Responsible and Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Tuskegee University Library Services

1. Introduction

Over recent decades, advances in technology—particularly artificial intelligence (AI)—have significantly influenced society, shaping how information is created, accessed, and used within academic libraries. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into higher education raises important ethical considerations, particularly in areas such as research development, locating scholarly resources, and supporting academic writing.

This guideline is intended for use across all Tuskegee University Library Services units, including library, archival, and museum operations, and provides practical direction for staff on the responsible and effective use of Artificial Intelligence in alignment with university policies and applicable state and federal requirements.

2. Scope and Purpose

This section outlines the scope of AI use within Tuskegee University Library Services across activities such as content development, proofreading, research assistance, information literacy instruction, reference services, data organization and analysis, creation of instructional and outreach materials, and administrative tasks. This guideline applies to all units within Tuskegee University Library Services, including the Ford Motor Company Library (Main Library), Architecture Library, Engineering Library, Veterinary Medical Library, the University Archives, and the Legacy Museum.

Its purpose is to promote responsible use, transparency, and adherence to academic and institutional standards. It is intended to provide internal guidance and best practices and does not constitute a university-wide AI policy.

3. Definitions

3.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI), as defined in the document *AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers*, published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the largest division of the American Library Association, refers to technologies or systems capable of performing complex tasks typically associated with human intelligence (ACRL, 2025).

3.2 Generative AI (GenAI)

Generative AI is a category of AI that can create new content such as text, images, videos, code, 3D content, and music (OECD, n.d.).

3.3 Embedded AI

Embedded AI refers to artificial intelligence that is built directly into enterprise applications—so the AI operates natively exactly where work gets done (SAP, 2025).

4. Principles for Responsible and Ethical AI Use

The following principles outline the responsible and ethical use of AI within Tuskegee University Library Services.

4.1 Privacy

AI tools should clearly disclose how user inputs are collected, stored, and used. Staff are encouraged to review data storage and training policies to understand how to handle such information. Many generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini) may utilize user inputs to improve their models, including in paid versions. When using these tools for library or university-related work, staff should review the tool's privacy or data settings and turn off any options related to "data sharing" or "model improvement". While disabling these settings limits the use of inputs for training, submitted content may still be retained and processed for a limited time to support safety, security, and system functionality.

Personal, sensitive, or internal information must not be entered into AI tools for library or university work. Staff should use only the information necessary and remove or redact identifying details as part of data minimization practices and consult library administration or the Office of Information Technology (OIT) when in doubt. AI use must comply with applicable privacy laws and university policies, including FERPA, HIPAA (where applicable), and institutional data classification standards.

4.2 Ensuring Accountability

In alignment with the Association of College and Research Libraries' *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, Tuskegee University Library Services will support understanding of how knowledge is generated, evaluated, and responsibly applied when working with AI tools (ACRL, 2016). Library Services will ensure that patrons are aware that AI-generated content may contain bias, inaccuracies, or unreliable information. Patrons will receive guidance on responsible AI use through consultations, the online library catalog, information literacy instruction that includes AI literacy, and other library resources.

Library staff who use AI tools are responsible for their selection and use ensuring that the tools are appropriate, reliable, and aligned with library operations and institutional requirements, while avoiding the use of unverified tools that may create privacy or security risks. Use caution when entering information into AI tools, as data may be stored or reused; avoid including sensitive, confidential, or institutional data unless the tool is approved and secure.

4.3 Human Oversight

Reliable AI systems may be used to improve workflows; however, in sensitive or high-risk situations, decisions must not rely solely on AI tool outputs and require human judgment. AI-generated content should be treated as a draft or suggestion, not as final or authoritative information, and must be reviewed and verified for accuracy and appropriate use. Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness, and quality of all library services remains with the individual using the AI tool. Outputs from vendor-provided AI features should be actively monitored and reviewed to identify potential inaccuracies, bias, or omissions. Concerns or unexpected results should be reported and, where appropriate, escalated for further review.

4.4 Prompting Fairness

AI tools are trained on existing data, which may reflect biases, stereotypes, or the underrepresentation of certain groups. As a result, AI-generated outputs may reinforce biased, incomplete, or uneven representations of information. Staff must remain mindful of these risks and ensure that AI-generated content is fair, balanced, and does not introduce bias or contribute to misrepresentation, exclusion, or harm to any individual or group.

