

What is AI?

Artificial intelligence, often referred to as AI, refers to a form of technology that performs tasks that historically have required human intelligence. This technology utilizes computer systems for the purposes of machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, robotics, and other related processes (Milicević, et. al, 2024).

What AI Resources Are There?

AI resources often are designed to meet a specific need; for example, some are for writing assistance, while others generate images. There are several AI resources available for individuals with varying levels of accessibility (some are free, while others charge a fee or require a subscription).

AI Assistants:



ChatGPT (Open AI)

- Chatbot
- Generates text and images
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free

Privacy: Saves your data, but doesn't share it



Claude (Anthropic)

- Chatbot
- Generates text, images, code, etc.
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free, with Pro version available for a fee

Privacy: Saves your data only with consent and doesn't share it



Perplexity AI

- Chatbot
- Generates text, images, code, and more
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free, with Pro version available for a fee

Privacy: Saves your data and shares it



Copilot (Microsoft)

- Chatbot
- Generates text and images
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free, with Pro version available for a fee

Privacy: Saves your data, but doesn't share it



Deepseek

- Chatbot
- Logical analysis
- Solves complex mathematical problems
- Assists with coding

Cost: Free, with Pro version available for a fee

Privacy: Based in China; saves your data, may share the data



Meta AI

- Chatbot
- Generates text and images
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free

Privacy: Saves your data and shares it



Gemini (Google)

- Chatbot
- Generates text and images
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free, with Advanced version available for a fee

Privacy: Saves your data and shares it



Grok (xAI)

- Chatbot
- Generates text, images, code, and more
- Searches the internet
- Analyzes text and documents

Cost: Free, with Advanced version available for a fee

Privacy: Saves your data and shares it

AI Use Guide

AI is a new and continually changing field; new tools are always being developed, and established tools are frequently being adjusted or discontinued.

Additional Writing-Specific AI Tools

- Jasper AI
- Grammarly
- Rytr
- Anyword
- Writesonic
- Sudowrite
- QuillBot

Additional Image Generator AI Tools

- DALL-E
- Adobe Firefly
- Jasper Art
- Canva
- Bing Image Creator
- Craiyon
- Leonardo AI

How Can AI Be Used?

The uses for AI overall are far too numerous to mention; however, below are some of the potential uses for educators and students (Milicević, et. al, 2024):

- Brainstorming ideas
- Creating an outline or storyboard
- Generating text, images, audio, etc.
- Getting feedback on ideas
- Creating learning content
- Analyzing data and providing insights
- Creating personalized learning plans
- Creating rubrics
- Creating outcomes and objectives
- Generating icebreakers
- Generating scenarios, samples, and examples

When to Use AI:

While AI can be extremely helpful, using it incorrectly or at the wrong time can result in unintended errors, misunderstanding, or potential plagiarism. Below is a quick guide for assessing whether AI should be used and in what capacity.

Step 1: Look at Your School's Policy Section

Below is Millersville University's policy on AI:

Plagiarism is defined as intentionally or unintentionally using ideas, images, words, or data from another source without crediting that source (including online sources). Students are required to accurately acknowledge any ideas, images, words, or data they use from another source by properly citing the source with (1) an in-text citation in the body of the paper and (2) a complete entry in the reference list at the end of the paper. By placing their name on an assignment/paper/project, students certify that, unless properly cited, all work is original.

AI Use Guide

Millersville University's Policy on AI Continued:

Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if they properly acknowledge/cite when doing one or all of the following:

1. quoting source's actual words, including words generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI);
2. using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, including those generated by an AI, even if they are completely paraphrased in their own words;
3. borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials, including those generated by an AI, unless the information is common knowledge.

These guidelines should be followed for all source types, including books, newspapers, pamphlets, journal articles, websites, AI-generated content, and other online resources.

Below is the University College's policy on AI:

Step 2: Look at Your Professor's Policy

Not all professors allow AI in their classes, and their policy may vary depending on the course they are teaching. **Check the syllabus** for information on the policy. If information is not available in the syllabus, **ask your professor directly**.

Step 3: Decide How to Use AI

Assuming your professor allows some form of AI to be used in their course, a decision must be made about which AI tool to use and how that tool will be used.

How to Use AI

- Getting started on assignments, such as brainstorming topic ideas or creating broad outlines (NOT generating text unless the assignment explicitly requires it)
- Getting feedback on drafts
- Having ideas explained in a less complex manner

How NOT to Use AI

- Having an assignment fully generated (you won't be learning and will be flagged for academic dishonesty)
- Using AI for research (AI pulls from the internet without discrimination, leading to incorrect or biased sources being used. There is also the risk of hallucinations, when AI provides false or fabricated information.)
- Using AI for an assignment and not properly citing that you used it.

