

Course policy on the use of GAI

In our course, the use of GAI to assist in writing and communication falls under [MIT's Academic Integrity policy](#). That means that copying, partially or entirely, any material, including material generated by GAI, without acknowledgment of the source will be considered plagiarism. In addition, we will observe the following distinction between AI-assisted writing and AI-generated writing¹:

- GAI-assisted writing includes using GAI as a collaborative tool for research, reviewing the literature on your project topic, summarizing and synthesizing related work, brainstorming and outlining, and proofreading and editing. With GAI-assisted writing, you use material gathered with the help of GAI as source material to generate and compose your own writing. In addition, the material gathered using GAI should be cited.
- GAI-generated writing is writing generated by a GAI tool with little or no involvement from yourself as an author. As the author of a text, your own choices are expected to determine the purpose, scope, and shape of your work; if you cannot articulate these choices, you likely have not authored the text.

Core learning objectives in this course are developing your technical expertise as a roboticist, practicing critical thinking in writing and oral communication, and learning to communicate and explain your work to your professional community and the public. For that reason, GAI-generated writing and oral presentations will not be allowed. You are, however, permitted to practice GAI-assisted writing provided you acknowledge your use of GAI and/or the sources it draws on.

The goal of this policy is to allow you to leverage the power of GAI to assist in your learning, research and communication processes while maintaining ethical research and writing practices.

Work that violates the terms of this policy will be handled according to [MIT's Procedures for Dealing with Academic Misconduct in Research and Scholarship](#).

To acknowledge your use of GAI, we ask you to use footnotes, for example:

² This paragraph paraphrases/cites text generated by ChatGPT, response to "Prompt...", OpenAI, March 7, 2025, <https://chat.openai.com/chat>.

¹ Adapted from Marc Watkins, "The AI Wolf That Education Must Face," Aug. 10, 2025, https://marcwatkins.substack.com/p/the-ai-wolf-that-education-must-face?img=https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2F4e42d400-c8dd-41ee-ab9c-1cbad64d6359_1280x720.png&open=false

Footnotes should be formatted according to the guidelines from the [IEEE EDITORIAL STYLE MANUAL FOR AUTHORS](#), 2024: “Footnotes should be numbered in consecutive order throughout the text. Each footnote should be a new paragraph. The footnote numbers are superscripts in text and in the actual footnotes. In text, place the superscript footnote numbers after punctuation such as periods, commas, parentheses, and quotation marks, but generally before dashes, colons, and semicolons in a compound sentence. The footnotes should be placed at the bottom of the text column in which they are cited.” (p. 17)

The table³ below lists acceptable and not acceptable use of GAI in your course work:

Acceptable	Acceptable with attribution	Not acceptable
GAI Ideation assistance	GAI Writing Assistance	GAI Generated Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of GAI to explore possible topics for the design project. - Use of AI assistant for suggestions on how to make improvements to your writing and oral presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of GAI to search for and summarize related work. You may use GAI-generated summaries of related papers with attribution using footnotes. When you use GAI to review and summarize related work, make sure to check the generated summary for accuracy against the abstract, introduction and conclusion of the paper in question. - Use of GAI to proofread and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of GAI to generate any portion of your text without acknowledgment. - Use of GAI to generate the text or script for written and oral assignments. - Use of GAI to write sections characterizing your design approach or to report and interpret your experimental results.

³ Adapted from Marc Watkins’ Stop Light Approach.
https://marcwatkins.substack.com/p/the-ai-wolf-that-education-must-face?img=https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2F4e42d400-c8dd-41ee-ab9c-1cbad64d6359_1280x720.png&open=false

	<p>revise your writing. Editorial assistance from GAI should be disclosed in the Acknowledgements section.</p>	
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