Authentic Assessment in the Age of AI

Steve Kaufman, M.Ed.

These are trying times.

University students feel 'anxious, confused and distrustful' about AI in th

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Unspla

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TIME

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The New York Times

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Teaching@Sydney

ELO

Cente

Assessment, Teaching tips / 12 July, 2023

What to do about assessments if we can't out-design or out-run AI?

by Danny Liu and Adam Bridgeman

Should AI be

Stu

tools make them better at their jobs.

by Amanda Sturgill | June 24, 2025

STEVEN MINTZ

Higher Ed Is Sleepwalking Toward Obsolescence — And AI Won't Be the Cause, Just the Accelerant

AI Has Exposed Higher Ed's Hollow Core — The University Must Reinvent Itself or Fade

STEVEN MINTZ

OCT 21, 2025

AI did not break higher education.

It simply made the rot impossible to ignore.

And how have universities responded?

With silence.

Without campus-wide forums.

Without a shared vision.

Without clear policies.

Without **redesign of pedagogy**.

AI has simply exposed how much of the existing model is
already hollow:

- Lectures that students skip—and no one notices.
- Assigned readings that no student completes—because nothing depends on them.
- Essays that do not demand serious research or critical thinking.
- Teaching reduced to content delivery—the one thing AI automates flawlessly.

"The uncomfortable truth is that AI has revealed the emptiness that increasingly lies at the heart of a college education."

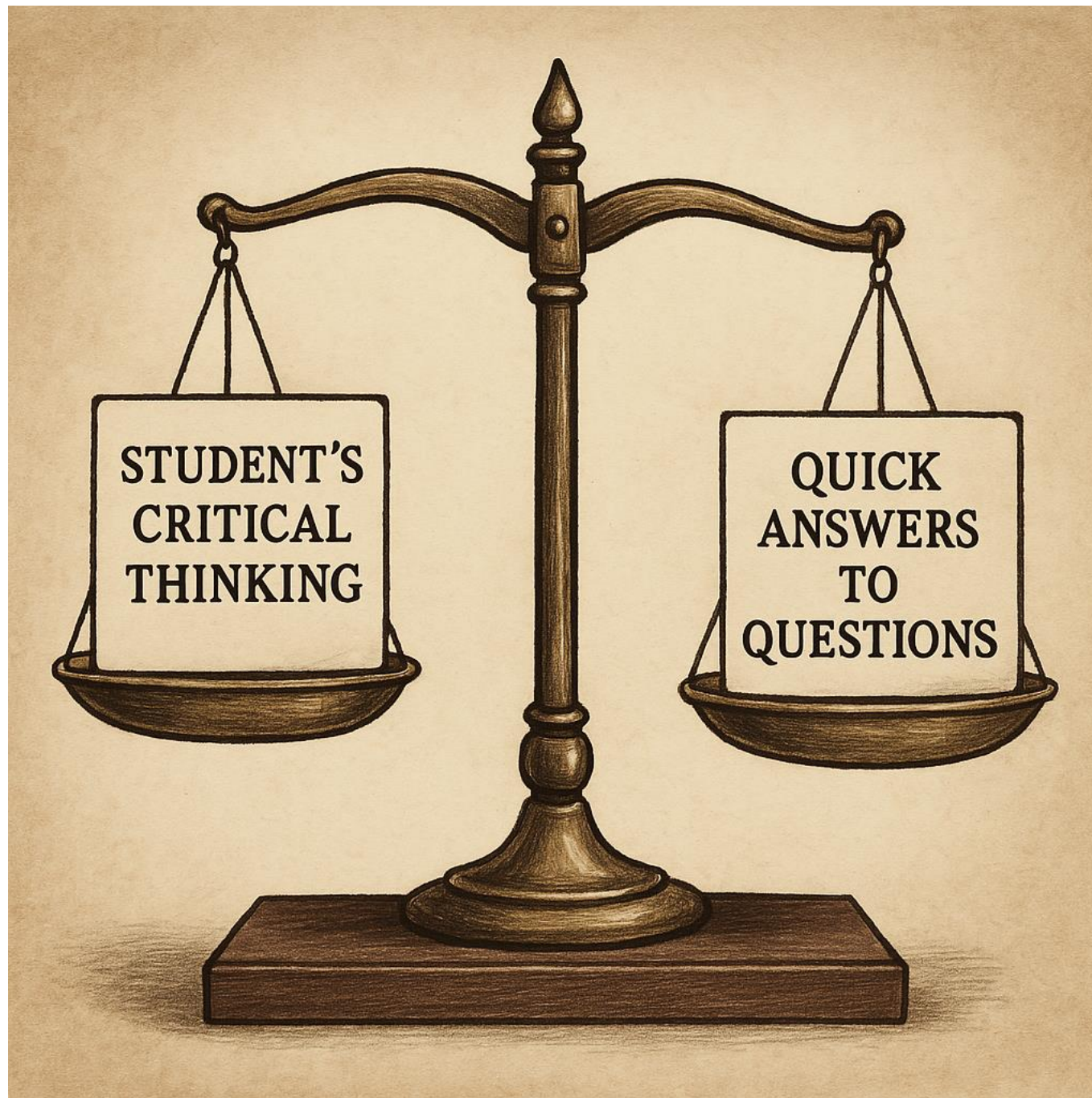- Steven Mintz | Professor of History, The University of Texas at Austin

