How to Create a Generative AI Policy

that's right for you

This guide is meant to serve as a resource, enabling you to create a generative AI policy that is right for you and your course.

How to use this guide

This guide is meant to provide a bit more context on the *importance* of having a strong, detailed, and thoughtful generative AI policy. Furthermore, this guide provides a helpful template for an ideal generative AI policy, alongside some exemplar content you can modify.

Part 1: Why are Generative AI Policies so important?

AI is everywhere - your rideshare app, your favorite e-commerce site, your social media feed, and more. What we can probably all agree on is that generative AI, like ChatGPT, feels a lot more magical. And its implication on student academic honesty is a bit more pervasive.

Generative AI policies are important, not just so we can "ban" the use of generative AI, but so we can be transparent and thoughtful with our students. A student who doesn't "cheat" usually has been given thorough expectations, understands the purpose of the assignment, and has been given resources for support. Let's help our students understand the purpose of learning the course content, and when, how, and why certain use cases of using generative AI would be helpful, and why others would be detrimental.

To further drive home the importance of AI policies, let's hear from some students:

Students share their thoughts about ChatGPT and AI tools for assignments

-CBC News

"Using [ChatGPT] is plagiarism. You're not actually learning anything. The point of writing an essay is showing that you've learned the content & that you're able to express that through your writing. I would never use it. Because I want to learn the techniques, and I value my marks and what I earn, not something that's given to me"

"My viewpoint on education has changed quite a bit. I've been in school for 13 plus years. And I realize that the workforce that we're entering after being students, it's fast-paced, and it's who can get the information there the fastest, the quickest, and in the most concise manner. And if you could identify tools that could help you do that while still having somewhat of a foundational understanding of what it's doing, I see it as more of an extension of our abilities as opposed to cheating."

"Suspicion, Cheating and Bans: A.I. Hits America's Schools"

-NYT's The Daily Podcast

Part 2: Examples of AI Policies

1. Boston University students put together a generative AI Policy, that they call "CDS Generative AI Assistance (GAIA) Policy". Click here to see the policy in whole.
2. If you plan on requiring use of AI, Ethan Mollick is a worthy educator to follow. Ethan required his students to use generative AI, and documented his learnings along the way.
3. Cleveland State University published a resource with 5 different faculty-developed generative AI policies. Click here to read those policies!

Part 3: Developing your own Generative AI Policy

When developing your generative AI policy, be sure to be as explicit as possible, and don't be vague when it comes to "the why". We've researched a few generative AI policies, and created a six-section template that should address just about every inquiry your student may have.

How to Create your Policy

For all six sections, the headers can be directly copied and pasted, and then all you need to do is either:

- Answer the question prompt(s) to write your own policy OR
- Copy & paste the provided answer(s) that aligns most with your sentiment, and modify as needed

1. "Generative Artificial Intelligence Use Policy"

The first section of your policy should answer the question *"Why does this course have a generative AI Policy?"*

Below are three possible answers, depending on your sentiment towards generative AI use in your course. Copy, paste, and edit the answer that best reflects your sentiment.

Prohibitive	Flexible	Required
This course has a generative AI policy because I believe in the importance of you personally engaging with the learning process. By prohibiting the use of generative AI, I aim to ensure that you fully immerse yourself in critical thinking, research, and original content creation. The emphasis is on nurturing your creativity and intellectual growth without relying on automated tools.	This course has a generative AI policy to acknowledge that technology, including AI, can play a supportive role in the learning and feedback process. While I don't mandate the use of generative AI, I am open to its application as long as you provide proper citations and acknowledge the assistance received from AI tools. The goal is to encourage you to explore various learning aids, including generative AI-powered tools, while still maintaining academic integrity.	This course has a generative AI policy because the use of AI has become an essential skill in today's AI-driven world. By requiring you to use generative AI, I am to equip you with relevant skills and tools necessary to thrive in a technology-driven society. Emphasizing the mastery of generative AI should empower you to harness its potential, enhancing your problem-solving abilities and preparing you for future challenges and opportunities.

2. "Generative AI in this Course"

The second section of your policy should actually answer _two_ questions:

1. _"Is use of generative AI in this course required? Is use of generative IA in the course allowed?"_
2. _"If it is required and/or allowed, how specifically will/can students use generative AI?"_

Below are three possible answers to the first question, depending on your sentiment towards generative AI use in your course. Copy, paste, and edit the answer that best reflects your sentiment.

Prohibitive

I firmly believe in the value of students engaging in the learning process without relying on AI-generated content. I want you to develop your critical thinking and problem-solving skills independently, owning your learning journey from start to finish. Therefore, the use of generative AI is not allowed in this course.

