

CITING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN ACADEMIC WORK

WHY CITING AI MATTERS

When you use artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, or other generative AI systems in academic work, it is important to acknowledge and cite how the tool was used. Just like books, articles, and websites, AI tools can influence ideas, wording, or explanations used in your assignments.

CITING AI HELPS MAINTAIN:

- Academic integrity
- Transparency in your writing process
- Credibility of your work

Always check your course syllabus and instructor's guidelines before using AI tools in assignments.

STEP 1: CHECK YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S AI POLICY

Before using AI tools:

- Review your course syllabus
 - Confirm whether AI use is allowed
 - Ask your instructor if you are unsure
- Some courses may prohibit AI use entirely, while others may allow it for brainstorming, editing, or research support.

STEP 2: ACKNOWLEDGE HOW YOU USED AI

In many cases, instructors may ask you to include a short AI acknowledgement statement explaining how the tool helped you.

Example Acknowledgement Statement:

I used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to help generate ideas and outline possible topics for this assignment. The prompts used included asking the tool to summarize key themes related to the topic. The output was used only for brainstorming, and all writing in this assignment was completed and verified by me.

Your acknowledgement should include:

- ✓ The AI tool used
- ✓ How you used it
- ✓ The prompts (if requested)
- ✓ How the output contributed to your work

This statement may be included in:

- A cover page
- A reflection section
- An appendix

STEP 3: CITE AI WHEN YOU USE ITS CONTENT

If you quote, paraphrase, or use ideas from AI-generated text, you should include a citation just like any other source.

EXAMPLE: APA STYLE

In-text citation example:

ChatGPT explained that the idea of being “left-brained” or “right-brained” is often considered an oversimplification (OpenAI, 2023).

Reference example:

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (March 14 version) [Large language model]. <https://chat.openai.com/>

EXAMPLE: MLA STYLE

If you use text generated by an AI tool, MLA recommends citing the prompt used in the conversation.

In-text citation example:

The story explores identity and self-expression for women in the nineteenth century (“Summarize the short story”).

Works Cited example:

“Summarize the short story ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Include main themes.”
ChatGPT, OpenAI, 24 May 2023, <https://chat.openai.com/>

IMPORTANT REMINDER

AI tools can sometimes generate incorrect or fabricated information, including fake sources.

Always:

- ✓ Verify facts with reliable sources
- ✓ Double-check references suggested by AI
- ✓ Use scholarly databases when conducting research

Quick Checklist for Using AI in Academic Work Before submitting an assignment that involves AI:

- ✓ Confirm AI use is allowed in the course
- ✓ Reflect on why you used AI
- ✓ Include an acknowledgment statement if required
- ✓ Cite AI content when used in your writing
- ✓ Verify information with trusted sources

KEY TAKEAWAY

Artificial intelligence can be a helpful learning tool, but you remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of your work.

NEED HELP?

Purdue OWL – AI Citation Guidelines
NCTC Library – Research & Citation Help
Ask Your Instructor

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HOW TO PROMPT AI EFFECTIVELY FOR STUDYING AND LEARNING

WHAT IS A PROMPT?

A **prompt** is the question or instruction you give to an AI tool such as ChatGPT, Copilot, or other generative AI systems.

The quality of the AI's response often depends on **how clearly and specifically you ask your question**.

A vague prompt usually produces vague answers, while a clear and detailed prompt leads to more helpful responses.

WHY PROMPTING SKILLS MATTER

Learning how to write effective prompts can help students:

- Understand difficult concepts
- Generate ideas for assignments
- Create practice questions for studying
- Explore topics from different perspectives
- Improve critical thinking and research skills

AI should **support your learning process**, not replace it.

TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER PROMPTS

BE SPECIFIC

Instead of:

"Explain biology"

Try:

"Explain photosynthesis in simple terms for a college biology student."

PROVIDE CONTEXT

Instead of:

"Help me write an essay"

Try:

"I am writing a 3-page essay about climate change impacts on agriculture. Can you help me brainstorm possible arguments?"

ASK FOR EXAMPLES

Example prompt:

"Give me three examples of how psychological stress affects college students."

REQUEST STEP-BY-STEP EXPLANATIONS

Example prompt:

"Explain step-by-step how to solve this algebra problem."

ASK AI TO QUIZ YOU

Example prompt:

"Create five practice quiz questions about the causes of World War I."

PROMPTS STUDENTS CAN USE FOR STUDYING

Understanding Concepts

Explain the concept of supply and demand in simple terms with an example.

Creating Study Questions

Create a short practice quiz about cellular respiration with multiple choice questions.

Exploring a Topic

What are three major causes of the Great Depression?

Breaking Down Difficult Material

Summarize the key points of cognitive behavioral therapy.

Testing Your Knowledge

Ask me five questions about photosynthesis to test my understanding.

PROMPTS TO AVOID

AI should not replace your own work or thinking.

Avoid prompts like:

✗ "Write my essay about climate change."

✗ "Complete my homework assignment."

