

Commission on Education Guidance for Ethical and Effective AI Use in Occupational Therapy Education

Purpose

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly integrated into higher education, occupational therapy (OT) and occupational therapy assistant (OTA) programs are presented with both opportunities and challenges. AI offers the potential to transform traditional teaching methodologies and enhance learning experiences (Ahmed et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024). The proliferation of AI use is also shaping OT practice, and future practitioners must be prepared to navigate these technological shifts (Jozkowski, 2025). The ethical integration of AI in OT education aligns with the profession's central aim of fostering health, well-being, and participation in life through engagement in meaningful occupations (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2020). A balanced approach to AI use in education requires both a clear understanding of its impacts and a commitment to ethical, equitable, and learner-centered integration. (Abdelaal & Sawl, 2024). These guidelines address the academic preparation of learners rather than prescribing AI use in OT practice or at the point of care. These recommendations are intended to prepare learners for a changing professional environment and are aligned with the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (AOTA, 2025).

Term Definitions

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence lacks a universally accepted definition, leading to confusion and inconsistency across disciplines (Kelly et al., 2023). This complexity is compounded by AI's inherently interdisciplinary nature, drawing from fields such as computer science, psychology, and ethics. Consequently, there is a growing emphasis on establishing discipline-specific definitions that align with the unique goals and practices of each profession (Crompton et al., 2023). There is an emerging need to define AI relative to occupational participation. The AOTA Commission on Education (COE) does not intend to define AI relative to practice, as doing so falls outside the scope of the committee's mandate. Additionally, the current body of literature does not support the drafting of such a definition, as significant gaps remain regarding how AI facilitates and impedes occupational participation. There is subsequently a clear need for research to examine the relationship between AI and occupational participation, and academic institutions will play a vital role in providing that clarity.

For the purposes of this paper, AI refers to computer systems that perform tasks that traditionally required human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and pattern recognition (Crompton et al., 2023). In relation to OT education specifically, AI refers to the integration of AI technologies, competencies, and literacy into curricula to prepare learners to critically evaluate, ethically implement, and adapt AI tools for scholarly inquiry and future OT practice (Jozkowski, 2025; Rasa, 2024). This definition encompasses tools and applications that can analyze data, generate content ("GenAI"), provide personalized feedback, and automate various teaching and learning processes, among other tasks (Jozkowski, 2025; Love et al., 2025).

The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (4th ed.) does not explicitly reference artificial intelligence but identifies *products and technology* as environmental factors within context that influence engagement in daily life (AOTA, 2020). Artificial intelligence fits within this category as a technology external to the person that can shape access, efficiency, and engagement in tasks. As such, it may function as either a facilitator or a barrier to participation and professional reasoning. Occupational

therapy educators must intentionally design learning experiences that promote thoughtful, ethical, and effective use of AI and prepare learners to apply this judgment in clinical practice.

AI Fluency

AI fluency represents a sophisticated level of digital literacy where users move beyond technical operation to engage with generative tools ethically, critically, and confidently. This competency involves positioning technology as a supportive collaborator to refine writing, generate ideas, and simplify complex terminology without replacing personal knowledge construction. It requires the critical judgment necessary to recognize misinformation, verify outputs, and maintain academic integrity while navigating complex information environments (Stratton-Maher & Kelly, 2026). By integrating these competencies into occupational therapy curricula through guided practice and structured assessment, educators ensure that future practitioners are prepared to thrive and make informed professional decisions in a service delivery landscape where AI is increasingly pervasive. The key challenge lies in how individuals respond to the ambiguity of how to best utilize AI tools in education. In this context, ambiguity functions as a productive condition that fosters reflection, discernment, and professional judgment (Stratton-Maher & Kelly, 2026). A constructive response contributes to the adaptability and creative confidence needed to engage meaningfully with emerging technologies.

Summary Recommendations

The integration of AI into OT education presents both promising opportunities and ethical responsibilities. As educators and learners navigate this evolving landscape, it is essential to ensure that AI use aligns with the profession's values and advances ethical and informed decision-making. This summary does not represent the complete set of recommendations but highlights key variables regarding policy creation and implementation, human oversight, transparency of use, fluency of use, and use of AI for the benefit of others.