Flexible

The use of generative AI in this course is allowed as long as you properly cite the AI-generated content and use it responsibly. While it is not a requirement, I recognize that AI can serve as a useful tool to support your learning experience. You may choose to use generative AI to gain insights, receive feedback, or generate ideas, but always remember to give credit where it's due and ensure your work reflects your own originality.

Required

The use of generative AI is required in this course. As an instructor, I believe that mastering generative AI is essential for staying relevant in an AI-driven world. Throughout the course, you will learn to effectively leverage AI technologies to enhance your problem-solving capabilities and creativity. Embracing generative AI will prepare you for the challenges and opportunities presented by AI, giving you a competitive edge in your academic and professional pursuits.

Here are different ways instructors have either allowed or instructed students to use generative AI...

If generative AI is required and/or allowed, feel free to pull from the following ideas to craft this portion of your policy:

1. **Use it as a brainstorming tool.** Generative AI can help spark ideas and provide examples that can help you get started on writing assignments.
   - You share the paper topic & thesis with AI, and you ask AI for a few ideas for a paper title
   - You should not use AI to generate any content for your paper, YOU should be the author of your paper's content
   - If you use generative AI to write a title for your paper, please disclose this in your AI-disclosure statement
2. **Build outlines for a paper**: with a short description and a thesis statement, ask AI to provide an outline for the paper
   - Make sure to thoroughly review the outline and make modifications as necessary. Generative AI is known for lack of accuracies
   - If you use generative AI to create an outline, please disclose this in your AI-disclosure statement
3. **Ask for explanations**. You can ask generative AI to explain concepts or summarize background information on a topic you are studying. This can help their understanding, especially in regards to difficult text or concepts, but you still need to do the learning yourself!
   - "Explain Beowulf Chapter 13 to me like I'm 5"
   - "I'm having a hard time understanding [x], can you share a few analogies that can help me better understand this concept?"
4. **Get writing suggestions.** You can get writing feedback from AI. Ask for grammar review, readability feedback, and the strength of your thesis/arguments. But the actual writing should be done by you, the student.
   - "Read my paper and let me know if you read any grammatical errors"
   - "I'm writing a paper with the thesis statement [x], can you give me feedback on my thesis statement?"
   - "I'm writing a paper with the thesis statement [x], and here are my arguments. Please give me feedback on my arguments, and let me know if there are any logical fallacies present?"
   - If you use generative AI for writing feedback, please disclose this in your AI-disclosure statement
5. **Get writing feedback using your rubric**. You can upload the assignment rubric, the writing prompt, and your paper and ask the AI to highlight any missing rubric categories or any rubric category that needs further development. You can also come to office hours for this same review, from me, your Instructor :)
   - If you do use AI as a "grader/reviewer", please disclose this in your AI-disclosure statement

3. "Data Privacy and Security"

The third section of your policy should provide terms of service for any recommended or required generative AI platform.

If you are not allowing nor requiring generative AI, you can skip this section! If you are, here's some text you can add:

"Every platform has its own terms of use and will approach data privacy and security differently. Please be mindful of these platforms' terms. I am requiring the use of [platform]. [Click here] to access their terms of use. If you have any questions or concerns about data privacy & security, please contact me via email as soon as possible."

OpenAI (ChatGPT) Terms

Bard Terms

Claude Terms of Service

Your institution's AI policy or general handbook may include a data privacy and security statement. Feel free to include that here.

4. "Generative AI Ethics and Academic Honesty"

The fourth section of your policy should answer two core questions:

1. **How should students disclose the use of generative AI on their assignments?**
2. **What happens if a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately?**

First, we'll provide some examples to the first question, "how should students disclose the use of generative AI?"

Prohibitive	Flexible	Required
You won't answer this question, as the use of generative AI is prohibited in your course!	If you choose to use generative AI as a learning aid, it is essential to disclose its use on your assignments to maintain academic integrity. If you use generative AI, make sure to add "Generative AI Disclosure:" at the bottom of your assignment. Your disclosure should share what program you used and how you used it.. Properly citing the AI-generated content allows me to understand your process better and gives credit to the assistance received from these tools.	For assignments where generative AI use is required, it is imperative to disclose the use of AI throughout your work. Clearly indicate which parts of the assignment were generated with the help of AI tools. Proper disclosure showcases your transparency and demonstrates your proficiency in using AI to augment your work. This practice also aligns with professional standards in an AI-driven world. Always remember to provide accurate citations for the AI-generated content to avoid any potential issues with plagiarism. In your disclosure, you must also provide the link to your AI sessions with the chatbot.

If you are asking your students to disclose use of generative AI, be specific. Model this for them! Here's something you can add, if you'd like.:

"If you're wondering 'how do I disclose the use of generative AI', it's simple. At the end of a paper or assignment, add a 'Generative AI Disclosure'. Make sure to link the chat history. I've included an example below:

'Generative AI Disclosure: This assignment was supported by use of the AI platform, ChatGPT. Specifically, I used GPT 3.5 to assist in the title creation (link here), although the final title was modified slightly. I also used ChatGPT to give me grammar feedback (link here). I implemented the chatbot's recommendations.'

