

ChatGPT, The CUPID Model, and Low-Stakes Writing

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Abstract: Educators are increasingly concerned with the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in student writing. Much of the concern focuses on the issue of students using ChatGPT to complete their work. I introduce the CUPID model for instructors to use when thinking about how to pedagogically handle ChatGPT. The CUPID model lays out five general approaches: Catch, Utilize, Prevent, Ignore, and Disincentivize. I suggest that instructors should especially consider using certain assignments that fall under the approach “Disincentivize”. Philosophy instructors in particular should assign more low-stakes writing, such as journals and reflection pieces. The adoption of low-stakes writing assignments aims to discourage students from relying on AI while promoting clarity of thought and deeper engagement with philosophical ideas.

Introduction¹

Ever since ChatGPT, a generative AI program, became available for public use in late 2022, a dizzying amount of commentary and analysis has taken the internet by storm. One hot theme in particular is the use of AI in educational contexts.² A key concern is the issue of academic integrity and authenticity in cases where students use AI to write a paper and attempt to pass off the AI’s words and ideas as their own.³

After briefly discussing the current writing abilities of ChatGPT and how students may use it, I introduce a new model for thinking about what sort of pedagogical approach one may take to address the use of ChatGPT and AI in education. In the CUPID model, each one of the letters in “CUPID” stands for a different tactic: Catch, Utilize, Prevent, Ignore, and Disincentivize. This paper contributes to the body of work on AI and ChatGPT through its two aims. The primary aim of this paper is to sketch out the model with the hope that it can be used as a simple heuristic by educators, who may reasonably feel overwhelmed by the ever-growing list of proposed tactics. I will discuss each of the five general approaches in some detail.

Another aim of this paper is to highlight a particular solution for philosophy instructors who are worried about the authenticity of student writing in introductory-level philosophy courses. I suggest that philosophy instructors use a particular kind of assignment that falls under the category “Disincentivize.” Specifically, instructors should assign more low-stakes philosophical writing, such as journals and reflection pieces. Low-stakes writing assignments help students achieve many of the pedagogical goals we have in mind when we assign philosophical writing, such as achieving clarity of thought and fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of philosophy.⁴ An upshot of assigning low-stakes writing is that it removes

some of the incentive to use ChatGPT such that instructors will not have as much reason to worry, “Did my student really write this?”

ChatGPT and Student Writing

GPT-3 was made publicly available by OpenAI on June 11, 2020. GPT-3 stands for “Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3.” It is one of the most advanced language-prediction model AI systems, in which one “feeds” the system a prompt and the system then provides a response to the prompt. GPT-3 is trained on an incredibly large database of text and generates text based on statistical patterns it learned during training. It is so advanced that many of its responses to complicated questions appear to be given by a human. On November 30, 2022, Open AI released ChatGPT to the public. ChatGPT is a chat-based version of the GPT-3 model designed specifically for chat-based conversational interactions.

To show what ChatGPT is currently capable of, here is how ChatGPT answers three prompts that may be asked of undergraduate students in a writing intensive philosophy course.

Question: Explain the differences between moral objectivism, cultural relativism, and moral nihilism.

ChatGTP’s response: Moral objectivism, cultural relativism, and moral nihilism are all philosophical perspectives that pertain to the nature of morality and moral truths. These perspectives differ in their views on whether moral truths are objective or relative, and whether they exist at all.

Moral objectivism is the belief that moral truths are objective and universal, meaning that they are true independent of anyone's beliefs, values, or culture. In other words, moral objectivists hold that there are moral facts that are true for all people, regardless of their individual or cultural beliefs.

Cultural relativism, on the other hand, is the idea that the moral beliefs, values, and practices of a culture should be understood and judged in the context of that culture, rather than by the standards of another culture or by universal moral principles. In other words, cultural relativism holds that there is no one correct or universal morality, but rather that what is considered moral varies from culture to culture.

Moral nihilism, meanwhile, is the belief that there are no moral truths or values at all. In other words, moral nihilists believe that moral judgments are meaningless, and that there is no inherent value or worth in any action or behavior.

In summary, the key differences between these perspectives are as follows: moral objectivism holds that moral truths are objective and universal, cultural relativism holds that moral truths are relative to individual cultures, and moral nihilism denies the existence of moral truths altogether.

Here is a second question.

