

ChatGPT for Faculty

Streamlining Administrative Tasks

Stuart Thiel

Concordia University

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Brief Overview of ChatGPT's Capabilities

- ▶ **Natural Language Understanding and Generation:** ChatGPT can understand and generate human-like text.
- ▶ **Information Retrieval:** It can help locate information, summarize texts, and explain various topics.
- ▶ **Learning/Adaptability:** ChatGPT can help create and refine templates for common responses, adapting to specific styles.
- ▶ **Assistance with Routine Tasks:** ChatGPT can assist in automating routine administrative tasks, such as scheduling, reminders, and organizing information.
- ▶ **Support for Decision Making:** It can offer suggestions and advice, helping explore different problem-solving approaches.
- ▶ **Ethical/Policy Compliance:** ChatGPT can streamline communications to university policies and ethical guidelines.

Workshop Purpose

Reducing Administrative Load

- ▶ Streamlining email communication with students and staff.
- ▶ Automating routine administrative tasks.
- ▶ Enhancing efficiency in handling requests and queries.

Adhering to University Policies

- ▶ Ensuring communications are in line with university guidelines.
- ▶ Facilitating appropriate and policy-compliant responses.
- ▶ Promoting ethical use of AI tools in an academic setting.

What This Workshop Isn't

Beyond the Scope of This Workshop

While the following topics are important, they are outside the scope of today's discussion to maintain focus on our primary goals.

- ▶ **Illicit Student Usage of AI:** Detecting or addressing misuse.
- ▶ **Detecting ChatGPT Usage:** Techniques for identifying ChatGPT-generated content in academic work.
- ▶ **AI's Societal Impacts:** Broader discussions on how AI affects society and ethical considerations.
- ▶ **Environmental Impact of AI :** The ecological footprint of developing and using AI technologies.

Focus of Today's Workshop

Our main goal is to explore practical ways to use ChatGPT to reduce administrative load and adhere to university policies.

Balancing Policy Adherence and Faculty Autonomy

Empowering Faculty through ChatGPT

- ▶ ChatGPT can help avoid accidental policy non-compliance.
- ▶ We must balance routine policy adherence with faculty discretion in specific scenarios.

When and how to Exercise Discretion

- ▶ There are times to challenge or question policies.
- ▶ Make deliberate decisions when deviating from guidelines.
- ▶ Deliberate non-compliance as reasoned policy engagement

Balancing Policy Adherence and Faculty Autonomy 2

Key Takeaway

This workshop aims to empower faculty with tools for policy adherence in everyday tasks while respecting the importance of critical engagement with policies when needed.

Focus on Efficient Problem-Solving

Quick Resolution, Not Conflict

- ▶ Solutions for swiftly moving administrative processes forward
- ▶ Efficiency and clarity in communication, not engaging in policy debates

Up Next: Limits, Scenarios and Hands-On Activities

- ▶ Summarize how to interact with ChatGPT
- ▶ Briefly address some technical limits of ChatGPT
- ▶ Exploring common scenarios faced in academic administration.
- ▶ Engaging in practical exercises to apply ChatGPT effectively.

Talking to the Machine: Part 1

Fundamental Interaction Strategies

- ▶ **Use Natural Language:** ChatGPT excels with clear, natural language queries.
- ▶ **Engage in a Dialogue:** Frame requests as part of an interactive conversation, unlike with search engines.
- ▶ **Iterative Refinement:** Refine queries and ask follow-up questions for more precise responses.
- ▶ **Seek Clarifications:** Prompt ChatGPT to explain its reasoning in complex scenarios.

Talking to the Machine: Part 2

Enhancing Communication Efficiency

- ▶ **Be Specific:** Specific queries lead to more targeted and useful responses.
- ▶ **Use Pre-Recorded Preambles:** Start conversations with consistent details for uniform communication.
- ▶ **Create New Preambles:** Have ChatGPT generate or summarize preambles for future use or to refresh ongoing conversations.
- ▶ **Verify Accuracy:** Always double-check critical information, particularly in academic or professional settings.