✗ "Write a research paper for me."

Using AI this way may violate course policies and academic integrity expectations.

ALWAYS VERIFY AI RESPONSES

Artificial intelligence tools may produce incorrect or misleading information. Before using AI responses in academic work:

- ✓ Verify information with textbooks or scholarly sources
- ✓ Check facts in research databases
- ✓ Review course materials or lecture notes

EXAMPLE OF IMPROVING A PROMPT

Weak Prompt

Tell me about psychology.

Better Prompt

Explain the difference between classical conditioning and operant conditioning with examples.

Best Prompt

Explain the difference between classical conditioning and operant conditioning with simple examples a college freshman would understand.

KEY TAKEAWAY

AI works best when you ask thoughtful questions, verify information, and use the tool to support your learning.

Good prompts lead to better answers — but your critical thinking is still the most important part of learning.

NEED HELP?

For more information about responsible AI use at NCTC:

- Review your course syllabus
- Visit the NCTC AI Resources page

STUDENT GUIDE TO USING AI RESPONSIBLY

WHAT THIS MEANS AT NCTC

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT and other generative AI platforms can help support learning, brainstorming, and studying. However, AI should never replace your own thinking or academic work unless your instructor explicitly allows it.

At North Central Texas College, **faculty determine how AI may be used in their courses**, and students should always follow the guidelines provided in their syllabus or assignment instructions.

Using AI in ways that violate course expectations may be considered a **violation of academic integrity**.

AI CAN BE HELPFUL FOR

Students may use AI tools to support learning in ways such as:

- ✓ Brainstorming ideas for assignments
- ✓ Explaining difficult concepts
- ✓ Generating practice questions or quizzes
- ✓ Improving study guides or outlines
- ✓ Reviewing writing for clarity or grammar
- ✓ Exploring possible research topics

AI should support your learning — not replace your work.

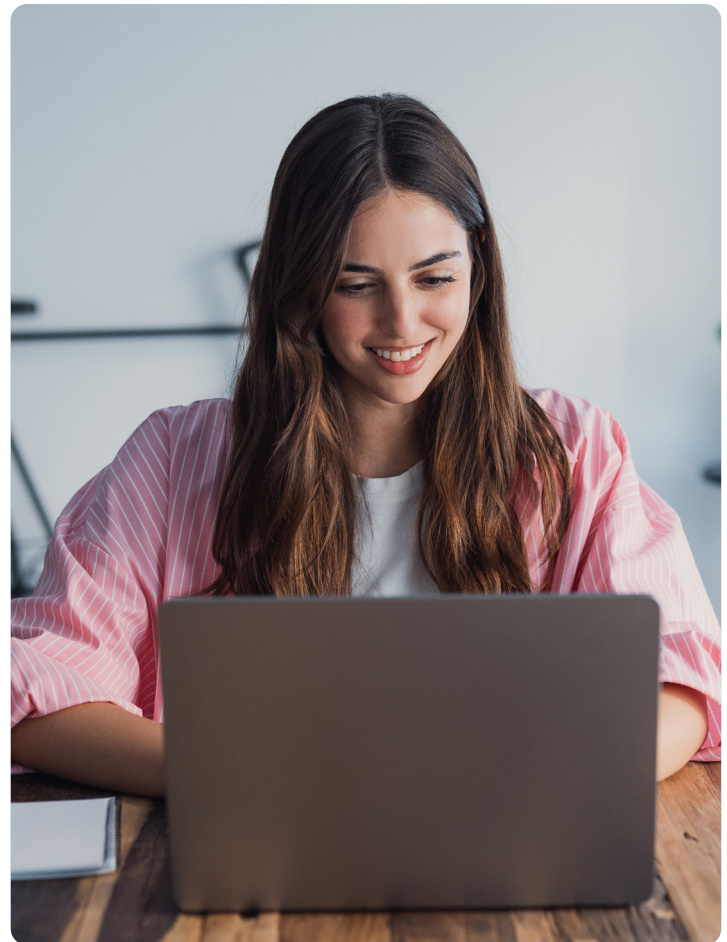
USE AI RESPONSIBLY

When using AI tools, students should:

- ✓ Always follow your instructor's AI policy in the syllabus
- ✓ Verify information from AI with reliable sources
- ✓ Use AI as a learning aid, not as a substitute for your own work
- ✓ Cite AI use when required by your instructor
- ✓ Ask your instructor if you are unsure whether AI use is allowed

AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ Submitting AI-generated work as your own
- ✗ Using AI on assignments or exams where it is prohibited
- ✗ Copying AI text without editing or verifying accuracy
- ✗ Assuming AI responses are always correct
- ✗ Relying entirely on AI instead of learning the material



REMEMBER

AI tools can sometimes produce incorrect, biased, or outdated information.

You are always responsible for the accuracy and originality of your work.

NEED HELP?

If you have questions about AI use in a course:

- Review your **course syllabus**
- Ask your **instructor for clarification**
- Contact the **NCTC eLearning Department**