Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence

In 1967, the first modern handheld calculator was introduced. Adults worried that people would lose their ability to compute or to think logically. Society had to change the way it thought about math and logic and how it was taught.

In 1990, we got the first search engine and progressed through to Google. Adults worried that people would lose their ability to memorize anything. Society had to change the way it thought about information, memorization, and the nature of truth.

In 2022, ChatGPT was publicly released. Adults are worried that college students are now able to go through their degree programs without writing or thinking anything for themselves. Society is going to have to change the way it thinks about communication and the ways in which students can demonstrate understanding.

I am (maybe weirdly) excited by ChatGPT. It is going to free up bandwidth in our currently traumatized and overloaded brains. It is going to make teaching and learning more challenging, and I like challenges. In some cases, it is going to make your writing easier for me to read, and I like that, too.

I am also confused, concerned, and a little bit sad.

We are not going to live in a bubble where we pretend that ChatGPT does not exist, or that you won’t be able to use it whenever you please after graduation.

We’re going to have to figure this out together:

What is ChatGPT good for?
What is it not good for?
What can you trust?
How can you check?

I don’t have all the answers to these questions right now.

Here’s what I do know for today:

- You may not type a question into ChatGPT, exactly copy and paste its response, and turn it into me as your own.
- You may not use ChatGPT without disclosing to me somewhere in your assignment that you have done so.
- All strings of four or more words that are coming from ChatGPT need to be delineated in green font.
○ All tables, figures, images that come from ChatGPT need to be delineated in
green font (like in the caption, or in a comment.)
○ There will be times when using ChatGPT is totally fine and possibly encouraged.
If I’m ever unclear, or you are unsure, you can always ask me.
○ We will actively discuss ways to use ChatGPT in ways that are ethical, accurate,
and useful.
○ Whenever there’s a rule about ChatGPT, it applies to all forms of artificial
intelligence.

Telling the truth is important, and I want to support you in the ways that I can. I have a lot
of respect for people who are honest about their mistakes even when it’s difficult. It is
much easier for current and past unethical situations to be handled in honest,
non-judgmental conversation, and I hope you’ll feel safe engaging in those with me if
ever needed. For instances in which we cannot agree, or are unsure of a norm, we’ll
consult the Siena Academic Integrity policy.