

Bunker Hill Community College

Student AI Use Guidelines

Fall 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

These guidelines establish expectations for artificial intelligence (AI) use by students at Bunker Hill Community College. They are designed to help students use AI responsibly, transparently, and in alignment with the College's mission, NECHE accreditation standards, Massachusetts state regulations (including the Commonwealth's Enterprise AI Use Policy), and national best practices for academic integrity.

These guidelines apply to all students enrolled at BHCC. Faculty members retain authority to define specific AI permissions and restrictions for their individual courses and assignments, consistent with these guidelines. A companion *Faculty AI Guidelines* document addresses faculty-specific obligations and expectations.

What these guidelines mean by "AI." "AI" in this document refers to a range of technologies that differ in function and risk. These include generative AI—tools that produce text, images, audio, code, or video (for example, ChatGPT, Claude, or Microsoft Copilot)—and agentic AI, which is addressed separately in Section 4. Other forms of AI, such as translation tools, automated tutoring or feedback systems, and AI detection software, are addressed where they are relevant. Because obligations differ by tool type, identify the specific kind of AI you are using and follow the guidance and any course-specific instructions that apply to it. A current list of institutionally approved AI tools is maintained by the BHCC AI Technical Review Group.

2. Guiding Principles

2.1 Human Responsibility First

AI can support learning and academic work, but it cannot replace human judgment, critical thinking, or original intellectual effort. Students remain fully responsible for all work submitted under their name, regardless of whether AI tools were used in its preparation.

2.2 Accessibility

AI tools used at BHCC should be accessible to all members of the College community and support equitable participation in teaching and learning.

- Institutionally supported AI tools should comply with applicable accessibility standards, including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), consistent with Massachusetts accessibility requirements.
- AI-enabled platforms should be compatible with commonly used assistive technologies whenever feasible.
- Institutionally adopted AI tools will be evaluated for accessibility as part of the College's review and implementation process.

Accommodation Process: If an AI tool required for a course is not accessible due to a disability or incompatibility with assistive technology, students should contact the BHCC Disability Services Office to request reasonable accommodations. Disability Services will work collaboratively with faculty to identify and implement an appropriate alternative that provides equivalent access to course content and learning outcomes.

2.3 Privacy and Data Protection

BHCC is committed to protecting student privacy when AI tools are in use:

- FERPA¹-regulated student information must be protected at all times.
- Do not upload personally identifiable information (PII) or protected data—yours or others’—to public or consumer AI tools.
- Do not upload faculty PII or course materials into AI systems.
(Faculty course materials—including syllabi, lectures, and assignment prompts—are the intellectual property of the instructor.)
- Do not upload your own coursework to public AI platforms unless authorized by your instructor. When authorized, use only the institution’s learning management system or other approved platforms.
- Be aware that institutionally approved AI tools have data retention and deletion policies governed by applicable law and institutional policy. Content you share with non-approved tools may be stored indefinitely or used for AI training.

Why this matters: These restrictions exist to protect you and your peers under FERPA, intellectual property law, and data security standards. Content shared with AI tools may be stored, used for training, or made accessible beyond your control. A good rule of thumb: if you wouldn’t share it publicly, don’t input it into AI.

2.4 Transparency and Academic Integrity

Transparency is foundational to academic integrity. When students use AI tools for academic work, they must:

- Disclose AI use in academic work when it has meaningfully influenced the final product (see Section 3 for guidance on what “meaningfully influenced” means).
- Cite AI tools used, similar to citing any other source.
- Understand that AI systems do not create original knowledge—they synthesize and generate responses from existing sources, and they lack critical thinking, authorship, or accountability. Responsibility for submitted work rests entirely with the student.
- Recognize that AI can present outdated or incorrect information—including fabricated facts, sources, or citations—as though it were accurate. Treat AI output as a starting point you must verify, not as a reliable source in itself (see Section 3.2).

