

Work Smarter, Not Harder: How Educators Can Use Generative AI Tools to Increase Efficiency in their Work

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Introduction/Need for Innovation or Idea

Generative AI (GenAI) tools draw upon “deep-learning models” to “generate high-quality text, images, and other content” (Martineau, 2023, para. 1). Currently, higher education students use GenAI inside and outside of the college classroom to complete tasks to improve efficiency in their daily lives. Within the academic setting, 49% of students reported using GenAI tools to assist them with summarizing or paraphrasing questions, understanding and deconstructing difficult concepts, and ultimately with assistance in answering homework questions and completing writing assignments (Coffey, 2023). Despite widespread use from students, only 22% of faculty were using GenAI and that was primarily to “see what students see,” and apply these techniques to teach students how to effectively and ethically use these GenAI tools (Shaw et al., 2023). In fact, only one-third of faculty members had used GenAI to create more engaging lesson plans and in-class activities (Coffey, 2023).

However, in the emerging “Age of Artificial Intelligence,” faculty must learn how to leverage the power of GenAI to help improve as educators (Christian, 2023). While these tools present some concerns regarding ethical use, they also provide an opportunity to help faculty increase in operational efficiency to complete time-consuming, tedious, or mundane tasks (Coffey, 2024). For example, faculty can use these tools to accomplish tasks such as brainstorming, outlining papers, drafting emails, developing engaging activities, and saving time on administrative tasks (Coffey, 2023; Heaven, 2023). While many GenAI tools exist, the purpose of this innovative idea poster is to describe how we have used two specific platforms in an educational setting: ChatGPT and Magic School AI. ChatGPT is an online platform that generates text in response to a user’s prompts (OpenAI, 2023); whereas Magic School AI is a resource designed to help complete educator-based tasks (Magic School AI, 2024).

How it Works

Each of these platforms require users to create an account. After you have the account, you can begin entering prompts. After logging into *ChatGPT*, you will be redirected to a screen with a message box where you can write a prompt. The more specific your prompt is, the more tailored the generated response will be. After, you can copy the response, regenerate it, or dislike it. If you would like to change the response, you may enter another prompt telling ChatGPT what you would like to do, and it will generate another response. *Magic School AI* is geared for educators and includes over 60 different “magic tools” (Magic School AI, 2024). The tools help educators to develop lesson plans, create innovative teaching lessons, write emails and letters, and craft questions for assessment (Magic School AI, 2024). Different from ChatGPT, Magic School AI, provides a few specific prompts for you to answer to generate your designated output such as the grade level, number of questions, type of topic, type of questions, and type of assessment. The prompt also instructs users to be specific.

Results to Date/Implications

We have found useful applications of GenAI tools (Table 1). Despite potential and promise, these tools still require a human touch to check for accuracy. They are useful when brainstorming ideas and generating new content to be further refined to meet educational goals.

Table 1*Applications of generative AI tools and examples of prompts*

Application of GenAI	Prompt Example
Writing quiz or discussion questions	Give me 5 multiple choice questions that force students to recognize active and passive voice; Write discussion questions about ag-gag laws and first amendment concerns.
Outlining class lectures	Create an outline for an hour-long college class lecture about influencer marketing on social media.
Creating activities for class; outlining tutorials for skill-based activities	Create a 40-minute activity about event planning. The activity should include elements related to creating event agendas, enhancing flow, facilitating a comfortable atmosphere, etc.
Editing instructions for clarity and conciseness	Review this marketing and communications package assignment description for clarity for a 2000 level class.
Drafting recommendation letters	Write a recommendation letter for a college student recommending them for a scholarship. The student is engaged in class, hardworking, kind, and involved in extracurriculars.
Writing assignment descriptions and rubrics	Write an assignment description in which students select a communications theory or model we NOT DID specifically address in the class and provide a 7-slide, 5-minute narrated presentation regarding the topic.
Drafting emails	Write an email to a student who has missed four days of class and will receive deductions based on course policy.
Drafting outline for research projects, thesis, or dissertation	Write an outline for a research poster with the following purpose "To explore the relationships between attitude and purchasing intent for sustainable cotton products."
Exploring data analysis	Describe the assumptions and steps to conduct a two-way ANOVA in SPSS and template to report in APA format.

Future Plans/Advice to Others

We will continue to experiment with the tools to identify strengths and weaknesses. Although they provide useful content, the responses always need more editing for refinement and to ensure accuracy. Unless something radically changes, these tools are part of our technology landscape and students are using them. Faculty need to be aware of these resources and consider ways to use them to enhance their teaching and research. While we are most familiar with the GenAI tools mentioned in this poster, many others are available. We recommend educators continue to search for platforms that help them enhance the educational experience for their students.

Costs/Resources Needed

GenAI tools require internet access; however, the tools referenced in this poster are free to use with the option to upgrade to a paid plan with additional features. For example, ChatGPT Plus is \$20/month and Magic School AI is \$8.33/month. We have only used the free versions of ChatGPT and Magic School AI. It should be noted that these platforms can become overwhelmed by the number of inquiries, causing the site to go down for periods of time.

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