

# DRAFT Report to Provost from TU Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force

**June 24, 2024**

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In August 2023, the Office of the Provost approved FACET’s leadership of the TU Generative AI in Higher Education Task Force. This group, co-chaired by FACET Assistant Provost Trish Westerman and FACET Research Fellow and Professor Sam Collins, consists of representatives (see list at end of report) from all Colleges; Student Accountability and Restorative Practice; OTS; Academic Senate; and Office of Academic Advising, Retention, and Completion. The group met monthly to discuss AI tools; policy implications; evidence-based practice for assignment and assessment revision as well as use of generative AI in research, grant writing, student assignment grading; AI-related ethics, bias, equity, and social justice; and areas in which AI use can benefit TU faculty, staff, and students. In December 2023, the Generative AI Task Force recommended that the Information and Instructional Technology Committee (IITC) review requests for university-wide usage of specific AI tools. Vice Provost Cooper approved the recommendation, effective January 2024, and the IITC began to develop processes for implementation. Ongoing discussions of the task force have culminated in the present report, which summarizes our discussions and develops our recommendations over the course of the past months.

## Outcomes of task force

The goal of this report is to provide guidance for responsible and ethical use of AI by faculty, staff, and students. While AI can offer exciting learning opportunities and robust support for operations, it is essential that bias, ethics, and social justice concerns regarding AI use be kept in mind when considering whether and how to infuse AI use into teaching, research, and other practice. Above all else, the task force hopes that this report will stimulate discussions at every level of the university, from student to Division, about what AI might mean for them and the work they do. The task force expects that relevant shared governance bodies will continue to review and make recommendations concerning these issues, particularly in regard to student and faculty technology use, curriculum development, and associated matters.

### Theme I: Ethics and community impact

Even though the development of current generative AI tools has been largely outside of the university setting, faculty, staff and students are all deeply imbricated in the ethics of their use. Faculty have a responsibility to analyze at broad levels and discipline-specific contexts the community-level impact of the use of AI technology on the classroom, research, the institution and, ultimately, the community as a whole. Faculty and students are already experiencing social and cultural impacts of generative AI in terms of work, creativity and expectations. In prior technology booms in the U.S., jobs were lost or reallocated and companies benefitted while workers suffered. In this case, individuals are contributing to the AI world, but not benefiting. Consideration needs to be given to the society level responsibility to ensure that it is not just a select few who economically benefit from the contributions by a society into the AI world.

The task force recommends that departments and offices that are considering using a particular AI tool identify the large language models (LLMs) upon which it is based to ensure that unethically curated LLMs and even large-action models (LAMs) be avoided. “Unethical” in this instance refers to a situation in which all learning of the LLM is inconsistent with fair use and personal ownership of intellectual property. There is a robust body of scholarship providing this critical background, and members of the task force, including FACET, are happy to work with groups on campus in their decision-making process. In the meantime, it is recommended that people who make decisions about paying for generative AI tools be aware that most of them have been trained with data that has been scraped in unethical ways that likely violate copyright. When we consider adopting LLMs or LLM-based tools, we need to insist that software vendors utilizing generative AI maximize transparency regarding their processes.

### Digital Divide and Other Ethical Considerations

The major areas of ethical concern regarding AI use are bias and discrimination, transparency and accountability, social manipulation, equitable access, misinformation, and the digital divide. There is a lot of information about this, but a good start is [this article](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/ethical-concerns-mount-as-ai-takes-bigger-decision-making-role/) from the Harvard Gazette.

Issues of social justice must be reviewed historically as well as contemporarily. In prior technology booms in the U.S., jobs were lost or reallocated and companies benefitted while workers suffered. In the case of AI, individuals are contributing to the AI world, but not benefiting. Consideration needs to be given to the society level responsibility to ensure that it is not just a select few who economically benefit from the contributions by a society into the AI domain. We should consider the role of Academe to refute or validate this claim, especially if Academe is advocating the use of AI in higher education and advancement of thought. Educators and administrators should ensure that any use of generative AI respects privacy rights and confidentiality, with clear guidelines and training on data protection and ethical considerations. Additionally, discussions on ethics, bias, and social justice should be incorporated into the curriculum to raise awareness and foster a responsible approach to AI use.

At the very least, the university should consider the origins of training data for LLMs. How transparent are these tools? Are they grounded in ethnocentric and racial stereotypes? Are they derived from content creators who have not been fairly compensated for their creative work? And how has the labor of others (human trainers) been harnessed to provide LLMs with limits and boundaries?

