

State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY @ Buffalo)
School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS)
Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE)

Departmental Policy on Generative AI in Dissertations, Theses, and Other Written Work by Students

Policy (Final 2G April 2026)

The Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) recognizes the growing significance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the field of engineering; however, ISE also recognizes that Generative AI is not a substitute for careful, thoughtful, well-reasoned critical thinking. Generative AI can produce output with hallucinations that are incorrect, misleading, or otherwise harmful, raising serious liability and ethical issues. Generative AI's overuse has profoundly negative environmental impacts, and overreliance on it reduces cognitive engagement in acts of creation.

ISE recognizes that AI tools can help students communicate more competently in technical English writing and editing, and can be useful for learning new concepts, brainstorming, or building temporary frameworks.

Keeping these considerations in mind, this policy reaffirms ISE's commitment to producing high-quality scholarly work that is aligned with the contractual requirements of our grants as well as the current accepted standards of practice that are dictated by the scholarly journals and other venues that publish our research. ISE holds the author(s) of a scholarly document to be responsible for its content, regardless of the process used to create the document. AI systems cannot be considered authors.

ISE reaffirms the following baseline expectations for all scholarly work produced by its students, particularly for dissertations, theses, and capstone project documents.

- It is each author's responsibility to make sure that the referenced citations are valid (that they actually exist), that their arguments are self-consistent, and that their content supports the claims as intended.
- Students are expected to verify the correctness of any code generated by AI tools, and to document how the AI was used in their work. This should be included, wherever possible, in the appendices of the work.
- Students using AI-generated artifacts, such as images, figures, and charts, in their work must clearly state the use of AI in the caption and, where possible, provide prompting and source image details (if applicable) in the appendices of the work.
- ISE holds the author(s) of a publication to be responsible for its originality. In submitting/publishing their work, the authors are expected to adequately disclose its

provenance, relationship to other related works, and/or credit other works from which it was derived. A detailed explanation of how such tools were used is required.

- ISE expects the author(s) of the publication to take ownership of the published material. By submitting/publishing the work, the authors assert their understanding and approval of the work they have made. The authors and, potentially, the University are liable for any published work; thus, this is a very serious matter.
- Peer reviewers cannot feed submitted papers for the purpose of assisting in a peer review. Doing so could expose intellectual property to AI systems without the author's knowledge or consent.
- All these considerations are consistent with The International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers (see reference).

Issue

As technology continues to advance, AI has the potential to enhance efficiency, innovation, and sustainability in engineering practices. AI remains a tool that has great potential to enhance engineering processes. However, AI cannot be held accountable, nor can it replace the training, experience, and judgment of an engineer.

AI has already made substantial contributions to the field of engineering. The rapid advancement of AI Technology is outstripping current laws and regulations. Governments at all levels, as well as private industries, are currently seeking to understand and regulate AI applications across many industries. Protecting public safety, health, and welfare remains the primary focus in the use of AI in engineering.

Context

All scholarly work, whether undergraduate or graduate, is subject to this policy. The University Graduate School provides a detailed explanation of the University's policies and references related to AI, which are listed below. If this departmental policy conflicts with any applicable University policy, the University policy controls. Advisors may also set additional expectations within their research groups, provided those expectations are consistent with university and departmental policies.

References:

1. SUNY @ Buffalo Graduate School Memorandum: Artificial Intelligence Use in Dissertations, Theses and Capstones Fall 2026 Policy Requirements for Graduate Programs. See <https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/intranet/curriculum/ai-use-dissertations-theses-capstones.html>.
2. CSE Department Policy on Generative AI in Thesis and Other Written Works

3. The International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM) Recommendations for Clarification of AI Use in Academic Manuscript Preparation, September 2025
4. American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Public Policy Statement 573
ASCE Publishing processes and rules