WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Office of the Provost

To: WSU Instructors

From: WSU Office of the Provost, Vice Provost Bill Davis

Date: February 11, 2026

RE: Cancellation of Turnitin AI Detection software and the Use of AI Detectors for Academic Integrity

Cancellation of Turnitin AI Detection

As of February 2026, WSU has cancelled its contract with Turnitin for its AI Detection software. The Turnitin plagiarism software package will continue to be available to WSU Faculty, Instructors, and Students via Canvas.

The cancellation of Turnitin's AI detection software aligns WSU with other R1 institutions who have banned its use in academic integrity, including UC-Berkeley, Colorado State University, Indiana University, Michigan State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Washington. There are three additional reasons for this cancellation.

1. Although disputed, Turnitin claims that they have a false positive detection rate (i.e., a paper is written by a human but flagged as AI generated) of 1-2%.[1] Other studies placed this value higher, especially for students who are neurodivergent or have English as a second language.
    a. In Fall 2024, Turnitin was used at WSU to analyze 148,547 assessments. Even if the false positive rate is 1%, that means almost 1,485 assessments were likely flagged by Turnitin as AI generated when they were not.
2. Every false positive has the potential to lead to the submission of a case of a violation of academic integrity against a student. From information provided by the Academic Integrity Hearing Boards in the Center for Community Standards, there is growing distress and anger being expressed by students over accusations leveled by instructors that are cases of false positives produced by Turnitin. These cases negatively impact student trust and wellbeing.
    a. Between 2023-2025, 33% of all Academic Integrity Hearing Board cases related to allegations of inappropriate AI use led to a finding of not responsible because AI detection was submitted independent of any other supporting evidence.
3. The output from the Turnitin detector is instructor facing and is not student facing. This means students are not aware of potential issues with their work prior to the detector's report to the instructor. Therefore, proactive communication from a student to their instructor about potential issues is not available.

We will continue our policy of not allowing the use of any AI detector as the sole source of support for a case against a student for academic misconduct in the future.

[1] https://lawlibguides.sandiego.edu/c.php?g=1443311&p=10721367

Use of AI Detectors in Academic Integrity at WSU

Currently, WSU does not endorse the use of any AI detection tool for several reasons. First, instructors should be mindful that the submission of student work to a third-party detection tool could lead to risks associated with the violation of students' intellectual property rights, FERPA, and perhaps HIPAA. Second, AI detectors and tools that designed to circumvent them by editing and manipulating AI generated content are currently in a cat and mouse game. Tools to evade AI detection like Undetectable.ai and Sapling are becoming more effective at "humanizing" AI generated text and detectors are mixed in their performance against them. Finally, human experts who use AI regularly outperform novices who do not use AI in detecting AI generated work. However, as a recent paper on Arxiv.org shows, even experts can have false positive detection rates of 4% or more (even higher than Turnitin).[2] Therefore, suspicion of the use of AI is not sufficient for a finding of student responsibility for inappropriate use of AI.

How to move forward in an AI world

Instructors are in a difficult position due to the technological revolution that AI has introduced. On the one hand, we have an obligation to prepare our students for the AI-enabled world that awaits them post-graduation. At the same time, especially with the introduction of agentic AI, AI can earn passing grades on many types of assessments used at universities which calls into question the validity of many traditional methods of assessing student learning. This means instructors need to do the hard work of reengineering assessments so that they include elements that are secure and AI-resilient. Our office continues to monitor the latest conversations around AI and assessment. Here are some resources we encourage instructors to engage with. We particularly feel it would be productive to engage with these resources within a departmental or program so that AI-resiliency extends beyond just the classroom level to the degree level.

1. University of Sydney has developed a two-lane approach to assessment in the age of AI that discusses AI-secure and non-AI-secure approaches to assessment[3]
2. A recent paper demonstrates how to help students understand the limitations of LLMs and writing.[4]
3. Some concrete examples of how to incorporate AI into assessments are available from the Chronicle of Higher Education[5]
4. The WSU Writing Program[6] and the WSU Libraries[7] have resources related to teaching with AI.
5. Bowen, J. A. (2024). *Teaching with AI*, First edition. This is available as a downloadable eBook from the WSU Libraries using a WSU netID.

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[2] https://arxiv.org/html/2501.15654v2#A1.T4
[3] https://educational-innovation.sydney.edu.au/teaching@sydney/the-sydney-assessment-framework/
[4] https://www.chronicle.com/article/10-ways-ai-is-ruining-your-students-writing
[5] https://www.chronicle.com/article/make-ai-part-of-the-assignment; https://www.chronicle.com/article/ai-writing-disclosures-are-a-joke-heres-how-to-improve-them
[6] https://writingprogram.wsu.edu/faculty-support/teaching-with-writing-in-the-ai-age/
[7] https://libguides.libraries.wsu.edu/c.php?g=1357907&p=10026873