"Steve, I just don't know anymore.
It seems like 100% of my student's papers are AI generated."

One of my very frustrated faculty members

"I feel like all I'm doing is grading a machine."

- Another one of my very frustrated faculty members

If a student submits a flawless essay that sounds AI-generated, what would you do first?

Run it through an AI detection tool   0%

Ask the student to explain their writing process   0%

Compare it to earlier work or writing samples   0%

Accept it unless there's direct evidence of misconduct   0%

Require a follow-up assignment (e.g., oral defense)   0%

We need a common definition.

How do you define Authentic Assessment?

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Which of the following would you consider the most important feature of an authentic assessment?

It mirrors real-world applications — **0%**

It encourages student choice and creativity — **0%**

It requires process and reflection — **0%**

It's difficult for AI to complete independently — **0%**

It promotes collaboration and iteration — **0%**

I'll give it a shot...

Authentic assessment refers to the evaluation of student learning through tasks that reflect real-world challenges, require the application of knowledge and skills in meaningful contexts, and encourage original thought. These assessments often **emphasize process**, problem-solving, and transfer of learning beyond the classroom.

The question we need to answer:

"How can we design assignments where AI becomes a helpful tool (a value-add), not a replacement for the student's thinking?"

Example:

The Privilege Walk

Students answer 50 questions.

1. If you are right-handed, take one step forward.   1

2. If English is your first language, take one step forward.   1

3. If one or both of your parents have a college degree, take one step forward.   1

4. If you can find Band-Aids at mainstream stores designed to blend in with or match your skin tone, take one step forward.   1

5. If you rely, or have relied primarily on public transportation, take one step back.   -1

6. If you have attended previous schools with people, you felt were like yourself, take one step forward   1

7. If you constantly feel unsafe walking alone at night, take one step back.   -1

8. If your household employs help as servants, gardeners, etc., take one step forward.   1

9. If you can move through the world without fear of assault, take one step forward.   1

10. If you studied the culture of your ancestors in elementary school, take one step forward.   1

11. If you often felt that your parents were too busy to spend time with you, take one step back.   -1

12. If you were ever made fun of or bullied for something you could not change or was beyond your control, take one step back.   -1

13. If your family has ever left your homeland or entered another country not of your own free will, take one step back.   -1

14. If you never think twice about calling the police when trouble occurs, take one step forward.   1

15. If your family owns a computer, take one step forward.   1

How do you create this as an ONLINE assignment?

The Privilege Walk

Instructions

1. Download the Privilege Walk Excel Sheet and answer each of the 50 questions. It will auto-calculate your score at the bottom.

