

Biotechnology & the Law Research

Fall 2025 (August 21)

Melissa Abernathy

Associate Director of Research & Instruction

mabernathy@sandiego.edu

Judith Lihosit

Assistant Dean, Director of the LRC, & Professor of Law

jlihosit@sandiego.edu

What we will cover today

- Law School Rule on Generative AI Tool Usage
- Techniques for Finding a Paper Topic

Law School Rule on the Use of Generative AI Tools (§18)

<https://www.sandiego.edu/law/documents/academics/academic-rules-2024-2025.pdf>

Introduction: This rule balances the fact that writing is an indispensable skill for lawyers with the fact that the use of AI tools is likely to become an integral part of practice.

1. For the purposes of this rule, artificial intelligence tools (“AI tools”) refer to large-language model (LLM) AI tools and do not include plagiarism checkers, grammar-check, spell-check, indexing, Bluebooking, or other citation or formatting tools such as those commonly used to generate tables of contents or bibliographies.
2. AI-Generated Content (“AGC”) refers to substantive content generated by an AI tool or revisions generated by an AI tool that materially alter a student’s own writing. AI may be used for research purposes, such as to generate suggestions of sources or topics; however, any material copied from or substantially derived from a query to an AI tool shall constitute AGC. Students remain responsible for the accuracy of any information generated by a query to an AI tool.

3. No AGC may be included in written work submitted for credit in either the JD or any of the Masters of Laws programs, unless the instructor explicitly permits such use in writing. If there is a course syllabus, the permission must be granted in the syllabus. If there is no syllabus, such as in the supervision of journal comments, the permission must be granted in a written communication.

4. In any submission of written work for credit, students must disclose the use of AI tools or any AGC included in their submissions, as specified in the course syllabus, or if there is no syllabus, such as in the supervision of journal comments, in a written communication. The failure to disclose the use of AI tools or AGC, as well as any other representation of AGC as student-drafted content, will be treated as plagiarism, as defined in Section I.1.d of the Law School's Honor Code.

5. Nothing in this policy alters any other rule pertaining to plagiarism, as defined in Section I.1.d of the Law School's Honor Code.

<https://www.sandiego.edu/law/current/student-handbook/honor-code.php>

AI Tool Usage in Written Work (Rule XVIII)

- Spell & grammar check tools are NOT generative AI
- Provides a definition for AGC
- Prohibits the use of AGC in written work submitted for credit unless explicitly permitted in the **syllabus**
- Sandwich method:
 - gen-AI tools allowed at the beginning & end
 - brainstorming ideas & research
 - editing & polishing
 - but **not** for actual drafting or writing
- Document usage of gen-AI tools

How to use Gen-AI tools to brainstorm paper topics

ChatGPT

- Chat GPT: free version vs. Plus (\$20/mo)
 - Need Plus for Deep Research
- Claude Free version vs. Plus (\$20/mo)
 - need Plus for latest model (Opus 4.1)
- Gemini
 - USD has an institutional license (login in with your USD email)

QUESTIONS?

[LRC's Video on Gen-AI for LWR](#)
[Paper Writing LibGuide](#)