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Step 4: Cite AI

If you use AI for an assignment, make sure that you cite it. Follow the citation style being used for your class.

APA citation: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

In-Text Citation: (Author, date)

Example: AI can generate dinner ideas such as beef and broccoli stir fry (OpenAI, 2025).

Reference: Author. Date. Title (month and day version) [Additional descriptions]. URL

Example: OpenAI. 2025. ChatGPT (March 31 version) [Large Language Model]. <https://chat.openai.com>

MLA citation: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai-updated-revised/>

In-Text Citation: (“Text used from prompt”)

Example: AI can generate dinner ideas such as beef and broccoli stir fry (“what are some ideas for a recipe?”).

Work Cited: “Text used for prompt” prompt. ChatGPT, model, Open AI, day month year, chat.openai.com.

Example: “What are some ideas for a recipe?” prompt. ChatGPT, model 4.0, OpenAI. 31 March 2025, chat.openai.com.

Chicago citation: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Documentation/faq0422.html>

Footnote Citation: 1. Text generated by ChatGPT, OpenAI, date, <https://chat.openai.com>

2. ChatGPT, response to “What are some ideas for a recipe?,” OpenAI, March 31, 2025, <https://chat.openai.com>

Example: 1. ChatGPT, response to “What are some ideas for a recipe?,” OpenAI, March 31, 2025, <https://chat.openai.com>.

Reference: ChatGPT. Response to “Text used from prompt.” OpenAI, month day, year, URL.

Example: ChatGPT. Response to “What are some ideas for a recipe?” OpenAI, March 31, 2025, <https://chat.openai.com>.

AI Use Guide

Step 5. Develop an Effective Prompt

In order to ensure you are getting the best information possible from AI, you must make sure you provide an effective prompt.

Effective prompts include the following:

Context- AI will need to know what kind of assignment you are working on, which field it is in, and what level of expertise is required

Task- You need to tell AI what you want it to do (analyze, generate, recommend, synthesize)

Specifics- Any instruction given to AI needs to be very clear and specific in order for AI to know what is expected to be included in the output, so ensure you include the intended audience

Simple language- Avoid using jargon with AI; instead, opt for a conversational approach

Expectations for the output- Tell AI how you want the output to be formatted and structured

Feedback- While using AI, you can ask it to help you create a prompt. Before submitting a prompt, you can also ask it what information it needs before creating its response (it will then tell you what additional information it requires for the best response). You can also provide feedback to a response it gives throughout the process by asking it to make adjustments if you don't get what you are looking for.

Prompt examples:

Mediocre prompt: What are some topic ideas for a paper on the Roman Empire?

Better prompt: What are some topic ideas for a five-page, undergraduate-level paper on the Roman Empire?
Provide five possible topics.

Best prompt: What are some topic ideas for a five-page, undergraduate-level paper on the Roman Empire? The paper is for an advanced, senior-level course designed to address the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, with special interest paid to military and political developments. Provide five possible topic ideas in a bulleted list with a brief, two-sentence note regarding why it may be a good topic.

AI Use Guide

Potential Issues and Concerns

Security

- Your information and data may be at risk.

Environmental Impact

- The computational power used to train AI requires substantial electricity and water, which can emit pollutants and strain water supplies and disrupt ecosystems; data centers use minerals and natural resources to produce hardware and contribute to electronic waste that emits hazardous materials

Sources

- Since AI draws from various sources on the internet, the information provided may not be accurate.
- AI may draw from copyrighted material without consent.
- Hallucinations can occur, which refers to AI providing incorrect or misleading information without a source.
- It may be difficult to determine where AI sourced information from.

Interpretation

- Depending on the AI's source training and programming, there is a risk that information will be presented in a biased manner.
- Because no standard guardrails (for ensuring ethical, reliable, and safe AI use) are in place for AI yet, unintentional bias, inaccurate information, or risks to privacy can occur. It is essential to be mindful of what information you share and to critically analyze and evaluate AI-generated content.

References

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- McMaster University Libraries. (2025, February 11). *McMaster Libguides: How Do I Cite Generative Ai?: Chicago (18th Ed.)*. McMaster LibGuides at McMaster University. <https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/cite-gen-ai/chicago>.
- Milicevic, V., Lazarova, L.K., & Pavlovic, M. J. (2024). The application of artificial intelligence in education: The current state and trends. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education*, 12(2). 259-272.
- OpenAI. (2025, March 2). ChatGPT response to [your name] on topics related to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. ChatGPT. <https://chat.openai.com>