2.5 AI Bias and Critical Evaluation

¹ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

AI systems can reflect and amplify biases present in their training data, including biases related to race, gender, disability, language, culture, and socioeconomic background. Because AI tools synthesize existing content rather than reason independently, their outputs can overlook or misrepresent the experiences of specific communities and can present stereotypes or inaccuracies as neutral fact. Students are responsible for critically evaluating AI-generated content before relying on it: question the assumptions behind a response, check claims against reliable non-AI sources, and consider whose perspectives may be missing. Critical evaluation of AI outputs is a core skill for responsible, equity-minded use of these tools. Students who want help building this skill can draw on BHCC Library Services and the Tutoring and Academic Support Center (see Section 8.3), and faculty are encouraged to point students to additional resources on recognizing AI bias.

2.6 Wellbeing and AI Use

While AI tools can be valuable academic resources, be mindful of your relationship with these technologies. Over-reliance on AI for academic work can undermine your confidence in your own abilities and reduce the deep learning that comes from intellectual struggle. Building strong skills in critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving is essential for your education and your future. AI should support these abilities, not replace the opportunities you have to develop them.

We also recognize that learning is about more than academic performance. Your mental health, sense of belonging, confidence, and connections with classmates, faculty, and staff matter. AI should never replace meaningful human relationships or the support you need to thrive. If you find that AI use is creating anxiety—whether from uncertainty about policies, fear of detection tools, or dependence on AI to complete work—reach out to your instructor or BHCC’s counseling services for support.

3. Academic Integrity and AI Use

3.1 Understanding AI Use: Source vs. Process

Not all AI use is the same. These guidelines distinguish between two types of AI use, because they carry different obligations:

- **AI as a source:** When AI-generated content (text, data, ideas, claims) is incorporated into your final submitted work. This use of AI always requires citation and disclosure.
- **AI as a process tool:** When AI is used to support your thinking process—brainstorming, understanding a concept, generating search terms, checking grammar, or organizing your ideas—but the final work is your own. This type of use should be disclosed when it meaningfully influenced the final product, but does not require formal citation in the same way.

What “meaningfully influenced” means: Disclosure is expected when AI use shaped the substance, structure, or argument of your work—not for incidental use like checking a single spelling or asking AI to explain a concept you then researched independently. When in doubt, disclose. Your instructor can provide further guidance on the threshold for their course.

3.2 Core Requirements

Permission and Disclosure: Students must both obtain permission from their instructor and provide disclosure when using AI for academic work. Permission may be indicated in the course syllabus (including through the institutional three-tier template), in assignment instructions, or through direct communication from your instructor. A general AI use statement in the syllabus serves as an umbrella policy for all assignments in that course unless a specific assignment states otherwise. Using AI without both permission and disclosure constitutes academic dishonesty.

When the Syllabus Is Silent: If a course syllabus does not address AI use, these guidelines serve as the default standard. You should ask your instructor for clarification before using AI tools for any assignment. When in doubt, ask—this is always the right approach and will never be held against you.

Faculty Authority: Individual faculty members define when AI can and cannot be used in their courses and assignments, within the scope of these guidelines. Follow the specific AI policies stated in each course syllabus and assignment instructions.

Citation Requirements: When AI provides factual claims, information, or content incorporated into your academic work (AI as a source), you must cite the AI tool and verify the accuracy of the information through reliable sources.

Verification Responsibility: AI-generated content may contain errors, fabrications, or biased information. You are responsible for verifying all facts and claims before including them in academic work. If an AI-fabricated citation or claim appears in your work, this is treated as a matter of academic care and due diligence. A single unverified AI error may be addressed as a learning opportunity; however, a pattern of unverified AI content or a failure to engage meaningfully with the verification process may be treated more seriously.

- **Tip:** You can ask AI tools to provide citations or sources for their claims, which can serve as a starting point for your own verification. However, AI-generated citations themselves must also be verified—AI tools sometimes fabricate references that appear real but do not exist.

Rule of Three: When verifying AI-generated claims, aim to confirm key facts through at least three independent, reputable non-AI sources. This practice builds strong research habits and protects against AI-fabricated information. While the “rule of three” is not in itself a core requirement, students are responsible for verifying factual claims generated via AI.