2. Grab a flag from the box above and click-and-drag it to where you are on the opportunity trail. This should correspond with your score from the Excel document.

3. Take note of where you are in comparison to your peers. You should revisit this activity closer

Privilege Walk Activity 👍 ⌄

🔑 Includes assessment.

The purpose of the virtual privilege walk is to bring awareness privilege and oppression shape lived experiences. This activity emotions, surprises, and new insights, ar meaning from the experience.

In your reflection, please address the fol

1. Personal Reaction

   ○ What was it like for you to partici

   ○ Did you experience any feelings o or awareness as the walk progres:

   ○ Were there moments when you b background, or experiences?

2. Patterns of Privilege and Oppress

   ○ What stood out to you about the the group?

   ○ Did you notice any patterns relate ability, or other social identities?

   ○ How did the activity help you see operate at both individual and str

3. Connection to Social Work Values

   ○ How does this exercise connect t recognizing the inherent dignity a person-in-environment, and work

   ○ How might reflecting on privilege and oppression strengthen your ability to practice cultural humility?

Privilege Walk Activity ⌄

Privilege Walk Activity ⌄

I began answering the questions without much thought. About halfway through, it occurred to me that my answers were more complicated than I anticipated. The questions brought up things from my childhood and adulthood. I was surprised to see that my score was -3 after answering all the questions.

When I examine the distribution of the group, it appears to be evenly distributed throughout the steps, but no one crossed over to the top half of the steps. The activity is a reminder that we have all had different experiences, oppressions, and levels of privilege.

As social workers, we are working to level the playing field by working toward social justice. Social justice limits oppression and privilege, enabling us to achieve equality. I think it's also important to note that you cannot tell what a person has been through by looking at them. This is where recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of every person that we engage with as social workers.

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"All of this AI stuff is exciting... but how can I use this in a way that actually gets my students to think?

- A less frustrated faculty member, but let's say cautiously optimistic?

Interview with an Emperor

By Stephen Kaufman

Have a conversation with a famous ancient emperor using primary sources.

Interview Cleopatra

Interview Hammurabi

Interview Augustus

Interview Ashoka

The Interview with King Hammurabi

Congratulations Evi!

I'm excited to share with you that you will have the opportunity to sit down and interview the legendary King Hammurabi on his laws! This is your big break, so (as an aspiring journalist) make sure to prepare for this interview accordingly. You will want to reference the following primary sources as a part of your research into your subject.

Here is the link to the law code: Hyperlink to the Law Code of Hammurabi.

Of all the clauses, we will concentrate on those that relate to the household (marriage, divorce, property, economic power, etc.).

Here is a list of the clauses:
6-7, 117-119, 129-139, 151-158, 166-167, 170-171, 177-180.

To prepare for this assignment, read the primary source carefully, annotate, and get ready to ask questions. While reading, look for segments of the text that can be used as evidence for substantiating your answer to the following questions.

1. What family relationships are the main focus of these laws?
2. Who owns and has the ability to manage property within the family?
3. What can we say about women's status (financially and otherwise)?

Suggestion: keep notes on these questions and the discussions. Your notes will make it easier for you to use these sources (i.e., reference them).

After you are done with your preparation, engage with King Hammurabi, and ask questions (at least 5 questions) to clarify and discuss the various aspects of the law code. You can question and challenge (respectfully) his policies and/or laws.

After finishing your interview, **make a pdf of the entire interview transcript, and submit it in the associated discussion topic** along with a **paragraph or video note** in which you critique your interaction with the AI (200-300 words).