- **Policy Creation and Implementation:** Establish policies that outline the appropriate use of AI tools, designed to protect educator and learner data and intellectual property while encouraging innovation and thoughtful use of the tools to advance both education and practice. These policies should include clear guidelines about how and when AI tools can be used for academic purposes at the institution, program, and course levels. This guidance should specify what tools are approved for use with protected data. All learners, educators, and programs must comply with guidance provided by their academic institutions and applicable governmental regulations. Programs should clearly outline potential ramifications for violation of AI use policies.
- **Human Oversight:** Ensure AI is not used to replace the work of any learner or educator but instead is used to enhance efficiency and efficacy. There should be adequate human oversight to ensure quality services and education are delivered and to ensure the accuracy of information produced by AI tools. Given that AI tools are prone to bias propagation as well as factual errors, all use should be carefully monitored by the user. Ultimately, the use of any AI-generated content is the responsibility of the user, as the user serves in the role of author of the content.
- **Transparency of Use:** Communicate clearly about when and how AI tools are used by both educators and learners through appropriate and thorough disclosure and citation. Educators should model ethical AI use. OT Education programs should avoid the use of AI detection programs and instead focus on building a culture of AI transparency and collaboration that centers the learning experience.
- **Promoting Evidence-Based Practices and Ensuring Academic Rigor:** Ensure that learners develop essential skills to appraise the quality and credibility of evidence, synthesize findings from multiple sources, and comprehend full scholarly texts and resources. Learners should seek to critically engage with peer-reviewed literature rather than relying solely on AI-generated

content or summaries. This approach ensures learners can make evidence-based practice decisions based on quality evidence while using AI as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement for scholarly engagement.

- **Improving Learning Opportunities, Experiences, and Outcomes:** Carefully consider the risks and benefits of AI use with learners, educators, the profession, consumers, and society at large. Educators hold a responsibility to prevent learner over-reliance on AI by preserving the development of core professional skills in OT learners, including critical and professional reasoning. Assessment and education approaches must maintain their integrity and quality to ensure these skills are taught and assessed appropriately. Educators should encourage the use of AI tools in ways that promote equity and accessibility and promote deeper learning and improved learner outcomes.
- **Ensuring AI Fluency:** Provide training for educators and learners to ensure a comprehensive understanding of how AI tools function and the ethical implications of their misuse. OT program curricula should integrate training in effective and ethical AI use to prepare students for its growing role in practice, research, and education (Jozkowski, 2025). Additionally, programs should establish measures to evaluate outcomes and ensure proficiency in the application of these tools. Monitoring fluency and measuring outcomes will ensure that AI tools are effectively and ethically integrated into practice. This preparation ensures educators and learners are equipped to integrate AI thoughtfully and responsibly within professional practice.

Full Guidelines for the Ethical and Effective Use of Artificial Intelligence in Occupational Therapy Education

1. Establishing Policies to Guide AI Use

Academic institutions must establish well-defined policies at the institutional, program, and course levels (Lee et al., 2024; Masters, 2023). These policies should not only address ethical considerations and data privacy but also promote transparency, accountability, and equitable access to AI tools. Furthermore, continuous evaluation and stakeholder engagement are essential to ensure that these policies remain relevant and responsive to the evolving landscape of AI in education and research.

- a. Programs must ensure that their policies and practices regarding AI use align with overarching institutional policies. Institutional guidelines establish the foundational principles for ethical AI use, academic integrity, and data privacy. Adherence to institutional policy ensures consistency, legal compliance, and a consistent approach to responsible AI integration. Academic programs should interpret and apply these policies in ways that reflect the unique needs and goals of OT education, such as fostering professional reasoning, ethical decision-making, and client-centered care.
- b. Institutions should establish clear policies regarding the handling of intellectual property, copyrighted material, and other protected information, ensuring robust data privacy and security measures.
 - i. All AI users must be aware that many publicly available AI tools are configured by default to collect and store information input by the user, which may result in unintended violations of federal data protection regulations. Institutions and programs should establish clear policies that define what types of information may be shared with AI tools, explicitly prohibit the input of protected or sensitive data with unauthorized tools, and specify which AI platforms are approved for educational purposes (Masters, 2023).