Second, we'll provide some examples to the second question, *"What happens if a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately?"*

Prohibitive

If a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately in this course, I will investigate the matter thoroughly. If the suspicion is confirmed, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken. The consequences may range from a warning and a deduction of points on the assignment to more severe penalties, depending on the severity of the violation. As the use of AI is prohibited, it is essential for students to adhere to the course policies to ensure a fair and equitable learning environment for all.

Flexible

If a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately without proper disclosure, I will conduct a fair and transparent investigation into the matter. It is essential for students to be open and honest about their use of AI in assignments. If the suspicion is confirmed and the student failed to disclose the AI use, the appropriate course of action will be taken. This may involve discussing the issue with the student, providing guidance on proper AI usage, and potentially a revision of the assignment with proper disclosure. My goal is to help students understand the importance of academic integrity and responsible use of AI.

Required

If a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately or without proper disclosure in this course, it will be thoroughly investigated. As the use of AI is a required skill in this class, any misuse or lack of transparency is taken seriously. Depending on the severity of the situation, consequences may range from a warning and a chance to rectify the issue to more severe penalties such as grade reductions or academic probation. My priority is to uphold academic integrity and ensure that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to develop their AI-related skills.

5. "Bias, Discrimination, and Falsehood"

The fifth section of your generative AI policy to students should explain how generative AI works and how it has a propensity for bias, discrimination and falsehood. Note how they should review, fact-check, and audit all generative AI outputs

Below are three possible answers, depending on your sentiment towards generative AI use in your course. Copy, paste, and edit the answer that best reflects your sentiment.

Prohibitive

In this course, I don't allow the use of generative AIs. It's essential to understand that generative AIs, while powerful, can be less than perfect in their outputs. As a result, I want you to focus on developing your critical thinking skills and conducting research independently. Avoid relying on AI-generated content, and instead, engage with the course material by presenting your original ideas and insights.

Flexible

While generative AIs are allowed as learning aids, remember that they are not flawless. Expect some imperfections due to biases or limitations in the AI model's understanding. Always fact-check and verify the AI-generated content by cross-referencing it with reputable sources. Additionally, exercise critical thinking to identify and address any inaccuracies that might arise.

Required

As generative AI is a required skill in this course, it's essential to recognize that AI outputs may not always be perfect. When using AI-generated content, think critically and apply fact-checking techniques to ensure accuracy. You must be aware of potential errors or biases in the AI outputs and take steps to verify information from reliable sources. As you advance your skills in using generative AI, consider regular auditing to ensure its performance meets your academic needs and standards.

If you plan on permitting or requiring generative AI, provide your students resources for thorough fact checking (text, websites, experts, office hours):

"If you're wondering how to best fact check content generated by AI, consider: [textbook], [website], [expert]"

6. "Continual Learning, Feedback, and Communication"

The final section of your generative AI policy should answer a few questions. We're purposefully going to *not* give you example answers, as we feel strongly this portion of the policy should be 100% authentic to you, the instructor.

Here are the questions you need to answer:

- How can students give feedback on this policy and generative AI use in your course?
- How will you personally keep up with developments in generative AI and generative AI education?
- How do you (the instructor) personally plan on using generative AI this term?
- How often do you plan on auditing and updating this policy?

About the authors...
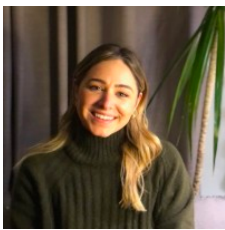
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During her four years in the classroom as a high school chemistry & physics teacher, Kelsey found herself using technology daily to captivate her reluctant students. Looking to widen the scope of her impact on education and help other educators see technology as a superpower, she joined Packback in 2017 as an Experience Manager. It's been a curiosity fueled journey since!
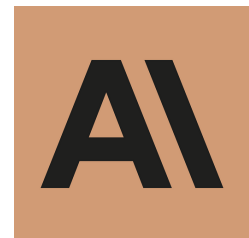
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As a former middle school ELA teacher, Ri was dedicated to finding innovative ways to engage in curriculum, amplify student voices and spark a love of reading and writing in every student. Now, as a Packback Curriculum Consultant, they teach higher ed faculty how to use AI-powered technology to do the same.

Claude.AI

AI disclosure: This guide was written with the help of Claude.AI, a generative AI platform. Claude was used to generate an to our recommended generative AI policy *outline*, and the human authors edited and modified the provided outline.

Claude provided the first draft of the example policy language, which was reviewed and edited by the human authors.