

Artificial Intelligence and Technology Use Policy

1 Purpose and scope

New Meridian University permits artificial intelligence for study support and limited technical assistance. Students remain fully responsible for the work they submit. They must personally compose its primary prose and perform the intellectual work for which they receive academic credit. This policy establishes permitted uses, authorship restrictions, disclosure expectations, quality requirements, and safeguards for confidential information.

This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, supervisors, contractors, and affiliated researchers in activities connected with NMU. It covers coursework, examinations, theses, dissertations, research, publications, teaching, and university operations. Covered technologies include standalone and built-in AI tools, writing assistants, programming tools, transcription services, automated meeting assistants, integrations, and agents that can act on connected systems. The function performed determines whether a use is permitted.

2 Responsibilities and authority

The President owns this policy, approves institutional AI services and uses involving confidential information, oversees its administration, and approves amendments. The President may assign technical assessment and administrative duties to qualified officials while retaining approval authority. The Office of Ethical Compliance administers academic integrity matters under the President's authority.

Instructors and research supervisors communicate applicable technology requirements in writing before the activity. They may restrict otherwise permitted assistance when independent performance of a skill is required. Their instructions must comply with this policy and may not authorize AI to perform prohibited student authorship functions. Students seek clarification when the boundary between technical assistance and their own required work is unclear.

3 Permitted support and technical assistance

Within applicable activity instructions, students may use AI to explain concepts, develop practice exercises, suggest search terms or possible sources, explore general topics, identify mechanical writing problems, and assist with programming, calculations, or data processing. Routine use within these limits does not require separate approval under this policy. Additional restrictions for examinations, skills assessments, or research activities must be communicated in writing.

Students must locate and read the sources they cite. AI summaries may support initial understanding, but students must personally evaluate the evidence used in their submissions. General brainstorming may suggest topics or questions. It may not supply the central claim, chain of reasoning, evidence synthesis, or substantive argument that the student submits as their intellectual contribution.

Proofreading may identify spelling, punctuation, grammar, or clarity problems and suggest limited mechanical corrections to text the student has written. It may not compose replacement passages, rewrite paragraphs, add substantive content, or reconstruct an argument. A feature

described as editing, paraphrasing, translation, or assistance remains subject to the same authorship boundary.

Technical assistance with programming, calculations, or analysis must follow the documented methodology and applicable research approvals. Students select and justify their approaches, review the procedures and outputs, and independently interpret the results. Generated software code does not authorize generated methods justification, results prose, or research conclusions.

4 Prohibited authorship uses

Students must not use AI to draft primary prose, synthesize original arguments, or write core chapters of assessed academic work. Primary prose includes the substantive text of assignments, discussion submissions, abstracts, introductions, literature reviews, methods sections, results narratives, discussions, conclusions, theses, dissertations, and other work presented as the student's academic contribution. The restriction applies regardless of the heading, length, or file format.

Students must personally develop their arguments, evaluate and synthesize evidence, choose and justify research methods, interpret findings, and draw conclusions. AI may explain an approach or assist with a technical procedure within Section 3. It may not perform these intellectual functions in place of the student.

Submitting AI-drafted primary prose after editing, paraphrasing, translating, or rewriting it remains prohibited. Disclosure does not authorize a prohibited use. Having a supervisor, tutor, consultant, contractor, or another person obtain AI-generated prose or arguments for the submission does not remove the restriction.

An instructor may assign an exercise in which students generate, examine, or critique AI output. In that exercise, the output must be clearly identified and presented as the material being examined. Students independently write their analysis and critique. This allowance does not authorize AI to write ordinary assessed prose or core thesis or dissertation chapters.

Use of AI for prohibited authorship functions constitutes unauthorized assistance and a breach of authorship accountability under NMU's Academic Integrity and Research Misconduct policy. A substantiated violation is academic misconduct. Any additional finding of plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or research misconduct must meet the applicable definitions and evidence requirements in that policy.

