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Library

# **SOCIOLOGY 101**

## **Using AI as an Assistive Tool**

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## What we're covering today

- AI Use policy in the course syllabus
- How to get the best results when working with AI
- Suggestions on how to use AI tools to help with writing and other academic work
- Examples of how to cite AI use
- Activity – Practice using AI



# AI Use Policy in the course syllabus

Any and all use of AI tools, in any of your assignments, must be cited following appropriate guidelines for citation ([The Chicago Manual](#), [APA](#), and [MLA](#) all have recommendations for your adoption). Failure to cite your use of AI tools are a violation of the UI Academic Honesty policy and I will have to refer violations of that policy to the Dean of Students office.

For example, according to the Chicago Manual, if you are using ChatGPT, ChatGPT stands in as “author” of the content, and OpenAI (the company that developed ChatGPT) is the publisher or sponsor. Any text you generate must clearly indicate what prompt was used and what text was generated in response. If the prompt hasn’t been included in the text, it can be included in a footnote:

1. ChatGPT, response to “Explain how to make pizza dough from common household ingredients,” OpenAI, March 7, 2023.

When you use AI tools you should also be warned that they do not always give good responses and in some instances provide completely incorrect responses. You are responsible for editing, correcting, and otherwise revising the responses you receive from AI tools so you meet the criteria for the course work.

## How I used AI to develop this session

When prompted with “Imagine you are a college professor. What suggestions would you give freshmen students on how to use AI, like chat GPT, as an assistive tool within their assignments?”, ChatGPT 4.0 mini generated a list of 10 suggestions (see <https://is.gd/o7ihBP> for the full transcript).<sup>1</sup>

I then selected and expanded upon those that were most relevant for this presentation.

1. Text generated by ChatGPT, OpenAI, January 13, 2025, <https://chatgpt.com/>.

# How to get the best results when working with AI<sup>2</sup>

- Write clear instructions
  - Include details
  - Ask the model to adopt a persona
  - Specify the desired length of the output
- Split complex tasks into simpler subtasks
  - First do this, then this...

2. “Prompt Engineering,” OpenAI, accessed January 14, 2025, <https://platform.openai.com/docs/guides/prompt-engineering>

## How to get the best results when working with AI<sup>3</sup>

Remember: “...generative chatbots, exemplified by ChatGPT, represent a fundamentally different tool for inquiry and learning, resembling a loom for weaving thoughts, rather than a hammer for nailing down facts.”<sup>4</sup>

3. Baumgaertner, Bert, and Zeth duBois. “Search Is a Hammer, Generative Chat Is a Loom; Beware the Technological Attribution Error.” In *Social Computing and Social Media*, edited by Adela Coman and Simona Vasilache, 14703:313–27. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-61281-7\\_22](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-61281-7_22).

# Suggestions on using AI tools

- Generating ideas
  - Brainstorming

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  - Summarizing sources



# Suggestions on using AI tools

- Generating ideas
  - Brainstorming
  - Summarizing sources
  - Exploring new concepts

# Suggestions on using AI tools

- Outlining
  - Creating outlines for essays and papers

# Suggestions on using AI tools

- Improving writing quality
  - Checking grammar and style
  - Rephrasing and expanding

# Suggestions on using AI tools

- Clarifying understanding
  - Engaging in a discussion
  - Testing your knowledge
  - Reflecting on learning progress

## Suggestions on using AI tools

- Lastly, consider using pre-made prompts as a starting point
  - [Wharton AI & Analytics Initiative: Student Exercises](#)

## Activity – Practice using AI

- Use an AI tool, such as ChatGPT, to help you brainstorm an essay topic relevant to this course



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**THANK YOU!**

Please email me ([jylisadoney@uidaho.edu](mailto:jylisadoney@uidaho.edu)) if you have questions or need help with library research in this class or others