# Replicating Writing

## UNESCO Perspective

Ethical

## General Use Bucket

Comparing Voices

## Goal

The goal of this assignment in my Ethics class was to have students have an experience of using AI, but also to assist them in analyzing AI generated materials, and critiquing any issues that crop up in the use of AI. We were discussing absolute rules in this unit, and I wanted to see whether they would think that there are any hard and fast rules that might be set for college students in using AI. I also wanted them to see what kind of editing, adapting, or rewriting would need to be done in order to have a viable piece of writing.

## Tool Used

Copilot

## The Assignment:

"You are going to go to Copilot and interact with it. Copilot is an Artificial Intelligence created through Microsoft. You already have access to Copilot as a Minnesota State college student. I am including a video to help you see how to use this tool, and how you will login. Here, then, is what you need to do once you get into Copilot:

* Think of a question that you believe is an ethical dilemma--something of concern in our culture or in your life--that you would like to ask Artificial Intelligence (AI) to talk about.
* In the discussion area, post the ethical dilemma question or concern that you come up with. Then go and pose your ethical dilemma question to Copilot, asking for a short essay on your topic.
* When you have an answer from Copilot, post the response in the discussion area. What did it say in response to your ethical dilemma? Once you have done this, reflect on these questions in the discussion area, and respond to others after reading what they have produced (the usual discussion requirements apply here):
  + Do you like what AI came up with in response to your question? Do you agree with its answer? Would you have phrased things the way it did?
  + Does using this AI for this assignment give you anything of value? If so, identify what that might be. If not, tell us why not.
  + What ways can you see yourself using AI? Would it include college level work? How?
  + Are there problems in looking to AI for answers, comments, or other materials for college assignments? Are there benefits? What are these?
  + Would you use AI to write a college paper, or assist in this process, for you? What about having it write some of a paper? Would you just use it for research? Is it any better than, say, Google?
  + What would you need to do to make something AI generated fit to hand in?
  + What kinds of sources did Copilot indicate it had used (it will list them below the answer it gives you)? What do you think of those sources?
  + Are there any rules you can think of that you would consider universal law concerning the ethical use of AI? (this is an ethics course--any absolute here?)"

## Final Product

The students asked Copilot everything from "Can murder ever be justified?" to "How do we convince others about the realities of climate change?" to "You are an engineer designing self driving cars. Should you program it to prioritize the safety of passengers or pedestrians?" to "Should we do medical testing on animals?" They received many kinds of short responses, even after asking it for an essay, often in lists of short two-three sentence paragraphs, sometimes in "Pros and Cons" format, and sometimes as an actual essay. They did an excellent job in identifying a number of issues with the responses that they received:

* "It tends to use complex and sometimes too elaborate vocabulary."
* "it's nice, but you still ultimately have to fact check."
* "Copilot likes Wikipedia."
* "This is a new technology, and I worry about becoming dependent on something that might not be accurate."
* "I found it concerning that it expressed opinions about my topic."
* "I would have to completely rewrite this, as it sounds nothing like me."

They also identified a number of ways in which AI might be useful:

* "I can see myself using this for creating an outline"
* "This is a great brainstorming tool"
* "It added ideas to some that I already had concerning this topic."
* "It found me a source I didn't know about."
* "Asking it about words I didn't know was time-consuming, but I learned something in the process."