3.3 What Constitutes Academic Dishonesty

The following AI-related behaviors violate BHCC’s academic integrity standards. Each is accompanied by a brief explanation of *why* the norm exists—these rules are meant to protect the integrity of a student’s learning, not to catch students doing something wrong.

- **Using AI to produce the deliverable for an assignment when the instructor has prohibited AI use.**

Why: When an instructor prohibits AI, it is because the process of completing the work—not just the final product—is the learning objective. Note: using AI as a learning aid (e.g., asking AI to explain a concept before you write) is different from using AI to produce the work itself. If you are unsure where the line falls, ask your instructor.

- **Using AI for permitted purposes but failing to disclose that use when it meaningfully influenced the final product.**

Why: Transparency allows your instructor to fairly assess your work and provide feedback that helps you grow. Disclosure is about extent of influence—students do not need to disclose incidental use like checking a single word's spelling.

- **Misrepresenting the degree of AI contribution to your work—for example, submitting work that is substantially AI-generated while presenting it as primarily your own.**

Why: Academic integrity rests on honest representation of your effort and thinking. The issue is misrepresentation of the degree of AI contribution, not whether any AI was used at all.

- **Failing to cite AI tools when AI-generated content (text, data, claims) is incorporated into your submitted work.**

Why: Citation applies when AI functions as a source—when its output becomes part of your work. Using AI to support your thinking process (brainstorming, concept clarification, generating search terms) does not require formal citation, though disclosure may still be appropriate.

- **Using AI to bypass the learning process that an assessment is designed to measure.**

Why: Assessments exist so you can develop and demonstrate specific skills. Faculty are encouraged to make the learning purpose of each assessment explicit so you can make informed decisions about appropriate AI use.

Violations are handled through the College's existing academic integrity procedures and the Student Code of Conduct. BHCC takes a graduated approach to consequences, recognizing that intent and severity matter: a first-time, minor violation (such as failing to disclose AI use on a single assignment) may be addressed through an educational conversation and resubmission, while repeated or serious violations (such as submitting entirely AI-generated work as one's own) may result in assignment failure, course failure, or referral to the Dean of Students. The goal is always education first—helping you understand and follow these guidelines. Consistent with BHCC's Student Conduct philosophy, any student alleged to have violated these guidelines has the opportunity to respond to the allegation and to engage in an educational resolution process before a final determination is made. This typically includes a conversation with the instructor and, where appropriate, the department chair or the Dean of Students office, so that context, intent, and learning opportunities can be considered alongside the facts of the case.

3.4 AI Detection Tools

AI detection tools (such as Turnitin's AI detection feature or GPTZero) may be used as one factor in assessing academic integrity concerns, but they are not sufficient as the sole basis for a finding of academic dishonesty. AI detection tools have known limitations, including false positives—particularly for multilingual or international students, and for students who use assistive technology or who have disabilities. Any academic integrity determination must be based on a holistic review that includes the student's explanation, the context of the assignment, and other available evidence.

3.5 Proper AI Citation

When AI functions as a source (its output is incorporated into your work), cite it. Include:

- The name and version of the AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT-4o, Claude 3.5, Grammarly)
- The date of use

- A description of how the tool was used (e.g., brainstorming, grammar checking, research assistance, content generation)
- The prompt or query provided, if relevant to understanding the output

Note on tool versioning: AI vendors frequently update their tools and sometimes blend multiple AI models (e.g., Microsoft Copilot may use different underlying models). Cite the tool name and version you can identify—you are not expected to know the underlying model architecture. If the version is unclear, note the tool name and the date of use.

Best practice: Retain your AI prompts, the AI's outputs, and any intermediate drafts that show how you incorporated AI assistance into your final work. This documentation protects you in the event of an academic integrity question and demonstrates your engagement with the material.

Example AI Citation

In-text: “According to a summary generated by ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026)...”

References entry:

OpenAI. (2026). ChatGPT (Mar 2026 version) [Large language model]. [OpenAI ChatGPT](#).
Prompt: “Summarize the key arguments for renewable energy policy in Massachusetts.”
Used for: initial brainstorming of policy arguments, March 5, 2026.

