

**From:** [Office of the MSU Provost](#)  
**Bcc:** [MSU Nontenure track faculty \(msu-faculty-nontenure@sympa.montana.edu\)](#); [MSU Faculty - Tenure track \(msu-faculty-tenure@sympa.montana.edu\)](#); [MSU Deans and Dept. Heads \(msu-academic-dddh@sympa.montana.edu\)](#); [Mokwa, Robert](#); [Knutson, Ryan](#); [Peterson, Kellie](#); [Stone, Cody](#); [Swinford, Steven](#); [Harmon, Alison](#); [Leist, Terry](#)  
**Subject:** Generative AI at MSU: Training, Guidance and Tools  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 28, 2026 7:59:39 AM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

---



Dear Colleagues,

Our recent MSU student AI symposiums provided a clear view into how MSU students are thinking about artificial intelligence, including their optimism, their concerns and their expectations for its use in academic and professional settings. Student panelists and student audience comments highlighted academic applications of AI on campus and the importance of approaching these tools with intentionality and awareness.

As MSU continues to explore generative artificial intelligence and its role in teaching, research, service and business operations, this communication outlines AI tools currently available to faculty, and identifies training resources and guidelines for their use.

### **Available training and resources**

Below is a sampling of training opportunities and guidance for faculty and instructors to support effective and responsible use of AI:

- [Establishing Expectations for Generative AI Use](#)  
Instructors are encouraged to set clear expectations in their syllabi regarding when and how generative AI may be used in their courses and assignments. This CFE resource provides example policies and sample language aligned with varying levels of permitted AI use.
- [Using Generative AI: A Guide for Faculty](#)  
Practical suggestions for integrating generative AI into teaching while maximizing its instructional value and minimizing potential risks.
- [Using Generative AI: A Guide for Students](#)  
A resource to help students navigate academic uses of AI, develop effective prompts, cite AI contributions and consider ethical implications. Many faculty have also found the resource useful as a teaching companion.
- [Machine Learning Lab + AI and Ambassadors](#)  
Information on a sandbox environment for faculty and researchers that provides studio access, advanced hardware, training and a learning

community to explore AI applications and experiment with emerging tools.

- [AI in Research and Scholarship](#)  
A compilation of resources focused on using generative AI tools and custom models to support research and scholarly work.
- [Adaptable Generative AI Assignments and Model Cards](#)  
A collection of interdisciplinary, MSU-developed examples for teaching with generative AI, including adaptable templates.

## Available AI tools

Faculty and instructors have access to several generative AI tools, each designed for different use cases:

- [CatChat](#)  
Developed and hosted by UIT and MSU Research Computing, and supported by the Tempest computing infrastructure. CatChat is a free, general-purpose AI tool comparable to other chat-based platforms. All data remain entirely within MSU systems.
- [Microsoft Copilot Chat \(Free\)](#)  
Included with MSU's Microsoft license and available via the web and within Microsoft 365 applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and OneNote. It can assist with drafting, summarizing and brainstorming tasks.
- [Microsoft 365 Copilot](#)  
An enhanced version of Copilot that integrates more directly into Microsoft applications and offers advanced capabilities and more consistent performance. This version is available at an additional cost of \$216 per user per year and may be requested through UIT.

No single tool fits every task. CatChat may be a good option for those seeking an MSU-hosted solution, while Copilot tools can be effective for work already centered in Microsoft applications. Units and individuals are encouraged to consider their specific needs, workflows, and data sensitivity when selecting an AI tool.

## Looking ahead

MSU will continue to evaluate emerging artificial intelligence technologies, along with ethical, social and environmental considerations associated with their use. In the coming weeks, you will see additional communications from campus partners highlighting new resources and training opportunities.

I encourage your participation in the [Faculty Symposium on AI](#), on March 26, 2026. Please consider registering for this free event and consider submitting a proposal to present and discuss your work on AI, with AI, or using AI.

Your feedback and questions are an important part of this process. Thank you for your continued engagement as we learn more about these tools together.

Best regards,



**Dr. Robert L. Mokwa | Executive Vice President and Provost**  
Montana State University  
Tel. 406-994-4371

---

Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
Montana Hall | P.O. Box 172560 | Bozeman, MT 59717-2560  
[www.montana.edu](http://www.montana.edu) | [provost@montana.edu](mailto:provost@montana.edu) | 406-994-4371