Academic Leadership in the AI Era: Turning Challenges Into Competitive Strengths

wcet

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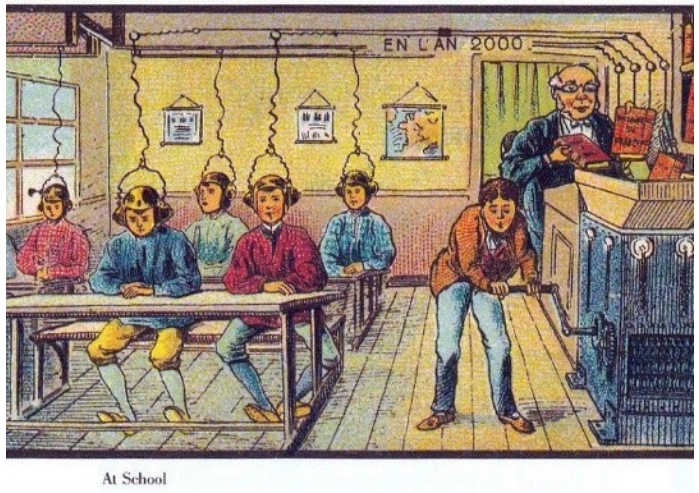
Agenda

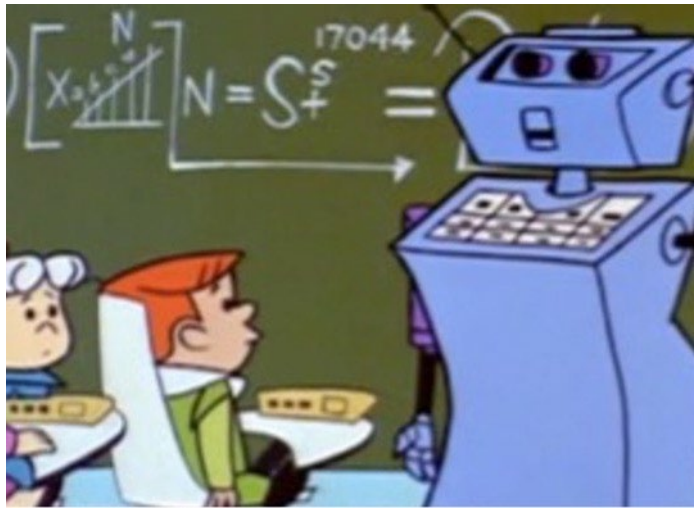
AI’s Current State

AI’s Institutional Challenges

Proactive, Not Reactive



At School



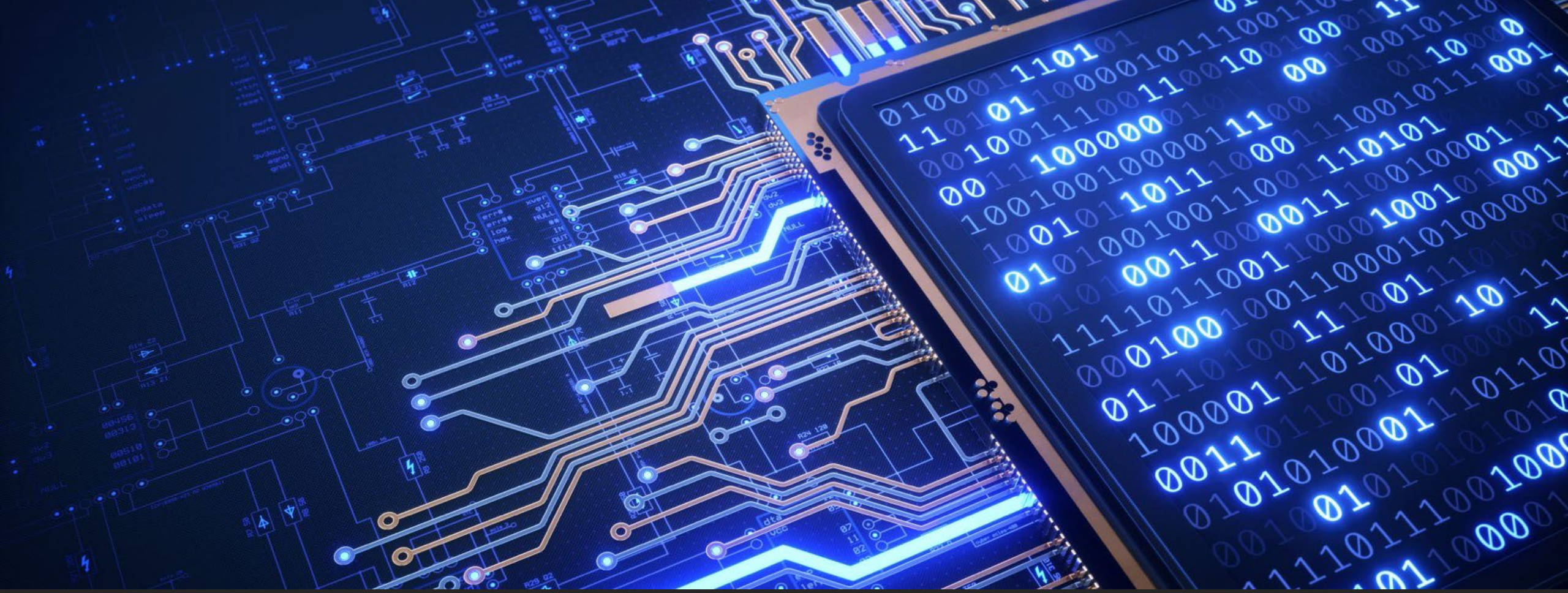
"At School," 1910

"Push-Button Education," 1958

"The Jetsons," 1963

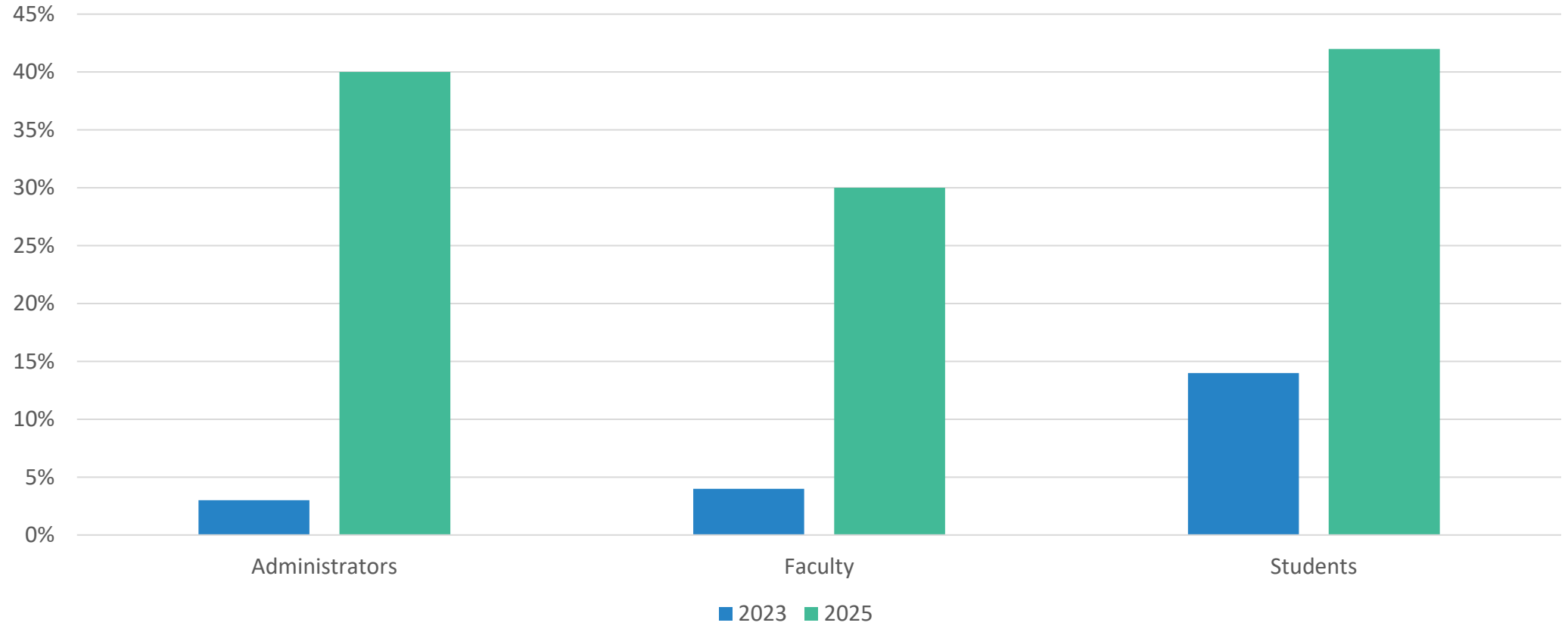
"AI in Higher Education," 2023

What two words encapsulate how you feel about AI in higher education?

