

CSC-207 Broader GenAI Policy, Fall 2026 - Noyce, CS Dept, Grinnell College

- We expect you to take full advantage of the many resources available within the Grinnell learning community: course staff and peers.
- As a growing programmer, we expect you to learn how to navigate external resources common to the discipline, including external texts, online tutorials, Q&A forums, and AI-augmented tools. However, we must balance your use of external resources with the need to produce original work so that:
 - You can maximize your opportunities to learn by doing and
 - We can accurately assess your progress in the course.

For the purposes of this policy, “GenAI tools” refers to tools that generate or substantially transform text, code, explanations, or other content in response to user input.

Human connection and communication skills

- Effective communication has always been an important skill to develop, and right now it is even more important! In addition to communicating, **being around people makes a significant difference to your learning and overall experience!**
- Thus, you are highly encouraged to connect with us, your network of support, and attend the in-person out-of-class sessions as well. We understand that GenAI tools **may look like** a “time saver”. However, they can keep you from developing crucial skills, being with your community, and building other skills that go deeper than solving the specific questions you would be asking.

We Miss You at the Mentoring, Tutoring, and Office Hours!

Reflect on the text below, which was reproduced from **Bad/Good Aura, Feuilleton 1, May 2025**, by Drs. Fernanda Elliott, Sarah Purcell, and Shanshan Rodriguez.



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3. The Aura of Absence.

Are **students** showing up less for office hours/mentoring sessions?

If so, would you consider it a silent erasure of a space where **struggle once found human presence**? What seems to be replacing it? An interface, a quicker fix, a path away from discomfort... But perhaps also: a growing unfamiliarity with interpersonal help, communication skills, and active listening... and perhaps loneliness masked by on-demand answers (**an illusion of self-sufficiency?**).

Is this shift evoking an aura of detachment, veiled as independence? A slow detachment of struggle from the presence of others?

Living in a Hybrid ecosystem: Human-GenAI workflows

In a changing technological world, we must develop tools that help us adapt and stand out. Therefore, this course will use two tools:

1. Cognitive Derivation Stamps

Over the summer of 2026, four of your peers joined Elliott's Cognitive Robustness team as research assistants and created stamps to provide an expressive visual language for communicating how GenAI systems participate in cognitive workflows. Read more about your peers here: "[Rethinking AI Through Research and Play](#)".

To learn more about the stamps and download them, visit: [How should society communicate cognitive derivation? A Visual Language for Communicating Cognitive Derivation in Hybrid Human-GenAI Workflows](#).

Your instructor will use the Cognitive Derivation Stamps and encourage you to use them whenever relevant.

2. Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection.

To reward and encourage deep cognitive effort, some deliverables will offer you the option to submit a Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection.

1. A Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection documents the time, difficulty, persistence, help-seeking, and other forms of cognitive effort involved in completing a programming assignment. It also helps you trace how you generated, developed, revised, and came to understand the submitted work.
2. A Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection should draw on evidence from your programming journal, code versions, testing, conversations with course mentors, tutors, peers, and your instructor, and other records of your work.
3. The reflection is evaluated based on both the cognitive effort invested and evidence that you can account for the derivation of the submitted work, including how your process aligns with deliverable-specific policies.

Citation and Resource Acknowledgment

Especially in a post-GenAI world, you must build the habit of being explicit about the resources you use in developing your workflows. To this end, for labs and projects, you are expected to cite all resources you use in developing your solutions. This includes people you consult (e.g., course staff and peers) and resources you use to develop your program (e.g., NetBeans, the course textbook, or external tutorials). The course does not follow a particular citation style; what is essential is the presence of the citation itself!

GenAI policy: A Broader Table

Overall, the table below summarizes the GenAI policy for this course. However, please note that specific deliverables may have a slightly different policy; thus, you are responsible for reading each assignment policy. If you have any questions, please ask! I am happy to answer and support your learning!

- A note on using **Grammar Checker tools** such as Grammarly to answer textual questions: it is fine to use those as long as you DO NOT make use of generative AI features.
- Allowable course tools are tools explicitly provided or identified by the instructional team for the assignment.

Allowable resources for different activities	Course Staff/Tools/Resources	Peers (not in group)	External Resources	GenAI Tools
Asking Conceptual Questions	 Yes	 Yes	 Yes	Yes (you have so many other resources to rely upon... thus, although allowed, you are highly encouraged to avoid it)
Asking Lab/Project-specific Questions	 Yes	 Yes	 Nope	 Nope
Developing Code (editing, testing, and debugging)	 Yes	 Nope	 Nope	 Nope
Reading course content, writing or summarizing emails or other course-related communications	 Yes	 Yes	 Yes	 Nope

Table: “What cognitive activity am I performing, and what resources may participate in it?”

In summary:

- You may consult any resources when asking conceptual questions about the course, not pertaining directly to a lab or project.
- Conceptual questions include any questions about programming or algorithmic design that do not directly pertain to specific questions on a lab or project.
- You may consult the course staff/tools and your peers when asking questions about specific details of a lab or project. This includes design and high-level algorithmic questions about the deliverable in question but does not include code.
- You may only consult members of the course staff and use approved course tools when developing your code. This includes editing, testing, and debugging your programs.
- You are responsible for reading course-related materials and emails yourself and are expected to compose your own messages without GenAI assistance.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Elliott expanded this doc from Dr. Osera's CSC207 GenAI policy.

Professor Elliott used GenAI tools in these ways:

Criticism, Minor editing, and writing alt text. [Visit this page](#) to learn more about the Cognitive Derivation stamps.



“Stamps: Clarifying GenAI Use in Pedagogy and Communication.” OSF. July 15. Silva, Jenifer, Edgar Romero, Mansi Singh, Paul Reif, and Fernanda Elliott. 2026. doi:10.17605/OSF.IO/2CYWR.