

## Guidance for AI in Relation to Theses and Dissertations

The Graduate and Professional School recognizes the ever-changing dynamics of artificial intelligence (AI) in academia. As graduate students are integrated into Texas A&M's research and teaching enterprises, we will refer to the best practices/guidance put forth by the Vice President for Research (VPR) in [Resources on Generative AI in Research](#) and the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) in [AI Initiatives](#). As we do not want to discourage the use of AI in research or academic endeavors, The Graduate and Professional School is not setting policies or restrictions on its use. Nonetheless, we advise awareness for certain aspects of potential AI usage.

Specifically, all aspects of AI in research fall under standard practices for [Responsible Conduct of Research](#). This might include researching AI itself (e.g., developing software), using AI for research (e.g., a means to collect data), or using AI for dissemination (e.g., preparation of figures, manuscripts, or presentations). As independent research products, theses and dissertations are also subjected to the responsible conduct standard.

We draw attention to two statements in the [Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines](#). A thesis, dissertation, or record of study is an "independent professional effort" and it is a student's advisor/advisory committee's responsibility to "oversee content." Thus, the student's advisor and advisory committee ensure that the work is independent, original, and ethically conducted. As such, The Graduate and Professional School emphasizes the importance of communication between the student and their chair/advisory committee. For example, a student wishing to use AI to gather data or proof-read their dissertation should have upfront conversations with and approval from their advisor/advisory committee (see VPR's [Best Practices for Generative AI in Research](#): Best Practices for Students).

We caution students and advisors/advisory committees that generative AI still has unresolved questions regarding "who owns" the output of AI (e.g., does the software developer own it?). Using an open-AI platform such as ChatPT could risk publicly disclosing intellectual property rights or releasing data owned by a funding entity (e.g., confidential government funded projects or private industry). Also, it is not clear if the AI platform (company) itself is violating intellectual property or copyrights owned by other individuals (especially if it is not referenced correctly). For this reason, care should be given when using AI to gather data/information or write text from open-ended prompts.