3.6 AI Influence Disclosure Spectrum

The following spectrum can help you determine the appropriate level of disclosure based on how much AI influenced your work:

Level	AI Influence	Disclosure Required
Green — Minimal	AI used for incidental support (spell-check, grammar, looking up a single word)	No formal disclosure needed
Yellow — Moderate	AI used for brainstorming, outlining, paraphrasing, generating search terms, or understanding concepts	Disclose in an AI use statement; cite if AI output appears in final work
Red — Substantial	AI generated or substantially shaped content, arguments, analysis, or structure in the final submission	Full disclosure and citation required; clearly identify AI-generated portions

4. Agentic AI Systems

4.1 Definition

Agentic AI refers to AI systems that can autonomously perform multi-step tasks, browse the internet, interact with software applications, or take actions on behalf of users. Examples include AI browser agents that navigate websites, automated research tools that compile and

synthesize sources, AI coding assistants that execute multi-step programming tasks, and AI systems that can submit forms, schedule meetings, or complete workflows independently.

4.2 Core Requirements

If your instructor permits agentic AI use, all such use must be:

- **Bounded:** Limited in scope to specific, approved tasks
- **Supervised:** Subject to student oversight throughout operation
- **Transparent:** Clearly disclosed and documented

4.3 Prohibited Uses

Agentic browsers and AI automation tools may not be used to:

- Submit assignments on a student's behalf
- Complete quizzes, exams, or assessments
- Interact with learning management systems to complete required coursework
- Attend class sessions, participate in discussions, or represent a student in any academic setting
- Perform any academic task that is intended to assess student learning

4.4 Exceptions for Accessibility

Some accessibility and assistive technology tools incorporate agentic AI features (e.g., screen readers with AI navigation, automated note-taking for students with documented disabilities). These tools are permitted when they are part of a documented accommodation through BHCC Disability Services or are institutionally approved tools. If a student is unsure whether their assistive technology qualifies, contact Disability Services for guidance.

4.5 Supervised vs. Unsupervised Agentic AI

When agentic AI use is permitted, students must understand the difference between supervised and unsupervised operation:

- **Supervised agentic AI:** Student actively monitors and directs the AI's actions in real time, reviewing each step before it proceeds. Example: using an AI coding assistant where the student reviews and approves each code change.
- **Unsupervised agentic AI:** The AI operates autonomously without a student's real-time oversight. Example: setting an AI agent to research and compile a report overnight.

Unsupervised agentic AI use for academic work is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by the student's instructor with specific parameters defined in advance.

5. Security of Data and Assignments

5.1 Student Responsibilities

Protect the security of your academic work and personal information:

- Do not share login credentials with AI tools that have access to college systems.
- Do not upload complete assignments to public AI platforms.
- Be aware that content shared with AI tools may be stored or used for training purposes.
- Review the privacy policies of any AI tool before use.

5.2 Protecting Personal Information

Never input the following into AI tools: Social Security numbers, student ID numbers, financial information, health records, or other sensitive personal data.

Your BHCC email address may be used for AI tools in accordance with the Commonwealth's Enterprise AI Use Policy, which requires use of institutional email addresses. When using AI for coursework involving personal reflection or sensitive topics, use pseudonyms or anonymized information.

6. Multilingual and International Students

BHCC recognizes that multilingual and international students may use AI tools differently: for example, for translation assistance, language comprehension support, or occasionally for cultural context. The use of AI tools for language support is not inherently a violation of these guidelines and can have an effective role in a language learner's repertoire, but must still be disclosed and must comply with instructor permissions for each assignment.

A note on AI and English language learning: Heavy reliance on AI for translation or rewriting can interrupt the language-learning process itself and might lead, over time, to potential long-term vulnerabilities in a language learner's academic and professional language skill set. Students who directly engage with content will develop both language skills and a sound understanding of course material. AI tools can be a helpful support for English language learners, but since real growth comes from direct engagement with content, students should not heavily rely on AI for translation or rewriting.

7. Institutional Transparency

BHCC commits to transparency in its own use of AI. The College will disclose when AI tools are used in student-facing services, including advising systems, chatbots, learning management system features, and communication platforms. You have the right to know when you are interacting with AI-enabled systems.