### Rights of Students, Patients, and Others

The rights, including those safeguarded by FERPA, HIPAA, and the like, of all constituents of the university must be protected at all times. Data privacy and security, for example, must be maintained. Additionally, health and well-being must be protected. Because use of generative AI tools by some (e.g., students, medical patients, medical and mental health practitioners, etc.) has the potential to cause harm, thorough review is required before implementing generative AI tools in academic, medical, and other settings. Policies related to tool adoption approval must be created by people and groups (e.g. IITC, Institutional Review Board [IRB], etc.) who are knowledgeable about and prepared to engage in these thoughtful critical review processes.

The fundamental problem of LLMs is precisely this: If third-party tools are being used, then how can the privacy of students over their lives, their data, and their creative work be protected? Faculty should be made aware that there may be harm to student privacy and intellectual property if faculty require students to type of copy original work into certain AI platforms. Note that this is a concern even if the generative AI application is developed locally—and especially if the AI agent is branching off of corporations like Open AI through developer tools.

### Processes of Decision-Making Regarding Generative AI Use in Educational Settings

As has been the case with other, pivotal technologies (e.g., the growth of the World Wide Web in the 1990s), generative AI presents opportunities to foster dialogues across the university. The questions go right to the heart of the university's mission. What work necessitates the creative labor of individuals? And what can be remanded to machines? Rather than let this conversation be decided by external forces (corporations and politicians), universities need to step up and contribute to debates about something that threatens (and promises) to change the basis for university work.

A few examples illustrate the importance of informed, collaborative discussion and decision making. Regarding operational processes, such as admissions, impacted departments should be formulating questions and best practices that interrogate generative AI use and that seek to anticipate problematic future scenarios. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) should consider impacts of generative AI in terms of research. How can researchers develop LLM tools in ways cognizant of human participant protection and intellectual property rights? Can data be uploaded to generative AI agents for analysis? To what extent do these tools introduce unknown biases into research?

A consistent area of concern with the growth of AI is academic integrity and plagiarism. The TU Academic Integrity Workgroup will meet in June to review the TU Academic Integrity policy for possible revision. Members of the workgroup will be informed by a forthcoming proposal from the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices as well as published best practice.

### Including Student Perspectives and Autonomy/Empowerment in Decision Making in Courses

The taskforce recognizes that, because generative AI will impact different constituent groups in different ways, recommendations need to be made in collaboration with impacted groups, including students at all levels. This collaboration will include in-depth research and needs assessments in order to plan appropriate training for different groups. These may take the form of training modules assigned to students as part of their orientation to the University. For some students, ChatGPT and other text-based AI tools can be used for some types of circumstances, such as tutoring, but not for others, such as content creation. Training should emphasize AI literacy (akin to information literacy or media literacy) so that students learn to apply critical evaluation tools to AI and are aware of the need to check for inaccuracy or hallucination.

## Theme II: Teaching

### For Students

The task force strongly recommends mandatory annual and/or new student training in AI use. If approved by Provost Perreault and Vice President Hurte, this training will include automated modules relating to benefits and concerns of AI use at TU and in their future workplaces, clear reference to TU policy and procedures regarding academic integrity and restorative practice, etc. Students will be warned against the “quick fix” that AI appears to afford them and will, instead, be encouraged to use AI only as permitted by a particular faculty member in a particular course and in particular assignments and assessments. The training will also underscore when not to use AI so that students are able and willing to complete and submit their own authentic work. While policies may differ by professor, department and college, the emphasis will be on following policies in order to avoid violations of academic integrity. Students’ voices will continue to be included in discussions about responsible and ethical AI use and about development of training materials.

### For Faculty

FACET and the task force will work with college- and department-level groups, such as faculty development committees, to create faculty learning materials, which will be deployed for faculty through a variety of channels. We anticipate these taking a variety of forms, depending upon the needs of departments and colleges. Faculty seeking opportunities for students to use AI tools will be instructed to contact FACET for support.

### Clear Communication and Sample Syllabus Language

Educators must clearly communicate policies on using generative AI in coursework at the beginning of each term. This includes specifying when and how AI tools can be used, underlining the importance of academic integrity, and explaining the rationale behind these guidelines to ensure transparency and understanding. Offering sample language for syllabi can help educators articulate the role of generative AI in their courses, including guidelines for use, citation practices, and ethical considerations. This will set clear expectations and standards from the outset.

It is essential that faculty communicate clearly to students in the syllabus what generative AI use, including names of specific tools, is allowed and what is not permitted. This can be a blanket statement for the entire course, or it can differ by assignment/assessment. Statements about penalties for violations of these course- and assignment-level policies should be included as well. Sample syllabus language can be found here: [FACET sample](https://blackboard.towson.edu/ultra/organizations/_268044_1/outline/edit/document/_10327501_1?courseId=_268044_1&view=content) and [Crowdsourced](https://danielstanford.substack.com/p/the-best-ai-syllabus-policies-ive).