Question: Explain Judith Jarvis Thomson's unconscious violinist scenario and what this scenario is supposed to reveal about the ethics of abortion.

ChatGPT's response: The unconscious violinist scenario is a thought experiment proposed by the philosopher Judith Jarvis Thomson in her 1971 article "A Defense of Abortion." The scenario is designed to challenge the idea that a fetus has a moral right to use the body of a pregnant woman without her consent.

In Thomson's scenario, a famous unconscious violinist has been kidnapped by music lovers and hooked up to your circulatory system in order to save his life. The violinist will only be alive for nine months, after which he will be removed from your body. The question is whether you are morally obligated to remain hooked up to the violinist for the duration of the nine months, or whether you have the right to disconnect yourself from the violinist.

Thomson argues that in this scenario, you do not have an obligation to remain hooked up to the unconscious violinist. She contends that your body is your own and that you have a right to decide what happens to it, even if disconnecting from the violinist will result in his death.

Thomson uses this scenario to illustrate that the moral rights of the fetus in a pregnancy are not equivalent to the moral rights of a person. She argues that a fetus has no right to use the body of a pregnant woman without her consent, just as you would have no right to use the body of another person without their consent. Therefore, Thomson concludes that the decision to have an abortion is a matter of personal autonomy and choice, and that the morality of abortion cannot be judged solely on the basis of the fetus's right to life.

And, a third:

Question: Is abortion morally wrong?

ChatGPT's response: The moral permissibility of abortion is a highly contentious and debated issue. Some people believe that abortion is morally wrong because it involves

ending the life of an unborn child, while others believe that it is not morally wrong because the decision to have an abortion is a matter of personal autonomy and choice.

There are many different moral arguments for and against abortion, and reasonable people can disagree about the issue. Ultimately, the moral permissibility of abortion depends on one's moral beliefs, values, and principles. Some people may believe that abortion is morally wrong because it goes against their religious or moral beliefs about the sanctity of human life, while others may believe that it is not morally wrong because they consider the right to control one's own body to be a fundamental moral right.

As a neutral and unbiased AI, I cannot take a position on whether abortion is morally wrong or not. It is up to individuals to form their own opinions on this complex and sensitive issue.

While the response to this final question is not something reasonable students would copy and paste into their final paper or written exam, they could easily edit it to fit whatever they wanted to say. Indeed, this seems to be the way that many students are actually using ChatGPT to help them write their papers.

Owen Kichizo Terry, an undergraduate student at Columbia, recently wrote an opinion piece in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* titled “I’m a Student. You Have No Idea How Much We’re Using ChatGPT.” He describes the ways in which he and other students use ChatGPT. They do not simply copy and paste what ChatGPT writes into their own papers.

The more effective, and increasingly popular, strategy is to have the AI walk you through the writing process step by step. You tell the algorithm what your topic is and ask for a central claim, then have it give you an outline to argue this claim. Depending on the topic, you might even be able to have it write each paragraph the outline calls for, one by one, then rewrite them yourself to make them flow better. (Terry 2023)

For example, when working on a 6-page paper on the Iliad, Terry asked ChatGPT to generate specific thesis statements. It gave him nine options. After picking one, he asked ChatGPT how to organize the paper. It gave him ideas for each paragraph of his paper and instructions on what to say in each paragraph. For example, for the first body paragraph it told him to “[i]ntroduce the concept of the gods as moral arbiters in the Iliad. Provide examples of how the gods act as judges of human behavior, punishing or rewarding individuals based on their actions. Analyze how the gods’ judgments reflect the moral codes and values of ancient Greek society. Use specific passages from the text to support your analysis.” ChatGPT will not just write for you, then. It will coach you how and what to write.

In short, when it comes to routine questions that probe a student's understanding of some concept, set of ideas, or reading, ChatGPT does a decent job delivering a result that students could use to get a passing or good grade on a writing assignment if they simply copied and pasted whatever ChatGPT gave them. But many students use ChatGPT in this more sophisticated manner. They do not just copy and paste; they have ChatGPT help them generate ideas and have it organize papers for them to then fill in with their own words. Thus, in this ChatGPT era, instructors must face the increasing likelihood that the writing assignments that students turn in are not their writing and/or their ideas. What should we do?

