


# Chapter 7

## “Artificial Intelligence” and Library Subject Guides: Impacting the Academic Research Space

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter examines (and provides a sort of “literature review” for) one particularly visible and ever-growing aspect the university librarian’s approach to disseminating instruction on “artificial intelligence:” the creation and development of library research subject guides (often referred to as “libguides”) specifically about “artificial intelligence” and its usages in an academic research context and beyond. It offers comparisons and methodological insights to a number of libguides from across university libraries of different types and purposes, highlighting the reasoning behind the most commonly discussed aspects of “artificial intelligence” elucidated in these subject guides, including copyright and fair use, the ethics and hallmarks of generated writing, and the intersection between “traditional” research methods and how they can (or cannot) be supplemented with “artificial intelligence” usage.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the last few years, the technological advent colloquially referred to as “artificial intelligence” (or “AI”), in particular generative publicly-accessible iterations thereof, has had a profound effect on academic research in a way that mirrors (and perhaps exceeds) the emergence of the internet decades earlier. The rapid pace with which these generative systems have advanced makes the prospect of offering guidance to researchers a daunting one, in large part because of how the potential usages of such systems upend traditional research and educative methodologies, including critical thinking, evaluation of information sources, bibliographic citation, and academic search modalities. As part of the broader systemic response by the education system to address the needs of students interested in the utilization of “artificial intelligence” in their coursework, university librarians of many different specialties have been at the forefront of adapting resources for new contexts in “artificial intelligence,” or, in many cases, creating entirely original instruction materials.

One prominent and constantly-developing aspect of the university librarian's approach to disseminating instruction on “artificial intelligence” has been the creation and iteration of library subject guides (often rendered as “libguides”) specifically about “artificial intelligence” and its usages both within and outside of academia. The James A. Cannavino Library at Marist University defines a library subject guide broadly as “a collection of library resources on a particular subject put together by a librarian...meant to help students explore materials on a subject through hand-picked library resources such as subject-specific databases, journals, websites, and more” (Clarke, 2021), which lends itself to potentially enormous variance in terms of purpose, form, aesthetic, and level of detail. Given that the advent of “artificial intelligence” presents opportunities and challenges uniquely impactful in the academic space, it is natural (perhaps inevitable) that librarians would construct libguides specializing in educating students and researchers about responsible, productive, and ethical employment “artificial intelligence.”

In this context, this chapter analyzes the approach taken by a selection of university libraries in constructing and presenting “artificial intelligence” libguides, offering comparisons and methodological insights to their multifarious types, purposes, and modi. This comparison will highlight the reasoning behind the most commonly discussed aspects of “artificial intelligence” elucidated in these libguides and how they relate to the needs of the institution as a whole and of its patrons (a term used here often, but not exclusively, to refer to students or instructional personnel of these respective universities). The goal of the chapter is not to educate about “artificial intelligence” itself or its technical, social, or moral implications but rather to provide an examination of how librarians go about educating patrons about such technologies and how they address both the demands of their institutions as well

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