The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Nursing

Heather DeGrande, PhD, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Topic: Academic Nursing: Excellence & Innovation

Category: Research Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is not new. In nursing education, AI has been used to augment student learning. The branch of AI, Large Language Models (LLMs), such as ChatCPT, have evolved into powerful writing tools. LLMs have challenged higher education in relation to academic integrity. As exponential improvement in LLMs is expected, the call from the academy is for faculty to consider ways to leverage LLMs.

Purpose

An argumentative essay assignment in a graduate level Nursing Informatics course was revised to explore the use of ChatGPT. The assignment included a reflective journal to gather student impressions.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

ChatGPT was explored by entering the prompt for the argumentative essay. The output was well written but did not include supportive evidence and missed essential components in the rubric. The essay assignment was revised with the option to use ChatGPT or not. Students who chose not to use ChatGPT were required to submit an academic integrity statement. All students were required to write a reflective journal about their impressions of the option and use of Chat GPT.

Results

The revision was a pilot attempt to leverage ChatGPT and has not been systematically studied. Approximately 1/3 of the students used ChatGPT and reportedly thought it useful for stimulating ideas, but not for writing a scholarly paper requiring supportive evidence.

Limitations

The option was applied to only one assignment at the graduate level. ChatGPT use was self-reported.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

AI and LLMs are and will continue to be a major part of nursing academia. The major concern is academic integrity. Academics can either fight it or embrace it. Given LLMs are predicted to improve exponentially, nursing faculty should consider teaching students the responsible use of LLMs to help stimulate ideas, while also considering other, more tactile methods of assessing student learning.

Biography

Heather DeGrande, PhD, CCRN-K is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. An Apple Teacher and having attended Apple Learning Academy, Dr DeGrande is well known by her peers and more importantly by her students as an innovator in the classroom. She was recently awarded the University Excellence in Teaching Education Award and the Texas Organization of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Education Innovation in Teaching Award. Dr. DeGrande has a passion for educating the next generation of nurses, nurse leaders, and nurse educators.

Contact Information

Heather DeGrande, PhD
Assistant Professor
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
heather.degrande@tamucc.edu
(361) 825-3696