

# EOU WRITING CENTER

*“...where every EOU writer can find an interested, responsive reader”*



## THE WRITING CENTER AND TEACHING WRITING WITH A.I.

AI-assisted writing technologies such as ChatGPT are reshaping how students learn about writing, and many classrooms are responding by reshaping assignments. The Writing Center is available for to support all writing, and we recognize that this technology will likely be integrated into the future workplace, has the potential (with education toward critical use) to equalize social inequalities around student success, and is difficult to detect and prove (AI-detection technologies are still highly fallible and may not constitute proof of use in plagiarism cases).

The following is a list of some assignment changes instructors might consider and how the EOU Writing Center might help support these alterations:

### 1. In-class oral presentations

Assigning in-class, unread oral presentations tests student memory of course material. AI can assist students in writing speech drafts, but students ultimately must deliver the material. Requiring students meet one-on-one with a Writing Center tutor for observation and comments as a “first draft” of an oral presentation ensures they get presentation practice, feedback, and deeper knowledge and retention of content.

### 2. Podcast episodes, or other multi-modal assignments

Podcast scripts can be written with the help of AI-writing technologies, but it is currently unlikely students will be able to use AI to fabricate a recorded *conversation* on a specific topic between two or more people. Writing tutors are available to support writing initial scripts, questions, and outlines that might be used for a podcast.

### 3. Assignments that seek to build new, local knowledge

AI cannot venture out into the real world and interview people or collect specific, physical artifacts for analysis. You might consider writing assignments that require students to engage different senses (such as a rhetorical analysis of a local political candidate’s recent speech, or the business strategy behind the design of a local restaurant, or a user experience analysis of engaging with a local company’s physical pamphlet). You might also consider assignments that ask students to interview other people. Requiring students meet one-on-one with a Writing Center tutor as a “interview/client/artifact brainstorm session” or “coordination support session” helps students through finding generative topics and making effective connections with potential clients and

interviewees. These sessions can reduce instructor labor around coordinating these types of student projects.

#### **4. Assigning discipline-specific genres**

AI writing technologies lack rhetorical context and nuanced knowledge of genre. Assigning students to produce document types specific to your discipline can deepen their understanding of your field in a way that makes the use of AI writing tools more challenging. Writing center tutors are trained in genre analysis and know how to ask strategic questions around genre and writing situations.

Requiring students meet one-on-one with a Writing Center tutor can support students as they learn about the subtleties of a particular document type produced in a particular academic community.

#### **5. Integrate personal writing**

Asking students to write about their own experiences, opinions, and perspectives on an issue is a great way to get students to engage critically with a given issue, while also engaging with the intended content. AI writing technologies can produce personal writing, but writers may be more motivated to engage in firsthand writing if their own personal voice is encouraged.

#### **6. Writing assignments as process**

Engagement-based learning assignments use carefully scaffolded writing prompts focused on process and participation. Several separate assignments are established for different aspects of writing the same document, and students may collect a series of lower-value points for simply participating in the writing process. For example, students might be required to first write a topic description and then meet with a fellow student to discuss, followed by a working outline on the chosen topic and a description on the choices the writer made, and then a required visit in the Writing Center to discuss a first draft, before submitting a final draft.

#### **7. Peer review and peer tutoring**

Providing student writers with opportunities to review their own writing and the writing of others allows students the opportunity to look closely at their drafts, develop their writing, and improve writing skills. Build peer review assignments and writing center tutoring into your course requirements so that students meet one-on-one with a Writing Center tutor, ensuring that students are engaging in learning about writing, building new writing skills, and deepening content knowledge through student-to-student and student-to-student tutor dialogue.

#### **8. Generating writing with AI technologies**

There are legitimate uses of AI writing technologies in academic writing, including generating outlines, analysis, summary, and critique. These actions require specific techniques that students may struggle to perform without initial direction.

(Handout inspired by Saginaw Valley State University Writing Center)