

# ENG 2100

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## Final Portfolio & Self-Assessment

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## **Table of Content**

1. Self-assessment
2. Paper 1 – Culminating Research Paper

## Self-assessment

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ENG 2100 – Research Writing & Argumentation

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### Self-Assessment #1: Midterm Reflection

As I look back at the first half of this semester, I realize how much I have grown as a writer and communicator in ENG 2100. The short writings we have done in class have helped me better understand academic expectations, strengthen my organization, and develop strategies for responding to complex readings. At the same time, I can see areas that still need improvement, such as refining my thesis statements and making sure my evidence always connects directly to my claims. This reflection reviews the progress I have made in my writing so far, the challenges I still face, the lessons from my group project, and the strategies I plan to use to continue improving in the second half of the semester.

One area where I have clearly improved is in my ability to summarize articles and engage critically with them. For example, in my response to David Leonhardt's essay *Is College Worth It?*, I learned how to balance summary with analysis. Instead of only retelling his argument, I practiced explaining which points I agreed with and why, while also bringing in outside evidence to support my response. Earlier in the semester, my summaries were either too detailed or too vague, but now I feel more confident about identifying the author's central claim and presenting it in my own words. I also noticed growth in my literacy narrative, where I practiced using personal experience to make a broader argument. On the other hand, I know I still need to work on writing stronger thesis statements. In my early drafts, I sometimes wrote broad statements like, "College is important for the future," which did not give my essay a clear direction. I am practicing writing more specific and arguable theses, such as, "While college can be expensive, it remains

worthwhile because of its long-term economic benefits and the opportunities for personal growth.” That shift makes my essays more focused and persuasive.

Working on the group research project has also been both rewarding and challenging. I enjoy collaborating with my teammates because each of us brings different strengths and ideas. For example, Steven created an outline that helped us divide the project into manageable sections, and Dwight has been very helpful with gathering historical sources. I personally enjoy contributing to the ethical issues section, because it allows me to connect what we read in class with real-world debates about organ donation. At the same time, collaboration can be challenging because it requires us to coordinate schedules and make sure our writing styles align. One area that we will need to revise in our group documentation is consistency in tone and formatting. Since different people are drafting different sections, we will need to carefully edit so that the final paper reads as one cohesive project rather than several separate parts.

I have not yet officially visited the University Writing Center this semester, but I am planning to work with my friend Jacob, who tutors English there. I think collaborating with him will be helpful because he already knows how the tutoring sessions work and can give me extra feedback on my drafts. Even without the Writing Center, I have been seeking feedback in other ways. I often ask my group members to look at my drafts, and I also reread my essays carefully against the rubrics that our professor provides. I have found it especially useful to compare my first drafts with the feedback I receive, so I can see patterns in my mistakes. For example, when I saw repeated comments about needing more evidence, I made a stronger effort to integrate outside sources in later assignments. Adding the Writing Center as another layer of support will only make me a stronger and more confident writer.

Looking ahead to the second half of the semester, I want to focus on three strategies that will help me grow into a more effective academic writer. First, I plan to dedicate more time to outlining before I draft, because clear planning helps me avoid writing paragraphs that wander off-topic. Second, I want to practice

integrating sources smoothly, using signal phrases and proper MLA citation, so that my essays feel more professional. Third, I want to work on revising with a stronger eye for clarity and style, not just grammar. This means reading my essays aloud, cutting unnecessary words, and making sure each paragraph develops a single idea fully. These strategies align with the course learning outcomes of critical reading, effective argumentation, and reflective revision, which I believe are essential not just for this class but for all my academic work.

In summary, this semester has already given me valuable opportunities to improve as a writer. I have learned how to balance summary and analysis, discovered the importance of a strong thesis, and gained experience working on a group research project. At the same time, I recognize that I still have work to do in refining my arguments and polishing my writing style. By using resources like the Writing Center, collaborating with my peers, and focusing on deliberate revision strategies, I am confident that I will continue to grow as a writer in the second half of the semester.

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ENG 2100 – Research Writing & Argumentation

Professor Joshua R. Burkheiser

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### **Self-Assessment #2: End-Term Reflection**

As the semester comes to an end, I can clearly see how much my writing and thinking have developed throughout ENG 2100. At the beginning of this course, I struggled with organizing my ideas, integrating sources correctly, and maintaining an academic tone. After completing multiple short writing assignments, a group research project, and a full research paper draft, I feel more confident in my ability to write clearly, critically, and responsibly in an academic setting.