Students should be instructed to cite any generative AI tools used in their academic work. This practice fosters academic honesty, allows for transparency in the academic process, and acknowledges the role of AI in their work. Guidelines on how to properly cite these tools should be provided to students. Appropriate citations/attributions should be given when generative AI or other AI tools have been used as support to complete an assignment. At minimum, AI use should be cited per the format/recommendations for the preferred style guides for the discipline: [Sample Generative AI Citation Guidance by Style](https://libguides.brown.edu/c.php?g=1338928&p=9868287). Ideally, students should also specify how the tool was used (quotations, paraphrasing, finding sources, data processing, translating, editing, etc.). Additionally, anyone using AI is responsible for checking the generated content for accuracy. Information about AI citation should be shared with students in the syllabus and in all descriptions of assignments and assessments in which it is relevant. Statements about penalties for violations of these course- and assignment-level policies should be included as well.

### Using AI to Assess Student Work

When using generative AI for grading, faculty should reflect on their practices, including generative AI rubric creation and deployment. It is incumbent upon faculty to ensure that verify accuracy of approaches selected and used.

### Preparing Students for the Workplace – AI Skill Development and Curricular Innovation

AI affords excellent opportunities for faculty to prepare students for the future workplace by integrating AI skill development into the curriculum. A focus on both the technical aspects of AI and its ethical, societal, and professional implications, encouraging innovation and adaptability in a rapidly evolving technological landscape will be essential in the world for which TU students are being prepared. One component of this focus is that, at some point in their education at TU, students should learn how to use AI effectively in their writing. It is likely that almost everyone will be co-writing with AI in the workforce within the next few years.

More broadly, faculty should consider reviewing and revising curricula to ensure that it will prepare students for the increase of AI use in the changing workplace. Within the core curriculum and program assessment, technology awareness and skill development will be needed, coupled with a clear view of ethical concerns, including those noted above. Questions need to be considered in areas that impact almost all of our students:

* How soon should students be exposed to AI concepts?
* Should AI usage be considered/allowed for ENG102 and TSEM?
* Should it be incorporated into the outcomes for core 9, for example?

Because many students who transfer to TU do not experience lower-level courses here, incorporating AI applications within Core 9 would ensure that students have some level of exposure during their matriculation at TU. In courses in general, it is recommended that all faculty address AI use in the syllabi, either as it relates to course assignments or to course content, or both. It is further recommended that faculty reviewing their academic program outcomes consider student development of AI knowledge, skills, etc., as appropriate. Currently, program assessment is required to include an outcome that includes technology literacy. Perhaps this could be expanded to ensure that programs incorporate a level of knowledge on AI and its potential application in writing and the workplace.

### Different Levels of Instruction

When integrating generative AI into curricula, faculty should consider tailoring the complexity and depth of content to the students' educational level. In any case, the goal is providing disciplinary guidance with regard to AI tools. Undergraduate courses should focus on foundational understanding and practical applications of AI, while graduate courses can delve into more advanced theories and research. First-year students might, therefore, benefit from introductory overviews of AI, with progressively deeper integration in later years. Guidance about effective prompting and ethical use can help foster undergraduate AI literacy and critical thinking when using such tools ([Scientific American- 2023](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/to-educate-students-about-ai-make-them-use-it/)).

As upper-level undergraduate students and graduate students develop research skills and become more autonomous learners, AI research assistants, simulations, and writing tools may be more appropriate than at more introductory levels where learners are building foundational knowledge and experience. As in the undergraduate context, guidance and practice are critical for students’ comfort level and appropriate use ([Chronicle- 2023](https://www.chronicle.com/article/artificial-intelligence-a-graduate-student-users-guide)).

### Different Disciplines and Skills

Application of generative AI should align with the specific discipline and skill set being taught. In writing courses, for example, AI may serve as a tool for generating topic ideas and editing content, thus freeing student energy to focus on creativity. For coding and technical disciplines, it may be used to help students to understand and generate code, analyze algorithms, or solve complex problems, thereby enhancing problem-solving skills and technical competence. As the scholar Anna Mills says, students should be encouraged to use AI to push their thinking, not to avoid thinking. One way to do this is to provide opportunities for students to use AI to facilitate or enhance certain aspects of the writing process, but to discourage them from using AI as a production tool. Faculty will understandably differ as to whether or not use of each AI tools for particular purposes is appropriate in their classes, and this diversity of perspective is to be supported. The goal, here, is to give faculty choices in their approach to assessments.

