



CNU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

I. Policy Statement

The CNU AI Use Policy defines the types of AI and outlines permissible and non-permissible uses of AI by CNU faculty and students.

II. Purpose

- a. This policy establishes a unified framework for the ethical, effective, and strategically coordinated integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across all functions of California Northstate University (CNU).
- b. This policy primarily addresses the use of Generative AI, which includes Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, capable of producing new content such as text, images, or code based on input data.
- c. The purpose of this policy is to enhance educational innovation, improve operational efficiency, and uphold CNU's core academic values and ethical standards.

III. Scope/Coverage

This policy applies to all members of the California Northstate University community, including faculty, staff, students, researchers, and administrators, in their use of AI technologies within university-related activities.

IV. Procedures

A. **General Principles Guiding the Safe and Responsible Use of AI**

Overarching principles for permissible use of AI in education at CNU are described by the acronym **BEST**.

i. **Permissible Use of AI.**

AI use is permitted when it supports:

- b. **B**ehavior of becoming a member of a learned and professional society
- c. **E**thical decision-making
- d. **S**kills and abilities identified with learned professional societies
- e. **T**echnical knowledge development

ii. **Prohibited uses.**

- f. The particular case use of AI will be contrary to the educational principles
- g. The violation of copyright beyond "fair use" in academia
- h. Without citation
- i. There is no original work as a substrate to justify the use of AI for "what if" iteration(s), to expand the range of consideration, to account for the combinatorial or permutational possibilities for analytic and predictive modeling.



iii. Intellectual Property and Attribution.

- a) Users are responsible for understanding and adhering to copyright laws and CNU's intellectual property policies when using AI tools, particularly concerning the input of copyrighted material and the output of AI-generated content.
- b) Proper attribution and citation of AI tools, where applicable, are required to maintain academic integrity and transparency.

B. Regulation and Compliance.

1. Data Privacy and Confidentiality:

- a. The use of AI tools must fully comply with all applicable data privacy and security regulations, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).
- b. Any and all data generated, collected, or coalesced by CNU must not be ingested by any AI analytic tools. This is a strict prohibition, no exception.
- c. Analytic work must be done within the intranet, and no export of data outside the intranet.

2. Accountability and Oversight:

- a. To mitigate institutional risk, faculty, staff, and administrators must be informed about the authorized uses of AI tools, understand the limitations of AI models, and recognize the importance of data provenance.
- b. Users are accountable for the content generated by AI tools and must ensure its accuracy, integrity, and compliance with university policies. Users should be prepared to demonstrate responsible AI usage.,
- c. Proper training and awareness help ensure that AI is used responsibly and in alignment with university policies. In the event of an incident that contradicts the ethical use of AI, the university will initiate an investigation into the issue.
- d. The CNU IT Department and the Office of the VP of Academic Affairs' AI Integration Task Force will provide oversight and risk assessment of AI use across the institution to identify concerns and ensure compliance with legal, ethical, and operational standards.
- e. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with relevant university policies, including the Academic Honesty Policy, Student Honor Code, and employee conduct policies.
- f. Comprehensive training programs, resources, and support will be made available through the IT Department and the Office of Academic Affairs to ensure the community is equipped for responsible AI use. Information on these resources will be regularly updated on the CNU Intranet.



C. Use of AI in Teaching and Learning.

1. Faculty Use of AI.

- a. Faculty may use AI tools (e.g., generative AI, adaptive learning systems) to enhance teaching and instruction, including improving materials, examples, simulations, assessments, and student support.
- b. AI-supported tools may be utilized by faculty to personalize instruction by modifying materials for students, offering valuable support for step-by-step explanations and tailored instruction.
- c. Faculty may use AI tools honestly, with proper documentation, citation, and acknowledgements. Faculty must be aware that AI is known to fabricate sources, facts, and give false or biased information.
- d. Faculty should also be aware and exercise caution because AI could reproduce material protected under copyright. Faculty are accountable for the content and accuracy of their work.
- e. AI shall not replace faculty's creative works or formative assessment of student learning, in compliance with CNU's academic honesty policy and student honor code.
- f. Human oversight remains essential for responsive, formative feedback, even when AI assists in analyzing student performance data and identifying learning trends.
- g. Open-source models of Generative AI shall NOT be used to analyze or interpret CNU-specific proprietary data, including but not limited to student course evaluations, outcomes-based assessments, or internal student performance or perception survey data.
- h. Only CNU-approved methods and platforms, as listed on the IT Department's official AI resources page on the CNU Intranet, may be used for analyzing sensitive institutional data, ensuring such data is de-identified and not used for model training or sharing.
- i. Faculty must communicate clearly in course syllabi how they may be using AI tools, as well as restrictions for student use of the technologies.
- j. Faculty must clearly outline course-specific policies on how students are allowed to use generative AI tools, including when and how such use must be cited.

