THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

UT Health Science Center: IT0002-HSC-D - Institutional AI Standard	
Version 1	**Publication Date: 02/03/2026**

Responsible Office: Information Technology Services	Last Review: 10/01/2025 Next Review: 10/01/2027
Contact: Vikki Massey	Phone: 901.448.8040 Email: vmercer@uthsc.edu

Purpose

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center's mission is *"Transforming lives through collaborative and inclusive education, research/scholarship, clinical care, and public service."* Consistent with this mission as well as the University of Tennessee's overall mission to serve *"all Tennesseans and beyond through education, discovery, and outreach that enables strong economic, social, and environmental well-being"* and the Be One UTHSC values, the Health Science Center recognizes the importance of positioning Campus members to thrive in a world that is being transformed by AI.

The purpose of this standard is to provide a framework for the responsible, secure, and innovative application of AI technologies in support of the core mission of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. It is intended to guide Students, Trainees, Faculty, and Staff in upholding a commitment to advancing healthcare and the health of Tennesseans through the use of innovative technology while maintaining ethical standards.

Scope

This standard applies to all Health Science Center Students, Trainees, Faculty, and Staff with respect to the use of AI technology. It applies to all AI and AI-driven products and services deployed for university-affiliated activities, including academic tools utilized for both teaching and learning, clinical/patient care systems, administrative products and services, research endeavors, and community engagement platforms. It also covers multiple forms of AI, including generative AI as well as AI that is integrated into other processes or products.

Finally, this standard seeks to balance the benefits of AI with responsible use in accordance with applicable policies and laws. In instances where this standard conflicts with Board of Trustees-approved policies, or federal or state law, those policies and regulations supersede this standard.

Definitions

"Artificial Intelligence" or "AI" means a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments and that can use machine and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments, abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner, and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.[2]

"The University of Tennessee Health Science Center", "UT Health Science Center", "Health Science Center", or "Campus" means all four educational sites (Memphis, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Nashville) as well as all other locations where members operate on behalf of the institution.

"Faculty" or "Faculty Member" means any faculty member (regardless of rank or title) employed by the University of Tennessee Health Science Center engaged in academic instruction, research, clinical care, or service.

"Staff" or "Staff Member" means exempt and non-exempt staff members employed by the University of Tennessee Health Science Center not engaged primarily in academic instruction, research, or service, including, but not limited to, professional staff and executive/administrative staff.

"Student" or "Students" shall include person(s) enrolled or registered for study at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, either full-time or part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies, as well as non-degree and non-credit programs and courses to the extent they are so defined in the Campus's student code of conduct or similar rule (e.g., student rights and responsibilities), as applicable.

"Trainee" or "Trainees" shall include person(s) who are a physician, dentist, or other health professional enrolled in the University of Tennessee Health Science Center graduate medical education program, residency, or fellowship training.

"University Leader" or "University Leaders" means individuals who hold significant senior leadership roles within the university's organizational structure. These roles include, but are not limited to, the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor, Deans, and Associate and Assistant Deans.

"Stakeholder" or "Stakeholders" shall include individuals or groups who have an interest in or are affected by the decisions, actions, and outcomes of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. This encompasses both university members (i.e., Students, Trainees, Faculty, and Staff) and external constituents (i.e., alumni, student relatives, prospective students and trainees, community members, government agencies, and university partners, donors, and sponsors).

Standard

AI technology use at UT Health Science Center will adhere to the following standards:

A. **Commitment to AI:** UT Health Science Center champions the transformative power of AI to ignite human potential — enriching learning, accelerating discovery, amplifying creativity, and driving meaningful productivity across education, research, clinical care, and public service.

B. **Ethical Principles:** Adherence to these ideals is paramount in the deployment and development of AI technologies.
   1. Respect for individuals: Uphold and protect individual dignity and rights by ensuring our use of AI products and services treats all users with respect, recognizing their inherent value as human beings.
   2. Beneficence: Actively ensure that AI products and services contribute to positive health, research, and educational outcomes, enhancing well-being while avoiding harm.
   3. Justice: Commit to providing equitable access to the benefits of AI products and services across different demographics and domains, ensuring that no group is disadvantaged by our technological advancements.
   4. Transparency: Strive for transparency in our use of AI products and services, making them understandable to non-experts and appropriate, thus building trust and accountability.

C. Data Governance: Data governance is critical for maintaining user trust, regulatory compliance, and ethical use of AI products and services.
   1. Each user has a responsibility to guard personal privacy through stringent adherence to laws like HIPAA for healthcare data and FERPA for educational records.
   2. Campus standards for data accuracy, consistency, and reliability must be upheld during all stages of data collection and processing.
   3. Comprehensive protocols must be established that outline conditions under which data may be shared with external entities while safeguarding sensitive information.

