

Department of Comparative Literature AI Use Policy

Purpose

Tools like ChatGPT and other generative artificial intelligence (genAI) tools are rapidly becoming accessible and are often used in search engines, marketing, pharmaceutical development, and customer service. Such tools are also often used for simple writing tasks, organizational management, and other basic functions. While such tools have potential for relatively simple tasks (e.g. customer service prompts, basic factual questions, etc.), genAI technologies are not able to accurately and carefully track complex interpretative questions like those most common to the humanities and other scholarly areas of research. Given that Comparative Literature's graduate programs (and much education in the humanities) focus on guiding students through their own original research, students in our department will benefit most from developing their own writing voice and ideas over time. For this reason, permitted GenAI use in our programs will be quite limited.

Scope

This policy covers the use of generative artificial intelligence in Master's Theses, PhD Proposals, and Doctoral Dissertations (appropriate AI use in graduate courses is determined by individual faculty and clearly stated on course syllabi).

Permitted Uses

Generation of preliminary bibliography for research; revision of translations of source material (students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of translations); editorial functions (spell-check, thesaurus); formatting text (again, students responsible for verifying the accuracy of any AI-assisted formatting according to the appropriate style guide).

Prohibited Uses

The following functions are prohibited by the Dept of Comparative Literature: the creation of content; drafting of sentences, using AI to develop arguments; summarizing books. In sum, the conceptualization, research, and writing of the project must be the student's original work.

Disclosure Requirements

AI-assisted translations must be noted either universally or in each specific instance of assistance (this would follow the practice for acknowledging that one has either translated source material oneself or that one has throughout modified already published translations); all AI use must be documented completely (program used, date/time of access, extent of use, in some cases this might include providing screen shots of prompts, etc.). Failure to document AI use may constitute plagiarism.

Consequences

Sanctions determined in consultation with UB's Office of Academic Integrity, the faculty advisor, DGS, and Chair. Possible sanctions range from rewriting implicated passages to expulsion from the program.

Review Process

This policy will be assessed by the full department in summer 2026 and reviewed/revised as needed in subsequent semesters.