One major area where I improved is organization and structure. Earlier in the semester, my paragraphs often lacked clear topic sentences or drifted off-topic. Through class activities like outlining and reverse outlining, I learned how to focus each paragraph on one main idea and connect it logically to the thesis. For example, in my culminating research paper, each section clearly addresses a specific ethical issue related to artificial intelligence, which was not something I could consistently do before. However, I still need to improve my sentence clarity, as I sometimes write long sentences that could be more concise.

Another important improvement was using sources properly. At first, I had trouble blending quotations and paraphrases smoothly into my writing. I either relied too heavily on direct quotes or did not fully explain how the source supported my argument. Over time, I learned to introduce sources more clearly and explain their relevance. In my research paper, I used MLA in-text citations and a Works Cited page more confidently. Still, I want to continue improving by paraphrasing more effectively and double-checking citation formatting.

The group project was both rewarding and challenging. One rewarding aspect was collaborating with classmates and sharing different perspectives on research topics. Working as a group helped me see how other students approach academic writing and organization. A challenge, however, was coordinating responsibilities and making sure everyone stayed on the same page. Some parts of our group-written documentation needed revisions for clarity and consistency, especially transitions between sections. This experience taught me how important communication and revision are in collaborative writing.

I did not visit the university writing center, but I still sought feedback in other ways. I regularly reviewed instructor comments, asked questions during class, and revised my work based on detailed feedback. I also compared my drafts to sample papers and class slides, which helped me understand expectations better. These strategies helped me improve without relying on outside editing or shortcuts.

Looking at the second half of the semester, I developed stronger revision strategies. Instead of only fixing grammar, I learned to revise for structure, clarity, and argument strength. Reverse outlining especially helped me check whether my ideas flowed logically. I also became more aware of academic integrity and made sure my work reflected my own understanding supported by credible research.

Overall, ENG 2100 helped me become a more confident and responsible academic writer. While I still have areas to improve, especially sentence clarity and conciseness, I now understand how to plan, draft, revise, and support an academic argument effectively. These skills will be valuable not only in future writing courses but also in my major and professional work.

Revised : Removed outline structure. All citations left justified and hanging paragraphs. Also, have active links.



## Paper 1 – Culminating Research Paper

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ENG 2100 – Research Writing & Argumentation

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### **The Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education**

While artificial intelligence can significantly improve personalized learning, its use in education must follow ethical standards that ensure transparency, reduce algorithmic bias, and protect student privacy. AI (Artificial Intelligence) is the one that has played the largest role in revolutionizing education in the 21st century, changing both student learning and teacher's lesson delivery. The educational sector has shifted to AI-based tools including ChatGPT, Gemini, and other adaptive learning systems which provide personalized instruction, automated tutoring, and even academic dishonesty detection. These technologies ensure that students receive prompt feedback and teachers know the areas where support is required (Ismaila et al. 824).

Nevertheless, the quick expansion of artificial intelligence has made ethical issues a major topic of discussion. The use of AI applications in educational settings grants access to a huge amount of sensitive student data, but the rationality of the automated decisions is not only often unclear but also sometimes unjust. On top of that, scholars have been cautioning that an excessive reliance on AI would result in a decrease in pupil's creativity as well as teacher-student interactions that are meaningful (Suryanto et al. 294).

What Le Borgne et al. said is that there are still doubts about the protection of student's privacy and the requirement of human intervention in the AI decision-making processes applied in schools (79). The direct impact of AI systems on students' chances, schools' atmosphere, and academical assessment makes it their responsible usage paramount. Even though AI can be a great factor in the personalization of

learning, it must still be applied in the educational setting according to the ethical norms that will guarantee transparency, minimize algorithmic bias and protect the privacy of students.

### **Benefits of AI in Education**

AI, in particular, has provided several substantial benefits in classrooms, particularly in terms of student support and teacher workload management. One of the most significant advantages is the capability to provide personalized learning. The adaptive learning platforms automatically modify the level of the lessons according to the student's performance, enabling every learner to learn at their own pace. These systems are already in place at many schools to either catch students who lag behind or to deliver brushes to the ones who learn fast. Moreover, AI tools are able to give faster and more comprehensive feedback than the usual method. For instance, with the help of automated tutoring systems, errors can be indicated right away, thus allowing pupils to digest the lesson before they lose the topic. Instant feedback like this one is usually unavailable for every student and is something that teachers have to provide when they have time (Chien et al. 895).

