be accepted. For example, if an assignment is due Tuesday, I may not accept it after Thursday's class.



Communication

Email: I will be emailing your [DePaul email account](#) fairly regularly. If you don't regularly check your email, plan to make this part of your homework routine, or [forward your mail](#) to an account that you do check.

D2L Notifications: Set up the notifications feature on D2L so that you receive email and/or text message alerts from your courses. (Instructions may be found [here](#).) I recommend that you sign up for email alerts for new News Items and maybe Grades.



Participation This is not a lecture-based class. Instead, you'll be active throughout most of the class, participating in discussion, providing feedback on your peers' work, and, of course, doing lots of writing.

In other words, your engagement and participation add value for everyone. Thank you in advance for your contributions.



Plagiarism The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

Violations of academic integrity are detrimental to the values of DePaul and its learning community, to students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- (a) *The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.*

(b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement.

(c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.

(d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

(e) Self-plagiarism--the use of one work product to obtain credit for multiple assignments without requesting permission from the current instructor.

Plagiarism can result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask! For more information, please consult: offices.depaul.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-resources/academic-integrity/Pages/student-faqs.aspx

Attendance

Because this course is participation-based, attending every class session is vital. Much of the work we'll be doing is collaborative and can't be made up outside the class session. For this reason, **students who have missed the equivalent of 20% of the class (i.e., four class periods) are subject to failure in the course.**

The University does not make a distinction between excused and unexcused absences. Students who are involved in university-sponsored activities that may keep them from attending class are not exempt from this policy. Promptness is expected of a student for all class sessions.

Save your absences for sick days! It is very important that you stay home if you are unwell, so be sure not to use them up in case you need them.

If you do have to miss class

1. Contact Margaret (mponcin@depaul.edu) well in advance if possible.
2. Use the Course Schedule on D2L to complete all necessary reading and writing assignments.

If Margaret has to miss class

Class will be moved to Zoom if possible. I'll post an announcement on D2L, so make sure that your [notification preferences are set to receive instant alerts](#)

Artificial intelligence use



Privacy By taking this course, you agree to sign up for generative artificial intelligence tools and use them to compose projects for the course. My goal is to stick with free products, but using any free internet product comes with privacy concerns.

Be sure to read the privacy policy of any platform you sign up for, and remember that many publicly accessible AI systems may retain and learn from what you submit. In other words, you should treat AI systems like a public platform: [Never enter information that is sensitive or confidential](#), change any identifying details like names or locations, and—even with those precautions—assume that the system may be collecting information that would make it easy to identify you, like your location or IP address.



Product subscriptions There is also a (very small) chance that free access to one or more of these tools may be removed. If that occurs, you may need to pay for a subscription for the duration of the course. Again, the chance of this occurring is very small, and if it does occur, we would work together to ensure no one is overburdened financially.



Academic integrity One of the goals of this course is to learn to use AI as a writing assistant, so there are most certainly assignments where you'll be using it to generate ideas and text. However, there are also some assignments where its use isn't appropriate because it would impede your learning or success on the task. **Please pay attention to assignment instructions to determine whether and how you may use artificial intelligence.**

When you do use AI, you must ensure that you've informed me. DePaul considers plagiarism to

include the use of artificial intelligence tools, such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2, without citation. In other words, any direct copying of text or even paraphrasing of ideas produced by AI is considered an academic integrity violation if your present those ideas as your own or neglect to cite them.

Note: Many professors, employers, and publishers consider ANY use of generative AI to be cheating. You should consult with them before using it for any writing outside of this course.

Guidance for citing AI:

[MLA style](#)

[APA style](#)

Assignments

More information about these projects, as well as a full course schedule, may be found on our course website on D2L (d2l.depaul.edu).

Reading responses and discussion participation Before most class sessions you will submit a short response to that day's assigned reading, video, or podcast. Responses should be posted to the discussion board at least two hours before class so that I have time to read through them. The goal of these is to help you prepare for a robust in-class discussion to deepen your critical analysis of the course material.

Writing Challenges 5 times throughout the course, you will complete a create a short composition with the help of AI. Each piece will be accompanied by a 1-2-page rationale that describes how you used the AI platform and describes how the writing challenge reflects the concepts covered during that week's class.

Final Project At the end of the course, you will write a 5-7 page research paper expanding on one of the concepts covered in the course in order to analyze the relationships between contemporary society, individuals, and AI. You should include at least 5 sources, three of which must be ones that we did *not* read for the class. During Week 9, you will submit a proposal and annotated bibliography, and during Week 10, you will submit a draft for peer review.

In-class activities and homework I have several in-class group projects planned that involve collaborating and presenting with your peers. Occasionally, there may also be take-home exercises if we don't have time to complete them during class.

