

Safe Use of AI Tools at the University of Denver

AI tools are part of how we work and learn at DU. Used well, they save time and open new possibilities. Used carelessly, they can expose student records, research data, and confidential information in ways that are difficult or impossible to undo. This guide covers what you need to know to use AI tools safely and responsibly.

Start here: DU-Approved AI Tools

These tools have been reviewed and approved by DU's AI Steering Committee. Unlike free consumer tools, they operate under enterprise agreements that protect your data and DU's.

- Microsoft Copilot
- Adobe Creative Cloud (AI features)
- Zoom AI Companion

Any new generative AI system, application, free trial, or extra module must be reviewed by Technology & Data Services Review Committee pursuant to University Policy IT 13.10.040 – Technology Acquisition.

Think Before You Type

The following must never go into an AI prompt, regardless of which tool you are using:

- Student records, grades, financial aid information, or anything covered by FERPA
- Social Security numbers, dates of birth, or other personal identifiers
- Health or medical information covered by HIPAA
- Login credentials, passwords, or API keys
- Unpublished research data, grant proposals, or data that grantors such as NIH prohibit from being entered into generative AI
- Donor, alumni, or confidential financial records
- Confidential HR or legal documents
- Information on public websites is not necessarily free of copyright or intellectual property restrictions

A useful test: if you would not email this information to a stranger, do not put it into an AI tool.

Treat AI Outputs with Care

- **Verify before you use:** AI tools confidently produce inaccurate information. Check anything important against a reliable source.
- **Citations may not exist:** AI tools routinely fabricate references. Look up every citation before including it in your work.
- **Copyright applies:** AI responses can include content from other sources. You are responsible for any IP issues in what you publish or submit.
- **Ethical and bias awareness:** AI must not be used to create content that is inappropriate, discriminatory, deceptive, or otherwise harmful.

Made a mistake? Do this now.

If you accidentally shared sensitive or protected data with an AI tool:

1. Stop the session immediately.
2. Note what was shared, with which tool, and approximately when.
3. Contact IT Security: info-security@du.edu

Early reporting limits the damage. You will not be penalised for an honest mistake reported promptly.

Academic Integrity

DU's [Honor Code](#) defines prohibited or inappropriate use of AI as Unauthorized Use. Expectations vary by course, so students must review the syllabus or ask their instructor before using any AI tool for coursework.

Questions? We are here.

IT Help Centre: du.edu/it

Report a concern: info-security@du.edu | Approved tool list: du.edu/artificial-intelligence/resources