Moreover, AI can improve the accessibility of learning. The automatic translation, speech-to-text, and text-to-speech tools are among the features that support the students with language barriers or disabilities which are the main beneficiaries of these tools. These supports really help the students to be involved in the class and to do their assignments. AI does not help the students directly but reduces the heavy administrative work, like grading routine assignments or tracking student progress, which teachers normally deal with. Tangen emphasizes that teachers can focus more on individual students when they have less paper work to worry about (Tangen 30). AI is definitely not a substitute for good teaching but its tools can make it easier and quicker for a lot of students to learn.

### **Ethical Issue #1: Transparency**

One of the main ethical issues linked to AI in education is the ambiguity of the process of decision-making in these systems. The majority of educational institutions have applied AI solutions for grading, detecting plagiarism, and forecasting student performance, among others, but the students and instructors have very little or no information on how the system arrives at the specific decisions. Whenever an AI application gives an essay a low quality mark or points out certain words as being plagiarized, it can create a feeling of confusion or even unfairness if there is no justification provided. Chaushi and coauthors maintain that AI systems should be “explainable,” which implies that the educators and learners should be cognizant of the rationale behind an outcome rather than simply being informed of the result (49). In the absence of such transparency and certainty, it is nearly impossible to fully rely on tech.

Problems with accountability can also arise due to the lack of transparency. In the case of a student being graded mainly by an algorithm, it is not clear who is to blame in case of an issue: the teacher, the school, or the software company. AI systems that provided little information about their grading process have been criticized in some universities for being partly responsible for the students' evaluations. Solanke points out that many educational AI tools rely on "closed-box algorithms" that keep their operations a secret from the public (3). As a result, it is almost impossible to contest a decision even if a student is convinced that it is wrong.

Considering that AI's decisions can influence grades, scholarships, and even the possibility of graduating, transparency is very important. By means of clear explanations, students can learn about their mistakes and teachers can verify if the AI is functioning correctly. Leerssen, too, supports this point, arguing that AI in educational institutions must supply ample information for the human to monitor and challenge its decisions (9). In the absence of transparency, AI could produce unjust or partial results without anyone being aware of it. Making it clear that AI systems are open, comprehensible, and soon-to-be-reviewed is one of the key steps in the responsible usage of this technology.

## Ethical Issue #2: Algorithmic Bias

AI in education has another big ethical issue of concern which is algorithmic bias. AI systems are often viewed as neutral, but still, they can generate unfair outcomes as they are fed with data that may already have bias in it. This issue gains more gravity when AI tools grading, scoring essays, or placing students. For instance, automated grading sometimes gives non-native English speakers a lower score, not because their ideas are weak but because the AI is trained to accept only certain writing styles or vocabulary patterns (Sari Han 77-78). Consequently, some students may end up with lower grades just because of their background, not their work's quality.

Algorithmic bias is an issue that impacts not just the teaching but also the overall learning process in the classroom. When students perceive that the system is “against” them, they may stop making efforts or lose their self-esteem. On the other hand, teachers might become overly dependent on AI grading systems and not realize that the program has different standards for different groups of students. According to Lee, biased AI tools can maintain educational inequalities by continually misjudging the performance of underrepresented groups (Moulavinafchi Oroskhan 91). In other words, instead of increasing teachers' capability to assist students better, AI can, even if unintentionally, create larger gaps in achievement. The first step is to incorporate highly effective measures to recognize and mitigate these biases in schools prior to the implementation of AI in grading or evaluation. One such measure is conducting continuous testing of AI systems on a diverse range of student work to determine their efficacy. A different method is to apply combined human review along with algorithmic scoring so that the teachers get an opportunity to spot the unfair trends beforehand. The Bako suggests that schools must make it a policy that every AI decision is subject to human scrutiny, thus avoiding the possibility of bias or harm caused by the technology (928). Working in this manner, the institutions will not only be able to ensure that AI is playing a role in the learning process but also do so without creating more divisions among the students.

### Ethical Issue #3: Privacy & Accountability

The third major ethical issue regarding the application of AI in education is the matter of student privacy protection. The majority of AI systems gather an incredible amount of personal data including, but not limited to, learning habits, writing patterns, location data, and even emotional reactions, and these all happen sometimes without the students being fully aware of the extent of the tracking. Schools rely on these data-heavy systems for learning enhancement; however, what is collected might be really sensitive. The European Commission cautions that AI in education promoted by the European Commission should be heavily regulated in order to maintain student information confidentiality and to avert its misuse or accidental release (Holmes, Wayne, et al. 69.). In case schools do not handle this aspect properly student data may get leaked or be turned into a resource for other than learning activities.

