

Provisional BUSL AI Policy

Observations

These recommendations are motivated by the following observations:

- 1) Boston University supports the use of AI in many circumstances for faculty, staff, and students.
- 2) AI is already an important tool in law practice, a tool that can improve the practice of law if used correctly and a tool that our students should be able to utilize skillfully, wisely, and ethically. AI can also be a useful learning tool.
- 3) AI is imperfect. It may make false statements. It is capable of glaring omissions, hallucinations, and plagiarism. It may miss the point altogether or miss important aspects of a problem.
- 4) Many public AI applications make inputted data accessible to others using the application. This could result in violations of privacy rights or attorney-client confidentiality, depending on the AI applications used. (Note that the University-provided TerrierGPT solves some privacy concerns, but not all.)
- 5) It remains important that students have an internalized body of knowledge and that they possess independent legal research, writing, and reasoning skills. That is, our students still need the ability to write, argue, negotiate, and reason without AI. (This is recognized by the bar exam in which AI is not available as well as by many professional licensing and certification processes.)
- 6) Relatedly, over-reliance on AI risks stunting critical thinking and writing skills. Even in a world that is increasingly reliant upon AI, our graduates will be expected to “add value” above and beyond what clients and others can find on their own via AI.
- 7) As with any new technology, we continue to learn about AI’s impact on mental health. There is some preliminary evidence that excessive and inappropriate AI usage can lead to mental health challenges.

Boston University School of Law AI Policies

The following are the AI policies of Boston University School of Law:

1. Instructors, researchers, and students should make themselves familiar with Boston University and Boston University School of Law policies on AI. (Boston University AI policies are at <https://www.bu.edu/aida/guidance/>.)
2. It is up to instructors to set the AI policy for their courses.
3. It is the responsibility of students to know the AI policies for any course in which they are enrolled, and the AI policies for the tasks and assignments in those courses.
4. All authors (instructors, researchers, and students) are responsible for the accuracy and integrity of their writing.
5. All authors (instructors, researchers, and students) are responsible for maintaining client confidentiality and other ethical responsibilities.
6. All authors (instructors, researchers, and students) must properly attribute the use of AI:

In acknowledging the use of AI, one should treat AI as one would a human researcher or a non-AI technology. If a human researcher or a non-AI technology providing the same service to the researcher would require acknowledgment or attribution, then AI should be acknowledged or attributed in similar fashion. For example, if AI is used as a spell checker or a grammar checker, then no acknowledgment or attribution is necessary. If AI provides important research output, then the use of AI should be acknowledged. (Individual instructors may have additional attribution or citation requirements.) Note that, in addition to attributing AI, researchers are responsible for complying with attribution and plagiarism standards as if the text were entirely written and researched by them. For example, if AI produces a statement that is a quote or idea from another research publication, then this must be indicated and attributed to the original source. (Adapted from Harvard Law School policy.)

7. All instructors, researchers, students, staff and other users of AI should attempt to monitor AI use for adverse effects on mental health on themselves and others and take appropriate steps if such adverse effects are observed.