- ii. Educators and learners must act to protect the intellectual property of others and safeguard protected educational and health information. Educators have a duty to ensure learners understand the potential risks of sharing protected information with AI tools. This extends to education about AI use during fieldwork and capstone experiences, where the learners will likely have access to protected health information and may be subject to policies provided by the fieldwork and capstone site in addition to institutional and program policies.
- c. Academic programs must recognize that leveraging AI is becoming increasingly essential and will require ongoing support and guidance. To address this proactively, programs should establish clear policies that reflect institutional and program values, and professional standards more broadly. Policies should clearly state that educators retain discretion over when and how AI may be used in academic work. Learners are expected to respect these decisions as pedagogical choices, grounded in the goal of supporting meaningful learning outcomes.
- d. Programs must clearly communicate the potential ramifications of violating AI use policies.

2. Emphasizing Human Oversight

AI exhibits several notable limitations, including an inability to fully comprehend real-world contexts, potential inaccuracies in its outputs, and a deficiency in reasoning and reflexivity, making it unsuitable for tasks requiring profound contextual and ethical understanding or rigorous fact-checking without human oversight (Hashmi & Bal, 2024). AI also cannot understand the complex lived human experience, which limits its ability to ensure an occupation and participation-focused approach or fully participate in the occupational therapy process as outlined in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework - 4 (AOTA, 2020).

- a. Educators are responsible for ensuring that learners carefully assess the accuracy and contextual relevance of AI-generated content. Over-reliance on AI without such scrutiny can compromise the quality of occupational therapy services and lead to ethically concerning outcomes (Gin et al., 2025). By fostering these evaluative skills, educators help learners make informed, ethical, and evidence-based decisions that uphold the standards and integrity of the profession.
- b. AI should not be utilized to substitute or replace the efforts and contributions of learners and educators within educational environments. Instead, AI should serve as a powerful tool to augment and improve the overall efficiency and efficacy of their work. When appropriately implemented, AI can streamline various tasks, assist in more effective resource management, and provide valuable support in research and learning processes. This ensures that learners can focus more on critical thinking, creative endeavors, and in-depth understanding, while educators can dedicate more time to mentorship, personalized instruction, and innovative teaching strategies. By enhancing productivity and effectiveness, AI can create a more dynamic and enriched educational experience where both learners and educators benefit from technology's potential to transform learning and teaching, without undermining their essential roles or diminishing the value of their intellectual contributions and efforts.
- c. AI tools can rapidly extract and synthesize information from a wide range of sources, offering powerful support for research and content creation. If individuals choose to use these tools, they have to ensure the accuracy of the information, since AI can sometimes generate false or fabricated content. Human judgment is essential for interpreting AI outputs, especially in areas that require context, critical thinking, and professional expertise. When using AI-generated content, users must also be aware of potential

plagiarism and copyright issues, as AI may draw from protected sources without proper attribution. The realistic nature of AI-generated content makes it important to carefully evaluate its credibility to avoid spreading misinformation. Ethical standards and accountability should guide all uses of AI, with users remaining responsible for how the information is applied and shared (Dirette, 2024).

3. Transparency of Use

Transparency in AI use is essential for upholding ethical standards and maintaining trust in educational and professional environments. It requires clear communication about when, how, and to what extent AI tools are used in completing tasks. This openness allows users and relevant parties to understand the role of AI and critically evaluate its contributions. To prevent misunderstandings or misrepresentations of skills and effort, both educators and learners should disclose their use of AI.

- a. The use of AI for all scholarly work should be cited as outlined in relevant guidelines and policies (i.e. APA Style Guide). However, ensuring transparency requires additional disclosure through an AI disclosure statement that explains how artificial intelligence contributed to a project. It should identify the AI model used, including the specific name and version. It should also describe the input provided to the system, specifying the prompts or data submitted. Next, the statement should include an evaluation of the output, explaining how the AI-generated content was reviewed for accuracy, reliability, and relevance. Finally, the disclosure should outline the purpose and scope of AI use, detailing why AI was employed and which specific parts of the work it supported (Triola & Rodman, 2025).
- b. Learners and educators may use spelling and grammar correction tools to address mechanical issues like punctuation, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, typographical errors, and any other surface-level changes, such as formatting, without disclosure of AI use. In contrast, using paraphrasing tools or generative AI to rephrase content, adjust tone, generate original text, or modify sentence structure necessitates disclosure.
- c. Educators have a responsibility to model transparent use of AI in their teaching, assessment design, and communication (Avello-Sáez & Estrada-Palavecino, 2023). By modeling ethical and transparent practices, educators create a culture of openness where AI use is shared and not concealed.
- d. The AOTA Commission on Education emphasizes transparency and learner partnership over surveillance, as such approaches can divert attention from the core educational mission of fostering meaningful engagement with knowledge (Kramm & McKenna, 2023). While institutions are often tempted to use AI detection tools as a means of verifying authenticity or monitoring for misconduct, these tools are fundamentally ineffective. They are characterized by high false-positive rates and a limited capacity to adapt to rapidly emerging technologies (Dirette, 2024; McDonald et al., 2025). Occupational therapy programs are encouraged to shift their focus toward assessment redesign, pedagogical transparency, and authentic learner engagement, fostering a culture of open dialogue about AI use between educators and learners.

