

**Recommendation Report: Grammarly in ENC 1101/1102**

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## Introduction

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) tools has fundamentally changed how students approach academic writing. College students, especially first-year composition students in courses like ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, are increasingly using programs like Grammarly, ChatGPT, and other AI-powered writing assistants. These tools give students immediate feedback on their grammar, organization, and clarity. Undoubtedly, this technology has made writing more approachable for many students, but it also has presented new difficulties for professors who want to preserve the integrity and growth of students' independent writing abilities.

This project directly supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, which focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. Our team wants to promote the appropriate and efficient use of technology in higher education by investigating the effects of AI tools like Grammarly on students' writing development.

By offering instant feedback and tailored guidance, Grammarly can improve learning by assisting students in enhancing their writing confidence, grammar, and general communication abilities. At the same time, our proposal acknowledges the value of sustaining independent thinking and academic integrity—two crucial elements of high-quality education. This research helps provide a more adaptable and sustainable learning environment by exploring ways to strike a balance between genuine skill development and AI support. In keeping with UN SDG Goal 4 of equipping students with the knowledge, abilities, and responsibilities necessary to thrive in a world driven by technology and undergoing fast change, it highlights that quality education involves more than just giving students access to new technology; it also involves teaching them how to use them critically and ethically.

Faculty members that teach first-year composition courses are increasingly concerned that their students' growth in critical thinking, revision, and stylistic control may be hindered by their reliance on Grammarly and other AI tools. Writing is a process of exploration, introspection, and improvement rather than just putting words on paper. Through drafts and revisions, students gain the ability to discover their own writing. However, when an AI program automatically corrects grammar, sentence structures, and word choices, students may bypass the intellectual engagement that writing demands. Their confidence and capacity for autonomous writing may eventually be weakened by this over-reliance, especially when they are given assignments that prohibit AI assistance.

This unsatisfactory situation calls for thoughtful examination and proactive adaptation. Furthermore, discussing AI literacy in ENC 1101 and 1102 could enable students to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of these technologies. By learning how Grammarly works and recognizing its limitations, students can use it as a guide rather than as a replacement for real writing abilities. Faculty can encourage this balance with peer review sessions, drafting workshops, and reflective assignments that prioritize the writing process over perfection. With these methods, students can still receive AI comments while remaining actively involved in their own work. In the end, educators face the issue of redefining AI's role in writing instruction rather than merely limiting it. AI has the potential to be a tool that promotes digital literacy and autonomous skill development with well-defined standards and thoughtful teaching methods, equipping students for success in an increasingly technology-driven world.

## Goals

The primary goal in addressing the integration of Grammarly within UCF's English Composition I and II courses is to promote student growth in independent writing technology. Faculty have expressed concern that the convenience of automated feedback may discourage students from developing self-editing and critical thinking skills. Therefore, any viable solution must ensure that Grammarly functions as a tool for learning rather than a substitute for intellectual engagement.

The central objective is to create a classroom culture where artificial intelligence complements instruction, reinforces grammar and style awareness, and maintains fidelity to UCF's standards of academic integrity. The first major criterion is the encouragement of critical thinking and writing independence. Grammarly should be implemented in a way that guides students to understand grammatical principles rather than relying passively on automatic correction. For example, students might be required to reflect on Grammarly's suggestions in revision logs or discussion posts. This ensures that technological feedback becomes an educational experience that reinforces cognitive awareness of language structure and stylistic decision-making. This approach aligns with the findings of Estrella (2025), who reports that students perceive Grammarly as beneficial when it is integrated into writing instruction rather than used as a stand-alone application. Moreover, critical engagement with AI tools prepares students for the increasing presence of digital literacy demands across academic and professional settings.

A second criterion concerns the enhancement of instructor participation and efficiency. By automating low-level corrections, Grammarly can reduce the amount of time instructors spend marking mechanical errors, allowing them to provide more meaningful commentary and organization. Abu Qub'a et al (2024) found that Grammarly-assisted instruction increased the quality of teacher feedback by shifting focus from surface-level editing to higher-order writing

concerns. Implementing this balance of AI and instructor engagement would ensure that technology strengthens- not replaces- the human element in writing pedagogy. Additionally, developing faculty workshops on AI literacy and feedback calibration could help instructors maintain consistency in how Grammarly feedback is incorporated into grading and classroom instruction.

A third criterion involves measurable involvements in writing quality and engagement. A successful response should demonstrate clear, assessable outcomes through writing diagnostics, peer review data, and student reflections. Quantitative gains might include fewer grammar errors per page or higher rubric scores in written assignments. Qualitatively, students should report greater confidence and self-efficacy as writers. As Barrot (2023) observed in studies of automated feedback tools, structured AI support can enhance language accuracy when guided by appropriate instructional frameworks. Furthermore, comparative data could be collected across different majors and linguistic backgrounds to assess equity in Grammarly's impact, ensuring that improvements are consistent and inclusive across student populations.