The CUPID Model

The CUPID model can help instructors think about what method or approach they want to take to the possibility that students will use ChatGPT to complete their writing assignments. "CUPID" stands for:

Catch: Attempt to spot ChatGPT generated text in student work.

Utilize: Purposefully use ChatGPT in assignments.

Prevent: Make it difficult for students to use AI to complete an assignment.

Ignore: Assign writing without trying to catch, utilize, or prevent the use of AI.

Disincentivize: Remove the incentive to use AI.

In this section, I explain each category and discuss specific protocols and assignments that help flesh out the category's approach.

Catching AI Generated Text

The first approach suggested by the CUPID model that instructors can take involves trying to "catch" or spot AI generated work.

Instructors are already familiar with plagiarism detector software, such as SafeAssign or TurnItIn, which reviews a student's paper for plagiarism. When a student copies and pastes something from a source on the internet, this kind of software isolates which parts of the student's paper were copied from another source, and what the sources are. Plagiarism detection software for ChatGPT exists already, but there are serious concerns about its reliability. A ChatGPT detector may conclude that the probability a paper is written by AI is, for example, 99%.⁵ But this detector does not isolate which sources were copied from, partly because ChatGPT does not copy and paste information from the internet; it apparently synthesizes information. This is one problem. Another problem is that the 99% reading is sometimes given when the paper is written by a human, so it is not reliable. A third problem is that some students use ChatGPT as a writing and idea coach rather than copying and pasting (as per the examples

given by Owen Kichizo Terry in the last section). In those cases, the writing assignment that they turn in is in their own words, and no detection software could pick up on their use of ChatGPT. So, instructors cannot (yet) rely on software to identify when students turn in work written or helped by ChatGPT.

Not all hope is lost. We can train ourselves to notice AI generated text because there are still ways to tell the difference between AI written text and text written by undergraduate students. Here are six factors that instructors can keep in mind.

Diction. Most English-speaking undergraduate students have relatively simple diction. Typically, they do not frequently use “SAT-words” when speaking or writing. Thus, written work that features sophisticated vocabulary could be a red flag.

Tone. Ask yourself, “Does this sound like it came from a textbook?” Large-language models draw from an immense database that includes numerous academic books and articles, so ChatGPT has a bland academic tone that student writing usually lacks.

Understanding. Students do not typically demonstrate a mastery of material that Chat GPT can demonstrate. Students get some of the important points down, but they occasionally misrepresent or fail to mention minor details. Thus, written work that demonstrates very detailed expert-level knowledge should be suspicious, especially if it goes beyond what is discussed in class and/or readings. On the flipside, sometimes ChatGPT gets things very wrong.⁶ Therefore, a written response that seems bizarrely wrong is likely a red flag.

Grammar. Students are imperfect writers (much like the rest of us!) As such, we should expect student work to contain some grammatical errors. Of course, work that does not contain grammatical errors is not necessarily a red flag. Some students have exceptional grammar and/or use tools like Grammarly to check their written work. But finding some grammatical errors in a student’s writing is a green flag that they did not simply copy and paste the text from AI.

Prompt. When a writing prompt is not addressed in full, or the student’s written work goes into much detail beyond the prompt, this could be an indication that the student is relying on ChatGPT. For example, a writing prompt might ask students to explain a particular idea (say, what a moral dilemma is) and then ask the student to share something personal (a moral dilemma they have experienced in their lives). Responses that fail to adequately address the second part of the prompt are suspicious, precisely because ChatGPT will not directly create a personal response for the student. (Remember ChatGPT’s response to the question about the morality of abortion previously mentioned.) Of course, more sophisticated users could tinker with different prompts and questions to feed into ChatGPT to help them write something, such that it outputs something that the student can use as a personal story. This means that just because a student has

directly responded to all aspects of the prompt and shared a personal story does not necessarily indicate that they did not rely on ChatGPT. The red flag is when the personal story, connection, or reflection is missing. On the converse, written work that goes beyond what the prompt asks, or goes beyond what was discussed in class or in the reading, is also likely a red flag, since student writing rarely does that.

Sources. ChatGPT does not cite sources.⁷ Therefore, the use of references and citations throughout the writing is a green flag that the writing is less likely to be taken from ChatGPT.