4. Promoting Evidence-Based Practices and Ensuring Academic Rigor

Educators should reinforce the importance of using peer-reviewed sources, teaching learners that clinical decisions and academic arguments must be grounded in credible, evidence-based literature rather than AI-generated content. While AI tools can support the process of locating potential resources, learners must be taught to verify the credibility and relevance of those sources within the context of OT theory and practice. As generative AI becomes more prevalent in academic and

practice settings, it is essential that learners develop the skills to critically evaluate, synthesize, and apply research findings apart from reliance on AI tools. Educators should seek to promote meaningful engagement with evidence to maintain high standards of academic integrity.

- a. Educators should reinforce the use of peer-reviewed sources. Learners must be taught that professional decision-making and academic arguments should be grounded in peer-reviewed literature, theory, and practice experience, and not in AI-generated content or general web summaries. While AI may assist in locating potential resources, educators need to ensure that learners verify the credibility and relevance of those sources within the context of occupational therapy theory and practice.
- b. Educators should promote direct engagement with scholarly literature. While AI tools can assist learners in identifying relevant research and highlighting key points in literature, educators need to emphasize that these tools do not replace the need to read and critically engage with full, peer-reviewed texts. Summaries based on abstracts or metadata often miss essential nuances that are critical for developing professional reasoning, ethical analysis, and culturally responsive care.
- c. Educators should foster learners' ability to synthesize information. Learners need to be guided in synthesizing findings from multiple sources to develop a comprehensive and balanced understanding of complex topics. Educators should discourage the use of research solely to confirm anecdotal beliefs, as this undermines the integrity of evidence-based practice.
- d. Educators must emphasize the need to appraise evidence. AI tools cannot, at this time, reliably assess risk of bias, detect study quality issues, or identify methodological limitations in research studies (Ge et al., 2024). Educators should ensure that learners develop the skills to evaluate the strength, relevance, and credibility of sources, which is essential for ethical and evidence-informed practice.

5. Improving Learning Opportunities, Experiences, and Outcomes

The utilization of AI in educational settings necessitates meticulous evaluation to discern both its potential risks and benefits for all involved parties, including learners, educators, practitioners, consumers, and society. In the context of education, the evaluation of the use of AI should focus on enhancing learning opportunities and promoting learner growth, well-being, and participation.

- a. Educators must ensure that AI tools are used to support positive outcomes without causing harm. Educators are encouraged to apply educational theories that define the best use of AI tools, while also indicating the types of data that need to be collected and evaluated to measure their effectiveness (Triola & Rodman, 2025). The development of critical thinking and research skills is paramount.
- b. Educators bear the responsibility to ensure that learners do not become overly dependent on AI and develop professional reasoning and critical thinking skills adequate to provide high-quality OT services. They should implement assessment methods and pedagogical strategies that uphold their integrity and quality, guaranteeing that these fundamental skills are effectively taught and accurately evaluated.
- c. Educators should encourage the use of AI tools by learners in ways that promote equity and accessibility, deeper learning, and improved learner outcomes. Incorporating AI into the learner's experience in ways that improve learning outcomes is beneficial and should be considered best practice. Educators should actively seek ways to incorporate AI tools into their courses and curriculum in alignment with course and curricular design. In particular, educators should promote experiential methodologies that foster creativity and critical thinking when incorporating AI tools (Avello-Saez & Estrada-Palavecino, 2023).

Educators should also consider the ability of AI to enhance accessibility for learners with a wide variety of learning needs, as AI can personalize, scaffold, and otherwise support learning (Dumitru et al., 2025). Purposeful integration of AI tools into learning opportunities can facilitate advanced thinking and reasoning skills, rather than leading to over-reliance on AI.

