

Title: Guidelines for Generative AI Use in Marketing and Social Media
Effective Date: Oct. 7, 2026
Issuing Authority: Senior Vice President for University Marketing
Policy Contact: Assistant Vice President for Marketing Communications
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Purpose

Mercer University recognizes the potential of generative artificial intelligence tools — such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and others — to help campus marketers and communicators develop ideas, improve drafts, and support creative and administrative work.

When used responsibly, AI can increase efficiency and expand creativity. However, the use of AI poses ethical and legal concerns, such as inaccuracies, bias, copyright and licensing concerns, privacy violations, accessibility problems, and content that erodes brand trust and credibility as generative AI sometimes makes mistakes.

The Office of Marketing Communications has developed these AI guidelines to establish expectations for the responsible use of AI in official University marketing and communications. AI may be used to assist work, but Mercer employees remain responsible for every message, claim, image or website published by the University.

The Office of Marketing Communications will review and update these guidelines as technology and institutional needs evolve. Questions about the proposed use of AI should be directed to the Office of Marketing Communications before publication.

Scope

These guidelines apply to official University marketing, communications, recruitment, advancement, social media, web and promotional materials created by or on behalf of University offices. The scope includes items like logos, apparel, photography, signage, brochures, flyers, copy, ads, social media posts, website content, email campaigns, videos, digital graphics, radio/streaming ads and promotional merchandise.

Marketing communications review is required before publishing any AI-assisted public facing material that includes Mercer branding, a University wordmark or a depiction of the Mercer community or campus.

Contact for review: Matt Smith, assistant vice president for marketing communications,
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Policy Statement

Using AI Responsibly

AI tools may be used for brainstorming and ideation but should not replace the expertise that Mercer students, faculty and staff bring to the final product. AI-generated content can reflect biases through stereotypes or the omission or inclusion of non-representative roles, along with geographic bias

(defaulting to generic college imagery not reflective of Mercer's campuses). Be aware of any biases AI may generate and the potential for copyright violation. To ensure accuracy and accountability, any content created with AI assistance must be reviewed and verified by you prior to being published.

Using AI in Promotional Photos, Videos and Audio

AI may not be used to generate photos or videos of the Mercer community (people and places) or present simulated campus scenes that are not real. Any fabrication of students and/or the campus environment is strictly prohibited.

Actions that are permitted:

- Minor retouching an image, including enlarging, cropping, sharpening, color correction, or removing minor defects as long as the edit does not change the substance or meaning of the image.
- Generating captions or subtitles

Actions that are not permitted:

- Altering a person's physical appearance beyond minor retouching
- Altering an image in a way that creates a fabrication.
- Creating or altering images or video in a way that inaccurately represents University programs, offerings, facilities, events, experiences or outcomes
- Creating AI-generated headshots or portraits for official institutional use
- Using AI-generated music or voices

Using AI in Graphics

AI-generated graphics fall under the same brand guidelines for style, color and voice as all other promotional materials from Mercer. Because AI cannot accurately generate official Mercer branding with consistency, generating official University marks and logos is not permitted. AI may support concept development, layout or individual design, but a Mercer employee must retain creative and editorial responsibility for the final piece. Adding Mercer logos to AI-generated content must be approved by the Office of Marketing Communications prior to use.

Actions that are permitted:

- Creating conceptual or illustrative (non-photorealistic) graphics
- Creating internal mockups
- Prompting AI to use the official PMS, hex or RGB mixes of Mercer orange

Actions that are not permitted:

- Altering Mercer branding in any way
- Creating new Mercer or University-affiliated logos and/or marks
- Generating stock images/illustrations of the Mercer community

Using AI in Apparel, Print and Promotional Merchandise

Generative AI may be used to create illustrations or mockups for apparel, brochures, flyers, signage, merchandise and other promotional materials. Final designs must receive human review and use approved Mercer marks, colors, typography, photography and brand elements. AI-generated artwork may not be used to represent or depict Mercer people, places, programs or events.

Using AI to Assist With Website Code

Generative AI may be used to assist with drafting, explaining, debugging or revising website code for pages on the mercer.edu Wordpress environment. Do not deploy AI-generated code directly to a Mercer website without human review. Code must comply with Mercer web and brand standards and accessibility requirements. AI may suggest accessibility improvements but cannot certify compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.2, Level AA).

Using AI in Writing

AI may assist writers in brainstorming, outlining, alternative phrasing, researching, synthesizing information and editing suggestions. Mercer writers remain responsible for independently verifying all facts, claims, voice and links before approving the final copy.

Actions that are permitted:

- Asking AI to generate recommendations for ways to improve your writing
- Using AI to answer questions about grammar and style
- Generating draft alt text, captions or subtitles for human review
- Creating internal reports
- Adapting approved copy for different formats, audiences or channels

Actions that are not permitted:

- Generating a first draft of a story, article or blog post
- Asking AI to completely re-write a story, article or blog post
- Using AI-generated text verbatim on a public-facing platform
- Relying on AI to obtain and verify factual information

Proprietary Information

Do not put confidential or non-public University information into generative AI tools. Examples include:

- Student information or photos
- Personnel information or photos
- University intellectual property
- Embargoed news items
- Other information requested to be kept private

Non-AI Resources

Mercer University has a number of resources available to create content without the use of AI.

- [Mercer University Branding Guidelines](#) — Official branding materials including typography and colors, University marks, college and school marks, spirit marks, stationery and presentation templates, and more
- [Mercer University Photo Gallery](#) — Archive of photos taken by University photographers
- [AP Stylebook](#) — Official style guide for Mercer marketing and communications (subscription required)
- [Merriam-Webster](#) — Official dictionary of the AP Stylebook

Other Design Tools

- [Pexels](#) and [Pixabay](#) — Free stock images (though try to use Mercer-specific images whenever possible). Users must review each image asset's license, releases and suitability for University use.
- [Canva](#) — Canva is a free and premium design platform that uses both traditional design tools and optional AI-enabled features. When using Canva's AI, these guidelines apply in full, including requirement for human review.