



Strategies to Consider if You Suspect A.I. Misuse in Your Course

The purpose of this Vitality is to consider a comprehensive approach on how we might address a student's suspected misuse of A.I. in their coursework, including gathering evidence, engaging in conversation, understanding the student's perspective, exploring underlying reasons for suspected A.I. misuse, and taking appropriate educative and/or corrective actions.

The November issue of [Vitality on Detecting A.I.](#) noted the importance of establishing clear and written course policies regarding how students can and cannot use A.I. for their coursework as the first step in maintaining academic integrity. Even then, we face a significant challenge in helping our students learn how to document and provide evidence of their authorial process. Therefore, in addition to detailing the types of A.I. tools and their use(s) that are permitted or prohibited in our courses, we might also want to provide students guidelines/examples of the kinds of documentation they can collect or will be required to turn in with their assignment(s). Helping students understand and adhere to codes of academic honesty requires our ongoing effort and commitment with reminders tied to assignments, projects, and exams (Lang, 2013).

If you suspect A.I. misuse in your course, consider the following process that may be similar to one you already use:

- **Approach the Conversation with the Student from a Place of Interest and Support:** Consider avoiding accusations at the outset to focus on helping the student learn from the experience (Lang, 2013).
- **Gather Evidence:** Carefully review the student's work and identify any aspects that raise concerns about inappropriate A.I. use. This may include asking the student to offer evidence of their authorship, authorial process, and/or original work.
- **Talk with the Student:** Schedule a meeting with the student to discuss your concerns, maintaining a respectful, non-confrontational tone foregrounding the educative purpose of the conversation.
- **Understand the Student's Perspective:** Within the context of your course policy, explain to the student the aspects of their work that are of concern to you regarding their suspected misuse of A.I. Ask the student to explain any use of A.I. in the conceiving, researching, writing, and/or refining of the work in question. Actively listen to their explanation.
- **Explore Underlying Reasons:** If you cannot rule out misuse of A.I. and/or use is confirmed, try to learn why the student used A.I. What motivated their use? Take note of reasons related to the difficulty of content, unfamiliarity with discipline-based writing, their workload, or stress. For example, students may be confused about the material, lack clarity about the assignment, be overcommitted, or experience fear of failure.



Once the reason(s) for suspected A.I. misuse is understood, appropriate educative and/or corrective actions can be taken. Addressing misuse of A.I. requires a multifaceted approach

that is fundamentally predicated upon first educating students about A.I., its appropriate role within the course guided by your course policies, assignment guidelines and grading schema as well as [Villanova University's Code of Academic Integrity](#).

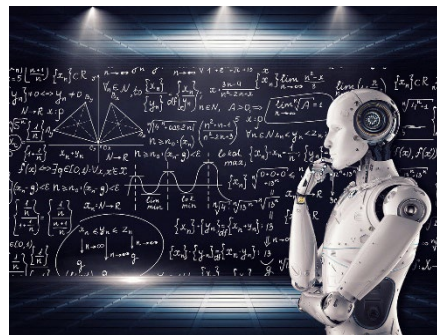
It is vital to consider actions focused first upon helping students learn from the experience and preventing future A.I. misuse as students will need to be prepared to navigate a world where A.I. increasingly plays important roles. Having uncovered why a student may have used A.I. despite course policy, you may consider the following educative and/or corrective actions:

Help the Student Take Personal Responsibility: If the student lacked clarity about the course policies and/or the requirements of an assignment, revisit the course policies and clarify with the student their responsibility for knowing and adhering to these policies.

Encourage the Student to Seek Out Support:

For example, if the student is struggling with the material or time management, identify with the students what supports, such as tutoring, study groups, writing support, academic coaching, and/or other University resources they might draw upon and encourage them to use them.

Discuss Ethics in A.I. Use: Discuss with the student the ethical implications of responsible A.I. use in an academic setting and the expectations for their post-graduate careers.



Document the Conversation: Maintain a record of the conversation, documenting key points discussed, and any agreed-upon actions, letting the student know that the conversation will be documented within the context of the course. This documentation may be useful in case further action is needed or if the situation reoccurs.

Report a Violation of the Academic Integrity Code: Per Villanova University's Code of Academic Integrity, if a grade penalty is given for integrity reasons, then the faculty member is required to report a violation of the Academic Integrity Code.

When we address A.I. misuse with a student our approach needs to align with Villanova's Code of Academic Integrity that calls us to consider our roles as educators and approach a student's suspected misuse of A.I. as an opportunity for their learning and growth. Indeed, addressing A.I. misuse in these ways will likely present us opportunities to help students understand both the boundaries of acceptable A.I. use and the importance of academic integrity, guiding them towards using A.I. ethically and effectively in their academic pursuits and beyond.

How have you engaged with students around A.I.? Share a learning activity/assignment by [emailing VITAL](#) so we can continue the conversation in future issues.

Upcoming: Faculty Forum on A.I. and Teaching, April 10th 9:15am to 11:00am followed by lunch, Dougherty Hall

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Reference: Lang, J. (2013). *Cheating lessons: Learning from academic dishonesty*. Harvard University Press.