- d. Occupational therapy education must prioritize justice as a central framework for AI adoption to ensure alignment with core professional values. This paradigm shift redefines the use of AI tools in both classroom and practice environments as a matter of occupational justice, specifically aiming to prevent technological advancements from erecting new barriers to participation or widening existing health disparities (Jozkowski, 2025). Occupational justice emphasizes bridging the digital divide so that technology facilitates engagement rather than creating barriers to participation and ensures that technological advancements promote equity and accessibility for diverse learners and underserved patient groups (AOTA, 2020). Critical interrogation of algorithmic neutrality is essential, as AI systems frequently mirror the power structures and inherent biases of their developers, potentially marginalizing diverse learner perspectives and underserved patient groups (Ueda et al., 2024).
- e. Educators have a vital role in ensuring that AI tools are used in ways that promote equity and accessibility for all learners, helping to bridge the digital divide between those who have ready access to AI tools and those who do not. In addition to thoughtful implementation, educators should be mindful of the broader environmental and societal impacts of widespread AI use. They are also in a unique position to foster awareness among learners, encouraging critical thinking about the ethical, social, and ecological dimensions of AI use. By modeling and teaching these values, educators can help shape a more informed and responsible generation of AI users.

6. Ensuring AI Fluency

Incorporation of training in AI tools into OT education is essential for responsible and effective use. Prior to integrating AI tools into education and practice, it is crucial to develop learner fluency in AI use. Teaching about AI involves providing learners with a comprehensive understanding of how AI tools function and the ethical implications of their misuse.

- a. Learners should be taught to evaluate not only the output of AI tools but also the usefulness, strengths, and weaknesses of the tools themselves. Educators should also emphasize the intersection of AI use with the OT Code of Ethics (AOTA, 2025) and standards of conduct, ensuring that learners are aware of the ethical responsibilities involved.
- b. Specific research considerations include ensuring learners understand how to use AI in compliance with research guidelines, standards, and publication requirements. AI should be leveraged as a tool to support the research process by organizing information, clarifying ideas, and enhancing the quality and rigor of scholarly work.
- c. Learners should be prepared during their time in higher education to navigate the use of AI in OT practice. Though the landscape is constantly changing, learners should be introduced to concepts such as AI integration into electronic medical records, AI-driven point-of-service documentation, emerging opportunities (i.e., AI-powered video analysis), and the importance of staying current in AI understanding as technology evolves. Additionally, learners should be prepared to support client use of AI as part of their OT practice at the person, group, and population levels, as the use of AI is an evolving facilitator of participation (Jozkowski, 2025).

- d. Educators must become proficient in the functionalities and limitations of AI tools to effectively integrate them into their curriculum. This includes understanding the ethical implications and the potential impact on learning. Educators should be equipped to use and model best practices in AI use, fostering an environment where transparency, critical evaluation of both tools and outputs, and ethical considerations are prioritized.
- e. Programs and institutions must establish measures to evaluate the outcomes of their training and ensure fluency for both learners and educators. Effective measurement of AI fluency is essential to ensure that all users can integrate AI use in ethically responsible ways.

7. Considerations for Fieldwork Education

Generative AI is increasingly recognized as a valuable tool that can support learning and enhance professional reasoning during academic fieldwork experiences. During fieldwork, AI may be used to support the occupational therapy process. Learners may benefit from using AI to brainstorm intervention strategies, organize treatment ideas, or manage cognitive load during documentation and planning. When used thoughtfully, AI can encourage creativity, increase efficiency, and promote the exploration of diverse approaches to care. AI use must complement but not replace the professional competencies learners are expected to develop through fieldwork. Learners are expected to remain adaptive, meaning they must be able to adjust their thinking and actions in response to new information, shifting client needs, unexpected challenges, and dynamic real-world environments. The use of AI may support this adaptivity by serving as a flexible resource that fosters reflection, responsiveness, and context-sensitive decision-making. AI should not limit learners to static or generic solutions (Mansour & Wong, 2024).

The following recommendations were written specifically for fieldwork education. However, many of the recommendations are applicable to capstone experiences and other experiential learning opportunities, as well.