D. Compliance: Compliance ensures the Campus operates within legal frameworks.
   1. The Campus will comply with current laws and regulations governing AI use, recognizing this as a foundation of ethical practice.
   2. Regular standard review processes will be instituted in anticipation of changes in legal standards, ensuring practices remain current.

E. Transparency & Consent: Transparent operations build trust; consent ensures autonomy.

1. Use of AI technology will be disclosed in significant decision-making processes involving personal records or healthcare decisions.
2. When protected or sensitive data is being used, explicit consent from individuals will be obtained before utilizing their data or materials in AI products and services whenever it is required by law or best practice standards.

F. Accountability & Oversight: Accountability structures are critical for responsible stewardship of AI.

1. The Campus will implement a governance structure to monitor all facets of AI and AI-related initiatives.
2. All AI users must understand their responsibility regarding use of AI products and services.
3. Specific domains or units of the Campus may elect to compose sub-standards or modify existing standards to govern AI technology use.

G. Security & Risk Management: Security measures prevent misuse; risk assessments anticipate challenges.

1. Appropriate cybersecurity measures will be implemented to protect against unique vulnerabilities presented by sophisticated AI systems handling sensitive data.
2. The university will conduct thorough risk assessments regularly on both existing and proposed AI systems to identify potential threats early.

H. **Academic Accountability:** Academic accountability assures the integrity of teaching and learning.

1. **Integration**: AI technologies should be integrated into academic courses where they can demonstrably improve instructional quality, student engagement, or learning outcomes.
2. **Transparency**: Students and Faculty both should be informed about how AI technologies function, their role within a course, and specific permitted use. Faculty should clearly state course-specific AI policies in the course syllabus or other standard form of course-related communications and define permitted use(s), acceptable type(s) of use, and required citation of AI technology and derived content in Students' academic work.
3. **Privacy**: All AI products and services must comply with Campus privacy policies as well as federal and state regulations concerning data protection.
4. **Bias Mitigation**: Efforts shall be made to address and minimize the bias inherent in AI products and services that could affect student assessment or access to learning opportunities.

5. **Accessibility**: AI resources must adhere to accessibility standards so that all students have equal opportunity to access and benefit from their use.
6. **Accountability**: Faculty remain ultimately responsible for course content and quality assurance; reliance on AI does not diminish faculty oversight or accountability.
7. **Compliance:** Students are responsible for adhering to academic integrity policies and policies/standards related to the use of AI technology and derived content as specified by their Faculty, department, college, and the Campus.

I. **Research Integrity & Collaboration:** Integrity in research fosters trust; collaboration extends boundaries.
1. The university will align research involving AI with recognized scientific integrity principles, promoting accuracy, objectivity, transparency, and carefulness of work.
2. Research collaborations will honor this standard's tenets, ensuring partnerships reflect a commitment to ethical practice.

I. **Training & Awareness:** All AI users must understand the principles, practices, and implications associated with AI technologies.
1. Training resources that reflect the principles outlined in this standard will be available for all Campus members.
2. Widespread understanding of ethical considerations related to AI will be promoted throughout the Campus community via seminars, workshops, and informational campaigns.

J. **Continuous Improvement:** Adaptation is essential; feedback informs evolution.
1. The Campus will engage robust feedback mechanisms between users, University Leaders, and other Stakeholders to refine and improve existing AI systems.
2. This standard will be reviewed periodically and updated based on new insights, technological advancements, and applicable regulation and University of Tennessee policy changes.

K. **Technology Implementation:** University Leaders, Stakeholders across the Campus, and Information Technology Services will collaborate to identify, prioritize, fund, and implement AI technologies that align with the Campus strategic plan.

Acceptable Use Statement

AI technology is to be used in accordance with (i) all Campus codes of conduct, honor codes, and acceptable use standards (e.g., academic, human resources, research, information technology, etc.); (ii) academic standards pertaining to attribution and citation; (iii) intellectual property rules; (iv)

applicable ethical and professional standards; (v) University of Tennessee/Campus policies, standards, procedures, and other guidelines; and (vi) applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Use of AI technology that violates those policies and standards may result in disciplinary action.

Authority

Pursuant to The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees Policy BT0035, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center is responsible for adopting a standard pertaining to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology by Students, Trainees, Faculty, and Staff for instructional and assignment purposes. Within the same standard, the Health Science Center also seeks to expand that guidance to reach across its entire mission.

Oversight and Review

At the direction of the Chancellor, the Health Science Center will appoint an AI Steering Committee, in consultation with the appropriate subject matter experts, to provide advice and support for this standard and governance of the campus's AI activities.

This standard will be reviewed annually by the designated governance structure to remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the Campus mission.

Policy History

Version #	Effective Date
1	10/01/2025

References

1. The University of Tennessee System Policy BT0035 – Policy on Artificial Intelligence
2. Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-7-185(a)
3. IT0001-General Statement on Information Technology Policy
4. IT0002-Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources
5. IT0002-HSC-A.02-Sccueptable Use of Generative AI