In sum, instructors can pay special attention to diction, tone, grammar, level of understanding displayed, whether the prompt is fully addressed, and whether the paper has appropriate sources. These are merely suggestions, and they are imperfect ones. There will of course be students with impressive diction, grammar, and writing styles, whose writing demonstrates an impressive mastery of material. Their authentic work will unfortunately raise suspicion now. Therefore, I caution instructors to take care when determining what to do when they suspect that a student has used ChatGPT to write their assignment. One way to do this is to have a baseline understanding of what that student's writing is like, which leads me to a concrete assignment suggestion.

Compare in-class writing. Instructors can assign in-class writing throughout the semester. Students turn in small writing assignments that they have written in class without any use of technology. These small assignments may have the primary pedagogical aim of getting students to think more carefully in class about some topic, for example, but they may also serve a secondary aim as a template of what their writing is actually like. If a student turns in a final paper with a different writing style or quality at the end of the semester, this may be strong evidence that the work is not authentically their own.

There is a potential worry about using in-class writing to spot when students turn in ChatGPT generated work: Students tend to turn in more polished work with an out-of-class writing assignment that they have had weeks to work on. Maybe they have used Grammarly, or had a friend help them edit the paper. After comparing how students wrote in class throughout the semester to what they turned in for their final paper, an instructor might flag the students' final paper as written by AI when the students simply had more time to reflect and work on the assignment. This is a salient possibility of which instructors should be aware in the event they want to take this approach. Nonetheless, there likely will not be significant discontinuities between what students write in and out of class.

Utilizing AI in Class

While the capabilities of ChatGPT and other AI systems present students with more opportunities to cheat, they also present more opportunities to learn. As educators, we can utilize these new technologies to positively challenge our students. Here are three ideas for how ChatGPT can be thoughtfully integrated into a philosophy classroom.

Collaborative Writing. Students can work together using ChatGPT to co-author a document or develop an argumentative philosophy paper. They can take turns interacting with the model, discussing ideas, and refining their writing based on the model's suggestions.⁸

Evaluating Writing. Assignments can challenge students to critically evaluate the capabilities and limitations of ChatGPT. Depending on the prompt asked, ChatGPT's response may need heavy, moderate, or no substantial revision. But in order to assess the degree of revision needed, one must understand what the response should look like. Thus, in editing or grading ChatGPT's response, students must test their grasp of the material. This, in turn, can have the effect of students becoming aware of ChatGPT's abilities and limitations.

Problem Solving with Ethical Dilemmas. Present students with ethical scenarios or dilemmas and ask them to interact with ChatGPT to gather information and compare different solutions. This can help students become more familiar with and think through the moral dilemmas and solutions posed in philosophy.

My goal here is not to provide an exhaustive list of different assignments that incorporate ChatGPT. That list is growing every day, and there are more types and examples of assignments that have been proposed that I do not touch on here, especially ones which may lend themselves better to classrooms other than philosophy. This is just a sample of the creative ways that ChatGPT can be fruitfully integrated into the philosophy classroom.⁹

Preventative Measures

The third approach one can take is to prevent students from using ChatGPT. There are a variety of preventive measures instructors can take to eliminate the chances of students consulting or using AI to do their assignments. Most of these options revolve around emphasizing different kinds of assignments other than standard papers.

In-class handwritten exams. In-class handwritten exams are a classic form of evaluation that may become more popular as instructors attempt to prevent students from using ChatGPT to help them write. Short essay type questions will require students to put essential ideas in their own words without the use of technology. Given time constraints, students will not be able to produce full-fledged end-of-the-semester papers, so this is not an assignment that is supposed to replace paper writing per se. But we can design essay questions that ask students to produce writing that

approximates what they would produce in a paper. For example, we can ask them to put another philosopher's main claim or argument, or to present one criticism of some claim or argument into their own words. Thus, in-class handwritten exams prevent students from consulting ChatGPT and other technology and give the students the opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills and understanding of the material.¹⁰

Oral exams. Another classic form of evaluation is the oral exam. With oral exams, the instructor arranges a time to meet with each student and asks them questions to assess the student's understanding of the material. Like written exams, oral exams require students to put important course material into their own words, thus demonstrating how well they understand the material.