If a faculty member or the institution uses AI to process a student's work (for example, to facilitate group formation, provide feedback, or assess submissions), the student will be notified in advance. Students have the right to raise concerns about how their work is being used through the instructor, department chair, or Dean of Students office.

8. Clinical, Practicum, and Workplace-Based Learning

In some programs—including health and clinical pathways, career and technical programs, and the College’s internship, practicum, and learn-and-earn experiences—AI is already embedded in the tools and workflows students will use professionally (for example, AI-assisted documentation in clinical settings). In these contexts, learning to use AI responsibly may be part of the required competencies of the course or placement, and opting out of AI entirely may not be possible. Where this is the case, faculty and program partners will make the requirement and its rationale clear to students, and students should raise accessibility or other concerns through the channels described in Section 7 and with BHCC Disability Services.

9. Education and Support

9.1 Student Feedback and Input

BHCC values student perspectives on AI in education. Students are encouraged to share their experiences with AI tools—what works, what doesn’t, and what additional support would be helpful. Feedback can be provided through course evaluations, the Student Government Association, or directly to the BHCC AI Technical Review Group². Student input will inform future updates to these guidelines and the development of AI literacy resources.

9.2 Education, Training, and Support

BHCC emphasizes education over punishment in matters of AI use. If a student is uncertain about AI policies, they should ask their instructor before using AI tools—this is always encouraged and will never be held against a student. The College recognizes that AI literacy varies among students and does not assume uniform familiarity with these tools.

9.3 Student Support Resources

A student does not have to rely on AI to get help with coursework. BHCC offers a range of human-centered academic supports designed to help you learn the material, strengthen your writing, and build confidence in your own abilities. Information on the range of academic support resources is available at <https://www.bhcc.edu/academics/academicresources>. These include:

- **Tutoring and Academic Coaching:** free peer and professional tutoring across subjects through the Tutoring and Academic Support Center.
- **Writing Support:** one-on-one help with drafting, revising, and citing sources through BHCC’s writing support services.
- **Library Services:** research assistance from BHCC librarians, including help locating and evaluating credible sources—an especially useful resource when verifying AI-generated claims.

² The BHCC AI Technical Review Group will be convened following dissolution of the AI Commission. The Group will be responsible on an ongoing basis for process and product reviews with AI tool selection, approval, development and usage to ensure technical and integration compliance with the College’s infrastructure. The Group also will conduct regular reviews and revisions of AI use guidelines, and develop plans for mitigating risks in information integrity and safety.

- **Advising and Counseling:** academic advising, disability services, and counseling services for students navigating coursework challenges or stress related to AI use and academic integrity questions.

Reaching out to these supports early—before you feel stuck—is always a good decision and is the approach the College most encourages.

10. Continuous Improvement

AI technology evolves rapidly. These guidelines will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect changes in technology, best practices, and regulatory requirements. The BHCC AI Technical Review Group will oversee updates and gather feedback from faculty, staff, and students.

Appendix: Quick Reference for Students

AI Use Checklist

1. **Check your syllabus:** Does your instructor permit AI use for this assignment?
2. **Understand the type of use:** Are you using AI as a source (content in your work) or a process tool (supporting your thinking)?
3. **If permitted, disclose:** Note which AI tools you used and how they influenced your work.
4. **Cite properly:** If AI-generated content appears in your work, include it in your citations.
5. **Verify facts:** Check AI-generated claims against reliable sources.
6. **Protect your data:** Don't share personal information with AI tools.
7. **When in doubt, ask:** Contact your instructor before using AI.

Key Principles Summary

Principle	Requirement
Disclosure	Disclose AI use when it meaningfully influenced your work
Source vs. Process	Cite AI when it's a source; disclose when it's a process tool with meaningful influence
Permission	Follow faculty guidelines; ask when the syllabus is silent
Verification	Verify AI-generated facts independently
Agentic AI	Must be bounded, supervised, and transparent
Submissions	No AI agents for submitting work or attending class
Privacy	Protect personal data; review AI privacy policies
AI Detection	Detection tools are not sole evidence of misconduct