



Indigo's Generative AI Policy

At Indigo, our priority is supporting students' intellectual growth. While most Indigo students produce excellent final projects, we value those final projects not as ends in and of themselves, but instead as representations of each student's process of learning and discovery. Therefore, Indigo requires all of our researchers – students and mentors alike – to use Generative AI tools only to assist their learning, not to replace their intellectual labor.

Students and mentors may use generative AI to narrow in on a research topic, gain general knowledge in their field, and even expedite some of the busy work of research with which they already have familiarity (e.g., intro-level coding). However, students and mentors are never permitted to use AI to generate the thesis statements, hypotheses, claims, analysis, or writing in their final projects. Further, if a student would like to learn a basic skill that AI could easily replace – again, let's consider the example of intro-level coding – then Indigo requires mentors to allow the students to work through the challenges of developing that skill for themselves, without leaning on AI.

One of the skills that we want our students to develop is the ability to use AI responsibly, as a tool to aid in their research, without impeding their own ability to learn and innovate. At Indigo, our mentors are ready to work with our students step by step, as they develop foundational skills necessary to advance in their fields.

Indigo's AI Rules of Thumb

1. Don't ask generative AI anything that you wouldn't feel comfortable asking your human teacher.

Examples applying this rule of thumb:

Acceptable uses of AI	AI Misuse, Prohibited

<p>Would you feel comfortable asking your teacher to help you understand a challenging key term or a couple sentences in an article? Yes, that's their job!</p>	<p>Would you feel comfortable asking your teacher to summarize the part of an article that you are required to summarize as part of your homework (e.g., a full paragraph or section of an article). No, you wouldn't ask your teacher to do part of your homework – so don't ask AI!</p>
<p>Would you feel comfortable asking your teacher to read through your paper draft and help you identify sentences with grammatical errors or typos? Yes, it's fine to have teachers read your writing to help you figure out where to begin editing for clarity.</p>	<p>Would you feel comfortable asking your teacher to revise part or all of your paper, to improve its style, voice, or content? No, that would be asking your teacher to write your paper for you!</p>
<p>Would you feel comfortable asking a teacher to read a quote from an article and then offer feedback on your attempt to paraphrase that quote? In other words, would you feel okay asking a TA to confirm whether you have correctly summarized and synthesized the quote's main ideas? Yes! In this case, the teacher would be supporting and offering feedback on your interpretation.</p>	<p>Would you ever ask your teacher to paraphrase a quote from an article and then use the teacher's words in your own paper without properly citing them? No, that would be plagiarizing your teacher's words and interpretation of passage! Don't plagiarize AI either.</p>



2. Always discuss AI use with your Mentor. This is part of your research method. Ask your Mentor or the Indigo Team if you have any questions or uncertainties about whether you are using AI in an unethical way.

Clear Cases of AI Misuse

In all of our programs, Indigo prohibits and takes disciplinary action against the following uses of AI:

- Asking AI to suggest an argument or central claim for the paper: i.e., the thesis, hypothesis, insights based on results. The idea that makes the paper original must come from the student.
- Using AI to write prose that appears in any paper draft, homework assignment, and/or the final paper, even if that prose is edited.
- Using AI to translate prose that the student has written in another language into English for the purpose of publication.
- Using AI to [re]structure a paper, whether that means generating a full outline or recommending how to reorganize the ideas in a couple paragraphs.
- Asking AI to generate a full bibliography or list of sources for a paper.
- Using AI to generate summaries of papers or abstracts. Students are more likely to accidentally plagiarize another author's work if they do not read and understand the work itself.
- Including text paraphrased by AI in any homework assignment, outline, draft, or final paper.
- Asking AI what to quote or paraphrase from a paper, to address a research question or topic.
- Using Grammarly or any other AI tool to revise the language and grammar of any homework assignment, outline, partial draft, or draft until the final version of the final paper. Indigo students may only run their paper through Grammarly once, at the very end of their project.



Indigo's Academic Honor Code & FAQ

Here's what our Mentor Honor Code says about generative AI:

I will not allow my student to use AI of any kind to generate writing or ideas for their paper.

- If a student's research project requires them to use AI (e.g., for projects in AI or Machine Learning), I understand that I must ensure that my student's paper remains a product of their thoughts and labor, with guidance from me.
- I will not permit my student to engage with AI in a manner that I would find even remotely suspicious or unethical for a student or colleague in a university setting.

Here's what our Student Honor Code says about generative AI:

I will not use AI of any kind to generate writing or ideas for my paper.

- If my research project requires me to use AI, my research mentor must approve of each of the specific way[s] in which I am engaging with AI.
- I understand that my mentor has also signed Indigo's Academic Honor Code and is not permitted to allow me to use AI to generate writing or ideas for my paper.

FAQ: What counts as an "idea" according to Indigo's Honor Code?

To answer this question, try thinking about generative AI as though it were an assistant mentor to the student. (See Indigo's "AI Rules of Thumb")

Indigo mentors can help students come up with their research topics and questions, just as professors usually do in university settings. One of the main jobs of a university-level instructor is helping students discover topics of interest and guiding them to narrow in on questions that they can realistically answer within the parameters of their current expertise, the genre and length of their intended final projects, and the resources (time and research



facilities) available to work on their projects. However, university instructors cannot give students the answers to their questions, offer them claims to build up to those answers, or perform analysis for our students.

The innovation that a student's paper or project offers in reply to a question is what counts as an "idea" in this case, whereas the research question itself is a direction for the student's ideas.

At Indigo: Academic Integrity, AI, & Open Communication

Academic integrity is a matter of open, honest communication about the methods and means of scholarship. Research is not a simple process of generating a paper or product. Often, the processes, materials, and sources that a scholar is working with are every bit as instructive as their result. If a researcher develops an excellent intervention in their field, then it is important to communicate how, precisely, they are building on the previous work of scholars in their field. Likewise, if a researcher is using AI to develop a project – whether that project is groundbreaking or a first attempt at college-level research – then it is the researcher's responsibility to acknowledge the role[s] of AI in their work. All researchers are obligated to convey this kind of information through citations, essay sections on methods & materials, and discussions with their collaborator[s]. At Indigo, we require every student and Mentor to communicate thoroughly about ethical AI uses in their fields.

After Indigo: Generative AI & College-Level Publications

At the college level, there are severe consequences for attempting to claim credit for any writing, ideas, or intellectual labor that are not entirely yours, up to and including expulsion. Before, during, and after college, scholarly journals and competitions are obligated to confirm that the work that they are publishing is original and was completed in accordance with academic guidelines surrounding citations and research ethics in their fields. If a journal suspects that any paper does not accord with their academic integrity policies, they will not publish it. Indigo's Academic Honor Code and Generative AI Policy are designed to prepare students for this reality. If a student does not follow Indigo's Honor Code and rules regarding



AI use, their paper will likely be rejected from peer-reviewed publications, and they may face accusations of plagiarism from scholarly journals beyond Indigo.

Indigo welcomes your questions & thoughts about AI.

This policy was developed in conversation with Indigo Mentors in AI & Machine Learning, as well as the core Indigo Team. As generative AI and university policies governing AI use continue to change, Indigo will also adapt. We will be updating this policy, drawing on the expertise of our Mentors and the ideas of our community of students and parents.

If any Indigo student, parent, or Mentor – present or future – has an inquiry or idea to share surrounding Indigo’s Generative AI Policy, we would love to hear from you! Please email hello@indigoresearch.org to get in touch with us.