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Interview Ashoka

Ask anything

Hammurabi Interview ⌄

After interacting with the Emperor Hammurabi AI I must say I have been impressed with some of the responses I gave and also its ability to clarify my follow up questions. I asked a few questions ranging from offense types, penalties, inheritance, and even some laws I thought were contradictory. In the case of contradiction the AI tried to defend the decisions mostly based off authority in the family and household stability. For some of the laws though it seems it is just left up to the gods! The interaction helped me better understand the mindset of Hammurabi in terms of his social, legal and familial beliefs. About the questions posed in the assignment. It seems that the relationship between a man and his wife as well as the one between him and his sons seems to be the focus of these laws. Similarly, Man, Wife, and sons all can manage property within the family. But obtaining the right to manage property is a different subject. Women's status in Mesopotamian society honestly wasn't that much different than that of men in my opinion. It appeared to me that most of the laws regarding marriage had the same punishments for men as they had for women. But for laws regarding the distribution of wealth, land, finances etc. The father, husband, or sons seems to have complete control over that. Overall, I found the AI to be a helpful tool for understanding the Mesopotamian legal system.

📄 Hammurabi Questions Tran... (3.86 MB)

Interview with King Hammurabi ⌄

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My interview with Hammurabi changed the way I view his code. I was aware, while studying his code, that I was examining a 3700-year-old document from a 2025 perspective. That being said, before the interview, I found the laws to be surprisingly logical, comprehensive, and even enlightened. I understood that the divide between 37 centuries and vastly different cultures gave these laws a harsh and repressive appearance. I thought I had adjusted for that, but was still bothered by the diminished role and unequal treatment of women, my perception of the value of property over life, and the dominance of the male heads of the households. I thought my questions would box him into an intellectual corner!

Somehow, they did not. His logic is difficult to argue.

When I questioned the death penalty for theft in clauses 6 and 7, suggesting that he values property over human life, his response was he does not. Hammurabi values civil "order above all." He explained that property was not merely possession, but represented survival. Protection of property, he argues, is a "sacred boundary" that must be feared to maintain civil order. Death, as a penalty for theft, is not about the property, but about the need to maintain trust, faith, and avoid chaos and rebellion. This changed my thinking about these laws.

Yelp review of gender in the Ottoman Empire ⌄

Includes assessment.   Must post first.

⭐ Subscribe

Using the sources for this week (women and gender in the early modern Ottoman Empire), write a Yelp or Trip Advisor review of gendered spaces (be creative here) in the Ottoman Empire. (At least 300 words)

Rubrics

HIST 221 - Connections and Reflections Rubric

Start a New Thread

The Imperial Harem

★★½☆☆ **2.6** (19 Reviews)

$$$$ •

Open • Open 24 hours • Women & Eunichs Only

Add Review	Call	Directions	Website

Hurrem S.
◫ 0 ★ 27 ▣ 65

★★★☆☆ Abt. 500 years ago

Initially? Not a big fan. That is to be expected when ripped away from absolutely everything you know. I suppose that doesn't really refle... read more

Sultan S.
Business Owner

Selamün Aleyküm, Hurrem. Do not post pictures from...
read more

Initially? Not a big fan. That is to be expected when ripped away from absolutely everything you know. I suppose that doesn't really reflect the harem itself. For the rough adjustment period and the pettiness and backstabbing of some of the women here, I am only giving three out of five stars. The adjustment to living in the harem really shines when it comes to being forced to learn a new language immediately. If you have a choice? Do not recommend it. Though, I suppose that it could be considered a good thing. The educational aspect has been,... enlightening. Perhaps a little brainwash-y with all the loyalty of the empire stuff. At least knowing multiple languages means you can know more of what is going on around you. It also means you can start to have an influence,... You see- this is why I am giving 3 stars. It is good and bad depending on how you look at it. At the very least it is better than working a farm.

Harem life is alright, I suppose. There is delicious food, luxurious rooms, and all the jewels a girl could dream of. As I have settled in, it has become easier but I do miss the outside world. The only real sense you get of what is happening outside the palace walls is through other people. Fortunately, there is at least that connection to the outside. Some women here have some fairly extensive networks of influence- a goal I hope to one day achieve myself.

Considering all of the wars the Sultan is starting in hopes to expand the empire,... at least it is safe here.

One day, I will almost certainly become the queen mother and will practically be running the entire place. On that day- then perhaps I will give 5 stars.