- a. Fieldwork sites must clearly communicate their policies regarding the use of AI tools. These policies should specify which tools are approved, outline acceptable and prohibited uses, and emphasize the importance of protecting client information and confidentiality. Clear policies help learners understand how to use AI responsibly while complying with institutional and governmental privacy standards and ethical guidelines.
- b. Fieldwork presents an opportunity for learners to practice integration of AI use into OT practice in ways that benefit the consumer and promote efficiency and productivity for the practitioner. AI should be viewed as a valuable learning tool for fieldwork education and for learners on fieldwork placements. Fieldwork educators should recognize that AI can serve as a valuable thought partner to improve and deepen learning. When used appropriately, it can support learners in exploring professional reasoning, generating ideas, and engaging in reflective practice, while reinforcing the importance of human judgment and ethical decision-making. Banning the use of AI in totality should be avoided.
- c. Although AI can enhance learning and support idea generation, learners must also demonstrate the ability to engage in professional reasoning and respond to the unique needs of each client and situation. This requires an understanding of contextual relevance, which involves recognizing how client-specific factors, environmental conditions, and clinical priorities influence decision-making. Fieldwork educators should assess how effectively learners integrate AI within these dynamic contexts, ensuring that

its use supports the development of flexible, competent, and client-centered professional reasoning.

- d. Fieldwork educators are responsible for guiding learners in the appropriate use of AI. This includes observing how learners interpret AI-generated content, evaluate its credibility and relevance, and apply it within OT practice. Educators must ensure that learners use AI in ways that support ethical practice and enhance professional development, rather than relying on it as a substitute for professional reasoning. Learners must always use AI tools ethically and with appropriate oversight.
- e. Fieldwork educators should facilitate learner reflection on how AI influences their practice decisions and professional reasoning. Learners should, at a baseline, consider the strengths and limitations of AI tools and their impact on client care, and evaluate how AI use aligns with evidence-based practice. Reflection on this process helps learners develop a thoughtful and informed approach to integrating AI into their professional reasoning.
- f. Fieldwork educators should evaluate learners' AI use in practice as part of the overall evaluation of professional competency. This includes assessing whether learners adequately comply with established policies and procedures surrounding AI use. It also requires that fieldwork educators assess the learners' ability to utilize AI tools in a manner that elevates occupational therapy practice and does not negatively impact services provided by the learner.

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Appendix A

Historical Context and the Emergence in Higher Education

Historical Context

The history of AI illustrates how discussion has evolved from conceptual understanding to practical application. Turing (1950) developed the imitation game to evaluate machine intelligence. As part of this criterion, a person blindly poses a question to a human and a machine. If the person cannot distinguish between the machine and human responses, the evaluator concludes the machine has demonstrated intelligent behavior. Turing's seminal work shifted discussions of machine intelligence from abstract questions to a behavioral outcome (Turing, 1950). In deference of his pioneering work, scholars have subsequently referred to the imitation game as the Turing Test. For three-quarters of a century, the Turing Test has been used as a maxim to assess AI. With the emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GAI), scholars have now questioned whether the benchmark established by Turing has been operationally achieved (Gonçalves, 2022), thus, reflecting a pivotal time in the advancement of AI.

The Emergence of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Generative AI refers to machine learning models that can produce novel content without explicit programming to do so. GAI poses a challenge to post-secondary education because it can create content that is indistinguishable from a human author (Ahmed et al., 2024). Universities and colleges initially responded to GAI by prioritizing academic integrity, specifically the surveillance of work to determine authorship. In drafting policies to guide AI usage, institutions have largely addressed academic integrity and emphasized the need for educator authorization, learner acknowledgment of usage, adherence to established guidelines, and course policies. While academic integrity remains a paramount concern, educators are increasingly asserting that AI should be used to transform a learner's relationship with knowledge, aiming to foster greater awareness of learner identity and the world more broadly (Kramm & McKenna, 2023).

Appendix B

Integration into Established Pedagogical Practices: Concerns, Opportunities, and Challenges

