AI-Generated Summaries:
Are They Any Good?

Course Subject:	DS 4973: Society of Mind: Artificial Intelligence for Everyone
Student Level:	Undergraduate
Number of Students:	13
Developed by:	John Rachlin, Associate Teaching Professor, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

What Students Did

In this activity, students were given three articles on the use of AI in modern medicine. Before they read the articles, they were asked to use Generative AI to create a summary of each one, some discussion questions about it, and some quiz questions. After reading each article, students responded to reflection questions that prompted them to critically assess the accuracy of the summary, the effectiveness of the discussion questions in promoting their own learning and engagement with the materials, and the utility of the quiz questions for self-learning or testing their own reading comprehension and learning. We then discussed the activity as a group.

Purpose

The goal of the activity was to engage students in making critical assessments of AI-generated summaries, and whether AI-generated discussion and questions are relevant and/or effective in helping them learn and engage with the material.

Assessment

The assignments were graded on a credit/no-credit basis. The whole group discussion gave me an opportunity to informally evaluate the effectiveness of the activity.

Faculty Reflections

This assignment prepared students to bring their own thinking to an in-class discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of generative AI in engaging issues that are important but nuanced, and their own learning processes in terms of using advanced organizers like the AI-generated summaries, discussion questions, and quiz questions.

Through the activity, students observed that AI completely missed the emotional content of the readings. The discussion around this made the point that because AI-generated content is more robotic than human-generated content, they can't use AI to do their writing for them if they want their unique voice to be heard.

Step-by-Step Directions

Step 1	Students use AI to generate a synopsis, discussion questions, and quiz questions for each of three assigned papers on the topic of AI in Medicine or AI in Healthcare.
Step 2	The students first read these AI-generated materials and then read each paper.
Step 3	The students write a 1-2 page essay answering the following questions: • Was the AI-generated synopsis accurate? • What key points were overlooked, if any? • Did foreknowledge of the thought questions and quiz questions help you to engage with the material on a deeper level or help you to understand and remember the material? • If a college professor were to use generative AI in this manner to select reading assignments or to test a student's comprehension of those readings, would that be ethical? Would your views change if this was done for a public high school reading assignment? • Do you believe that in the future, AI will act as an ever-present sidekick helping students learn? What is your vision for the role of AI and "intelligent agents" in society? NOTE: These papers were submitted for a credit/no-credit grade.
Step 4	The class participated in an in-depth follow-up discussion to explore nuanced dimensions of the utility, benefits and limitations, and ethics of using AI in teaching and learning.