Student guidelines on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in writing an MA thesis, MS capstone project or term papers

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The goal of this document is to offer guidance on the prudent use of GAI consistent with the basic principles of academic work. Specific courses may have different rules stated on their syllabus. In this case the course-specific rules have precedence.

General principles:

1. You should treat GAI output as any another *input* or *reference material* that you rely on in writing your thesis. Specifically, you must cite the GAI output *and* give credit to the *original* source of any idea or fact that the GAI generated.
2. The thesis is your intellectual product; you must "own" your work. This means you are fully responsible for --- and must be able to defend as your own --- the results, ideas, and analysis in the thesis as well as the structure and wording of the text.
3. If you use GAI, you must document its use appropriately. Passing off text produced by GAI as your own, without any attribution, is a form of academic dishonesty and will be dealt with according to the [Policy on Student Plagiarism](.).

More specific advice and guidelines:

1. You should not copy-paste text produced by GAI directly into your thesis. Standard GAI output does not include proper references to the source ("training") material, which is a basic requirement for academic studies. Moreover, other plagiarism software used by CEU could recognize the sources behind the generated text, in which case you will be subject to plagiarism charges. There have been cases brought against students because of this.
2. You should document how you used GAI while writing your thesis. For example, you may save important prompts along with a description of how you used the resulting output in an appendix. What is an "important" prompt may be subjective and will be shaped by actual practice over the coming years. When in doubt, you may want to be conservative and/or talk with your supervisor.
3. It is fine to use GAI to help you find (or even summarize) studies relevant to your topic, but you will then have to cite these studies properly (as if you had found them via a simple google search). GAI sometimes "hallucinates" and cites non-existing studies. Please confirm your sources via google. You may be penalized for citing non-existing studies.

4. It is also fine to use GAI to help with more technical tasks such as the writing and debugging of computer code, the cleaning or presentation of data, formatting text, etc.

5. Another "good" use of GAI is to learn more about a topic or, say, a statistical method by having a conversation with it. Asking the right questions and taking time to understand the answers can deepen your understanding and can be an effective way of learning.

6. Finally, here is a useful analogy --- treat GAI as if it was one of your classmates. For instance, you should not copy the GAI's output, just as you should not copy your classmate's work. GAI can give misleading answers, just as classmates sometimes do. If your work is found problematic, you cannot defend it by saying "my classmate/GAI said so." At the same time, you can ask classmates/GAI for feedback on your code, your writing style or formatting. You are welcome to use this feedback to improve your work but make these improvements on your own.