

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: April 30, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Policy on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence at TSU

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Jeffery Norfleet, Committee Chair
Robbie K. Melton, Provost

Background Information

Public Chapter 550, effective March 11, 2024, requires the adoption of an artificial intelligence policy. The law specifically requires each local governing board of trustees of a state university to adopt a policy regarding the use of artificial intelligence by students, teachers, and staff for instructional and assignment purposes.

The policy must be implemented no later than July 1, 2025; the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act does not apply to a policy adopted under the new law. The policy must be published on institution's website.

The board must submit the policy to chair of the Education Committee of the Senate and chair of the Education Administration Committee in the House of Representatives no later than July 1, 2025. If a board fails to adopt and submit its policy, the governing board must appear before the Joint Government Operations Committee by no later than 60 days after July 1, 2025.

TSU's proposed "Policy on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence at TSU" ("AI Policy") is enclosed for consideration by the Board of Trustees. During its meeting on April 28, 2025, the Student and Academic Affairs Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the policy, as contained in the materials for the April 30, 2025, Board meeting.

Action

The Chair will call for a motion to adopt the AI Policy as recommended by the Student and Academic Affairs Committee during its April 28, 2025, meeting.

MOTION: I move to recommend to the full Board the approval of the AI Policy, as contained in the meeting materials for the April 30, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting.



Policy on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence at TSU

Policy No. 1.09

Effective Date: Immediately Upon Approval

Responsible Offices: Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Technology Services (OTS), Office of Student Affairs

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for the responsible use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) tools at Tennessee State University (TSU). It ensures compliance with Tennessee law, data security, privacy laws, and ethical standards while promoting the effective use of artificial intelligence in academic and administrative settings.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to faculty, staff, students, and employees who use AI tools for academic, research, or administrative purposes at TSU.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Machine-based systems that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments and that are capable of using machine and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments, abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner, and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.
- **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI):** AI that generates new content, such as text, images, and code, when prompted by an individual.
- **Fair Use:** A legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances for purposes such

as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, in accordance with the framework set out in Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976.

4. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR AI USE

A. Responsible Use of AI by Students for Instructional and Assignment Purposes

The University embraces the integration of AI with a commitment to scholarly rigor, intellectual integrity, and educational excellence. The University acknowledges that the implementation of AI poses unique challenges to academic integrity, while also offering exciting possibilities that will enhance teaching and student engagement in preparation for the evolving landscape of learning and professional endeavors. The following principles apply generally to the use of AI on campus for instructional and assignment purposes:

1. **Responsible Use of AI Tools:** Students may be permitted to use AI tools for assistance with coursework. Students are expected to review, validate, and understand the output from these tools.
2. **AI and Academic Integrity:** Faculty may elect to allow students to use AI for particular assignments or according to specified guidelines. Students should contact course faculty for any questions concerning the faculty's AI election for a given course and/or the appropriate use of GAI in each course. Generally, the use of AI to complete assignments, write papers, or answer quiz questions on behalf of the student is strictly prohibited unless allowed by course faculty and appropriately cited. The improper use of AI constitutes a breach of academic integrity and is considered academic misconduct under the Code of Student Conduct, similar to plagiarism or cheating.
3. **Original Work:** While AI can provide assistance, the work submitted by a student must be the student's own work. Any use of AI-generated content should be clearly cited.
4. **Data Privacy:** Using AI tools often involves sharing data with third-party entities. Students must be mindful of what information they are sharing and always prioritize protecting personal and academic data. Students are advised to review University technology policies and guidelines applicable to students to ensure compliance with acceptable use policies.
5. **Accessibility:** The University recognizes that not all students have access to AI tools. Assignments will be designed with this in mind, and no student will be at a disadvantage for lack of access to AI technology.