5 Full responsibility for submitted work

Students are 100 percent responsible for the originality, accuracy, attribution, methods, calculations, and conclusions in every submission, including work prepared with permitted AI assistance. They may not blame an AI tool, its developer, a generated response, or an automated feature for plagiarism, copied or closely paraphrased material, inaccurate or false information, incorrect attribution, fabricated references, or unsupported research claims. Responsibility remains with the student who submits the work.

Students must review and independently verify relevant output before relying on it. They must check cited sources, quotations, factual statements, data, calculations, code, and interpretations

against the underlying evidence. An AI response, a low similarity score, or a disclosure statement does not establish that the work is accurate, original, properly attributed, or permitted.

Students must be able to explain and defend their work, including how they selected sources, performed analyses, made methodological decisions, and reached conclusions. Permission to use a tool does not excuse failure to meet assignment requirements or research standards.

6 Risks to academic writing and research quality

The following problems may arise from AI assistance and may affect academic quality, assessment, or research integrity. Students must perform checks suited to the activity. Identifying and correcting these risks does not authorize the prohibited authorship uses in Section 4.

- Copied language and close paraphrasing. AI output may reproduce another source's wording, sentence structure, or ideas without identifying the source. Students must examine borrowed material, consult the original sources, and provide accurate quotation or paraphrasing and attribution. A similarity report does not perform that review for them.
- Fabricated references. AI may invent an article, author, journal, book, publication date, page number, or digital object identifier. Students must locate the actual source and verify its bibliographic details before citing it. A plausible reference is insufficient.
- Incorrect attribution. An AI tool may attach a real source to a claim that the source does not support, confuse authors, or misidentify the origin of an idea. Students must read the cited material and confirm that it supports the specific statement being made.
- Invented or altered quotations. AI may create wording that appears to be a quotation or change words from a publication or research participant. Quotations must match the original source, transcript, or recording and follow the applicable rules for any identified omission or alteration.
- Inaccurate or outdated information. Outputs may contain false facts, incorrect dates, obsolete requirements, or unsupported claims presented with confidence. Students must check information against authoritative sources appropriate to the topic and the time period being discussed.
- Misrepresented studies and concepts. AI may inaccurately describe a study's population, sample, setting, design, findings, or limitations, or confuse theories and technical terms. Students must compare descriptions with the actual studies and disciplinary sources they use.
- Faulty synthesis and unsupported conclusions. AI summaries may erase disagreements between studies, overlook limitations, claim an unverified research gap, or connect ideas without adequate evidence. Students must independently evaluate and synthesize the evidence and develop their own arguments and conclusions. AI-generated synthesis may not replace that work.
- Inappropriate research methods. Suggested methods may fail to fit the research questions, design, variables, sampling approach, or available data. Students must select and justify their methods, check disciplinary requirements, and explain why the procedures are suitable for the actual project.
- Statistical and interpretive errors. AI may recommend an unsuitable test, apply the wrong assumption checks, miscalculate a statistic, overstate an effect, or interpret an association as

causation. Students must verify procedures, results, uncertainty, and interpretations against the actual analysis and relevant methodological standards.

- Programming and data processing errors. Generated code may reverse scores incorrectly, mislabel variables, omit observations, introduce unsupported transformations, or execute a different analysis from the one intended. Students must review the code, check intermediate outputs, and reconcile the results with the original data and documented method.
- Invented or improperly altered data. AI may fill missing information with invented observations or change, omit, or combine records without a defensible method. Original records must be preserved, transformations documented, and simulated or synthetic material clearly identified. Generated material must never be represented as evidence collected from actual participants or events.
- Distorted qualitative evidence. AI may confuse speakers, alter participant meaning, invent quotations, misclassify passages, or report coded segments as numbers of participants. Students must check the source records, participant identifiers, analytical decisions, and the unit represented by each reported count.
- Inconsistent tables and figures. Generated displays may contain incorrect totals, labels, scales, percentages, or values that conflict with the narrative or underlying data. Students must reconcile every table and figure with the verified results and accurately describe what each display shows.
- Bias and incomplete evidence. Outputs may reproduce stereotypes, make unsupported assumptions about populations, or omit relevant contradictory evidence. Students must examine source coverage, exclusions, competing explanations, and the basis for claims about the people or settings studied.
- Loss of meaning and writing quality. Proofreading, translation, transcription, or other automated suggestions may change a claim, remove a qualification, misuse terminology, or introduce generic, repetitive, contradictory, or imprecise language. Students must preserve meaning and personally compose the substantive prose required by this policy.
- Loss of explainability and reproducibility. A student may rely on an output without understanding how it was produced or being able to reproduce the analytical steps. Students must retain relevant records, understand the procedures used, and be able to explain and defend the sources, methods, decisions, and conclusions in their work.