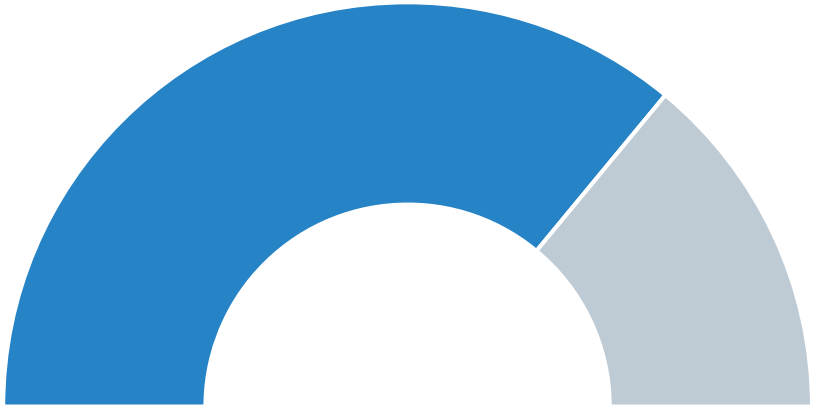


How often do you use AI as a part of your job?

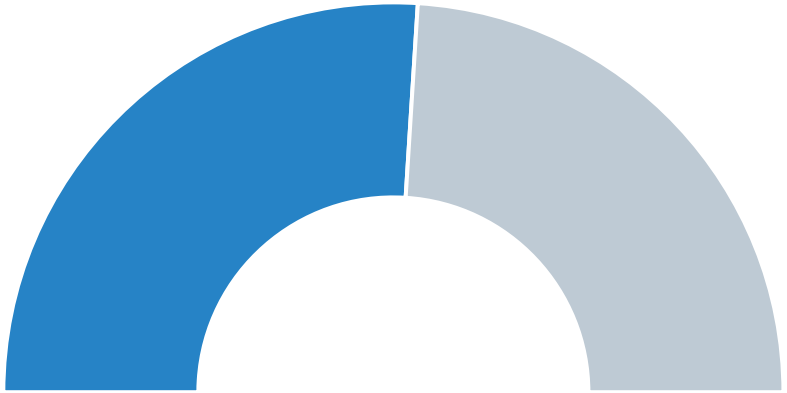
Campus AI Usage



Tyton Partners, *Time for Class 2025: Empowering Educators, Engaging Students*

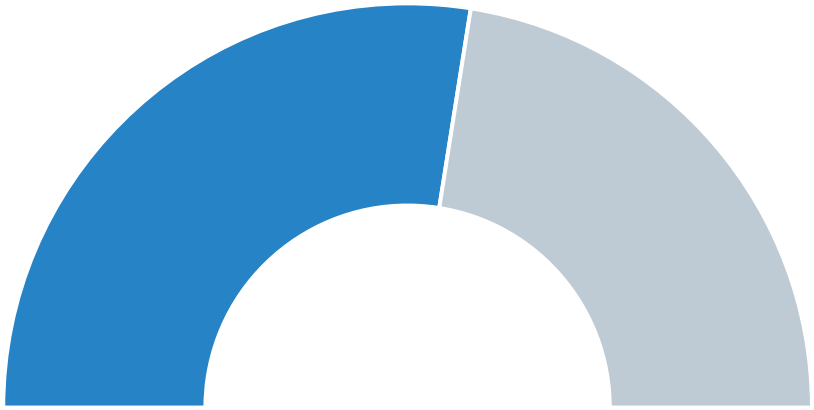


72% of enterprise leaders say basic AI literacy is important or very important. **59%** say there is an AI skills gap.



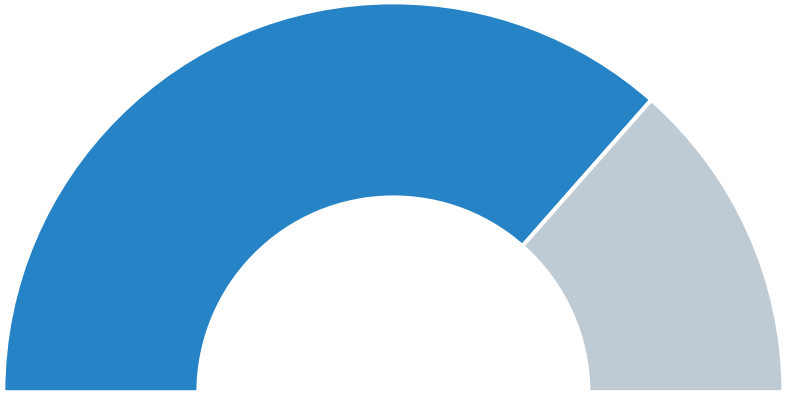
52% of college presidents say AI literacy is NOT widespread on their campus.

