Think Before You Paste: Using AI-Generated Code on Our Websites

While AI tools like ChatGPT or Copilot can quickly create HTML, CSS, and JavaScript snippets for new elements and special layouts, pasting AI-generated code directly into our websites can cause serious problems. We strongly recommend working with the ITS team to build any custom elements you need. We are happy to help you!

⚠️ Potential Dangers of Pasting AI-Generated Code

Pasting code you don't fully understand can immediately break our website's appearance and functionality.

- **Design & Style Issues (CSS/Aesthetics):**

  - AI code may include new, conflicting styles (CSS) that override the website's existing design and don't conform with the site's brand guidelines. This can make your new element look different from the rest of the site and can break the styling of nearby, existing content.

  - The generated code may not meet accessibility standards that are in place or may break the mobile-responsiveness of the site.

- **Security Vulnerabilities:**

  - AI models are trained on vast amounts of code, which may include examples with security flaws. Without an expert review, this code can introduce vulnerabilities that can compromise the website.

- **Code Quality & Maintenance Problems:**

  - The code is often inefficient, bloated, or overly complex. This can slow down page loading for all users and make the page extremely difficult for the ITS team to fix or update later.

- **Risk of Permanent Data Loss/Overwriting:**
  - If you drop in your code or overwrite existing code, and accidentally activate it, the original working code could be permanently overwritten and gone.

✅ Our Preferred Solution: Partner with ITS!

The ITS team can create and add new elements that fit the site's existing design. Your website's consistency, performance, and security are our top priorities.

- Consult with ITS first for any new feature, designed element, or AI-generated idea. We will help integrate it properly and safely, ensuring it matches your site's look and functionality.

- Our goal is collaboration: You bring the ideas, and we'll ensure they work beautifully within the site framework.

💡 Best Practices & Tips (If You Must Use AI Code)

If you are using AI as a starting point, treat it as untrusted material and follow these critical steps:

- Use it for Inspiration Only: Treat the AI output as a draft idea. Send the idea to ITS to implement and fit within the site's current design and style.

- Do not paste AI-generated code directly into a live, public page. Always test it on a draft or admin only page.

- Keep records: If you ever use code snippets, save where they came from and what they do.