

HOWARD UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Number: 100-022: Academics and Research
Policy Title: HOWARD UNIVERSITY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY
Responsible Officer: Provost & Chief Academic Officer
Responsible Office: Office of the Provost
Effective Date: April 24, 2026

I. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Howard University (“the University”) to ensure the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) in support of the University’s academic, research, and operational activities.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the Responsible Officer.

II. RATIONALE

Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are increasingly used across the University and can enhance teaching and learning, support research and scholarship, improve administrative efficiency, and foster innovation when used responsibly. However, AI also presents risks related to bias, accuracy, accessibility, privacy, data security, intellectual property, and contractual obligations. Accordingly, this policy establishes a University-wide framework for the responsible use of AI that promotes ethical conduct, protects individual and institutional interests, upholds academic integrity, and ensures alignment with applicable laws and University policies, while maintaining accountability for individuals and units using AI.

III. ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all members of the Howard University community, including faculty, staff, students, contractors, affiliates, and any other individuals or entities using artificial intelligence systems in connection with University activities.

IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to computer-based systems or software that perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, including learning from data, recognizing patterns, making predictions or decisions, generating content, and automating processes.

B. Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI) – Generative AI refers to AI systems designed to generate new content, including text, images, audio, video, code, or other outputs, in response to user inputs or prompts.

C. AI Tools – AI Tools are software applications, platforms, or services that utilize artificial intelligence, including generative AI, to support or perform tasks in academic, research, administrative, or operational contexts.

D. Confidential Information – Confidential Information means any non-public or proprietary information of the University, where the unauthorized access, use, disclosure, or loss of which could result in a violation of University obligations or policies, or could reasonably cause harm to the university’s reputation, programs and services, safety, operations, finances, or community members.

E. Intellectual Property (IP) – Intellectual Property (IP) refers to a concrete or abstract product of the human intellect protected by a category of intangible rights such as those granted by patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade Secret protections, as defined in the *Howard University Intellectual Property Policy* (100-006).

F. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) – Personally Identifiable Information (PII) refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. For purposes of this Policy, PII constitutes sensitive information and shall be protected and handled in accordance with applicable University information and data protection policies, as defined in the *Howard University Acceptable Use University Information Resources, Data, and Communication Services Policy* 700-002.

G. Protected Health Information (PHI) – Protected Health Information is individually identifiable health information that is created, received, maintained, or transmitted by a HIPAA-covered entity or its business associate, in any form or medium.

H. Responsible Use of AI – Responsible Use of AI refers to the design, development, deployment, and use of AI systems in a manner that is ethical, transparent, lawful, and aligned with University policies, including appropriate safeguards to mitigate bias, protect privacy, and ensure human accountability.

I. University Data – University Data refers to data created, collected, maintained, or processed by or on behalf of the University in connection with academic, research, administrative, or operational activities, including data stored in or generated by University information systems.

V. POLICY PROCEDURES

The following procedures establish University-wide requirements governing the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) systems and tools.

A. Administration and Oversight

The Provost and Chief Academic Officer is the Responsible Officer for this policy and is authorized to oversee its implementation, interpretation, and enforcement. The Responsible Officer may delegate administrative responsibilities as appropriate and may consult with relevant University offices and advisory bodies in carrying out these duties.

This policy shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to reflect changes in applicable law, University priorities, and evolving artificial intelligence technologies.

B. General Requirements

1. Use of AI systems shall comply with all applicable University policies, legal and regulatory requirements, and contractual obligations.
2. Individuals and units using AI systems shall remain accountable for verifying the accuracy and appropriateness of AI-generated outputs before using them.
3. Use of AI shall be disclosed when required by the academic, research, administrative, or operational context in which it is employed, in a manner appropriate to that context.
4. Confidential Information, Personally Identifiable Information (PII), University Data, or other protected information shall not be entered into AI systems unless expressly authorized in writing and subject to appropriate institutional review and approval.
5. University Data and Confidential Information shall not be used to train AI systems or models.
6. The University does not authorize third-party use of its data or intellectual property (IP) for marketing, training, or model development purposes without prior review, approval, and agreement by appropriate University authorities, including the use of anonymized or aggregated data in exchange for AI services, regardless of cost or consideration. Any new contract containing provisions for the use of University Data or IP must be reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel to ensure compliance with this policy.

C. Teaching and Learning

1. Use of AI in teaching and learning activities shall be consistent with the University's commitment to academic integrity, honesty, and the pursuit of knowledge, as set forth in the Code of Ethical Conduct and the Academic Code of Student Conduct.
2. Faculty shall establish and communicate, through course syllabi and other official course materials, course requirements regarding the permissible and impermissible use of AI tools, including whether and how AI may be used in coursework.
3. Student use of AI shall comply with course requirements, instructor requirements, and all applicable University academic conduct policies, and in the absence of explicit course-level guidance regarding AI use, students shall seek clarification from the instructor prior to using AI tools for coursework or assessments.
4. Use of AI in instructional activities shall not undermine learning objectives, assessment integrity, or the evaluation of student work, and shall remain subject to applicable academic integrity standards.
5. Confidential Information, PII, or student education records shall not be entered into AI systems in connection with teaching and learning activities.
6. Use of AI in instructional contexts shall comply with applicable accessibility, disability accommodation, and non-discrimination obligations under University policy and applicable law.

