

Teaching and supporting strong writing skills

Especially tailoring to a lay audience, versus academic writing. Ideas generated:

- Strive to include a prerequisite in the curriculum to build strong writing skills,
- Encourage writing across the dietetics curriculum,
- Assess skills prior to start of course; can be a self-assessment
- Orient students at onset of the importance of good communication skills including writing,
- Stress the value of reading as a means to improve writing,
- Provide lots of practice,
- Provide links to online tools such as plainlanguage.gov and the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL), grammar tutorials and quizzes
- Provide opportunities and instruction in peer review
- A semester long project can include multiple opportunities to build writing skills: write a paper for health professional audience, then use to create a presentation on same content for a consumer audience, then use to write a magazine article to a targeted consumer audience
- Provide examples of good versus poor writing, professional vs. informal, and have students reflect on what makes good, professional writing
- Motivate students to write well as a means to achieve success more than as a means to avoid penalties in grading
- Make your writing expectations clear. Here is guidance Rachel Clark provides to her classes: Top scored writing exercises will be (a) concise yet detailed, (b) clearly stated, (c) insightful & reflective, (d) accurate, (e) professionally written and (f) grammatically correct, not sounding like a text message or a casual conversation

We discussed the use of AI for writing assignments and Rachel Clark shared these links: We agreed that this would make an important topic for a future discussion. She shared how useful a feature of the PackBack program is called Deep Dive that assists students with writing projects and correcting grammar.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-chat-gpt-2023-1>

<https://fortune.com/2023/01/21/chatgpt-passed-wharton-mba-exam-one-professor-is-sounding-alarm-artificial-intelligence/>

<https://apnews.com/article/what-is-chat-gpt-ac4967a4fb41fda31c4d27f015e32660>

The challenge of AI – artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT

The consensus was that AI is here to stay and our challenge will be in how to use it and maximize its benefits, yet not allow it to lessen the need or opportunity for students to build critical thinking skills and other skills such as research and writing. We will need to be creative to incorporate the appropriate use of AI into our teaching and provide ample strategies for skill building. We discussed ways to test student knowledge that prevented cheating. Some methods included locking students' browsers to prohibit going to other websites during an exam, having online exams taken synchronously, using more oral exams, etc.