One notable drawback of this route is that it might take too much time for an instructor to schedule oral exams with each of their students. An instructor with 10 or 20 students could feasibly give each of her students a 20-30-minute oral exam in the course of a week, but an instructor with over 100 students would not be in the same position. A potential solution is to have students complete oral exams in groups so as to reduce the time burden on instructors.¹¹

Computer labs. A final preventative solution involves having students write their final papers and other written assignments in a designated computer lab, where this lab is affixed with some kind of surveillance to prevent students from utilizing ChatGPT and other AI systems to write for them. One benefit of doing things this way is that students can still be required to produce relatively lengthy final term papers and the like. However, there are also major drawbacks. One might not have access to a computer lab. Scheduling computer lab time might be difficult. In order to produce a full paper, students will need multiple visits to the lab. If the computer lab time is scheduled during class time, then that cuts significantly into the days and times one has to cover material or do anything else in class. If the computer lab time is scheduled outside of class time, then one runs into the worry that students with responsibilities outside school are unfairly disadvantaged.

In this section, I have mentioned three ideas for how instructors can prevent students from using ChatGPT. They all involve implementing some kind of control over the environment in which students complete assignments. The first two concerned assignments that must be completed in class without access to ChatGPT. The third idea is to continue to have students write papers in computer labs where their computer use is monitored.

Ignoring the use of AI

The fourth tactic educators can take is to continue to assign out-of-class writing assignments like standard term papers without attempting to check for ChatGPT generated responses. While at first this may strike some as foolish, I think there are contexts in which this approach is acceptable.

Think about, for example, teaching an advanced undergraduate philosophy course or a graduate philosophy course. Learning to write philosophy is an essential developmental process and milestone for someone to get a degree in philosophy, especially a graduate degree. Most of the other tactics we have discussed simply do not ask students to endure and learn through the painstaking process of writing and editing a philosophy term paper. One may reasonably expect that, especially when it comes to graduate students, students will be internally motivated to produce original work, such that an instructor's dismissal of the possibility that students can outsource their writing is warranted.

Philosophy professor Laurence Shapiro defends the Ignore approach in his opinion piece, "Why I'm Not Worried About My Students Using ChatGPT." He claims that he plans to do nothing about students using AI to complete their writing work for them and offers many reasons for this. One is that there are not that many students cheating with AI. Moreover, those who do cheat are only hurting themselves, since they will simply not become better writers. Another is students desperately need to learn how to write because they are generally not very good at it, and from Shapiro's perspective, they are actually getting worse. By continuing to give standard out-of-class writing assignments where students can practice their writing and then get feedback on it, they in turn become better writers. Shapiro says, "It makes no sense to me that I should deprive 22 students who can richly benefit from having to write papers only to prevent the other six from cheating (some of whom might have cheated even without the help of a chatbot)."

I agree there is value in continuing to assign writing assignments to let students practice and become better writers, and that our concerns about cheating should not necessarily outweigh our duties to teach our students important skills. Still, there are problems with Shapiro's argument. First, he underestimates how common it is for students to cheat or use AI to complete assignments: "In my normal class of about 28 students, I encounter one every few semesters whom I suspect of plagiarism. Let us now say that the temptation to use chatbots for nefarious ends increases the number of cheaters to an (unrealistic) 20 percent." We do not yet have enough data on the prevalence of the use of AI by college students to complete their assignments, but preliminary surveys suggest the number is higher than expected. According to a BestColleges survey from March 2023, 22% of the college students surveyed reported using AI to complete assignments during the 2022-2023 academic year.¹² Another problem with Shapiro's argument is that it is not true that students only hurt themselves when they cheat with AI. It is a waste of an instructor's valuable time and effort to read, grade, and provide feedback to AI generated writing. Indeed, the waste of an instructor's time and effort is one of the more frustrating aspects

of students cheating by using AI, in my opinion. Nonetheless, it might be that students' opportunities to learn and get feedback on their writing are still not outweighed by the fact that a portion of their peers will cheat on assignments and waste educators' time and effort grading, evaluating, and giving feedback to AI generated text.

One suggestion for instructors who are drawn to the Ignore approach is to train themselves how to spot AI generated text such that they can identify students who are using ChatGPT to do their work. Then instructors can have a conversation with said students about why they are using ChatGPT and try to convince them that working to become a better writer is actually in their best interest.

Disincentivizing

One final route to addressing the potential use of ChatGPT by students is to remove student's incentives to outsource their work to ChatGPT. There are a cluster of related reasons why students outsource their work, many of which can be traced to the nature of the assignment.