INSIDE HIGHER ED, 2026 INSIDE HIGHER ED SURVEY OF COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS, HTTPS://WWW.INSIDEHIGHERED.COM/NEWS/GOVERNANCE/EXECUTIVE-LEADERSHIP/2026/03/10/PRESIDENTS-FEEL-PRESSURE-TRUMPS-SECOND-TERM



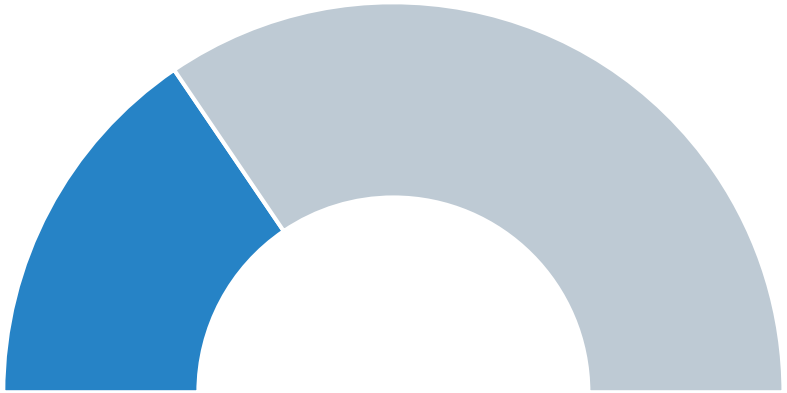
55% of graduates said their degree program did NOT prepare them to use AI

Cengage, *2024 Graduate Employability Report, https://cengage.widen.net/s/bmjxxjx9mm/cg-2024-employability-survey-report*



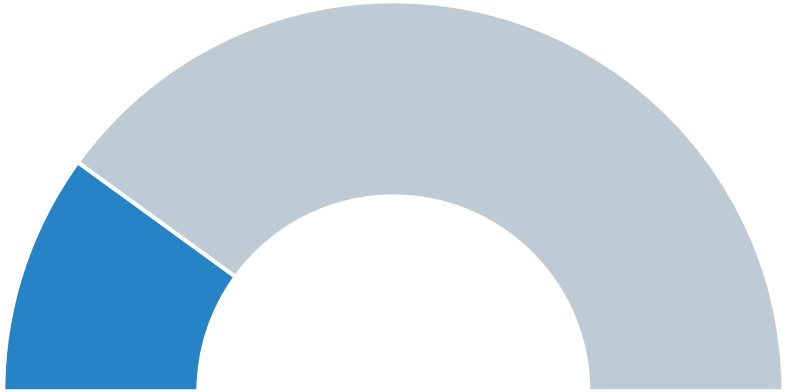
73% of students say their institution should be preparing them to use AI in the workforce.

INSIDE HIGHER ED, 2024, HTTPS://WWW.INSIDEHIGHERED.COM/NEWS/STUDENT-SUCCESS/LIFE-AFTER-COLLEGE/2024/01/10/SURVEY-COLLEGE-STUDENTS-THOUGHTS-AI-AND-CAREERS#



31% of students are aware of AI courses at their institution.

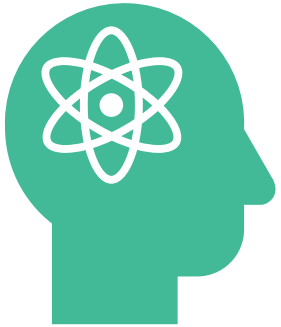
HONORLOCK, 2026, HTTPS://WWW.MARKETWATCH.COM/PRESS-RELEASE/HONORLOCK-STUDY-FINDS-MAJORITY-OF-COLLEGE-STUDENTS-REQUIRED-TO-USE-AI-FOR-CLASSWORK-BUT-UNIVERSITIES-SLOW-ON-OFFERING-AI-COURSES-LEAVING-STUDENTS-UNPREPARED-FOR-AI-USE-IN-FUTURE-CAREERS-B7310F73



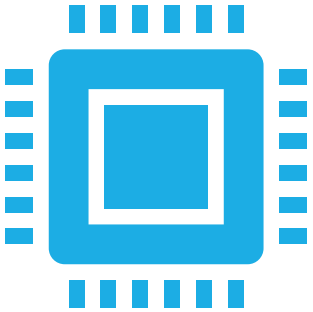
20% of students have taken an AI course.

HONORLOCK, 2026, HTTPS://WWW.MARKETWATCH.COM/PRESS-RELEASE/HONORLOCK-STUDY-FINDS-MAJORITY-OF-COLLEGE-STUDENTS-REQUIRED-TO-USE-AI-FOR-CLASSWORK-BUT-UNIVERSITIES-SLOW-ON-OFFERING-AI-COURSES-LEAVING-STUDENTS-UNPREPARED-FOR-AI-USE-IN-FUTURE-CAREERS-B7310F73