D. Research and Scholarship

1. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) in research and scholarly activities shall comply with all applicable University research integrity policies, sponsor requirements, publication and authorship policies, intellectual property obligations, and contractual obligations.
2. Researchers shall comply with all applicable policies and requirements imposed by funding agencies, journals, professional societies, and other relevant external entities related to the use of AI, as applicable to the specific research activity, as well as in accordance with applicable policies and procedures of the Office of Regulatory Research Compliance (ORRC).
3. Confidential Information, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that is sensitive information, or other protected University Data shall not be entered into AI systems in connection with research activities unless expressly authorized and subject to appropriate institutional review and approval.
4. Use of AI in research shall be documented and disclosed as required by applicable funding agencies, publishers, or other binding external requirements.
5. Researchers shall remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and validity of research outputs produced using AI at any stage of the research process, including responsibility for any errors, omissions, or misrepresentations resulting from such use.
6. Use of AI shall not compromise the security, ownership, or value of the University's intellectual property or University Data or violate applicable intellectual property, copyright, or authorship policies.

E. External Engagements and Partnerships

1. Engagements, including partnerships, in which AI is involved in any way (i.e. "AI-related") with external entities shall be conducted in a manner that protects the University's intellectual property, Confidential Information, University Data, and institutional interests, and complies with all applicable University policies, legal requirements, contractual obligations, and brand guidelines. Any such proposed partnerships or engagements must be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel and, if applicable, the Office of University Communications, before they are finalized.
2. Employees, students, contractors, and affiliates shall not enter into any agreement or arrangement, whether formal or informal, with external entities involving the development, use, digitization, licensing, or sharing of University Data or intellectual property without prior legal review by the Office of the General Counsel and approval by authorized University officials.
3. AI-related agreements shall be subject to appropriate institutional review prior to execution to assess legal, financial, data security, privacy, and intellectual property risks.
4. University Data and intellectual property shall not be licensed, transferred, or made available to external entities for AI-related purposes in exchange for digitization, access, or other consideration without appropriate authorization and compensation and without legal review by the Office of the General Counsel.

5. Use of AI in external engagements and partnerships shall not compromise the security, ownership, control, or value of the University's intellectual property, Confidential Information, and institutional interests.

F. Work-Related Use

1. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) in University work-related activities, including administrative and operational functions, shall comply with all applicable University policies, legal requirements, and data governance standards, and shall support institutional integrity and the protection of Confidential Information, Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and other protected University Data.
2. Faculty, staff, student employees, and other University personnel shall not enter Confidential Information or PII into AI systems in connection with work-related activities unless expressly authorized and subject to appropriate institutional review and approval.
3. Use of AI in work-related activities shall comply with all applicable University policies governing data privacy, information security, and records management, including requirements related to student education records (FERPA) and protected health information (HIPAA).
4. AI tools or services used in the University operations shall comply with institutional privacy, security, and data stewardship standards and shall be subject to appropriate institutional review and approval prior to use.
5. Use of AI in work-related activities shall be disclosed and documented when required by applicable University policies, legal obligations, or requirements established by an administrative unit overseeing the work.

VI. INTERIM POLICIES

There are no interim policies.

VII. SANCTIONS.

Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures.

VII. RESOURCES

- Academic Code of Student Conduct, <https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/student-code-conduct>
- FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, <https://howard.edu/registrar/FERPA>
- Howard University Artificial Intelligence Initiative and Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council (AIAC), <https://howard.edu/ai/contact>
- Howard University Code of Ethical Conduct Policy, <https://secretary.howard.edu/board-trustees/governance-documents>
- Howard University Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy and Security Violations/Sanctions Policy (900-002)

<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/health-insurance-portability-and-accountability-act-hipaa-privacy-and-security>

- Howard University Acceptable Use of University Information, Resources, Data, and Communication Services Policy (700-002),
<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/acceptable-use-university-information-resources-data-and-communication-services>
- Howard University Information Security Plan,
https://technology.howard.edu/sites/technology.howard.edu/files/2020-03/Information_Security_Plan_0.pdf
- Howard University Office of University Communications Brand Guidelines,
<https://ouc.howard.edu/our-services/creative-branding-multimedia>
- Howard University Online Privacy Notice Policy (700-007),
<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/web-data-security>
- Howard University Research Misconduct Policy (100-011: Academics and Research),
<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/research-misconduct-policy>
- Howard University Students Privacy Rights Policy (600-002),
<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/student-privacy-rights-policy>
- Howard University Technology Transfer Policy (100-006),
<https://secretary.howard.edu/resources/technology-transfer-policy>
- Initial Howard University Guidelines for Use of Generative AI Tools,
<https://provost.howard.edu/initial-howard-university-guidelines-use-generative-ai-tools>

Questions regarding this policy or requests for additional guidance may be directed to:
AI@howard.edu.