

USU Extension Guidelines for Using Generative AI or AI-Assisted Tools

Introduction

Using generative artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools can benefit authors as they gather and summarize information and need assistance making content clear and easy to understand. There are AI-assisted tools built into many software programs that provide spelling assistance, grammar tips, citation generators, etc., that help improve the content quality. This document will help you understand how generative AI or AI-assisted tools can be used and disclosed appropriately in Utah State University (USU) Extension content. Generative AI, when used carefully, can increase efficiencies in writing and enhance creativity in program development. However, when used carelessly, it can lead to inaccurate information that can damage author and institution credibility.

Definitions

Generative AI: A type of AI that can create content such as text, images, music, video, etc.

AI-Assisted Tools: AI tools such as spell-check, grammar suggestions, citation generators, etc.

Best Practices

When publishing research on behalf of USU Extension, it is best practice to publish original work that is free from any generative AI content. It may be appropriate to use AI tools in the ideation of research topics or similar activities and for editing assistance. AI is known to make mistakes (called hallucinations). It is up to the author(s) to verify AI-provided content for accuracy and references for validity.

Transparency

Transparency is vital for USU Extension's credibility as a provider of research-backed information. When AI is used in content, it must be disclosed. Authors must disclose which AI tool was used and how it assisted them. A disclosure statement **is not needed** for AI-assisted tools like spell-check, grammar tips, citation generators, etc.

Disclosure Statements

- **If AI IS used**, include this disclosure statement:
"The author(s) of this content used [AI tool name] to [insert purpose here]. Authors reviewed and edited the content provided by the AI tool and take full responsibility for the content."

- **If AI IS NOT used**, you may use this disclosure statement at your discretion:
“The author(s) did not use generative AI in the creation of this content, and it is purely the work of the author(s). This content should not be used for the purposes of training AI technologies without express permission from the author(s).”
- A disclosure statement **is not needed** for AI-assisted tools like spell-check, grammar tips, citation generators, etc.

Citing AI

If AI-generated content is used in a way that would require citation (as you would do for any citation taken from another source), you must disclose that you have used AI to generate the content and list AI in the document’s reference section. AI or AI-assisted technologies should not be listed as authors or co-authors. USU Extension follows the [APA Style](#) in its content. The examples below show how to reference AI in USU Extension materials using APA style.

How to Cite AI Text

AI citations include the:

- Author - company that created the AI tool, e.g., OpenAI, Microsoft, Google, etc.
- Date - the year of the version of software you used, e.g., 2025.
- Title - the name of the AI model, e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, etc.
- Source - the URL of the AI tool, e.g., chatgpt.com, copilot.microsoft.com, gemini.google.com, etc.

Citation type	Example
Reference	OpenAI. (2025). <i>ChatGPT</i> (Aug 2025 version) [Large language model]. chatgpt.com
In-text parenthetical citation	(OpenAI, 2025)
In-text narrative citation	OpenAI (2025)

How to Cite AI Image Captions

Cite AI-generated images as you would for any image or graphic from another source. The image caption should include a citation such as:

“This image was created with the assistance of (AI tool name).”

Reminders

- Cite AI-sourced content as a reference.
- Do not include the URL of the AI tool result (the URL of the software is sufficient).

Fact-Checking

If AI is used in content, it is the responsibility of the author(s) to fact-check the accuracy and validity of the content provided by AI.

USU's Official Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use and Compliance ([USU Policy 5200.2.8](#))

USU recognizes the growing significance of AI in education, research, and operations. The use of AI tools must align with university policies, security guidelines, and ethical standards.

1. **Data security and privacy:** Users are responsible for ensuring that sensitive, restricted, or confidential data (including FERPA, HIPAA, Personal Data, and proprietary university information) is not uploaded or processed in AI tools unless the university has an established privacy agreement with the provider. Uploading such data to third-party AI tools without a university-approved privacy agreement may result in security breaches, compliance violations, and legal or institutional liability. Users must understand these restrictions and exercise caution when using AI tools.
2. **Integrity and accountability:** AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy, bias, and compliance with copyright regulations before use in coursework, research, or administrative communications.
3. **Responsible use:** AI should supplement human decision-making but must not replace critical thinking, academic rigor, or professional judgment. Institutional Guidance: Faculty, staff, and students should refer to USU's AI guidance for official procedures, best practices, and available AI tools.

GPTs

GPTs created on behalf of USU Extension or for USU Extension work or public purposes need to be coordinated with USU Extension marketing and hosted by USU Extension's ChatGPT account.

Resources

- [USU's official Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Resources website](#)
- [USU's AI Essentials and Professional Tools online course](#)
- [AI Guidance for Communicators, North Carolina State University](#)
- [Guidelines for EDIS Authors When Using AI Tools, University of Florida Extension](#)
- [Virginia Cooperative Extension Guidance for Use of Generative AI](#)