Finally, all proposed solutions must adhere strictly to UCF's academic integrity policies. This requires transparent usage guidelines and faculty oversight to prevent overreliance or unethical assistance. Students must be educated on how to engage responsibility with AI feedback, distinguishing between correction and authorship. The success of such criteria depends on student participation and access- factors that influence how effectively Grammarly can operate as a development aid. Overall, these criteria emphasize a balanced approach: leveraging Grammarly's analytical precision and accessibility while preserving student agency, ethical standards, and the pedagogical role of faculty. When implemented within clear academic boundaries, Grammarly can serve as both a practical and educational tool, advancing UCF's mission to cultivate writing proficiency through innovation and integrity.

## Actions

We identified four plausible courses of action that UCF could proceed with. The first option is to openly embrace the new technology and incorporate external AI tools like Grammarly into course lectures. Integration would involve UCF's endorsement of a specific tool or company and could be structured towards complementing a professor's lectures and improving time spent on quality education for students by off-loading more menial tasks. What qualifies as menial tasks may be up to a professor's own interpretation, but this could involve help with grammar, sentence structure, and outlining or drafting. On the other hand, this solution raises questions on academic integrity, personal instructor policies, endorsement of an external service, and its own experimental nature.

The second option is to adapt learning strategies to complement the burgeoning technology by devoting less time to broader subjects like drafting, outlining, and revision to spend more time on narrower topics such as word choice, rhetoric, and persuasive, argumentative, or informative techniques. This solution is fairly evasive in nature, not endorsing or rejecting new technology but instead letting students choose to adopt or not to adopt new technology. But reframing our broader strategies at large based on the assumption that students will use AI tools could potentially put students who are unable to or choose not to use AI tools for personal reasons at a disadvantage, which is naturally not an ideal solution or the intention of adaptation.

The third solution is simply to ignore external AI tools. Ignoring AI presents two primary concerns: the first is that, as an external tool, students could compromise UCF's code of academic integrity with little to no immediate consequences. This could later result in students withdrawing for a variety of reasons ranging from being caught and punished, an internal ethical or moral conflict, or simple ineptitude as they progress to more challenging content. The second concern is that rejecting new technology that could be used for good runs counterintuitive to our university's ideals—finding meaningful and helpful advancement in society and technology to better the lives of all.

The fourth solution, however, is to offer every student equal access to new AI resources like Grammarly with specific restrictions on some of its intellectual capabilities to encourage students to complement their learning rather than disregard it. This would involve a company hosting AI tools similar to Grammarly endorsing UCF and creating a new branch of their tool to adopt restrictions based on UCF's policies. These restrictions could involve prohibiting AI from becoming too involved in an assignment and instead serving more selective functions like helping students devise outlines or refine word choice and sentence structure. This solution aims to incorporate the new benefits of technology without compromising on the integral policies which lend UCF its quality education. Additionally, UCF is already involved with Microsoft—which hosts their own AI tool, Copilot, offering an easy avenue for cooperation.

## Solutions

The survey results and related research were used to evaluate the effectiveness of Grammarly in academic writing in ENC 1101/1102 classes at UCF. Findings from the survey show that 64.3% of students used Grammarly in the past although most students did not have access to the premium version and features of Grammarly. Student majors widely varied among participants. Aside from the neutral participants who responded to the survey, the majority agreed that Grammarly generally promoted academic integrity rather than hindering it. The results also showed that students used Grammarly primarily for grammar and punctuation checks with a mixed response in frequency of usage. Overall, a little over half, 54.5%, agreed that

Grammarly is somewhat helpful in improving writing skills although the majority was unsure or did not feel that Grammarly necessarily improved grades on writing assignments. Aside from Grammarly other AI programs that the students frequently used was ChatGPT in their coursework. Lastly, many students do not agree that Grammarly should be officially integrated into the ENC 1101/1102 classes with the majority of respondents split between answering “no” or “not sure”.

These findings suggest that although students generally agree that Grammarly is helpful as an AI tool for spellcheck and grammar more data would need to be collected to determine its level of effectiveness as well as to determine if Grammarly should be officially integrated into coursework. Therefore, a less invasive solution should be used which encourages Grammarly usage into writing courses at UCF but doesn’t change the curriculum in English courses or drastically interfere with how language is taught.