Also, when using vendor-provided AI features (e.g., discovery systems, databases), users should be aware that outputs may influence search rankings and the visibility of authors or topics, potentially leading to disproportionate or incomplete representation. Any concerns or unexpected results should be reported and reviewed by the appropriate authority.

4.5 Ensuring Transparency

Tuskegee University Library Services will follow university policies and Competency 1.4 of ACRL's *AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers*, promoting transparency in AI use, including how data is selected, how systems function, how outputs can be understood, and when AI use should be clearly disclosed (ACRL, 2025).

Library Services staff should maintain records of the AI tools used, their purpose, and any review of outputs, and provide this information to appropriate institutional authorities upon request. When in doubt, consult with your department head and seek guidance before proceeding with the use of AI tools or sharing information. See Section 5 of Acceptable and Prohibited Uses for guidance on what actions are not allowed when using AI in library service work.

When AI has meaningfully contributed to a work-related document or product, the content must not be presented as fully human-created. Where appropriate, the use of AI tools should be documented to support transparency, review, and accountability. Any concerns, errors, or

unintended outcomes resulting from the use of AI tools should be reported and addressed through appropriate review processes.

4.6 Academic Integrity

Staff should use AI tools in ways that maintain honesty and accuracy in academic work. The use of AI tools and AI-generated content must align with the university's academic integrity policy (*Academic Regulations and Procedures*, p. 26), ensuring that such content is reviewed and not presented as original work without appropriate acknowledgment. This includes properly acknowledging the use of AI-generated content in academic work and ensuring that its use aligns with academic integrity standards.

When supporting student research, projects, or assignments, staff should inform students that many platforms now include embedded AI features. Students should be advised to consult their course instructor or professor to confirm what uses of AI are acceptable and not acceptable in their specific work. Also make them aware that some AI tools may produce inaccurate citations or made-up sources. These citations and sources should be verified using relevant and reliable resources.

5. Acceptable and Prohibited Use of AI

5.1 Low-Risk Uses (Generally Acceptable with Review)

AI may be used for routine library tasks when sensitive, confidential, or protected data is not involved, and outputs are reviewed and verified by staff:

- Using AI to assist with routine administrative tasks, draft and improve written materials (e.g., emails, reports, announcements), and summarize content for general understanding (not to be used as the sole basis for decisions).
- Using AI tools to explore concepts, generate ideas, and develop outlines for projects, services, or initiatives, as well as to assist with event planning, communication materials, internal documentation, and professional development.
- Supporting basic data organization or simple analysis where no sensitive or identifying information is involved
- Generating text or captions for images and videos, with manual verification of accuracy before publishing.

5.2 Medium-Risk Uses (Allowed with Caution and Oversight)

- When creating or using AI-generated images related to university settings (e.g., campus buildings, events, or laboratories), staff should exercise caution and consult relevant university or library authorities before use. Such images that appear realistic should be clearly labeled (e.g., "AI-generated image") in flyers, websites, or reports to avoid confusion with actual photographs.

- Analyzing data or survey responses is permitted only when the data is not confidential or sensitive and all identifying information has been removed.
- Drafting policies, procedures, reports, or other formal institutional documents; all outputs must be carefully reviewed by a subject matter expert to ensure accuracy and compliance before use

5.3 Prohibited Use of AI

- Using AI to evaluate individuals (e.g., hiring or performance appraisal) or to make decisions that significantly affect individuals without human review.
- Entering personally identifiable information (PII), confidential, sensitive, restricted, or non-public university information into AI tools is not permitted.
- Uploading or using library database content in AI tools is not allowed unless the database terms permit it.
- Using AI tools in ways that violate copyright, licensing, contracts, or other legal obligations—including entering protected materials without permission—is not permitted.
- Using AI to classify or evaluate individuals based on protected characteristics, or in ways that reinforce bias or discrimination, is not permitted. Any such outputs must be reviewed and mitigated before use.
- Using library AI tools for political lobbying.