Amigud and Lancaster (2019) studied the reasons students give for why they outsource their work to others.¹³ The number one reason students gave for why they outsourced their work was what the authors called "perseverance":

Academic assignments vary in size and complexity, and so do students' performance levels. This affects the duration of completion. Once started, students are expected to complete the entire assignments, not just do parts that they know or like. Academic work is often tedious in nature. Students refuse to complete the work on their own. The results suggest that students seek to outsource their academic assignments midway, because they find it difficult to finish the work they have started. Perseverance is the top reason for outsourcing work and appears to be students' inability to sustain and carry on with academic assignments. Some find the assignments tedious, stressful, boring, or exhausting. This leads to frustration and outsourcing behavior as a means to escape the suffering.¹⁴

The second reason that Amigud and Lancaster found for students outsourcing their work was "academic aptitude." Students might sign up for a course they must take to graduate, and they have little familiarity or comfortability with the topic. This makes it more likely that they will simply have someone else, or AI do their work for them. Amigud and Lancaster (2019) say, "Students express difficulty with a task at hand (e.g., "I'm struggling," "stuck on pre cal") and a need for assistance (e.g., "tutor me in physics," "need a math tutor".) Because students do not always have control over their subject selection, they encounter subjects whose materials are difficult for them to comprehend. At this point, the student faces a decision of whether to find someone who can help them learn or to find someone to do the work for them" (103).

Assignments that require a lot of effort to complete (perseverance) and/or more sophisticated engagement with the subject matter (aptitude) will therefore be more likely to induce students to outsource their work to AI. From this information, we can construct assignments that will disincentivize students to use AI.

This is where “low-stakes” assignments are relevant. An assignment is low-stakes when the assignment counts for a smaller percentage of the overall grade. Low-stakes assignments therefore tend to not take long to complete. I want to suggest that low-stakes writing assignments should be given by philosophy instructors teaching writing intensive introductory-level philosophy courses. This is because first, low-stakes writing can remove the incentives to cheat, and second, low-stakes writing still gets students to practice and hone valuable writing and philosophical skills. Let me say more about the former first. Then I will introduce two low-stakes writing assignment ideas, and I will discuss the latter in more detail.

Students in writing intensive introductory-level philosophy courses will have the most incentive to outsource their writing because they are likely taking the course to fulfill some more general degree requirement rather than because they are majoring or minoring. And since it is an introductory-level course, we can assume that these students probably are not that familiar with philosophy. This suggests that the conditions for a lack of academic aptitude are in place for students in these classes. But certain kinds of low-stakes assignments can counteract students feeling like they lack aptitude for philosophy by having them write about things with which they are familiar. (More on this when the specific ideas for low-stakes writing assignments are given in detail below.) Furthermore, since low-stakes writing does not take long to complete, it thus removes the worry about perseverance.

Low-Stakes Writing Assignments

Here I will share two examples of low-stakes writing assignments that I have used in my introduction to applied ethics courses for the last three years.

Media journal. A media journal is a short, (about 100-300 word) writing assignment in which students are asked to connect something that we have talked about in class to something that they find in the media outside of class. I understand ‘media’ here loosely to include the news, TV shows, film, podcasts, and posts on social media like a YouTube or TikTok video. For example, they might write about a connection they find between an ethical theory we discussed and something they watched at home, like a blockbuster superhero movie, the newest trending TV show, or a podcast episode.

The assignment is overall fairly easy for them to complete, yet it still serves an array of pedagogical purposes. It gets them to connect what we have discussed in the classroom to things that might not seem philosophically relevant at first glance, which thereby helps to instill an appreciation for the ubiquity of philosophy. Having them connect what concepts, issues, and arguments we discuss in class to something they find outside of class also requires them to recognize philosophically salient material. Being able to recognize it out in the wild involves first being able to understand the material to a certain degree. Third, the media journal gets them to write about philosophy in a way that makes philosophy more interesting for them, because it connects philosophy with something they find interesting.