The use and integration of AI in teaching present opportunities and challenges for educator consideration. A review of current evidence indicates there are a number of opportunities that the use of AI offers. Literature identifies increased efficiency in administrative and academic tasks (Castillo-Martinez, et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2020), personalized and inclusive learning experiences, real-time feedback (Abdelaal & Sawl, 2024; Chen et al., 2020, Lee et al., 2024), and enhanced learner engagement (Ahmed et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025). Some studies show that AI may support creativity and innovation in education (Ahmed et al., 2024; Castillo-Martinez et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024). Conversely, educators may resist the use of AI due to unfamiliarity and insecurity with changing technological tools as well as the need to reassess and change teaching approaches (Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025). Alignment with pedagogical approaches impacts the acquisition of new information and critical thinking skills. Overdependence upon AI tools is a concern identified by educators (Lee et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024; Ng et al., 2025). In health care professions, there are added challenges in AI-supported clinical training, including technical skills, privacy and safety concerns, and recognition of contraindications (Feigerlova et al., 2025; Mansour & Wong, 2024). There is a risk for maintaining academic integrity (Avello-Saez & Estrada-Palavecino, 2023; Lee et al., 2024), limitations in assessing learning outcomes (Shloul et al., 2024), reduced educator autonomy, and concerns over data privacy and the dehumanization of education (Lee et al., 2024).

The included tables 1 and 2 summarize many of the opportunities, risks, and challenges outlined in the literature relevant to the use of AI in OT education. This existing literature provides a robust understanding of the potential benefits and drawbacks of its integration in OT education.

Table 1: Opportunities related to the use of AI in OT Education

Literature Theme	Summary of Findings	Example	Ethical Principle
Increased Learner Engagement with Content	Can foster learners' emotional, behavioral, and cognitive learning engagement by creating positive feelings, satisfaction, enjoyment, and effort (Ahmed et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	Learners engage in interactive AI-driven case-based simulations for intervention planning. In these simulations, learners develop skills to communicate honestly, document precisely, and make transparent, evidence-based choices, reinforcing the importance of integrity and truthfulness in occupational therapy practice.	Veracity
Contextualizing Content for Learners	Potential to personalize learning experiences, provide an inclusive curriculum, and enhance learning experiences for international learners (Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	Learners engage with AI-generated case studies, where the clients have a variety of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This facilitates cross-cultural collaboration and language translation and ensures the learners are prepared for culturally responsive practice.	Justice
Real-Time Feedback and Improved Accessibility	Provides instant feedback and support through chatbots and automatic grading; offers opportunities for self-assessment (Abdelaal & Sawl, 2024; Chen et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	Learners complete an AI-generated professional reasoning quiz, where the chatbot provides instant feedback on their responses. This improves learning outcomes as learners are readily able to incorporate feedback.	Fidelity
Greater Efficiency for Administrative Task Completion	Streamline processes for rubric creation, responding to emails, providing learner/educator feedback and other administrative tasks (Chen et al., 2020; Ng et al., 2025).	An OT educator uses AI to generate detailed grading rubrics that align with learning outcomes and assignment instructions, provides timely, unbiased feedback, and automates personalized emails thus promoting fair assessment and equal support for all learners, regardless of background or learning style.	Justice
Literature, Writing Tasks, and Content Creation	Content creation of learning materials, worksheets, plans, rubrics, quizzes, and exams. It can assist with data analysis, hypothesis generation, manuscript writing,	An OT educator uses an AI tool to extract key findings from research data and assist in hypothesis and manuscript drafting while providing critical oversight and guidance of the AI tool. This ensures a truthful representation of the research. The educator also uses the AI tool to generate quizzes based on verified	Veracity

	predictive models, and summarizing long articles. (Castillo-Martinez et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024; Ng, et al., 2025)	summaries, promoting comprehension and critical thinking in OT education that accurately reflects current literature.	
Innovation	Can promote and support creative and critical thinking and intervention strategies; It can also facilitate innovative learning methods (Ahmed et al., 2024; Castillo-Martinez et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024).	A learner uses an AI tool as a thought partner while on a fieldwork placement to foster creative, evidence-based intervention ideas. The ready access to and implementation of these ideas improves client outcomes.	Beneficence
Fieldwork and Capstone Placements	Can be used in health professions education to aid intervention planning and support professional experiences and training (Mansour & Wong, 2024).	A learner uses AI to facilitate evidence-based intervention planning with real-time feedback and recommendations. This enhances professional reasoning, deepens the learner's understanding of the interventional planning process, and improves educational outcomes.	Beneficence

Table 2: Challenges and risks related to the use of AI in OT education

Literature Theme	Summary of Findings	Example	Ethical Principle
Academic Integrity and Dishonesty	Potential for an increase in academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Difficulty sourcing data and accurately citing ideas and information, leading to academic integrity concerns (Avello-	A learner uses an AI text generator to complete an essay assignment, copying the generated text verbatim without proper citation. Consequently, the educator is unable to identify the original sources, raising concerns about academic integrity and the authenticity of the learner's work.	Veracity