73% ETHICS

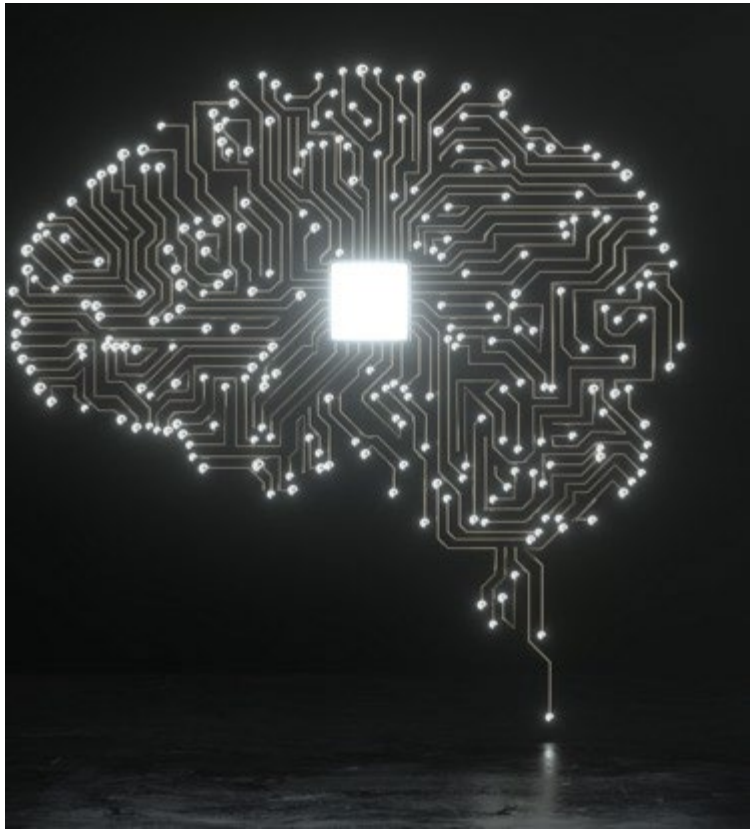


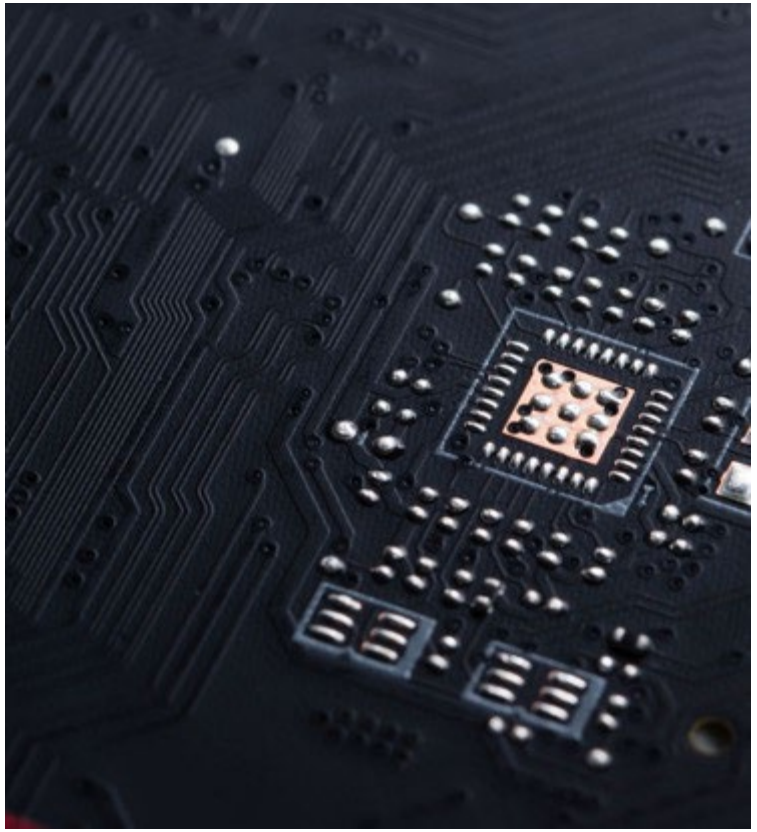
62% CORE SKILLS (CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM-SOLVING)



60% PRACTICAL SKILLS

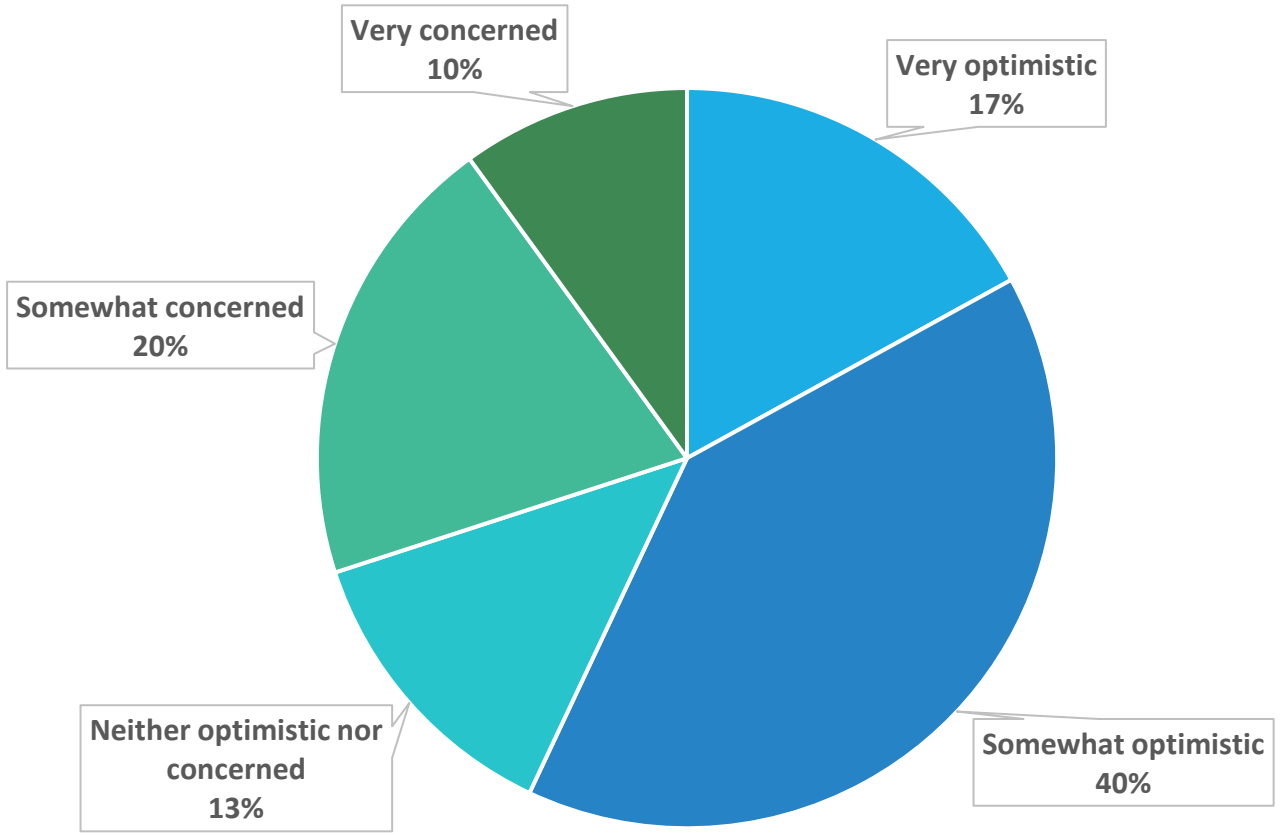
INSIDE HIGHER ED, 2024, HTTPS://WWW.INSIDEHIGHERED.COM/NEWS/STUDENT-SUCCESS/LIFE-AFTER-COLLEGE/2024/01/10/SURVEY-COLLEGE-STUDENTS-THOUGHTS-AI-AND-CAREERS#