The first solution identified was to integrate Grammarly into course lectures with the intention that Grammarly would play a support role in the classroom which would reduce time students would spend on menial tasks and complement the professor’s lectures. This solution is extreme, and ultimately not the best solution to use based on data results from the survey and past academic research. As mentioned previously, results showed that students did not favor the integration of Grammarly directly into ENC 1101/1102 classes. Students would most likely not benefit from this solution as it could negatively alter the curriculum in these classes raising questions concerning academic integrity and create significant differences across courses in how each class is taught. For instance, in the research article “Exploring the use of Grammarly in Assessing English Academic Writing” the researchers identified the extent to which Grammarly could be used as a reliable tool for assessing English writing using ten articles published in scholarly journals written by native English speakers (Abu Qub'a et al.1). The results from this study showed Grammarly over-flagged a significant number of writing issues related to correctness, punctuation, spelling/word issues and other problems such as improper formatting and text inconsistencies. Results revealed that only 4.8% of these issues were truly errors. Accepting some suggestions from Grammarly resulted in inappropriate usage of language at times and misled writers as having serious problems with their writing. The study concludes that accepting suggestions from Grammarly blindly could result in ungrammatical sentences and distortion of meaning in writing and that educators and users of Grammarly should take its suggestions with caution (Abu Qub'a et. al. 5-11).

The next solution was to create new learning strategies when it comes to grammar and writing techniques. This would fundamentally restructure how language is taught by working with new technology and spending less time on drafting and revising and instead on more specific skills such as word choice, persuasive techniques, and improving rhetorical and argumentative strategies. However, Grammarly has not been shown to be a reliable tool in

refining writing due to the overflagging of writing issues as shown previously. One ENC 1101 student noted that “sometimes Grammarly rewords phrases in a way that’s too casual or formal, or suggests words that don’t fit the argument I’m trying to make” (personal interview, Oct. 17, 2025). In addition, drafting and revising is a fundamental skill in writing and having an AI tool such as Grammarly doing the work for you raises questions concerning academic integrity. A common concern is that students could form a dependence primarily on Grammarly hindering them from developing essential writing skills and only understanding grammar and syntax at a superficial basic level (Felix, 4). Students may also submit work corrected by Grammarly without understanding the changes which could potentially contribute to academic dishonesty. Therefore, this second solution can be outruled.

The third solution was to ignore the use of AI like Grammarly in English 1101/1102 classes entirely. This solution can be outruled as well as anyone can use AI tools such as Grammarly freely with zero monitoring which could lead to rampant uses of academic dishonesty in writing. In addition, ignoring the use of AI wastes opportunities in technology as tools like Grammarly can be used in a responsible manner.

The last solution was to offer Grammarly as part of the UCF student service package with restrictions on how Grammarly responds to student content. This solution is less invasive and provides students the option to use Grammarly as a tool without forcing them to use it in the classroom. Based on the evaluation of all solutions, this option is recommended since it best aligns with the previous criteria of supporting student learning, promoting academic integrity and enhancing academic engagement while also being practical to implement. In the quasi experimental study “Using Automated Written Corrective Feedback in the writing classrooms effects on L2 writing accuracy” showed that Automated Written Corrective Feedback tools such as Grammarly can complement the work of teachers especially in large class sizes with limited time but mentoring and engagement between humans is also crucial which AI tools cannot provide (Barrot, 9). Therefore, providing controlled access to Grammarly positively influences learning outcomes while also requiring minimal changes to classroom structure avoiding academic integrity concerns as well as compromising originality.

## Conclusion

Overall, when used appropriately, Grammarly can be a useful tool for improving students’ writing skills and grammar knowledge in academic writing. Students can identify and fix their own errors by receiving real-time feedback, which encourages steady progress over time. In addition to improving students’ writing abilities, this reduces the amount of time instructors spend on correcting minor grammatical and mechanical errors, allowing them to concentrate more on content, structure, and higher-order thinking skills. Furthermore, promoting ethical use of AI technologies such as Grammarly aligns with UCF’s code of conduct and

academic integrity standards. Students can develop academic honesty and technology literacy when they know how to utilize these programs ethically, as learning tools rather than shortcuts. Based on our survey results and evaluations, we conclude that Grammarly, when thoughtfully integrated and used responsibly, effectively supports the goals of ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 courses by improving writing quality, encouraging critical thinking, and fostering an ethical approach to AI-assisted learning.

## Recommendation

To address the challenges and opportunities presented by AI tools like Grammarly in academic writing, we should offer Grammarly as part of the UCF student service package, with built-in restrictions on how the program interacts with student content. This approach allows students to access Grammarly as a helpful writing tool while maintaining the integrity of their original work. Instead of depending on Grammarly for graded assignments, students can use it freely outside of class to improve their grammar and editing abilities if it were to be implemented. The suggested limitations, including restricting automated rewriting capabilities or mandating feedback, would ensure that students use the technology critically rather than passively taking corrections. This approach protects academic freedom while encouraging ethical AI involvement, making it less intrusive than requiring Grammarly use in every class. It supports UCF's dedication to academic integrity and quality education while enabling students to take charge of their education.

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