Arkansas State University

ITS Acceptable Use of AI Guidelines

Effective Date: October 22, 2024
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for the fair, responsible, and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by Arkansas State University (A-State) faculty, staff, and students from an IT security perspective. The goal is to ensure that AI is used in ways that are aligned with A-State's academic integrity standards, respect for privacy and security of protected data, and commitment to innovation. This document supplements the ethical use of artificial intelligence guidelines that have been provided to faculty at A-State.

2. Scope

These guidelines apply to all A-State employees, students, contractors, and affiliated parties who use AI technologies or tools in any form for academic, research, administrative, or operational purposes. AI tools include, but are not limited to, machine learning applications, natural language processing tools, AI-driven automation software, and any systems that make decisions or recommendations based on algorithmic data processing or computing.

3. Definitions

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Systems or technologies that simulate human intelligence, such as machine learning algorithms and demonstrating adaptiveness after deployment, natural language processing, and autonomous systems, to perform tasks or assist decision-making.

- **Acceptable Use:** The ethical and legal use of AI tools and systems in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and A-State standards.

- **Data Privacy:** The handling, collection, storage, and sharing of personal and sensitive information in a way that complies with regulations and policies.

4. General Principles

All uses of AI at Arkansas State University must adhere to the following guiding principles:

- **Transparency and Accountability:**
  AI applications should be used transparently. Faculty, staff, and students must disclose when AI tools are used for decision-making, content generation, grading, or other processes that impact academic or administrative outcomes.

- **Bias and Fairness:**
  AI tools should be deployed in ways that are unbiased and fair. Users must be aware of and mitigate potential biases in AI algorithms that could lead to discrimination or unfair treatment of individuals based on race, gender, age, or other protected characteristics.

- **Data Privacy and Security:**
  The use of AI must comply with A-State's data privacy policies and all applicable federal and state laws, including but limited to those articulated below in Section 8, to ensure that personal and sensitive information is securely handled and protected from misuse.

- **Academic Integrity:**
  The use of AI tools in academic work must not compromise the academic integrity of coursework, research, or assessments. Students must follow A-State's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and disclose AI use in assignments, projects, or exams as required by instructors. Please refer to the [Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence guidelines](#) for recommended verbiage that can be used in syllabi.

- **Informed Consent:**
  When AI tools are used to process or analyze personal data, individuals must be informed about the nature of the AI system, its purpose, and any potential consequences of its use. Explicit consent must be obtained wherever necessary.

5. Use of AI in Education

AI tools can provide support in learning and teaching, such as personalized learning platforms or tutoring systems. However:

- **Faculty Responsibilities:** Faculty must ensure that AI is used to supplement, not replace, traditional teaching methods. They must also educate students about responsible AI usage, including disclosing when AI is used for grading or generating feedback.

- **Student Responsibilities:** Students are encouraged to use AI responsibly to enhance their learning. However, they must refrain from using AI tools to generate assignments, take exams, or complete work that would be considered dishonest or in violation of academic integrity standards.

6. Use of AI in Research

Researchers at A-State are encouraged to explore AI applications in their fields. However, AI use in research must:

- Ensure that AI tools are used to augment rather than automate research in a way that could lead to unethical practices.

- Ensure that all research complies with institutional research ethics guidelines and relevant external regulatory frameworks.

7. Use of AI in Administrative and Operational Functions

A-State may deploy AI technologies to improve administrative processes such as admissions, financial aid, and resource management. In these cases:

- The university must be transparent about where and how AI is being used.

- The decisions made by AI systems must be subject to human oversight, particularly in cases where these decisions affect individuals' educational opportunities or employment.

8. Ethical and Legal Compliance

All AI applications must comply with applicable laws, including but not limited to:

- FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

- GLBA (Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act)

- HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

- Other applicable data privacy or AI-specific legal and regulatory frameworks, as they evolve[1]

9. Prohibited Uses of AI

The following uses of AI are prohibited within A-State:

- Using AI to engage in academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, or generating academic work.

- Using AI to infringe on privacy or collect data without proper authorization.

- Using AI in a way that could result in bias, discrimination, or unfair outcomes.

- Deploying AI systems for surveillance purposes without explicit approval from A-State's IT Security and Legal departments.

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[1] In addition to federal and state laws cited above, laws of territories outside the United States may be applicable to AI use, including the United Kingdom Data Protection Act of 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union, the Artificial Intelligence Act of the European Union, and the Personal Information Protection Law of China. Please direct all legal questions to the ASU System General Counsel's Office.

10. Compliance and Enforcement

Violations of these guidelines are strongly discouraged, and misuse may result in disciplinary action as outlined in A-State's employee and student handbooks. While the University encourages compliance with these guidelines, it also reserves the right to review AI usage to ensure adherence, particularly with institutionally purchased licenses.

11. Acceptable Use Review and Updates

These guidelines will be reviewed as significant changes in AI technology or regulatory frameworks occur. The IT Security Panel will monitor compliance and recommend updates to these guidelines as necessary.

12. Contact Information

For questions regarding these guidelines or the use of AI technologies, please contact: security@astate.edu. Questions regarding academic use of AI should be directed to Madeline Ragland, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Student Services, mprestidge@astate.edu.

13. Approved AI Platforms

Please see Appendix I for a list of approved AI platforms at Arkansas State University. All other platforms for consideration should follow the standard Software Purchase Request process, where the platform will be vetted to ensure it meets institutional compliance guidelines. A VPAT and HECVAT (or ITS Security Questionnaire) will be required for any AI tool to be considered for institutional use at A-State.

Any OpenAI platforms such as ChatGPT or DALL-E are discouraged for institutional use, though may be acceptable by obtaining a valid Business Associate Agreement (BAA).

Appendix I - Approved AI Platforms

The University recommends the following AI-approved platforms for use, as they align with our compliance and data protection standards:

- **Microsoft Copilot** (strongly recommended) – Fully compliant with FERPA and HIPAA regulations, ensuring optimal security for handling sensitive information.

- **Claude Pro (Anthropic)**

- **OtterAI**

While Microsoft Copilot is strongly recommended due to its robust compliance with FERPA and HIPAA, these other platforms also meet our minimum requirements for approved AI usage. OpenAI platforms such as ChatGPT, DALL-E are generally discouraged, however, they may be used if a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) is obtained to ensure HIPAA compliance.