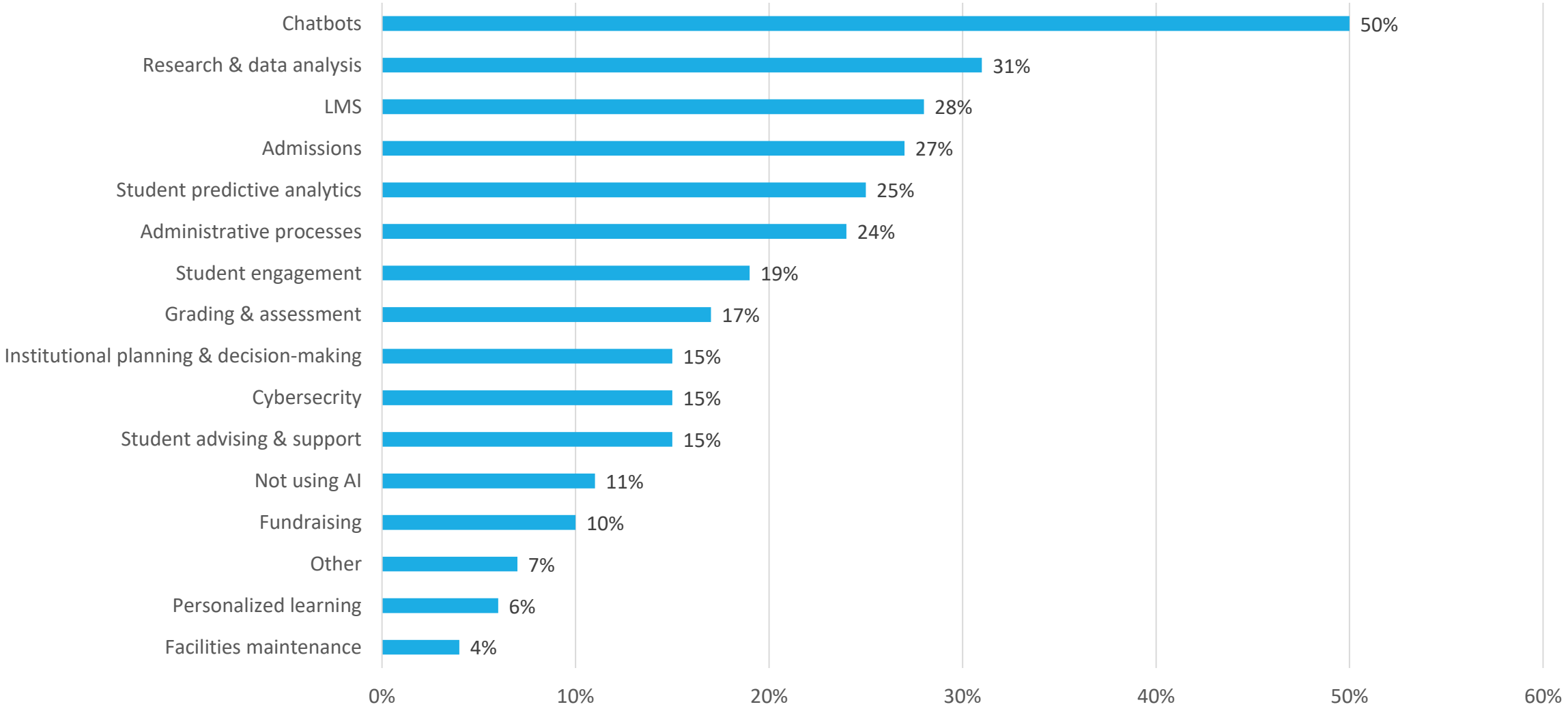
AI’s Current State

Presidential Optimism



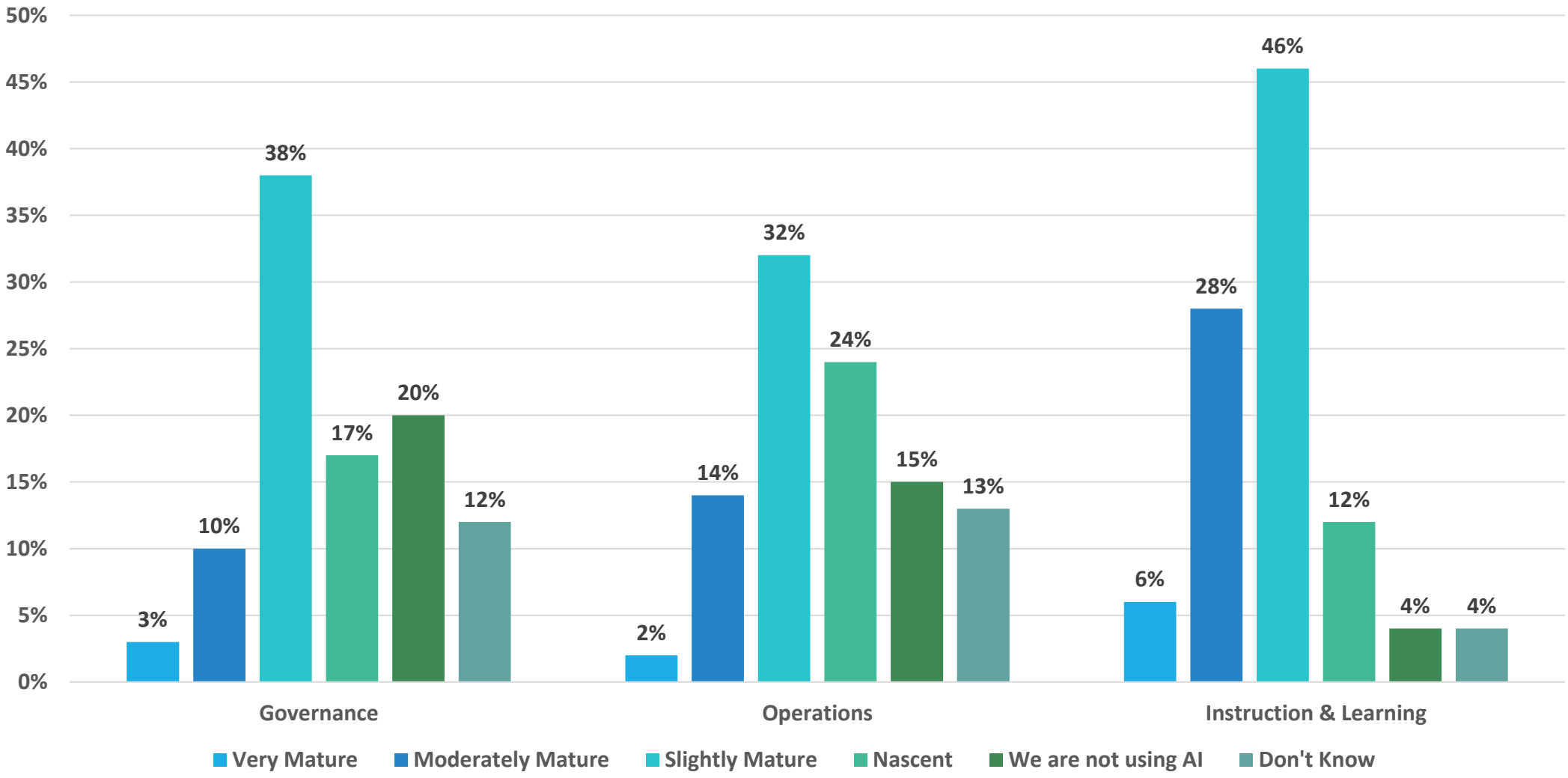
2025 College & University Presidents: A Survey by Inside Higher Ed & Hanover Research, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/02/26/out-now-2025-survey-college-and-university-presidents