Understanding ChatGPT: Generative AI

Generative, Not Learning

- ▶ ChatGPT is a generative AI, which means it generates responses based on patterns in data, not through learning or understanding.
- ▶ It makes educated guesses on what sounds right, not necessarily what is factually correct.

Implication

While ChatGPT is quick and effective, its responses are probabilistic guesses and can include errors or misinformation.

ChatGPT's Conversation Retention Limitations

Finite Focus Size

- ▶ ChatGPT only retains a portion of the conversation within its focus size, leading to a loss of context in longer exchanges.
- ▶ Each request and response is converted into tokens, and the focus size varies with the model (free or paid). This conversion process is often not intuitive to humans.
- ▶ It may require reminders or reiterations of key points in extended dialogues.

Adaptation Strategy

Periodically summarize or refocus the conversation to keep ChatGPT aligned with the discussion's purpose.

Nuances and Inferences: Areas of Difficulty

Understanding Subtlety

- ▶ ChatGPT may struggle with subtle nuances or complex inferences, especially in nuanced or ambiguous contexts.
- ▶ While effective in extracting nuances from others' communications, it may not always infer or interpret them correctly in its responses.

Best Practice

Be explicit in your queries and verify critical or nuanced information independently.

ChatGPT: Non-Deterministic and Ever-Evolving

Non-Deterministic Responses

- ▶ ChatGPT's responses are not deterministic, meaning similar queries can yield different results.
- ▶ This variability is due to its probabilistic nature, relying on patterns in data rather than fixed rules.

Implication for Users

Embrace flexibility in your expectations and verify critical responses.

Dynamic Workflow with ChatGPT

Ongoing Updates and Changes

- ▶ ChatGPT undergoes continuous updates, improving its capabilities and altering its response patterns.
- ▶ Users need to adapt to these changes dynamically in their workflow.

Consistent Role as an Assistant

Despite updates, the core principle remains: ChatGPT is an assistant designed to aid in tasks, though it may not always have 'brilliant' insights.

Scenario 1: Last-Minute Request

Email Example

Hello Professor,

I hope this message finds you well. I'm reaching out to inquire about the possibility of an extension for Assignment 3. Recently, I've been facing some health challenges that have significantly impacted my ability to keep up with coursework. These issues have made it difficult to maintain regular attendance, particularly for early morning classes. My physical condition, which I am currently seeking medical attention for, has left me with limited energy, affecting my study routine and class participation.

Due to these circumstances, I've fallen behind in my courses, including yours. I'm in the process of updating my records in the system to reflect these challenges. Your understanding and any flexibility you can extend regarding the deadline for Assignment 3 would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for considering my request.

Best regards,
Simard

PS Could you please advise if any additional accommodations or support are available for the midterm, final, or project?

Scenario 1: Last-Minute Request Query

ChatGPT Query

I am a University prof teaching a course. I have an email from a student requesting an extension. I would like to politely say no but ask them to contact ACSD for more formal long-term support with health issues or to look up the short-term absence form for isolated resolution. Here is their email:
<email>

- ▶ **Role and Context:** State your position and the context
- ▶ **Request Type:** Summarize the student's request
- ▶ **Response Decision:** Indicate your decision
- ▶ **Actionable Alternatives:** Mention alternatives
- ▶ **Include Student's Email:** Provide the email for context.
- ▶ **Conciseness:** Keep the query brief and focused.
- ▶ **Tone/Style:** Mention any tone or style preferences

Scenario 1: Last-Minute Request Response

ChatGPT Response

Hi Simard,

I'm sorry to hear about the health challenges you've been facing. I appreciate you reaching out and explaining your situation. While I understand your request for an extension on Assignment 3, I encourage you to connect with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) for more formal and long-term support with your health issues. They can provide the necessary accommodations and assistance tailored to your specific needs.

Additionally, you can explore the short-term absence form for isolated resolution, which may offer a more immediate solution for addressing your current challenges.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need further guidance on accessing these resources. I'm here to support you in any way I can.