	Saez & Estrada-Palavecino, 2023; Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).		
Critical Thinking	Concerns about learner misuse of tools that may result in over-reliance on technology, decreased understanding of content and underdeveloped critical thinking (Lee et al., 2024; Mansour & Wong, 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	A learner frequently uses AI tools to generate treatment plans and write notes, leading to an over-reliance on technology. This over-reliance results in underdeveloped critical thinking in treatment planning that is required to ensure person-centered approaches in practice. Upon graduation, the learner is unable to provide high-quality, person-centered care in real time.	Beneficence
Learning Outcomes and Assessments	AI challenges current assessment strategies; need to redesign assignments to support AI while ensuring learning objectives are met (Lee et al., 2024; Shloul et al., 2024).	An educator observes learners using AI to draft treatment plans. This prompts a redesign of the course, integrating additional practical skill testing and simulated client sessions to ensure learners achieve learning objectives related to critical thinking around treatment planning. This increases the workload and related course expenses.	Nonmaleficence
Innovation	Potential for decreased “autonomy” without realization, which may limit innovation (Lee et al., 2024).	A learner consistently utilizes AI to generate content for coursework. When tasked with creating an innovative capstone experience, the learner is unable to generate unique ideas outside of what has previously been explored due to an over-reliance on AI.	Autonomy
Dehumanization of Education	Educators may view AI as a potential threat to their roles, fearing that AI could replace teaching roles (Lee et al., 2024).	University administration encourages a variety of cost-saving measures, including the increased use of AI by educators to boost productivity in lessons and exam generation, grading, and support provided to learners. This cost-saving measure results in a reduced need for educator positions within an academic program; subsequently, an educator role is eliminated.	Nonmaleficence
Data Collection, Surveillance, and Privacy	Potential risk for the acquisition and use of learner data unknowingly indicates the need for policies and guidelines. A key concern is safety and privacy (Feigerlova, 2025; Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	An educational program collects extensive learner data through AI-driven platforms. The program does not notify the learner about the data collection and no consent is provided, which puts the learner at an unknown level of risk. The database is eventually breached, the learner is not notified, and their information is utilized to cause harm to the learner.	Autonomy

Resistance to Change	Some educators may be resistant to changing teaching practices and methods, often due to unfamiliarity with AI technology. (Lee et al., 2024; Ng, et al., 2025).	An educator is hesitant to incorporate AI into their pediatrics course, primarily due to a lack of understanding about how the technology works or its benefits. As a result, the educator does not incorporate AI into their course. The learners are not equipped to ethically or competently use AI following graduation, leading to services rendered at a lower quality and efficiency than their AI-competent peers.	Nonmaleficence Justice
Lack of Training	Educators report the need for training and professional development, insecurity with the use of AI technology, insufficient time to learn the tech, and tech support (Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	Administration requires that educators incorporate AI into their courses. Educators report they lack the skill or knowledge to incorporate it well into existing assignments and courses. However, additional training, time for education, and technical support are not provided. Educators continue to feel ill-equipped and choose to either not incorporate AI in their courses, incorporate it minimally, or allow learners to utilize AI however they choose. As a result, learners are not adequately prepared to utilize AI in practice and educators feel increased stress around their role.	Nonmaleficence Justice
Needs of Learners	Learners may not understand foundational concepts and misuse tools; explicit guidance for the use of tools is required. (Lee et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025).	A learner uses AI to generate a treatment plan while on Level II fieldwork. The learner does not fully understand the risks associated with AI use and inputs protected client data into the public AI tool. This results in a HIPAA violation.	Nonmaleficence Autonomy
Potential for Bias	Models can inherit political, racial, and gender biases from the human-sourced data on which they are trained which may lead to unfair or discriminatory outcomes. The design and programming of AI tools often reflect the values and assumptions of their creators, which can unintentionally embed biases into models (Alotaibi, 2024; Reynolds, 2023; Swiecki et al., 2022).	An AI tool used by a learner on fieldwork inadvertently favors treatment plans that align with Western cultural norms, resulting in biased recommendations for interventions. As a result, minoritized clients experience suboptimal care and worse outcomes from their OT services received compared to their majority peers.	Justice Nonmaleficence