Institutional AI Usage per CAOs

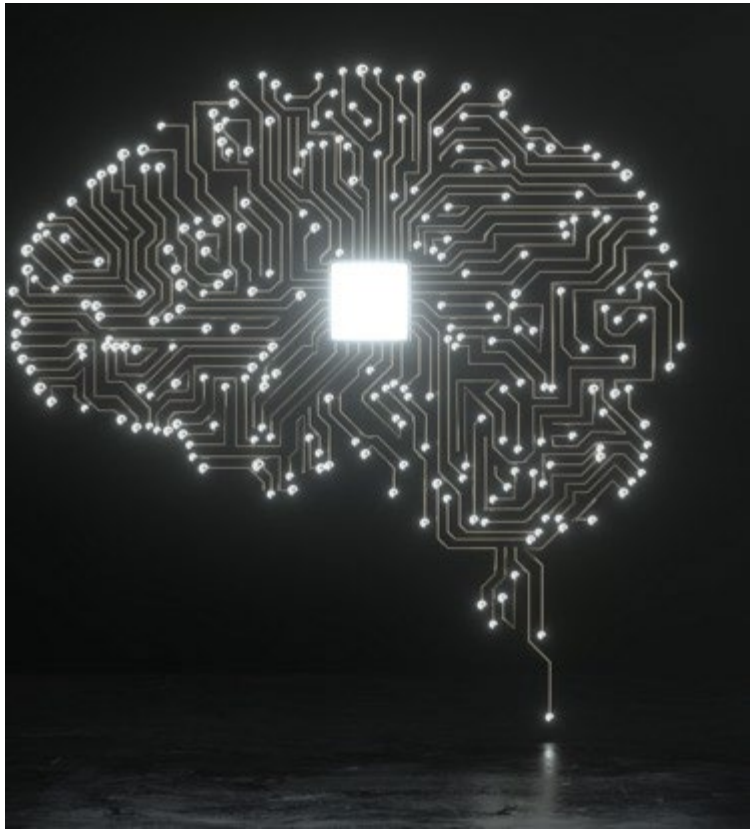


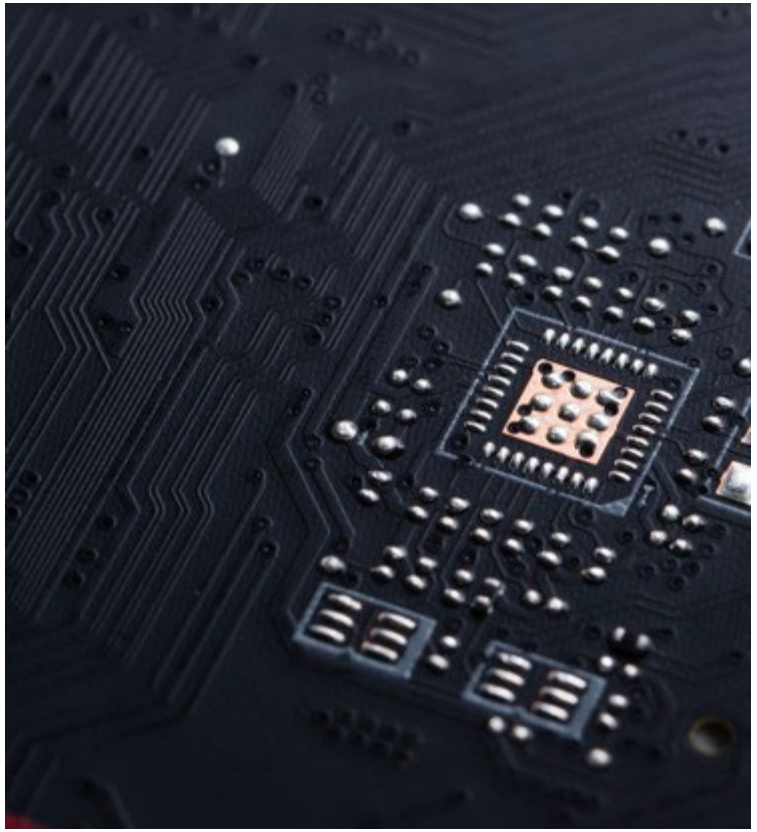
2025 Survey of College & University Chief Academic Officers: A Survey by Inside Higher Ed & Hanover Research, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2025/09/16/survey-provosts-focused-funding-cuts-academic