B. Responsible Use of AI by Faculty, Staff, and Employees

1. **Instructor Discretion** – Faculty and staff members have the authority and responsibility to set course-specific AI policies that clearly communicate to students the permitted uses, if any, of AI and the extent to which AI and derived content may be used as part of a student’s academic work.
2. **Administrative Use** – AI-generated content for University operations must be fact-checked to prevent misinformation and ensure compliance with institutional policies.
3. **AI Detection Tools** – Faculty must exercise caution with AI detection tools, as misidentifications can occur. AI detection results should not be the sole determinant of academic dishonesty.

C. Ethical Considerations

1. AI generated results may contain data, images, and other information protected under intellectual property or other ownership rights, including copyright. Authors shall be fully responsible for ensuring the allowed use of any AI generated data and information contained in their work.
2. AI technology is to be used in accordance with: (i) academic and student codes of conduct; (ii) any ethical and professional standards applicable to a particular course or program; (iii) academic standards pertaining to attribution and citations; (iv) University, department, college or other applicable policies, procedures, and other guidelines; and (v) applicable laws, rules, or regulations.

D. OTS Data Security & Privacy Policy

The use of AI technology is subject to the University’s policies and procedures pertaining to information technology, including, but not limited to, the Information Security Policy, Policy No. 10.01. The following must also be adhered to:

1. **OTS Risk Assessment** – Before inputting Restricted Data into an AI tool, an OTS security review must be conducted. Users must contact OTS directly to request the requisite security review.
2. **Restricted Data** – Faculty, staff, and students are free to use any AI technology for instructional purposes so long as Restricted Data is not entered into such systems. The following are deemed “Restricted Data” and may not be entered into AI tools unless approved by OTS:
 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)-protected information, includes, but is not limited to, student records, demographic information, grades, attendance records, and disability-related information;
 - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-protected health information;

- Personally identifiable information;
- Employee performance records;
- Proprietary intellectual property; and
- Confidential research data.

3. **Prohibited Use** – AI tools may not be used for:

- Generating misinformation, defamatory content, or academic dishonesty;
- Facilitating cybersecurity threats, malware, or phishing;
- Violating copyright, intellectual property, or contract or licensing agreements; or
- Assisting in discriminatory practices, harassment, or illegal activities.

E. Fair Use of AI-Generated Content

AI-generated content may be used for educational, research, or analytical purposes, provided it complies with copyright laws, university policies, and ethical standards.

5. COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT

A. Consequences of Violations

- **Students** – Violations of this policy will be handled in accordance with the university’s Student Code of Conduct, as applicable.
- **Faculty & Staff** – Violations of this policy will be handled in accordance with the university’s normal disciplinary processes for faculty and staff

B. University Oversight

- OTS will monitor and block or restrict unauthorized AI tools, as necessary, on university-owned devices and on the University’s network.
- Regular policy reviews will be conducted by the Responsible Officials to ensure alignment with legal, technological, and ethical developments.
- The Office of Risk and Financial Compliance shall be responsible for reviewing University procedures, guidelines, and other efforts to promote compliance with the provisions of this policy. The Office of Risk and Financial Compliance will prepare reports regarding the implementation and ongoing compliance with this policy as may be requested by the President and/or TSU Board of Trustees Audit Committee.

6. EDUCATIONAL TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To ensure responsible AI use, TSU will provide:

- Workshops for faculty, staff, and students on AI ethics, security, and academic applications.
- Updated guidance on AI integration in academic and administrative settings will be regularly provided.

7. AUTHORITY

In accordance with T.C.A. §49-7-185, the TSU Board of Trustees is responsible for adopting a policy pertaining to the use of AI technology by students, faculty, and staff for instructional and assignment purposes.

The Board of Trustees charges the President and Responsible Offices with the University oversight, including policy reviews, provided for in this policy.

8. APPROVAL & REVIEW

This policy is subject to periodic review and updates.

Approved By: TSU Board of Trustees

Date: _____

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

- TSU Student Code of Conduct
- Information Security Policy, Policy No. 10.01