7 Disclosure and attribution

Students must disclose material AI assistance that contributes to a submission or research activity. Material assistance includes support affecting source selection, substantive research planning, programming, data processing or analysis, translation, transcription, or other parts of the documented workflow. The disclosure identifies the tool and model or version when known, relevant dates, the purpose of the use, the portions or procedures affected, and the checks performed.

For coursework, disclosure accompanies the submission in the location specified by the instructor. For theses, dissertations, or publications, the declaration and methods description identify the relevant assistance. Instructors or supervisors may require supporting records for a particular activity. Routine spelling checks, punctuation corrections, formatting, and non-

generative citation-management functions do not ordinarily require a separate declaration unless activity instructions require one.

Disclosing an AI tool does not replace attribution of another person's work or citation of the original evidence. Students must follow the applicable citation style when an authorized exercise includes quoted AI output. AI may not be named as an author. Disclosure never cures prohibited authorship, plagiarism, inaccurate information, invented evidence, or incorrect attribution.

8 Theses dissertations and research records

The student must make and demonstrate the intellectual contribution required for the degree. The authorship restrictions in Section 4 apply throughout proposal development, research, thesis or dissertation preparation, and examination. Supervisors may provide feedback and permitted methodological support, but may not authorize AI to write primary prose, synthesize the student's original argument, or compose core chapters.

Permitted technical assistance must be documented sufficiently to explain the relationship between original records, analytical procedures, and reported findings. Researchers preserve source data and record material cleaning, exclusions, recoding, imputation, and other transformations. Records include relevant code, settings, versions, prompts, and outputs where needed to explain or reproduce the work, subject to confidentiality and authorized access.

Simulated or synthetic data may be used for an authorized instructional or methodological purpose when clearly identified. Such data may not replace required empirical evidence or be represented as information collected from real participants or events. Participant quotations must accurately reflect the source material. Research record retention and preservation follow the Academic Integrity and Research Misconduct policy and applicable consent, data-management, and other requirements.

Students must independently explain their research and answer questions during a defense or examination. AI must not generate or relay answers on the student's behalf. An assessment expressly designed to examine AI output under Section 4 may use clearly identified generated material as the object of analysis. The student must independently provide the explanation and critique.

9 Confidential information and approved services

Confidential or restricted information must not be entered into public or personal AI services. This includes student records and identifiable submissions, grades, admissions documents, personnel and financial records, identifiable participant data, confidential research records, unpublished work belonging to others, privileged communications, passwords, and other protected institutional information. Uploading, pasting, recording, connecting an account, or allowing an AI tool to search files can disclose information.

Use involving confidential information requires the President's written approval of the specific service, account or institutional workspace, purpose, and information category after an appropriate privacy and security assessment. Approval must account for access, retention, model training, provider or third-party disclosure, contractual protections, and necessary consent or

research permissions. A paid subscription, a privacy setting, or general academic permission to use AI does not establish institutional approval.

Users must limit information and permissions to what is necessary for the authorized task. Removing a name does not establish that a record is safely deidentified. Any required consent, confidentiality commitment, research approval, licensing restriction, or other applicable requirement must be satisfied before information is provided to the service.