Grading:	% of Total
Writing Challenges (5 total)	25
Reading Responses and discussion participation	20
Final Project	
Proposal	10
Draft and peer review	5
Final Draft	30
In-class activities and homework	10

Grading Scale	
93 – 100	A
90 – 92	A -
87 – 89	B +
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B -
77 – 79	C +
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C -
67 – 69	D +
63 – 66	D
0 – 62	F

Resources

D2L (d2l.depaul.edu) All course materials may be found on D2L, including readings, assignments and grades.

The Writing Center The Writing Center provides free tutoring to any student on campus. You may make an appointment online at <http://depaul.edu/writing>. There are also drop-in services, online appointments, and a written feedback service, in which tutors provide comments via email. You may visit the Writing Center at any stage of your process, from the day you get your assignment to the

polishing stages, and I encourage you to do so because receiving feedback is an important stage of the writing process for any writer.

Dean of Students Office The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students in navigating the university, particularly during difficult situations, such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. Absence Notifications to faculty, Late Withdrawals, and Community Resource Referrals support students both in and outside of the classroom. Additionally, they have resources and programs to support health and wellness, violence prevention, substance abuse and drug preventions, and LGBTQ student services. Contact them at go.depaul.edu/dos

Accommodations Students with disabilities who feel they may need specific accommodations should contact me within the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students should also contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) for additional support and services: CSD Lincoln Park, Student Center 370, 773-325-1677; CSD Loop, Lewis 1420, 312-362-8002 or CSD@depaul.edu.

University Counseling and Psychology Services (UCAPS) University Counseling & Psychological Services (UCAPS) helps remove barriers to learning and support academic success by providing free, goal-focused, collaborative, short-term, confidential, individual, and group counseling services for DePaul's students. UCAPS has a diverse multi-disciplinary staff that includes licensed mental health professionals in psychology, counseling, and social work. Students can talk to a therapist or schedule a brief screening and consultation appointment in the following ways:

To speak directly to a therapist 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, students should call 773-325-CARE (2273) and Press "1" when prompted.

On-campus locations are:
Lincoln Park - Student Center Suite 350
Loop Lewis - Center Suite 1465

Services are provided based on student eligibility. For full eligibility details please visit go.depaul.edu/ucaps

Course Outline

This schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the class. All assignments due by the beginning of class on the day listed, except reading responses, which are due 2 hours before class. Materials may be found on D2L.

		Read/watch/listen	Compose
Week 1	Introduction to generative AI		
	Day 1	<i>No homework</i>	
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A People’s Guide to AI</i> excerpt 	Reading Response Writing Challenge 1
Week 2	Authorship and Intellectual Property		
	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kang “What’s the point of reading writing by humans?” • Vara “Confessions of a viral AI writer” 	Reading Response
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naylor “AI and the rise of mediocrity” • Kirschenbaum “Prepare for the Textpocolypse” 	Reading Response Writing Challenge 2
Week 3	Bias		
	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O’Neil <i>Weapons of Math Destruction</i> excerpt • 	Reading Response
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noble <i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> excerpt • Turk “Generative AI like Midjourney creates images full of stereotypes” 	Reading Response
Week 4	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weil “You are not a parrot” • Bender et al “On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots” 	Reading Response
	Economics and the workplace		
	Day 2	TBA	TBA

Week 5	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noy and Zhang “Experimental evidence on the productivity effects of generative artificial intelligence” Dell’Acqua et al. “Navigating the Jagged Frontier” 	Reading Response
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mokri “The contradictions of Sam Altman, AI crusader” 	Reading Response
	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klein interview with Hwang 	Writing Challenge 3 Reading Response
	Human versus AI		
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O’Gieblyn <i>God, Human, Animal, Machine</i> excerpt 	Reading Response
Week 7	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aguera y Arcas “Artificial neural networks are making strides toward consciousness” Lemoine excerpt of conversation with LaMDA about sentience 	Reading Response Writing Challenge 4
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roose “Why a conversation with ChatGPT left me deeply unsettled” Sejnowski “Large language models and the reverse Turing test” excerpt 	Reading Response
Week 8	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch <i>Her</i> 	Reading Response
	What we know and how we know it		
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alemohammad et al., “Self-Consuming Generative Models Go MAD” Roose and Newton “AI is eating the internet” 	Reading Response
Week 9	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girotra, et al. “Ideas are Dimes a Dozen: Large Language Models for Idea Generation in Innovation” Doshi and Hauser “Generative Artificial Intelligence Enhances Creativity but Reduces the Diversity of Novel Content” 	Reading Response Proposal due
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klein “Beyond the ‘Matrix’ theory of the mind” 	Reading Response Writing Challenge 5
W	Alignment and the future of AI		

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hendrycks “Natural selection favors AIs over humans” • Sentient Syllabus Project “Priests and Badgers” 	Reading Response
Day 2		Draft of Research Paper Due
Finals Week Final Research Paper Due Thursday, March 21st by 5:00pm		

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