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Chat GPT: Opportunities for researching writing and the teaching of writing

**... from the perspective of a
writing studies faculty member**

How might research be used to examine the impact of ChatGPT?

Ethics

- Designing scenarios to quantify perceptions of a person versus an AI writing
 - A machine writes a new bill.
 - A student uses a machine to outline a paper.
- Investigating data sources of large language models to uncover bias
 - E.g., cultural, racial, gendered, class bias
 - Effects of the distribution of quality within the data source.

Effectiveness

- Comparing automated writing to human writing
 - Lawyers, technical writers, judges, politicians versus AI
- Offloading repetitive writing
 - Provides templates, time cost / savings
- Emotional component of composing with help
 - Instant feedback
 - Avoid starting with a blank page

I'm interested in developing empirical studies, including quasi and fully experimental studies. (email me johnng@illinois.edu if interested in collaboration!)

What is the impact of A.I. writing technologies on the teaching and learning of writing?

We don't yet know the impact.

- However, thinking about AI writing technologies allows us to reflect and revisit our writing pedagogies.
 - Why are we assigning writing?
 - What is the purpose of the writing in our courses?
 - How are we using writing to assess versus to teach communication?
- Remember this isn't the first disruptive writing technology, we should engage with existing scholarship on the impact of previous writing technologies.
 - E.g., writing by hand leads to more detailed planning versus screen composing for students (Haas, 1989).