



Policy Regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration and Utilization for Publishing and Review

The Professional Counselor

The Professional Counselor (TPC), the official journal of the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC), serves as a scholarly resource for counselors, counseling students, counselor educators, and mental health professionals, providing research and scholarship that shapes and advances the counseling profession. NBCC and the *TPC* Editorial Team strive to maintain the integrity of the peer review process and value the original, creative work of the scholars who are published in the journal.

In order to protect the review, editorial, and publication processes of the journal, this Policy has been established to clarify the appropriate and acceptable use and integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in the development of publications to guide the work of authors contributing articles to *TPC* and *TPC* editorial team members reviewing and editing *TPC* submissions.

Guidelines for Authors

Authors who submit publications for inclusion in *TPC* bear the responsibility of adhering to applicable professional ethical guidelines and the NBCC *Code of Ethics* regarding their submissions. Additionally, they are responsible for adhering to the guidelines identified and explained below concerning the use of AI and related disclosures of AI within publications submitted for review.

Assistive Artificial Intelligence

Assistive AI is a form of artificial intelligence designed to support, enhance, and refine human work rather than replace it. Such tools are typically embedded in word processing programs (e.g., Microsoft Word) and editing services (e.g., Grammarly). As such, assistive AI tools used for the limited purposes of correcting punctuation, spelling, and grammar are permitted in author submissions and do not require disclosure. Additionally, the use of assistive AI editing tools such as Grammarly to improve the readability of human-generated content is also permitted without the need for disclosure.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

Generative AI is a form of artificial intelligence designed to generate original content, such as text, images, audio, video, and code, based on user prompts. Because AI tools are not human and cannot assume legal or ethical responsibility for submitted content, individuals are responsible for ensuring the accuracy, integrity, and originality of their work.

Accordingly, this Policy establishes the following parameters concerning generative AI:

- a. **No Generative AI Use Permitted for Text:** Authors are prohibited from using generative AI to create text included in a manuscript for submission.
 - b. **No Generative AI Use Permitted for Images and Photos:** Authors are prohibited from submitting manuscripts that include AI-generated creative images, as such images may be derived from the creative works of human artists, sometimes without their consent or acknowledgment, and/or incorporated into the work without permission or appropriate attribution.
 - c. **Limited and Disclosed Generative AI Use Permitted for Data Display:** Authors may use generative AI to create scientific or informative images based solely on their own data or content. For example, authors may use AI to create tables, graphs, flow charts, figures, or similar visuals from data collected during a research study.
- **Required Publication Notes Disclosing Integration and Utilization of AI**

When generative AI is used in this manner, authors must include a clear AI disclosure statement that identifies what generative AI tools were utilized in the preparation of the scholarly work and explains how and for what purpose those tools were applied. This statement must appear as a figure caption or footnote adjacent to, or on the same page, where the chart, figure, table, or graph is displayed.

The following information must be included in the AI disclosure statement:

- » AI technology/tool name and version
- » month and year of utilization of AI for the development of chart/graph/table
- » description of the purpose of utilizing AI and how it was used
- » description of how the author verified the accuracy of the created item(s) and any safeguards used to ensure accuracy
- » strategies used to ensure appropriate confidentiality of human subject data

Example Statement: “*Chart 1. Presentation of . . . Chart created using ChatGPT (accessed February 2025) to generate initial draft of table, with subsequent modifications by the author in Canva. All content was reviewed for accuracy by the author with comparisons to author-generated analysis of collected data.*”

- **Non-Disclosed Utilization of AI:** If, at any point during the review and publication process, a member of the editorial team discovers that AI was utilized in the preparation of the manuscript without proper disclosure, *TPC* reserves the right to reject the submission. *TPC* also reserves the right to remove a previously published article in the event that non-disclosed utilization of AI for manuscript preparation is identified.

Guidelines for Editorial Team Members

Members of *TPC*'s editorial team include the Editor, Managing Editor, Associate Editors, Statistics Consultants, and members of the Editorial Review Board. Members of the publication team include NBCC staff from the Communications, IT, and Executive Departments. All members of both the editorial and publications teams will comply with the following guidelines.

Uploads to Artificial Intelligence Systems Prohibited

To protect the intellectual property of authors who submit their work for publication in *TPC*, editorial team members will not upload any materials submitted for review to any open or closed AI system. Tools used by NBCC to assess integration of AI-generated content in publications will be used prior to initial reviews and only with appropriate safeguards in place to ensure that no data is saved improperly.

Assistive Artificial Intelligence Permitted

Because editorial team members review manuscripts using word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word), they may use integrated assistive AI tools that are built into those programs to identify errors in punctuation, spelling, and/or grammar.

Guidelines for Images in the *TPC Digest*

TPC will ensure that all images featured in the *Digest* are obtained in a manner that upholds the intellectual property rights of those individuals and artists who created the images. Images that are created using generative AI will not be included in the *TPC Digest*.