Furthermore, it would not make much sense for a student to outsource a low-stakes assignment like the media journal assignment. The student need not do any extra outside research to complete this assignment. They need to simply write a paragraph about something they are already interested in and then describe in another paragraph how it relates to something we have talked about. Thus, students likely will not feel like they lack the requisite aptitude to complete this assignment, since they are writing about a piece of media that they are familiar with and that they are interested in. Moreover, students would not save much time by outsourcing the assignment to ChatGPT. The writing could be done in 30 minutes or less. Furthermore, if they did use ChatGPT, in feeding it the appropriate prompt, students will have already done important work for the assignment, which is coming up with the connection between class and something outside of class in the first place.

Reflective writing. Another example of low-stakes writing emphasizes student reflection—writing assignments that ask students to reflect on something they have learned. For example, at the end of each semester, I ask students to write a reflection on the course. They answer prompts such as “We covered many different topics throughout the course. Which did you find the most interesting to cover, and why?” And “Overall, what ideas or lessons did you get the most out of? What did you learn that you will take with you beyond this class and beyond your formal education?” And “In your own words, how would you describe this class to a friend?” These prompts ask students to think about the course and what they have learned in holistic and/or metacognitive ways.

Both journals and reflection pieces get students to practice writing skills that are essential to writing philosophy well: students are required to put complicated ideas in unembellished and clear prose. In turn, when students are required to write unembellished and clear prose, this helps students to practice developing clear and coherent trains of thought, which are essential for thinking critically and doing philosophy. Furthermore, journal and reflection assignments allow students to articulate their thoughts and ideas in a structured and coherent manner. This enhances their written communication skills and helps them develop a clear writing style. Reflection-based writing assignments in particular encourage students to explore their values, beliefs, and personal

growth. They can reflect on their experiences, both in and out of the classroom, and appreciate how they may have evolved over time.

In short, low-stakes writing assignments have much to offer.¹⁵ They reduce incentives for students to use AI to write their work, and they still challenge students to develop important writing skills and grapple with the material. I highly recommend that philosophy instructors teaching writing intensive introductory-level philosophy courses assign some low-stake writing to their students.¹⁶ This will help reduce student use of AI in completing writing assignments while still giving students the opportunity to develop their writing and philosophical skills.

Concerns

In this section, I will discuss two concerns. Here is the first. Some of these methods, such as those listed under “Catch” and “Prevent”, seem to stem from a problematic attitude about what teaching involves. Teaching, the concern goes, should focus most on students’ learning and growth; it should not focus on policing students. Yet, some of these suggestions and assignments are borne out of the desire to (or attitude that instructors should) police students. The prospect of setting assignments up in such a way as to “catch” a student using AI is somehow antithetical to the mission of being a good instructor. We want to encourage learning and instill an appreciation and understanding of philosophy. We should not be focused on playing a cat and mouse game with students, attempting to do everything we can to “catch the bad ones.”¹⁷

Townley and Parsel (2004) take this angle. They were writing in the wake of the introduction of the internet, when students could first go online and search for answers and copy and paste what others wrote. The problem of plagiarism and the use of the internet by students became a hot topic in education in the early 2000s; a similar situation to what we now face with AI. Townley and Parsel (2004) suggest we should be more focused on cultivating intellectual virtues in our students, rather than being focused on catching cheaters. By inspiring students and getting them to appreciate intellectual challenges such as writing a paper, we can instill internal motivation to produce authentic work. This, in turn, may have the effect of fewer students turning to AI to complete their work for them.

While instilling intellectual virtues and inspiring our students is an important pedagogical goal, one worry is that it is too idealistic. Even the most passionate and charismatic educators do not reach all of their students. Instructors should face the reality that many of their students are going to try to use ChatGPT to help them with their writing assignments if given the chance. Nonetheless, as mentioned with the Ignore approach, this may not be reason enough to drastically change how we teach and evaluate.

The second major concern relates to online courses. Many of the suggestions made in this article may not be tailored to the online environment (in-class writing, computer labs, in-class written exams, etc.). Nonetheless, the CUPID model can still serve as a broad guide. Do online instructors prefer to catch or prevent cheaters? Do they wish to use AI, ignore it or disincentivize its use? Those general options are still available, and online instructors can build their assignments around their general pedagogical preferences.

Conclusion

The CUPID model (Catch, Utilize, Prevent, Ignore, and Disincentivize) is a way to categorize and think about different approaches to addressing the issue of plagiarism in educational contexts, specifically in relation to the use of ChatGPT for writing assignments. My hope is that educators find the CUPID model a helpful heuristic when they are thinking about what to do about ChatGPT and the use of AI in education more generally.