Institutional AI Maturity



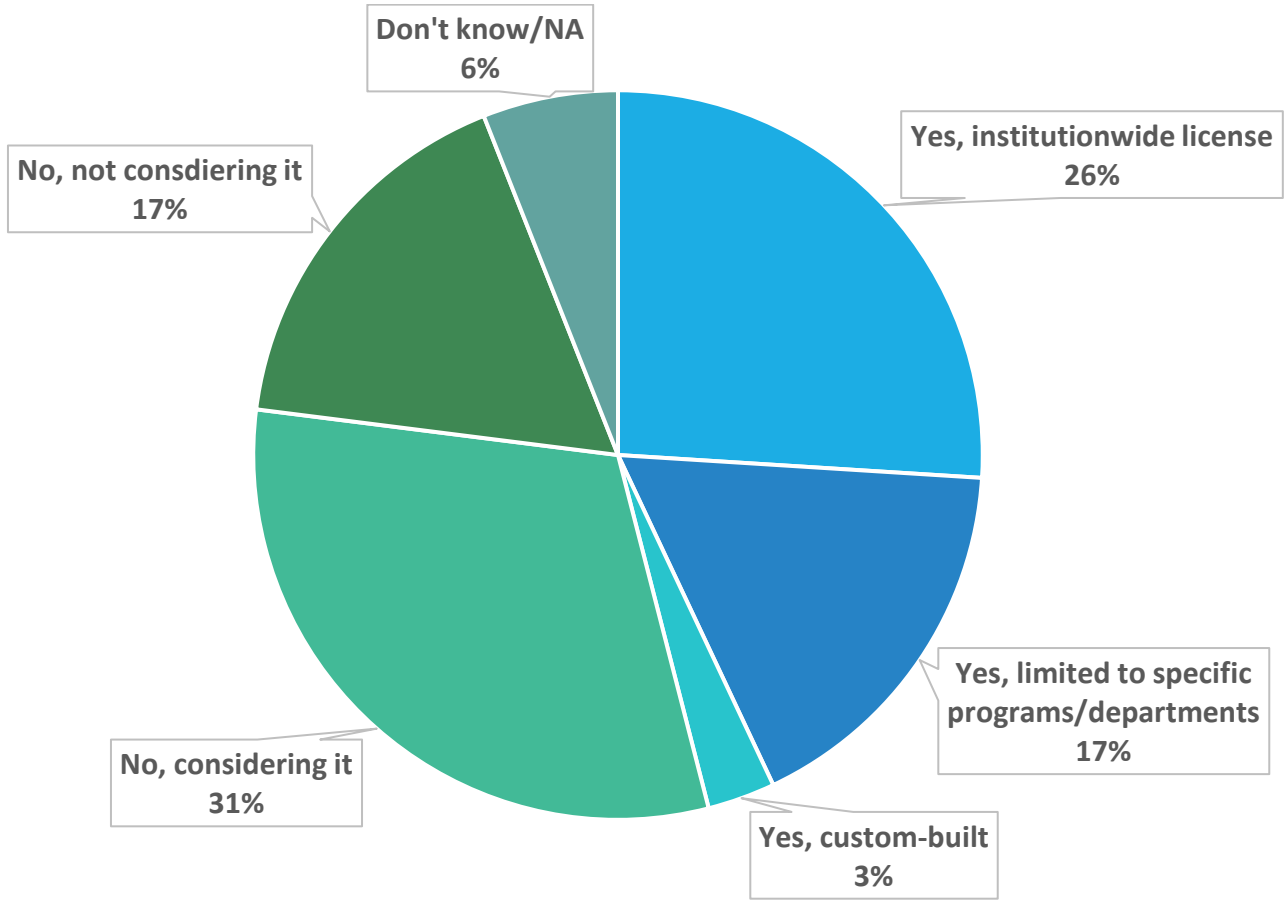
Sebesta. *Supporting Governance, Operations, and Instruction and Learning Through Artificial Intelligence: A Survey of Institutional Policies and Practices 2025.* WCET





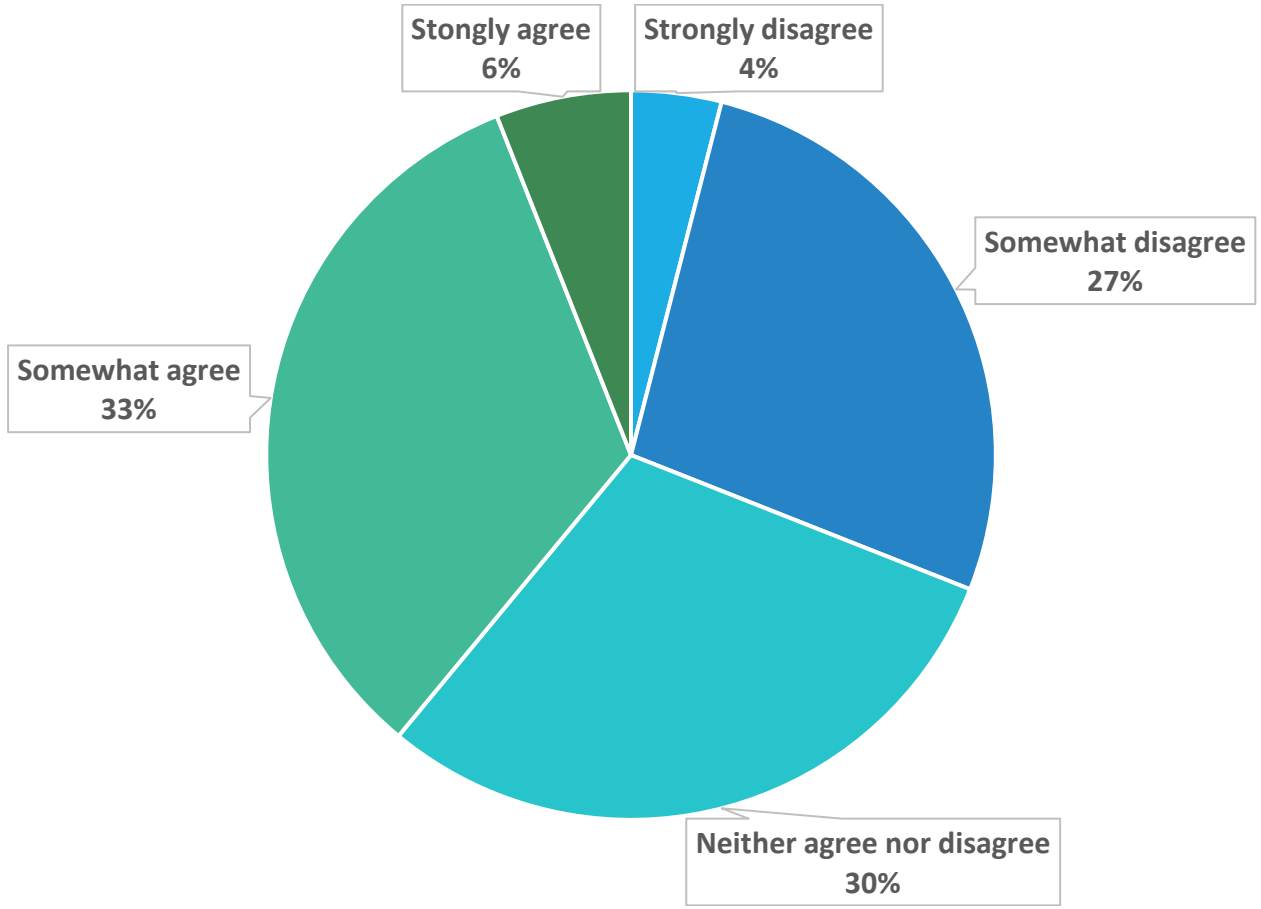
AI’s Institutional Challenges

Generative AI Student Access



2025 Survey of College & University Chief Academic Officers: A Survey by Inside Higher Ed & Hanover Research, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2025/09/16/survey-provosts-focused-funding-cuts-academic

There is significant faculty resistance to AI at my institution…



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Academic Integrity

- Critical challenge as generative AI is capable of average or above-average written responses to many prompts
- Requires rethinking and reconceptualizing assessment practices
  - Shift from assessing knowledge to assessing skills and application
  - Authentic assessment practices
  - Bloom's Taxonomy's higher order skills
    - Oregon State University Ecampus's *Bloom's Taxonomy Revisited*

Oregon State University Ecampus

Bloom's Taxonomy Revisited

Use this table as a reference for evaluating and making changes to aligned course activities and assessments (or, where possible, learning outcomes) that account for generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool capabilities and distinctive human skills.

