

MEMORANDUM

TO: Professor Wynn Yarbrough, IGED 210 Professor
FROM: Connor Tracy, IGED 210 Student
DATE: August 13, 2026
SUBJECT: Proposal for Responsible AI Guidelines for UDC Fine Arts

The purpose of this memo is to propose a focused research project about how fine arts students and instructors at the University of the District of Columbia can use artificial intelligence as a creative and professional tool while still protecting original thinking, authorship, and ethical artistic practice. The research question guiding this project is: How can UDC fine arts students and instructors develop practical guidelines for responsible AI use in creative assignments so that AI supports brainstorming, research, and workflow without replacing originality, authorship, or creative decision-making?

Problem

AI is becoming part of college learning, creative work, and the local workforce, but art students need clearer guidance than simply being told to use it or avoid it. UDC's Art Program prepares students in studio art, graphic design, and photography, and the program emphasizes conceptual thinking, digital tools, collaboration, and current technologies ("Art: Studio Art"). Because of that, AI is relevant to the creative marketplace art students are entering. At the same time, AI creates real concerns for artists, including originality, authorship, copyright, bias, overreliance on automated images or text, and uncertainty about when AI use should be disclosed.

UDC already recognizes the need for AI literacy. The UDC Learning Resources Division explains that generative AI can create text, images, audio, video, and code, but it also stresses that students need to understand its limitations and learn how to evaluate and cite AI outputs ("Artificial Intelligence"). This matters locally too. In 2026, the DC government announced mandatory responsible AI training for employees and contractors, emphasizing accountability, privacy, human oversight, and public trust (District of Columbia). If DC workplaces are moving toward responsible AI training, UDC students should be prepared before entering professional spaces.

For art students, the main issue is how students can use AI without weakening the creative thinking, personal vision, and process that make art meaningful. As a photographer and art student, I see AI as something that could help with brainstorming, research, accessibility, mockups, or workflow, but it can also flatten creative work if students use it as a shortcut. The U.S. Department of Education recommends that AI in education should keep people at the center and protect safety, ethics, and transparency (U.S. Department of Education). Those ideas are especially important in fine arts because process, intention, and authorship matter.

Proposed Actions

To address this issue, I propose creating a small responsible AI support plan for UDC fine arts students. The goal would not be to ban AI or encourage students to rely on it. The goal would be to give students and faculty a shared language for using AI in a way that supports learning instead of replacing it.

I would take the following steps:

- Create a one-page AI and originality guide for UDC art students explaining acceptable uses of AI, such as brainstorming, organizing research, testing design ideas, or preparing for critique.
- Develop a simple AI disclosure statement for art assignments so students can explain what tool they used, what part of the process it affected, and what creative decisions remained their own.
- Propose a short workshop or critique discussion through an art class, the Art Students Union, or a similar student group, using examples from photography, graphic design, and studio practice.
- Gather student and faculty feedback about how students are already using AI and what instructors need in order to evaluate originality and process fairly.
- Share the final guide and recommendations with my professor and, if appropriate, with UDC Art Program faculty or student leaders.

These actions are realistic because they do not require a new course or a large policy change. They begin with education, transparency, and conversation. They also fit the interdisciplinary nature of the course because the topic connects art, technology, ethics, education, and professional communication.

Closing

This project is worth pursuing because fine arts students are entering a world where AI will affect creative labor, teaching, marketing, and professional practice. If students only learn AI through trial and error, they may not fully understand the ethical problems or the creative possibilities. A responsible AI support plan would help UDC fine arts students use new tools while still protecting the originality, discipline, and personal vision that art education is supposed to build.

Attached: Works Cited

Works Cited

- "Art: Studio Art, Graphic Design and Photography - BA." University of the District of Columbia, <https://www.udc.edu/cas/arts-humanities/art/>.
- "Artificial Intelligence (AI) Help Guide." Learning Resources Division, University of the District of Columbia, <https://udc.libguides.com/ai/home>.
- District of Columbia, Office of the Chief Technology Officer. "DC Becomes First Major U.S. City to Require Responsible AI Training for Government Workforce." 12 Feb. 2026, <https://octo.dc.gov/release/dc-becomes-first-major-us-city-require-responsible-ai-training-government-workforce>.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology. *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning: Insights and Recommendations*. May 2023, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/documents/ai-report/ai-report.pdf>.