But we still have this tension...

We need students to produce authentic work. However, we also need to produce AI literate graduates.

Topics & Tools > Workplace News & Trends > Employers Want New Grads with AI Experience, Knowledge

IN FOCUS

Employers Want New Grads with AI Experience, Knowledge

February 20, 2024

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Influenced by feedback from employers, recruiters and their alums, some colleges and universities now offer master's degrees in generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) as well as undergraduate classes to prepare their students for the demands of the new workforce.

Forbes

LEADERSHIP > CAR

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It

By **Robin Ryan**, C

Published Jul 30, 202

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Using AI just to **generate text** is risky. Students may rely too much on it, you may struggle to evaluate genuine thinking, and the value of the assignment may drop. But when faculty **design intentionally** to integrate AI as a tool *within* the learning process, you get:

- Increased student engagement (because AI is new/interesting)
- Opportunities to teach **digital literacy**, ethical use of AI, and metacognition ("how did I use the AI?")
- Stronger assurance that what students submit reflects their thinking and learning, not just AI output

It requires that we rework everything.

Document the Process

Performance Levels:

Exceeds Expectations (10 pts):
Thoughtful, detailed reflection, clear delineation of AI vs personal work, with **specific revision examples**.

Meets Expectations (7-9 pts):
Moderate insight; mentions AI with some explanation but lacks depth.

Approaches Expectations (4-6 pts):
Vague or surface-level reflection; AI use is unclear or not explained.

Below Expectations (0-3 pts):
Lacks reflection; no mention of process or AI involvement.

Encourage Transparency

AI-Use Declaration Form

In the interest of transparency, ethical engagement with AI, and academic integrity, please complete this AI-Use Declaration form and submit it along with your assignment. Your responses will help your instructor understand how you engaged with AI tools during your learning process.

Section 1: AI Use Summary

Did you use any AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, DALL·E, etc.) during the completion of this assignment?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Section 2: If Yes, Please Specify

1. What AI tools did you use? List all tools and platforms.

   _____

2. For what purpose(s) did you use these tools? (e.g., brainstorming, outlining, proofreading, generating images, etc.)

   _____

3. How did you ensure that your final submission reflects your own thinking, learning, and understanding?

   _____

Section 3: Reflection on AI Use

Reflect briefly on your experience using AI. What were the benefits or drawbacks? How did it impact your learning?

Discuss the Risk

"One analogy, popularized by the writer Ted Chiang, is that using Gen AI is like asking a forklift to lift weights for you, then declaring yourself fit when the forklift finishes the reps, even though you didn't build any muscle. The writing process is weight training for your brain. **Who benefits when your brain is weak? Let's get strong.** "

https://against-a-i.com/first-day-speeches/

Technology

ChatGPT dissidents, the students who refuse to use AI: 'I couldn't remember the last time I had written something by myself'

Some college students are beginning to limit their use of artificial intelligence, so as not to hinder their own creativity, discipline and critical thinking

Set Clear Expectations

Ethical Use of AI

AI tools (such as ChatGPT) are powerful tools that can be used to aid in the learning process. Students should discuss with me the fair and ethical use of AI tools for this course. The inappropriate or unethical use of such technologies will violate the Code of Student Conduct as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, and/or gaining an unfair advantage. The Code of Student Conduct is a University rule that provides the framework for the student conduct process at the University of Akron and defines student misconduct and the process that the University will use to address student misconduct reported to the Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Students at the University of Akron are responsible to know and abide by the Code of Student Conduct and all University rules, regulations, and policies. My expanded AI policy is as follows:

In this course, students are only allowed to use AI tools in the ways described below.