Philosophy instructors should consider using low-stakes writing assignments, such as journals and reflection pieces, as a solution falling under the "disincentivize" category of the CUPID model. Low-stakes assignments such as journals and reflection pieces remove some of the incentives for cheating while allowing students to practice and improve their writing and philosophical skills.

Finally, not all of the approaches specified by the CUPID model are mutually exclusive. So, perhaps the best pedagogical approach to students using ChatGPT and other AI systems is a multi-pronged one in which instructors employ many of the tactics mentioned in this article.

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² For recent discussions of the use of AI in educational contexts, see Cotton, Cotton, and Shipway (2023); Kasneci (2023); and Sullivan, Kelly, McLaughlan (2023).

³ Dehouche (2021) is a prescient outlier in their relatively early anticipation and warning of the use of students using AI.

⁴ While much of the discussion in this article is directed in particular at philosophy instructors, I think educators in all fields can likely glean something useful from it, especially if their courses involve substantial writing.

⁵ <https://huggingface.co/openai-detector>

⁶ For discussions of ChatGPT’s limitations, see Arkoudas (2023); Christian (2023); Floridi & Chiriatti (2020); Floridi (2023).

⁷ I asked ChatGPT why it does not cite sources for its material, and it said: “ChatGPT, as an AI language model, does not have direct access to its training data or the ability to browse the internet. It generates responses based on patterns and information it has learned from the training data it was provided. While it can provide information and answer questions based on its training, it doesn't have a built-in mechanism to cite specific sources.”

⁸ One benefit of this suggestion is that it incorporates how students are already using ChatGPT to do assignments. Think of the undergraduate student Terry mentioned in the first section, and how he surreptitiously used ChatGPT to complete his papers for him. It was a much more sophisticated process than simply asking a question and copying the answer. The assignment idea expressed here is to basically explicitly ask and expect students to do this as part of their learning and writing process.

⁹ Valuable resources for ideas for different assignments that incorporate ChatGPT are UNESCO’s 2023 guide to ChatGPT and AI in education; Cotton, Cotton, and Shipway (2023); and Perkins (2023). Another exceptional resource is ChatGPT itself. As an example, I asked ChatGPT about how it can be incorporated into assignments, and it gave me two of the options (collaborative writing and problem solving with ethical dilemmas).

¹⁰ One might worry that it is an ableist assumption that people can sit down in class and hand write their essay answers. A potential solution is to utilize testing centers at one’s institution in the case that students need accommodation.

¹¹ Thanks to an anonymous referee for this suggestion.

¹² Welding (2023). <https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-students-ai-tools-survey/>

¹³ This study specifically focused on contract grading and outsourcing student work to others as a form of academic dishonesty. Students using AI to surreptitiously complete their work for them is also a kind of outsourcing and academic dishonesty. Thus, even though the study does not directly tackle the question of why students turn to AI to do their work for them, the results are directly relevant to such cases.

¹⁴ Amigud and Lancaster (2019) p. 102

¹⁵ An anonymous referee noted the worry that low-stakes assignments might be seen as busy work and place a further burden on students by adding to the growing list of assignments that they must complete. This may be true if instructors assign too many assignments. But it is possible to keep the number of assignments low (say, fewer than six) while also assigning low-stakes writing assignments like journals and reflection pieces such that they are not burdensome or busy work. For example, one may assign two in-class written exams that are worth a large percentage of the overall grade (30% each), and four low-stakes assignments at 10% each. Assigning both in-class writing and out-of-class low-stakes writing is a combination of the Prevent and Disincentivize approaches. As I mention in the conclusion, taking a multi-pronged approach is perhaps the best approach.

¹⁶ The reason I emphasize introductory-level philosophy courses is that students in those courses are especially likely to feel like they do not have the aptitude for doing philosophy, which is a major impetus for cheating behaviors. In more upper-level courses, it becomes more likely that students have taken a philosophy class before and so are somewhat more familiar with philosophy.

¹⁷ Hubick (2016) has a similar criticism of the current instructor-student state of affairs regarding plagiarism and writing papers. Also relevant is Nguyen’s (2022) guest post titled “Teacher, Bureaucrat, Cop.”