6. Vendor Evaluation and Responsible Procurement

Before adopting any AI tool for library service work, staff should review the evaluation rubric to determine (See appendix) whether the tool or vendor should be recommended to the Director of Library Services or the Library Services AI Committee for approval. The rubric uses four rating levels: excellent, good, bad, and unacceptable, to assess seven areas: cost, data transparency, data training, data security, data fairness checks, necessity of the tool, and support. Information for grading should be obtained from the AI vendor's website, with links provided as evidence for each evaluation area. Ratings below Excellent require a written justification, with more detail expected for lower scores. An Excellent rating requires only evidence showing the criteria are met. If a vendor does not clearly explain its data security practices, it may not meet the expectations required for university use. AI features used by software or third-party services must be identified and evaluated carefully. Contracted services that use AI should be assessed in the same way as direct AI use. If needed, consult with the Office of General Counsel and the Office of Information Technology to ensure that vendor or contractor agreements include clear terms related to AI use, data security, and compliance.

7. Disclaimer

This guideline provides general direction for the responsible use of AI tools in library services and does not replace university policies or legal requirements. It will be reviewed annually by the Library Services AI Committee to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

8. References

Association of College & Research Libraries. (2016). *Framework for information literacy for higher education*. https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework

Association of College & Research Libraries. (2025). *AI competencies for academic library workers*. https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ai

Tuskegee University. (2011). *Academic regulations and procedures for undergraduates*. https://www.tuskegee.edu/policies/Academic-Regulations-and-Procedures.pdf

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Generative AI*. https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/generative-ai.html

SAP. (2025, October 27). *What is embedded AI?* https://www.sap.com/resources/embedded-ai-explained

9. Appendix

Ai Tool Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Areas	Excellent Criteria	Good Criteria	Bad Criteria	Unacceptable Criteria
Cost	Cost is affordable, and the benefit of the tool does outweigh the cost.	Cost is high, but the benefit of the tool does outweigh the cost.	Cost is affordable, but the benefit of the tool does not outweigh the cost.	Cost is extremely high and unaffordable.
Data Transparency	Company states where the data they trained its tool on was from. States if data input is used for future training. Gives option to not allow future training on data input.	Company states where the data they trained its tool on was from. States if data input is used for future training. Does not give option to not allow future training on data input.	Company is vague about where the data they trained its tool on was from. Does not state if data input is used for future training. Does not give option to not allow future training on data input.	Company does not address data transparency.
Data Training	Data used for training was from in-house information from the company.	Data used for training was partially in-house and external sources, but company obtained permission for training.	Data used for training was external only, but company was mostly given permission for training.	Data used for training was external only and company was not given permission for training.
Data Security	Data inputs are secure, and users have the option to prevent data from being stored	Data inputs are secure, but users do not have the option to prevent data from being stored	Data inputs are not secured, and users do not have the option to prevent data from being stored	Company does not address data security
Data Fairness Checks	Company has routine fairness checks on its tool.	Company sometimes does fairness checks on its tool.	Company expects users to do their own fairness checks on its tool.	Company does not address fairness checks on its tool.
Necessity of Tool	Clear and reasonable need for tool.	Not clear but has reasonable need for tool.	Clear but not reasonable need for tool.	No clear and reasonable need for tool.
Support	Support is offered in a multitude of ways and is easy to find.	Support is offered in a multitude of ways, but it is hard to find.	Support is only available through one or two avenues.	Company does not offer any support.

How to Use Chart Above				
Grading	**Excellent Criteria**	**Good Criteria**	**Bad Criteria**	**Unacceptable Criteria**
	If Ai tool checks all in this column, it does not need a letter of support.	If AI tool checks 4 or more in this column, it will need a short letter of support.	If AI tool checks 4 or more in this column, it should not be brought up for purchase without letter of defense for the tool.	If AI tool checks any in this column, it should not be allowed to be used. Must bring intense letter of defense to be considered for purchase.
Proof of AI tool checking any of these boxes should be attached when sent to Library Services Director. Proof should be direct links to company pages with information for that box. Screenshots of official company statements may be allowed if asked.				

Notes for this Chart

- Clear means company of AI tool is transparent about the use of this tool.
- Reasonable means easy to see reason why the library needs this AI tool.
- AI Tool Evaluation Rubric created by Amber Lantz.