Best regards,
Stuart

Scenario 2: Midterm Conflict Accommodation

Email Example

Hello Mr. Thiel,

I've recently encountered a scheduling conflict for the upcoming weekend, which unfortunately coincides with the scheduled date of our midterm. I will be out of town during this time and won't be able to attend the exam as planned.

I apologize for the short notice and understand this is an inconvenience. I am inquiring if there's a possibility to reschedule my exam for an alternate date. I am aware that another classmate has been permitted to take the exam on the following Monday. If it's feasible, I would appreciate being able to write the exam then, provided it doesn't conflict with my other scheduled commitments.

Thank you very much for considering my request and for your understanding.

Best regards,
Basil

Scenario 2: Midterm Conflict Query

ChatGPT Query

I am a University prof teaching a course. I have an email from a student requesting an alternate midterm due to conflict. It is last-minute, but I have accommodated other students with similar requests so like to say yes. The alternate date is Oct. 30 at 3pm, Here is their email:
<email>

- ▶ **Role and Context:** State your position and context
- ▶ **Request Type:** Summarize the student's request
- ▶ **Decision Specification:** Indicate your intended response
- ▶ **Specific Details:** Include relevant details
- ▶ **Student's Email:** Attach the student's email for context
- ▶ **Conciseness:** Keep the query brief and focused.
- ▶ **Tone/Style:** Mention any preferred style or tone.

Scenario 2: Midterm Conflict Response

ChatGPT Response

Hi Basil,

I understand your situation and appreciate you reaching out. It's important to me to accommodate your request whenever possible. I can confirm that you may take the midterm on the alternate date of October 30th at 3 pm. Please make sure this doesn't conflict with your other commitments.

Best regards,
Stuart

- ▶ No tone was specified... this is a little weak.
- ▶ You can follow up with ChatGPT

ChatGPT Query

That response is a little stilted, and I don't want to sound too fawning. Could we firm up the tone?

Scenario 2: Midterm Conflict Response 2

ChatGPT Response

Hi Basil,

I've reviewed your request, and I can accommodate your request to reschedule the midterm to October 30th at 3 pm. Please ensure this new date doesn't clash with your other commitments.

Best regards,
Stuart

Getting Started with the Hands-On Exercise

Participation Options

- ▶ If you have a ChatGPT account, feel free to log in and follow along.
- ▶ I will also log in to ChatGPT to demonstrate live examples.

Focus of the Exercise

We'll use real-world scenarios to explore how ChatGPT can assist in resolving standard email queries and administrative tasks faculty commonly face.

Incorporating Concordia's Resources

Practical Application

- ▶ We'll paste information from Concordia's website and policy documents into ChatGPT.
- ▶ Explore how ChatGPT can interpret and utilize these resources to draft responses.

Objective

Understanding how to leverage ChatGPT for quick solutions to frequent email and policy-related inquiries.

Workshop Summary: Key Insights

Empowering Faculty with ChatGPT

- ▶ Overview of ChatGPT's capabilities in academic administration.
- ▶ Strategies for policy adherence and autonomy in decision-making.
- ▶ Effective practices for interacting with ChatGPT.
- ▶ Understanding ChatGPT's limitations and dynamic nature.

Moving Forward: Exploration and Application

Next Steps with ChatGPT

- ▶ Experiment with ChatGPT in your routine tasks.
- ▶ Embrace the tool as an assistant, but remain mindful of its limitations.
- ▶ Continue to adapt and refine your approach as ChatGPT evolves.

Final Thought

ChatGPT is a tool to augment, not replace, the critical thinking and expertise of the faculty.

Q&A Session

Your Questions and Discussions

- ▶ Feel free to ask any questions or share your thoughts about using ChatGPT in an academic context.
- ▶ Discussions on how to integrate ChatGPT into your workflows are welcome.

Closing Remarks

Thank You and Next Steps

Thank you for your participation and engagement in today's workshop. Let's continue to explore and innovate in our use of AI tools in academia.