

I. Introduction & Purpose

St. John's University has developed the following guidelines concerning the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in academia and research. If artificial intelligence tools are used in academia and research, they should be used safely and responsibly. The guidelines described in this document are specific to academic and research activities and are intended to address privacy, data security, and the protection of academic and research integrity. This document provides guidance to supplement St. John's University Human Resources Policy 1038, [Artificial Intelligence in the Workplace](#), and includes guidelines, examples, and guardrails to facilitate its application in academia and research. In the event of a conflict between Policy 1038 and these guidelines, Policy 1038 shall apply.

II. Definitions

As defined in Policy 1038, Artificial Intelligence in the Workplace, artificial intelligence (AI) is the ability of machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These technologies enable machines to learn from data, detect patterns, process natural language, and interact with the environment to mimic human cognition. Generative AI is a specific type of AI capable of generating new content from text, images, music, and more. Generative AI integrates several technologies such as Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, and Deep Learning systems and is trained on large volumes of data through Large Language Models (LLM). Generative AI tools include Chat GPT, Bard, Gemini, and similar programs, which can answer questions, provide explanations and summaries, draft documents, and simulate discussions, among other things. Other examples of AI technologies are Voice Dictation and Speech Recognition, Computer Vision, Robotics, Recommender Systems, and Knowledge Graphs.

It is important to note that AI tools may pose certain risks, have limitations, and be biased in the information they provide. Hence, while AI offers innovative possibilities, its use involves careful consideration of privacy, accuracy, integrity, and ethical use within the University's academic and research framework.

III. Scope

These guidelines apply to all instructors and students at St. John's University engaged in university-related academic activities/research. Law school instructors and students should also see Law School-specific documents.

IV. Use of AI in Academia

- 4.1 St John's University adheres to the following principles defined by the US Dept. of Education regarding the use of AI in academic activities:
- a. Humans in the loop: Instructors, students, and researchers must retain their agency to decide what data patterns mean, choose courses of action, and not use AI as an alternative to human decision-making.
 - b. Equity: AI and any other learning technology should be used to pursue educational equity, inclusive pedagogy, and the rooting out of data or algorithm-driven biases and discrimination.
 - c. Safety and Ethics: AI technologies should be used in ways that i) do not compromise students' privacy and security and ii) adhere to ethical standards.

- d. Transparency: Academic uses of AI must be transparent regarding disclosure, explainability, and understanding of how AI models work in various general educational use cases to anticipate limitations, problems, and risks.

4.2 With regard to the use of AI in academic activities, instructors should explicitly outline their AI use expectations for students, clearly defining the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable uses. Students using AI must follow individual instructors' expectations outlined in teaching materials and the classroom.

4.3 When engaged in university-related academic activities, instructors and students must always disclose and report the use of generative AI and be responsible for reviewing all AI-generated content for accuracy.

4.4 Guidance on the Use of AI for Instructors

Instructors are encouraged to explore innovative ways to incorporate AI tools into their teaching methods. AI is expected to be used across fields in many creative ways. Within the boundaries set by instructors and under the obligation of disclosing the use of AI in the performing of academic work, legitimate AI uses may include:

- a. Supplemental Learning: AI can be a supplementary tool to provide additional explanations, examples, and resources to enhance students' understanding of course materials.
- b. Discussion Facilitation: AI can stimulate discussions by generating prompts, questions, or hypothetical scenarios that encourage critical thinking and class participation.
- c. Ideation and creativity: Students can use AI to generate or improve creative content in tasks such as idea generation, outlines, prototyping, and creation of alternative renditions and formats for concepts or visual artifacts.
- d. Active Learning: Instructors can use AI to create engaging assignments in which students work in groups to conduct a comparative analysis of AI-generated content related to coursework and curricular content.
- e. Personalized Feedback: AI can provide personalized feedback on assignments, projects, or assessments, addressing individual student's questions and concerns.
- f. Language Practice: AI can allow students to practice language skills, simulate real-world conversations, or engage in various learning exercises.
- g. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR): AI can enhance virtual and augmented reality experiences in education by creating immersive simulations and scenarios, allowing students to explore complex concepts in a more engaging manner.

4.5 Guidance on Ethical Considerations

The integration of AI tools must align with ethical standards and policies to ensure academic integrity. To aid in this alignment, instructors should outline in their syllabi and other documents, such as assignments, teaching materials, and course web pages, AI use expectations for students, clearly defining the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable uses. Examples of unethical uses include:

- a. Lack of Transparency/Disclosure: Instructors should inform students whenever they use AI tools. Clear disclosure of the technology's involvement in classroom activities helps maintain trust and avoid confusion. Students should disclose how they used AI in performing academic work following the guidelines defined by their instructor.

For sample language that can be incorporated into syllabi and assignments, see the templates or sample syllabi in the canvas course "Generative AI in the classroom". For suggestions about creating an AI policy for your class, see [this guide](#).