10 Faculty and administrative responsibilities

Faculty, staff, supervisors, and contractors remain responsible for AI-assisted work performed in their university roles. They must verify facts, sources, quotations, calculations, instructional materials, feedback, and communications before using or sharing them. They must not use AI to prepare prohibited prose or original arguments for student submissions. Material AI use in research and scholarly work must be disclosed under applicable disciplinary, publication, and research requirements.

AI-assisted review of student work requires approval appropriate to the information involved and compliance with confidentiality restrictions. Faculty personally review the assessed work and determine grades. Admissions, academic standing, misconduct findings, employment actions, and other consequential decisions require an authorized human decision-maker who reviews the relevant evidence and accepts responsibility. AI may not independently issue those decisions.

The President must approve institutional deployment of AI services and automated integrations. The authorized official documents their purpose, access, human oversight, and review arrangements. Approval for one activity or feature does not authorize unrelated uses or wider access.

11 Technology access recording and security

University technology must be used through authorized accounts and access permissions. Users protect credentials, follow required authentication measures, respect software licenses and access controls, and report suspected compromise. Unauthorized access, impersonation, interference with systems, and use of automation to evade assessment requirements are prohibited.

Users must have the necessary rights and permission before uploading protected course materials, assessment banks, licensed publications, unpublished manuscripts, proprietary content, or another person's work. AI use does not remove copyright, license, contractual, or confidentiality obligations.

AI meeting assistants, recordings, and transcription services require approval for the information involved, notice to participants, and any required consent. Research use must follow the approved protocol and participant commitments. Approval is required before connecting AI to university records or permitting it to send, modify, delete, or publish institutional material. Access is limited to the task and reviewed when the use changes.

12 Accessibility and access

Approved accessibility tools and arrangements may support access to learning and the expression of a student's own ideas. They remain subject to accuracy, attribution, confidentiality, and applicable assessment requirements. Instructors coordinate reasonable arrangements through the President or the designated official and communicate how required skills will be assessed.

When a course requires a particular technology, the instructor identifies access requirements in advance and arranges appropriate access or an academically equivalent alternative. Students should not be assessed on purchasing an optional AI service or surrendering confidential information to an unapproved provider.

13 Reporting correction and misconduct review

Academic integrity concerns are reported to the Academic and Research Integrity Officer within the Office of Ethical Compliance. The President designates that officer and any alternate official. If the officer is implicated or the position is vacant, the concern may be reported to the President. Cases personally implicating the President follow the independent review arrangements in the Academic Integrity and Research Misconduct policy.

Suspected confidential disclosure, unauthorized access, compromised credentials, or unintended automated actions must be reported promptly to the President or the designated official. The user stops the affected use where feasible, preserves relevant records securely, and follows containment instructions. The President directs the response and any required notification.

Students who discover an error after submission must promptly inform the instructor or supervisor and provide an accurate correction. Researchers also address affected records or publications through the appropriate correction process. Corrective action is considered in context and does not erase an established violation.

Incorrect information, weak analysis, or faulty attribution may affect the academic evaluation of work and require correction. Whether conduct also constitutes misconduct is determined under NMU's Academic Integrity and Research Misconduct policy. Reviewers examine the actual text, sources, records, activity instructions, and other relevant evidence. A similarity percentage or AI detection score alone does not establish plagiarism or unauthorized AI use.

Full responsibility for AI-assisted work preserves the established requirements for notice, evidence, an opportunity to respond, impartial review, written findings, sanctions, and appeals. Research misconduct retains the requirements concerning a significant departure from accepted practices and intentional, knowing, or reckless conduct. Honest error and reasonable scholarly differences receive the treatment established in that policy. Serious sanctions, including degree revocation or personnel termination, follow its specified procedures.

14 Review and amendments

The President reviews this policy periodically and approves amendments, approved institutional uses, and related guidance. The Office of Ethical Compliance may recommend revisions based on implementation and reported concerns. Material changes are communicated through the

ethical compliance manual and website. The complete approved policy governs university procedures.

Approval date October 1, 2026

Effective date October 1, 2026

Billy Whisnant, Ph.D., President