This policy applies to the following AI tools:

- AI chatbots (such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Claude, CoPilot)
- AI image generators (such as DALL-E, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, Adobe Firefly)
- AI audio or music generators (such as Amper, AIVA, Soundful)
- Multimodal AI tools (such as Canva Magic Design, Microsoft Designer)
- AI-powered presentation tools (such as Beautiful.ai, Gamma.app)

The policy applies under the following conditions:

- Only with proper citations and acknowledgment
- Only as marked within the syllabus assignment sections and/or flagged by the instructor

The following processes are in place:

- Students should contact the instructor if they have questions about this policy
- Students are responsible for identifying and addressing any inaccurate AI content
- Students must check for possible plagiarism in the AI output
- Students must disclose the use of AI in their work
- Students must cite all AI outputs following either APA or MLA citation guidelines

The rationale for this policy is:

- The students have shown themselves to be responsible, effective learners
- The assessments have value regardless of the use of chatbots
- Students are informed about AI risks and benefits

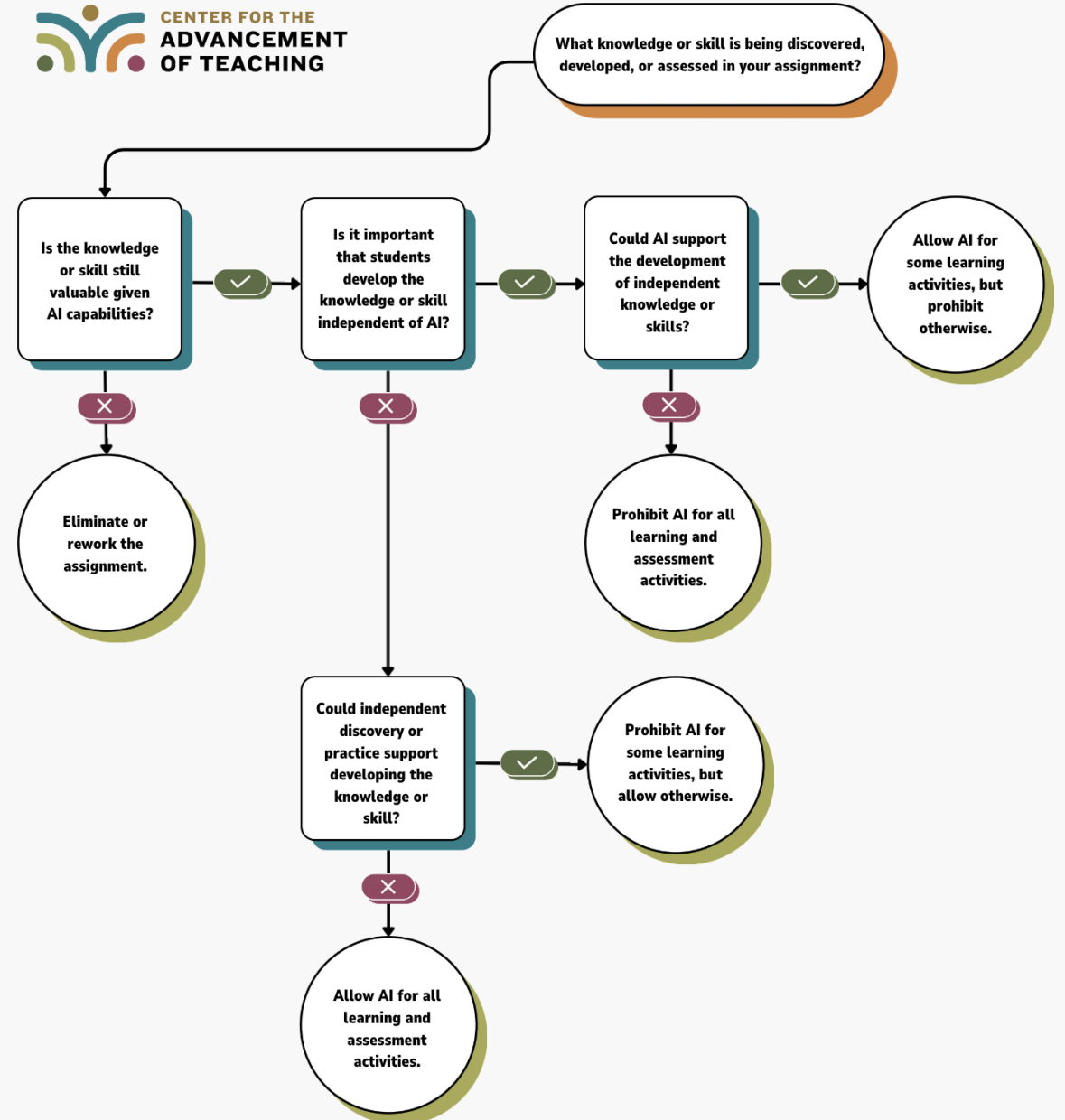The rationale for restricting AI use includes:

- The course focuses on developing fundamental skills that AI tools might bypass
- The assessment design requires independent problem-solving without AI assistance

Failure to adhere to these expectations constitutes a violation of UA's academic integrity standards and may result in disciplinary action.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to adjust this policy during the course as needed to support student learning and maintain academic integrity.

https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/ai/syllabus/decision/

AI Decision Tree

CENTER FOR THE
**ADVANCEMENT
OF TEACHING**

What knowledge or skill is being discovered, developed, or assessed in your assignment?

Is the knowledge or skill still valuable given AI capabilities?

Is it important that students develop the knowledge or skill independent of AI?

Could AI support the development of independent knowledge or skills?

Allow AI for some learning activities, but prohibit otherwise.

Eliminate or rework the assignment.

Prohibit AI for all learning and assessment activities.

Could independent discovery or practice support developing the knowledge or skill?

Prohibit AI for some learning activities, but allow otherwise.

Allow AI for all learning and assessment activities.

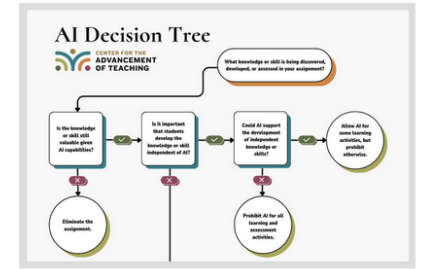https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/ai/syllabus/

Six Steps

Not sure where to begin? Short on time? Start with these six steps for developing an effective approach to AI in your classroom.
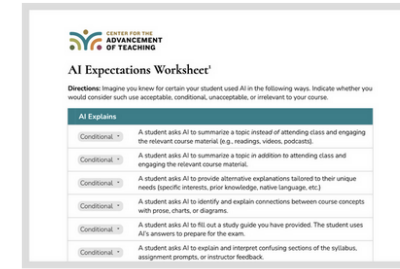
AI Expectations

Explore your initial intuitions by completing this worksheet, then reflect on the principles underlying those intuitions.
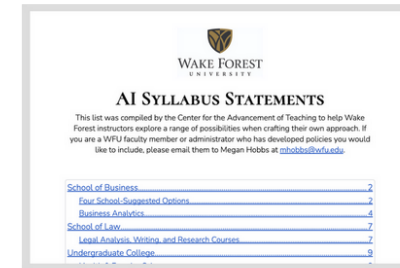
Decision Tree

Unsure whether AI use is appropriate in your course or in a given activity? Use this decision tree as a guide.
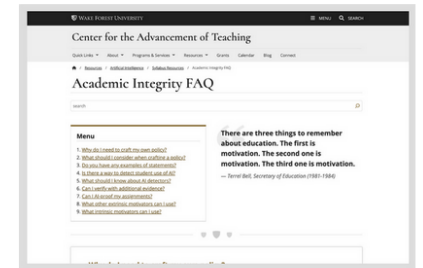
Global Examples

An international, crowdsourced archive of AI syllabus policies in higher education. Last update: February 20, 2024.

WFU Examples

A crowdsourced archive of AI syllabus policies here at Wake Forest. Last update: August, 2023.

Integrity FAQ

Longer answers to the most common questions we've received about AI & academic integrity. Last update: August 2023.

General Policy

Select one general policy statement that best reflects your course's approach to AI use:

General Policy Options

○ In this course, students are allowed to use AI tools freely as they choose.

