University of Utah

Guidelines for Responsible Use of AI in Grading

Purpose

These guidelines provide direction for faculty who wish to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist with grading and feedback. They are intended to:

- Encourage thoughtful, responsible innovation in teaching.
- Protect student privacy and education records under FERPA.
- Ensure academic integrity, fairness, and instructor accountability.
- Provide clear expectations for oversight and student communication.

These guidelines apply to all courses and instructional settings at the University of Utah.

1. Guiding Principles

1. **Faculty retain full responsibility for grades.**
   AI may support grading and feedback, but it may not serve as the sole or final authority in determining grades.
2. **Human oversight is required.**
   The instructor of record (or designated grader) must review AI-assisted outputs before grades are finalized.
3. **AI use in grading is optional.**
   No instructor is required to use AI tools. Those who choose to do so must follow these guidelines.
4. **Student privacy is paramount.**
   All student work and associated data are education records protected under FERPA.

2. Scope of Assignments and FERPA Considerations

University assignments vary widely in nature and sensitivity. These include:

- Research-based and analytical assignments.

- Professional or technical writing.
- Creative work.
- Reflective, autobiographical, or experiential writing.

Reflective or experiential assignments may contain personal, medical, financial, familial, or other sensitive information. Such information may be protected under FERPA and, in some cases, other privacy laws.

Accordingly:

- All student work must be treated as part of the student's education record.
- If student work will be processed by any AI system for any purpose, it must first be fully de-identified.
- Faculty should carefully evaluate whether certain assignments—particularly highly personal reflective work—are appropriate for AI-assisted grading at all.

3. Approved Tools and Secure Environments

Faculty may use only AI tools that are institutionally approved and under appropriate contractual protections.

The University supports use of ChatGPT Edu, which offers enhanced security, administrative controls, and institutional data protections relative to consumer AI tools.

Even when using ChatGPT Edu or another approved tool:

- Do not include student names, student ID numbers, email addresses, or other direct identifiers.
- Remove indirect identifiers (e.g., references to specific clinical placements, workplaces, or unique life circumstances that could reasonably identify a student).
- Do not upload gradebooks or spreadsheets containing identifiable student information.
- Do not use personal or consumer AI accounts for grading-related tasks.

When in doubt about a tool's approval status, consult the Office of Artificial Intelligence.

Email: AISupport@utah.edu

4. Required De-Identification Standards

Before submitting student work to any AI system:

- Remove all names and student numbers.
- Remove metadata that may identify the student.
- Replace identifying references with neutral placeholders (e.g., “[Student A]”).
- Avoid including course sections, small cohort labels, or contextual details that could enable re-identification.

De-identification is required even when using institutionally approved tools.

5. Appropriate Uses of AI in Grading

AI may be used to support, but not replace, instructor judgment. Appropriate uses may include:

- Applying a rubric to generate preliminary scoring suggestions.
- Generating draft feedback aligned with rubric criteria.
- Identifying patterns (e.g., common strengths or recurring errors) to inform instructor comments.
- Suggesting clarifications to rubric language.

AI must not:

- Assign final grades without human review.
- Serve as the primary or exclusive grading mechanism.
- Make academic misconduct determinations without independent human evaluation.
- Replace substantive instructor engagement in high-stakes or complex assessments.

6. Validation and Oversight

Before using AI for grading in a course:

1. **Pilot Testing**
   Conduct a small-scale comparison between human grading and AI-assisted grading using a representative sample of assignments.

2. **Comparison and Calibration**
   Compare score distributions, rubric alignment, and performance on borderline or higher-order tasks. Adjust prompts and processes as needed.
3. **Ongoing Monitoring**
   Periodically spot-check AI-assisted grading throughout the semester to detect drift, inconsistency, or bias.
4. **Documentation**
   Maintain brief documentation of:
   a. The tool used.
   b. The nature of AI assistance.
   c. The validation approach.
   d. Any known limitations.

7. Transparency with Students

If AI will assist with grading or feedback:

- Clearly disclose this in the syllabus.
- Explain the purpose and scope of AI use.
- Clarify that the instructor retains final grading authority.
- Describe privacy protections and de-identification procedures.
- Provide a clear process for students to request human review of AI-assisted feedback or grading.

Where feasible, students should have a reasonable mechanism to request grading without AI assistance, particularly in courses involving sensitive or reflective assignments.

8. Appeals and Human Review

Students must have access to established grade appeal processes.

When AI has assisted in grading:

- Instructors must be able to explain how the final grade was determined.
- A full human review must be available upon request.
- AI-generated comments must not be presented as infallible or authoritative.

9. Ethical and Equity Considerations

Faculty should remain attentive to:

- Potential bias in AI outputs.
- Disparate impacts across student populations.
- Over-reliance on automated rubric interpretation.
- Reduction of meaningful pedagogical feedback.

AI should enhance—not diminish—the quality of instructor engagement and educational fairness.

10. Summary of Core Requirements

- Faculty retain full responsibility for grades.
- Use only institutionally approved AI tools
- De-identify all student work before submission to any AI system.
- Never input identifiable student information into AI tools.
- Maintain human oversight and transparent communication.
- Provide clear processes for review and appeal.

Acknowledgment
This guidance draws in part on earlier AI-assisted grading guidelines developed by Himanshu Mishra and has been adapted for broader institutional guidance.