2. Student Use of AI.

- a. Students may use generative AI tools to support and enhance their learning, including assistance with understanding complex concepts, generating ideas for assignments, creating study aids, and practicing skills through step-by-step explanations.
- b. AI tools shall never be used as a substitute for critical thinking, original work, or to complete assignments, exams, or assessments in violation of course requirements or the CNU academic honor code.
- c. Students are responsible for ensuring that any content created or assisted by AI is properly cited, acknowledged, and used in accordance with course expectations.
- d. Students must critically evaluate any AI output, as generative AI tools can produce inaccurate, misleading, or biased information and may infringe on copyright.



- e. Students remain fully accountable for the quality and originality of their academic submissions.
- f. Students must follow the specific AI-use guidelines provided by their instructors, which should be clearly stated in the course syllabus. These guidelines may differ from one class to another.

D. Use of AI in Research.

- a. The CNU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP), in collaboration with the Chief Scientific Officer, under the guidance of the VP of Research, is responsible for providing central administrative support for research and scholarly activities involving AI.
- b. ORSP shall promote interdisciplinary collaboration, support technical infrastructure, and provide guidance for compliance and extramural financial support related to AI scholarship.
- c. ORSP shall provide support to faculty regarding ethical implications for AI-generated content, data usage, and authorship.
- d. The policy extends to the collection and analysis of “big data” or the use of AI to create new model systems, such as pharmacophore modeling of small-molecule drugs and predictive analysis of structure-activity relationships for novel therapeutics.
- e. Researchers must ensure that the use of AI in data collection, analysis, and interpretation adheres to all ethical guidelines, data privacy regulations, and responsible conduct of research principles. No proprietary CNU data may be ingested by any AI platform.
- f. Researchers must recognize that National Institutes of Health (NIH) policies regarding AI are non-negotiable. Specifically, the use of generative AI for NIH peer review is prohibited, as sharing confidential materials with AI tools is considered a violation of NIH integrity policies. Moreover, all NIH grant applications must be the original intellectual product of the investigators; proposals substantially written by AI may be subject to investigation for research misconduct. Failure to comply can result in both institutional and federal sanctions, including the termination of grants.

E. Administrative Use of AI to Enhance University Operations.

- a. AI tools may be used to improve operational efficiency across departments within the university by streamlining administrative workflows and optimizing standard operating procedures.
- b. AI applications may be used across admissions, advising, scheduling, and student services, but must comply with institutional data protection policies, including FERPA. No identifiable student data may be ingested by any AI platform.
- c. The use of AI tools in operations must be disclosed to all parties.
- d. Allowing AI tools to make decisions affecting personnel or students without human oversight is prohibited.
- e. AI systems used in administrative decisions shall undergo impact assessments, and all such decisions are subject to human review and final approval.



F. Assessment and Accreditation.

- a. AI tools may be utilized to support institutional assessment and accreditation processes, provided that such use maintains the integrity, validity, and reliability of data and reporting.
- b. Analysis of proprietary institutional data using AI tools is permitted only after the data has been thoroughly de-identified and with specific instructions to the AI model or platform that the data shall not be used for model training or sharing with third parties.
- c. Any insights or reports generated by AI for assessment and accreditation purposes must be rigorously validated and subject to comprehensive human review and approval before official submission or dissemination.

V. Review History

This policy will be reviewed as needed by the CNU Office of Academic Affairs' AI Integration Task Force in consultation with other relevant bodies. Updates will reflect developments in AI technologies and evolving best practices in higher education.

Document History

February 2025	Document created by the University Curriculum Committee
April-June 2025	Faculty Senate invited by OIEA to join UCC and VP Academic Affairs
July 2025	Discussed at PEC. Feedback from PEC incorporated by OIEA
July 15, 2025	Revised, feedback from Dr. Cheung
July 16, 2025	Discussed at the 2025 CNU Annual Retreat
August 4-11, 2025	Discussed at PEC. Further revised.
August 11, 2025	Sent to the Faculty Senate, the University Policy and Procedure Committee, and the President's Executive Council for closing discussions
August 20, 2025	Approved by the University Policy and Procedure Committee as written Faculty Senate provided comments; will be discussed

VI. Approvals

Approved by the PEC: 9/15/2025

Approved Board of Trustees: 10/04/2025

Review and Updates: as needed