**Proposal: Integrating Artificial Intelligence into ENGL 1313 to Enhance Digital Literacy and Career Readiness**

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**Overview**This proposal outlines a plan to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into ENGL 1313 to better prepare students for a workforce increasingly shaped by AI technologies. The initiative emphasizes digital literacy, ethical awareness, and critical thinking, equipping students with the skills necessary to navigate and use AI responsibly in both academic and professional contexts.

**Rationale** The rapid expansion of AI demands a thoughtful pedagogical response. During a recent faculty meeting, I posed several guiding questions:

* How should education respond to the rise of AI?
* What challenges and ethical concerns does AI introduce?
* How can we prepare students to engage with these tools critically and effectively?

While some faculty are already exploring AI in the classroom—such as having students compare outputs across platforms to detect bias—many students still face fundamental challenges when interacting with AI or databases. This highlights a broader need for intentional instruction in digital literacy and the responsible use of emerging technologies.

**Instructional Plan** My integration strategy begins with strengthening students’ research skills through the **Information Search Process**, which includes:

* Teaching students how to formulate effective research questions.
* Identifying relevant keywords for academic and professional use.
* Modeling the use of keywords in library databases.
* Providing hands-on exercises to practice and refine search strategies.

Students will also learn how databases and AI systems function—specifically, how they retrieve and rank information through algorithmic filtering rather than human reasoning. By demystifying this process, students will develop a more informed, critical approach to research and digital inquiry.

**Bridging Existing Knowledge with Advanced Skills** Many students possess intuitive internet search skills from years of using platforms like Google or YouTube. However, transitioning from casual search habits to effective use of academic databases and AI tools requires a shift in understanding. Structured systems rely on metadata, filters, and specific phrasing—not conversational logic.

This course module will build on students’ existing habits by teaching them to:

* Apply strategic keyword selection.
* Craft concise, purposeful prompts.
* Communicate with AI systems using clear, intentional language.

**Learning Outcomes** By the end of the course, students will:

* Understand how AI and databases process and prioritize information.
* Demonstrate effective use of research strategies in both human- and AI-powered systems.
* Engage critically with the ethical implications of AI in education and the workplace.
* Transfer these skills to real-world contexts, including data analysis, content generation, and digital problem-solving.

**Conclusion** This initiative offers a proactive, pedagogically sound approach to integrating AI into the humanities. By combining foundational research instruction with digital fluency and ethical inquiry, this proposal aims to empower students to navigate an AI-driven world with confidence, competence, and care.

**ENGL 1313 Syllabus Draft: AI Integration and Digital Literacy**

**Overview:** In this unit, we will explore how artificial intelligence (AI) tools are reshaping the research process and the workplace. You will learn how to critically and effectively interact with AI-powered platforms and academic databases. This module builds on your existing digital habits and helps you develop strategies for academic and professional research in an increasingly AI-driven world.

**Why This Matters:** From search engines to content generators, AI tools are already embedded in many aspects of modern life and work. However, these systems don’t think like humans—they follow algorithms, filters, and probability patterns. To use them well, we must learn how to communicate with them clearly and strategically. This module prepares you to engage responsibly with these tools, building foundational skills that will benefit you far beyond the classroom.

**Key Questions We’ll Explore:**

* How does AI influence the way we search for and evaluate information?
* What challenges and ethical considerations arise from using AI in education?
* How can we use AI tools effectively, responsibly, and professionally?

**Learning Objectives:**By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

* Formulate clear research questions and keywords for academic and career-related topics
* Navigate library databases and AI tools with a critical understanding of how they sort and retrieve information
* Craft effective, concise prompts for AI systems
* Identify bias, limitations, and ethical concerns in AI-generated outputs
* Apply advanced digital literacy skills in academic and professional contexts

**Instructional Activities:**

* In-class modeling and walkthroughs of keyword searches in academic databases
* Guided practice comparing outputs from AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Perplexity, etc.)
* Reflection assignments on the ethics of AI use in education and work
* Research projects that incorporate both human and AI sources, with a focus on evaluation and synthesis
* Group discussions on evolving workplace expectations around AI literacy

**Assessment Methods:**

* Digital literacy quizzes and search strategy exercises
* Annotated AI-output comparisons
* Reflection essays on ethical use of AI
* Final research project incorporating database and AI-sourced material, with proper citation and analysis