○ In this course, students are only allowed to use AI tools in the limited ways described below.

○ In this course, students are not allowed to use AI tools, except when certain conditions are met as described below.

○ In this course, students are never allowed to use AI tools
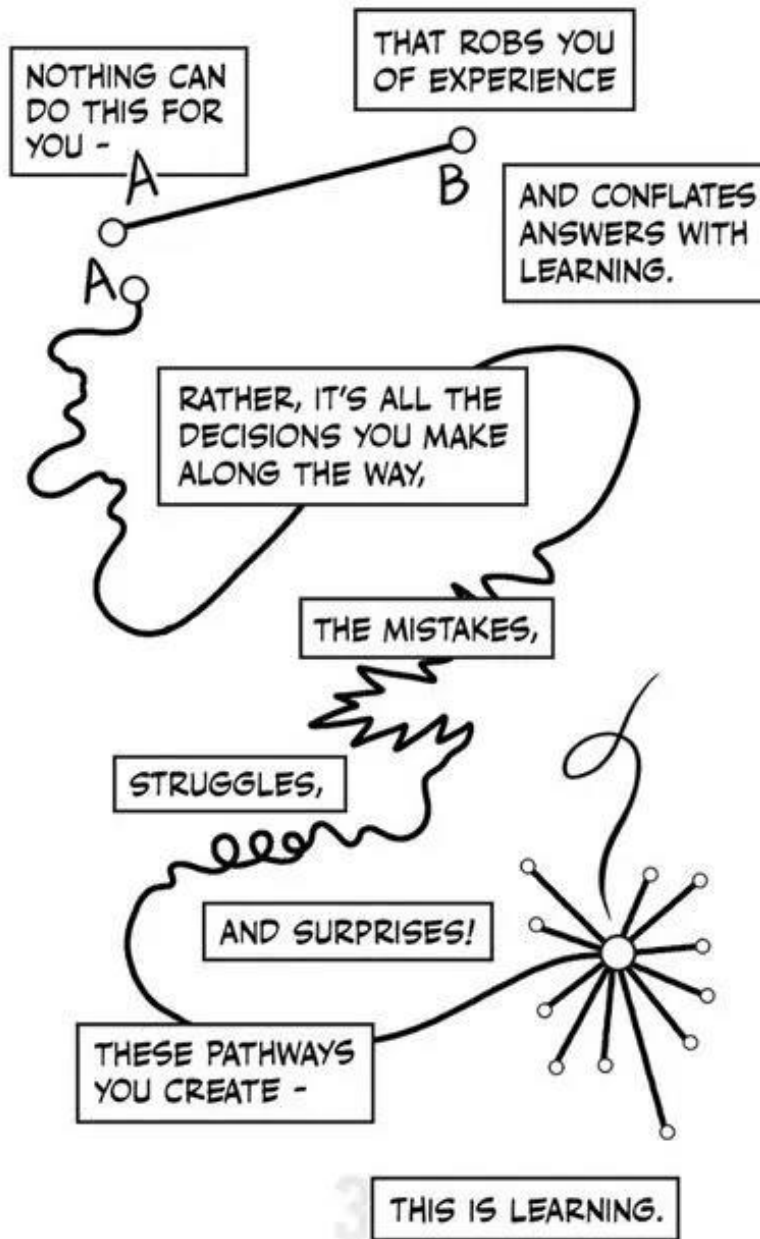
Tools

Conditions

Processes

Rationale

Restrictive Rationale

It requires that we rework everything.

Joanna Maciejewska (Myth-T... Follow ...
@AuthorJMac

You know what the biggest problem with pushing all-things-AI is? Wrong direction.
I want AI to do my laundry and dishes so that I can do art and writing, not for AI to do my art and writing so that I can do my laundry and dishes.

Thank You!

skaufman@uakron.edu

Steve Kaufman, M.Ed.

Sr. Instructional Designer & Strategic Initiatives Coordinator at The Univers...

Bonus: Maybe AI can do our chores?