## Theme III: Research and Business/ Operating Procedures

Faculty should familiarize themselves with discipline-specific permissibility of AI use when writing grant proposals, professional presentation proposals and presentations, and professional documents (i.e., journal articles, book chapters, books, etc.) as well as forms of creative work like art and music. Faculty should educate students about the specific policies and ethical guidelines regarding generative AI use within their discipline. This knowledge is crucial for fostering responsible use of AI, ensuring that both faculty and students can navigate the complexities of AI integration in their professional and academic endeavors. As noted above, AI use should be cited, employing the format provided by style guides for the relevant discipline: [Sample Generative AI Citation Guidance by Style](https://libguides.brown.edu/c.php?g=1338928&p=9868287). FACET and the task force are eager to help develop materials to disseminate this information.

Regarding business/operating procedures, the task force will work with faculty and staff to help them to discover and apply best practices to these processes. Under what conditions can faculty and staff utilize AI tools in their preparation of reports? In their analysis of budgets? Organizations all over the world are now grappling with these questions, and the task force recommends following an ongoing collaborative approach as outlined above with students and faculty. After thorough discussion, additional guidance will be created and published. In particular, the task force is prepared to work with faculty and departments in terms of student writing and other forms of assessment.

Some university policies may need to be revisited in light of rapid changes in generative AI deployment. The task force stands ready to work with appropriate people and groups in these cases to help determine next steps. Faculty and staff should also be cognizant about any changes to TU documents, including those related to promotion, tenure, and reappointment (PTR) and performance review. While acceptable practices surrounding the use of generative AI in scholarly dissemination and business operations may continue to shift, it seems clear that these tools will become a sustained option in these processes. Faculty, staff, and students will need to stay informed of best practices for generating ideas, synthesizing and summarizing information for literature reviews, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, and other components of research and business processes.

### Dissemination of guidance and resources

The task force requests that the Office of the Provost email all faculty to share material, to be drafted by the task force in the forthcoming few weeks, upon your approval of the recommendations found in this report. This material will include a synopsis of the report along with encouragement to faculty to draft language for their syllabi in which they include clear communication about whether or not AI tools are permitted and, if so, in which assignments and assessments; which tools are permitted; requirements regarding citation of AI usage; and implications for academic integrity processes if students do not adhere to rules. The email will also include links to resources.

The FACET AI webpage, the Blackboard one-stop shop, ongoing self-paced workshop, FACET in-person, hyflex, and webinar events, and departmental and one-on-one consultations, will provide instruction and links to resources. This training will include modules that teach about AI tools, pedagogy, etc. in the context of a self-paced workshop and development of a set of automated brief training modules. FACET will also continue to offer monthly AI drop-in events in which faculty and others can learn about and apply AI-related concepts, processes, and tools to their courses and scholarly work.

### Next steps

This report can be shared with President Ginsberg and anyone else who may benefit from receiving and reading it. We welcome input from all constituencies. The task force co-chairs intend to email the department chairs this summer to ask if they would like to discuss task force outcomes. This discussion would include seeking input on and developing support that the task force and FACET can offer for the 2024-2025 academic year.

We are standing by to meet with any departments and offices on the campus that would like to discuss and make decisions about whether and how best to use generative AI in their operations. Relevant offices would include, but not be limited to, admissions, honors, and career services. Additionally, the task force co-chairs will give a presentation as a part of the AI Summit being planned for this August/September by Susan Miltenberger. Finally, the task force intends to continue its work throughout the new academic year.

### Recommendations Emanating from Task Force

The task force recommends that departments and offices that are considering using a particular AI tool identify the large language models (LLMs) upon which it is based to ensure that unethically curated LLMs and even large-action models (LAMs) be avoided.

It is recommended that people who make decisions about paying for generative AI tools be aware that most of them have been trained with data that has been scraped in unethical ways that likely violate copyright. When we consider adopting LLMs or LLM-based tools, we need to insist that software vendors utilizing generative AI maximize transparency regarding their processes.

The task force strongly recommends mandatory annual and/or new student training in AI use. The task force will be happy to lead the effort to construct this training.

It is recommended that students be instructed to cite any generative AI tools used in their academic work.

It is recommended that all faculty address AI use in course syllabi, either as it relates to course assignments or to course content, or both.

It is further recommended that faculty reviewing academic program outcomes consider adding student development of AI knowledge, skills, etc., as appropriate.

It is recommended that faculty familiarize themselves with discipline-specific permissibility of AI use when writing grant proposals, professional presentation proposals and presentations, and professional documents (i.e., journal articles, book chapters, books, etc.) as well as forms of creative work like art and music. Additionally, faculty should educate students about the specific policies and ethical guidelines regarding generative AI use within their discipline.

It is recommended that the task force continue to operate in order to stay abreast of and discuss emerging AI-related matters and provide support and further recommendations.

## Task Force Members 2023-2024

Emily Bailey, Philosophy & Religious Studies

Michael Bachman, Computer & Information Systems

Jan Baum, Art + Design, Art History, Art Education; Management

Rachel Billman, Special Education

Cheryl Brown, Computer & Information Systems

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