Accountability is one more aspect of the issue. The question of who is liable may be left unanswered when AI systems err in a manner such as wrongly grading an assignment or wrongly accusing a student of cheating. On occasion, the educational institution holds the software company responsible, while the latter insists that the former has misused the system. This uncertainty does not provide a straightforward avenue for students and families to contest unjust decisions. It is the position of Novelli, Mariarosaria, and Luciano that there should be comprehensive documentation in AI tools which not only describes the decision-making process but also indicates the data controllers and the accountable persons in case of any technological failures (Novelli, C., Taddeo, M. and Floridi, L., 1879). AI decisions without transparency can be mistaken for arbitrariness or prejudice, and, unfortunately, students may suffer because of mistakes that they are not even aware of.

For tackling these problems, the educational institutions must mandate human supervision for every significant decision made by the AI. It implies that the results produced by AI should not be taken for granted but should rather be scrutinized by teachers and administrators. Besides, Michopoulou, K. as well as

Gan, J.K.C. maintain that the engagement of humans is essential not only to make the usage of AI tools responsible but also to ensure that important decisions made by teachers are not replaced by AI (25). In mixing more robust privacy safeguards and laying down unambiguous accountability, organizations can make AI more secure and more reliable for all parties concerned.

### **Ensuring Human-Centered Learning**

Despite the numerous benefits that artificial intelligence can offer, it cannot substitute the essential function of teachers in the process of education. Teachers, as human beings, give emotional backing, guide the students, and make judgment calls instantly; roles which AI systems cannot perform. The students still look up to their teachers for the clarification of complex concepts, the provision of help in the form of creative outputs, and the use of methods that go beyond mere automated responses to obtain the understanding. In their discussion, Khalifa and Mona argue that the development of AI should be done in a way that it supports teachers instead of replacing them, for the reason that human and machine intelligences can be interdependent if the right measures are implemented (10). This way, AI is perceived as a support tool for the students' learning process rather than as a controller.

Educators are also the ones that determine when and in what way a student can use AI. A large number of students have recourse to AI for an instant answer, and this is the case when their mental and problem-solving skills are not fully utilized sometimes. Still, when educators are involved, they can teach the students to use AI as a support not as an opponent in their learning. For instance, the teacher may grant the students an AI-assisted brainstorming session but still insist on their writing the first drafts and thinking critically about the topic. This situation enables the students to enjoy the advantages of technology while still acquiring the essential academic skills.

Furthermore, the reliance issues that were pointed out in previous sections are also attributed to the human-centered learning practice. Holmes et al. point to the instance where AI has the capacity to enhance

learning efficiency but also caution that the teacher's human input remains as the backbone of a meaningful and ethical education (11). The intentionality of schools in maintaining teachers as the core, turning AI into a supportive option or a resource, and not a substitution guarantees that the students acquire creativity, independence, and real comprehension.

## Conclusion

Artificial intelligence has found its way into modern education so that it can not only support students but teachers too, at the same time managing their workload. Despite this, the ethical questions that go with these tools need to be answered as schools start to use them more and more. The issues of transparency, algorithmic bias, and student data privacy, among others, indicate that AI cannot be simply introduced to classrooms without proper planning and supervision. Among others, Conijn, R and his colleagues maintain that students have the right to know the criteria behind automated decisions, particularly in cases where the decisions are related to academic opportunities (38). Similarly, the research on algorithmic bias alerts that the unfair grading patterns or unequal treatment resulting from the use of AI could impact negatively on students with learning difficulties (Boateng, Boateng 3). Such concerns unequivocally indicate that ethical use of AI is not merely optional but rather a necessity.

Simultaneously, AI undeniably has great potential, provided that schools treat it as a responsible tool. Properly secured with privacy, closely monitored by human intervention, and governed by clear policies, the tech can be a boon rather than a burden in education. According to Patel and Heta, the presence of human decision-makers in the schools' AI systems is fundamental for the purpose of ensuring fairness and accountability (207). If the educators, school heads, and policy makers set the ethical standards as their first priority, AI would be a partner in student success instead of a teacher replacement, since there would be no dehumanizing of the educational process that makes it worth the while.

In the end, the role of artificial intelligence in the educational sector will be determined by its responsible usage. While the tech is still developing, it is advisable for educators to embrace the technology in a manner that would not only be advantageous to the learners but also cause the least harm. By implementing practices such as promoting transparency, mitigating algorithm bias, safeguarding student data, and involving teachers in every teaching and learning process, schools can secure the situation where AI enhances rather than detracts from the overall educational experience.

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