- b. Automating student assessment: AI tools should not be used to outsource learning assessment and grading tasks to AI (see the "Human in the loop" principle, art 4.1).
- c. Generating or perpetuating Bias: AI models may inherit biases from the data they are trained on, which can lead to biased or unfair information. Offensive, violent, or otherwise inappropriate content may surface when AI uses biased input. Instructors and students should be vigilant and work to counteract these to ensure unbiased information is not created, shared, or perpetuated.
- d. Lack of Accessibility: instructors should strive to ensure that using AI tools does not exclude any students with disabilities from participating in class activities. The technology should be used in a way that is accessible to all students.
- e. Reduced Learning Engagement: Overreliance on AI may hinder deep engagement and cause a lack of understanding of course materials, leading to incomplete learning experiences.
- f. Lack of awareness about the Ethical Development of AI: instructors should encourage responsible use of AI and raise awareness about AI tools' limitations to help students better understand how AI technologies work, what they can or cannot do well, and their societal implications.
- g. Infringement of Academic Integrity: Instructors should clearly define boundaries for student use of AI tools so that academic integrity is not compromised. Instructors should also facilitate their students' understanding and avoid plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or using the tool to gain unfair advantage in assessments. Students must not use AI to cheat in any way. They must strictly adhere to the academic integrity university policy and the rules defined by the instructor when using AI in performing academic work. AI-enabled cheating on assignments and assessments will be subject to the same rules and consequences established in St John's policy on academic integrity. Instructors can assume that students are infringing on academic integrity when the use of AI:
 - undermines learning objectives and impairs the learning process;
 - gives a dishonest impression of knowledge and abilities;
 - violates the rules established by the instructor regarding the use of AI in a class or assignment.
- h. Plagiarism and Misattribution: Instructors should urge students to disclose the use of Generative AI to avoid plagiarizing or failing to attribute AI-generated content, compromising originality, and properly citing AI-generated content. Instructors are encouraged to enforce the message that authorship implies responsibility. Therefore, AI models do not constitute authorship as they cannot take responsibility for the submitted work.
- i. Unauthorized Collaboration: AI tools might be used for improper collaboration, blurring individual contributions, and violating academic integrity.

- j. **Intellectual Property Infringement:** AI tools do not currently disclose whether the information they use and regurgitate is protected by copyright. Therefore, students and instructors should exercise caution when distributing texts or images created with AI. Similarly, students and instructors should avoid feeding AI tools with copyright-protected information.
- k. **Privacy violation:** Users have no control over the data they provide to an AI tool. Feeding these tools with sensitive information that could lead to privacy violations must be avoided. For instance, teachers should not use student information when using ChatGPT or similar tools.

4.6 Exercise caution and seek guidance when using AI software

While St John's University is working on defining more specific guidelines regarding the assessment of security or confidentiality concerns that can arise from using AI-empowered software, researchers and instructors should exercise caution in adopting such software tools and seek recommendations from the St John's Information Technology department when using or purchasing AI-software.

V. Guidance on the Use of AI in Academic Research

Concerning the use of AI in research, all St John's faculty and students should ensure:

- 5.1 **Confidentiality:** Researchers must NOT enter confidential information and/or data into third-party AI tools. Any infringements may expose the University and its community members to potential privacy and security breaches. Examples include entering prompts and queries into tools like ChatGPT, which is a form of releasing that information into the public domain. Uploading research data, grant proposals, and analytical results into a public AI tool could also publicly disclose that content.
- 5.2 **Accountability:** researchers using AI tools for scholarship activities are fully accountable for verifying the accuracy and integrity of the generated content. Researchers using AI tools in manuscript writing, data collection, and analysis must be transparent in disclosing their use of AI tools. Researchers are responsible for checking and ensuring that the AI-generated output they are using is not incorrect, incomplete, or biased. Accuracy and integrity in scientific work are always the researcher's responsibility, for which they are accountable and not the AI. Similarly, grant applications should represent the researchers' original and accurate ideas.
- 5.3 **Disclosure:** The use of generative AI should be clearly, transparently disclosed, and documented according to the professional and ethical standards for their respective field or discipline of research. The researcher involved in proposing, reviewing, performing, or disseminating research is responsible for abiding by the policies and standards governing the use of AI in their field of study.
- 5.4 **Biases:** given the opaque nature of the source data for generative AI tools and the mission of St. John's University, researchers should make explicit attempts to mitigate biases within the generated content.
- 5.5 **Authorship:** St. John's University supports the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#) position statement on "[Authorship and AI tools](#)," asserting that AI models do not constitute authorship as they cannot take responsibility for the submitted work. (*discuss concerns raised*)

- 5.6 Peer-review: St. John's University supports the [NIH position](#) prohibiting AI use in peer-review processes.
- 5.7 Use of research software incorporating AI: While St John's University is working on defining more specific guidelines regarding the assessment of security or confidentiality concerns that can possibly arise from using AI-empowered software, researchers should exercise caution in adopting such software tools and seek recommendations from the St John's Information Technology department regarding the level of risk.

VI. Privacy and Data Security

All instructors and students are expected to protect confidential data in academic activities as mandated by the St. John's University Human Resources Policy on Artificial Intelligence in the Workplace.

VII. Review and Revision

These guidelines will be periodically reviewed and revised as needed.

VIII. Approved by Dr. Simon Moller, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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