All course activities and assessments will benefit from **review** given the capabilities of AI tools; those at the **Remember** and **Analyze** levels may be more likely to need **amendment**.

	RECOMMENDATION	AI CAPABILITIES	DISTINCTIVE HUMAN SKILLS
CREATE	Review	Suggest a range of alternatives, enumerate potential drawbacks and advantages, describe successful real-world cases	Formulate original solutions incorporating human judgement, collaborate spontaneously
EVALUATE	Review	Identify pros and cons of various courses of action, develop rubrics	Engage in metacognitive reflection, holistically appraise ethical consequences of alternative courses of action
ANALYZE	Amend	Compare and contrast data, infer trends and themes, compute, predict	Critically think and reason within the cognitive and affective domains, interpret and relate to authentic problems, decisions, & choices
APPLY	Review	Make use of a process, model, or method to illustrate how to solve a quantitative inquiry	Operate, implement, conduct, execute, experiment, and test in the real world; apply creativity and imagination to idea & solution development
UNDERSTAND	Review	Describe a concept in different words, recognize a related example, translate	Contextualize answers within emotional, moral, or ethical considerations
REMEMBER	Amend	Recall factual information, list possible answers, define a term, construct a basic chronolgy	Recall information in situations where technology is not readily accessible

Agentic AI

Agentic AI are systems that can plan, take actions, and complete multi-step tasks on behalf of humans with very little human input. Generative AI answers questions while agentic AI handles processes.

Key characteristics

Goal-oriented	Multi-step reasoning	Tool use	Memory	Bounded autonomy

Agentic AI's Threat

A new academic integrity crisis

- Agentic AI means that we are moving from students using AI to complete assignments to students using AI to complete courses

Enrollment fraud

- Agentic AI allows someone to completely automate the entire enrollment process using fraudulent identity information, thus accessing state and federal financial aid.

As these technologies become better at producing knowledge work – designing classes, writing papers, suggesting experiments and summarizing difficult texts – they don't just make universities more productive. They risk hollowing out the ecosystem of learning and mentorship upon which these institutions are built, and on which they depend.

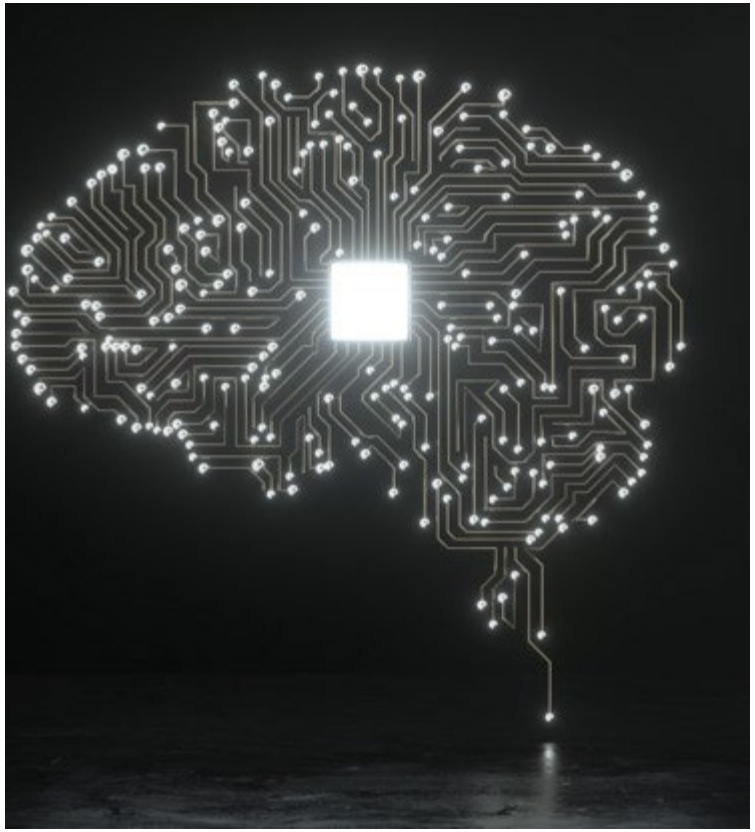
Nir Eiskovits & Jacob Burley

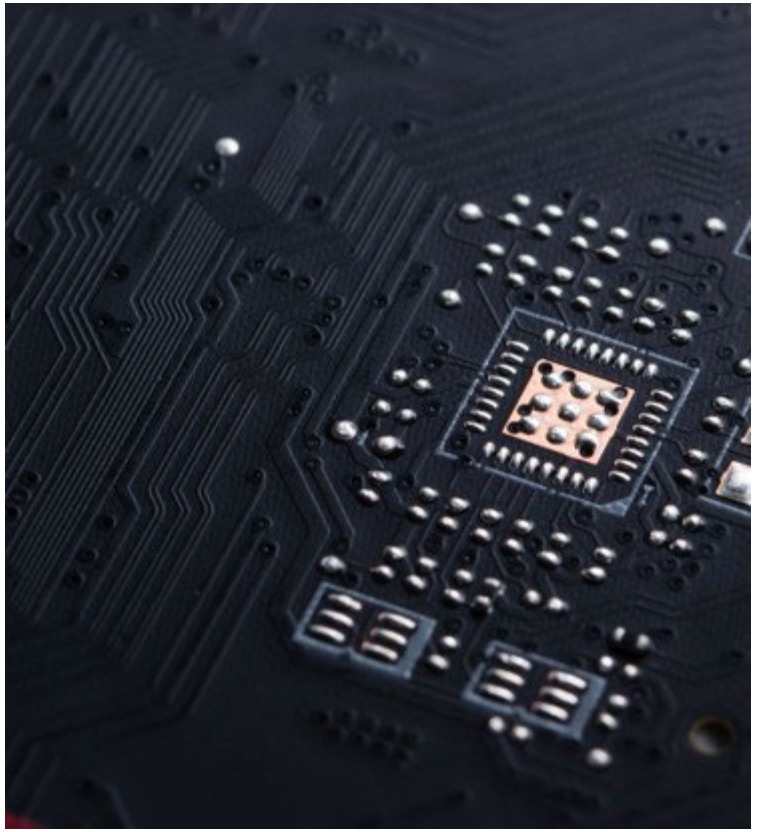
Applied Ethics Center, UMass Boston

https://theconversation.com/the-greatest-risk-of-ai-in-higher-education-isnt-cheating-its-the-erosion-of-learning-itself-270243

"We need a new model of learning that enables learners to understand the highly technological world around them and that simultaneously allows them to transcend it by nurturing the mental and intellectual qualities that are unique to humans– namely their capacity for creativity and mental flexibility."

Joseph Aoun, *Robot-Proof: Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*





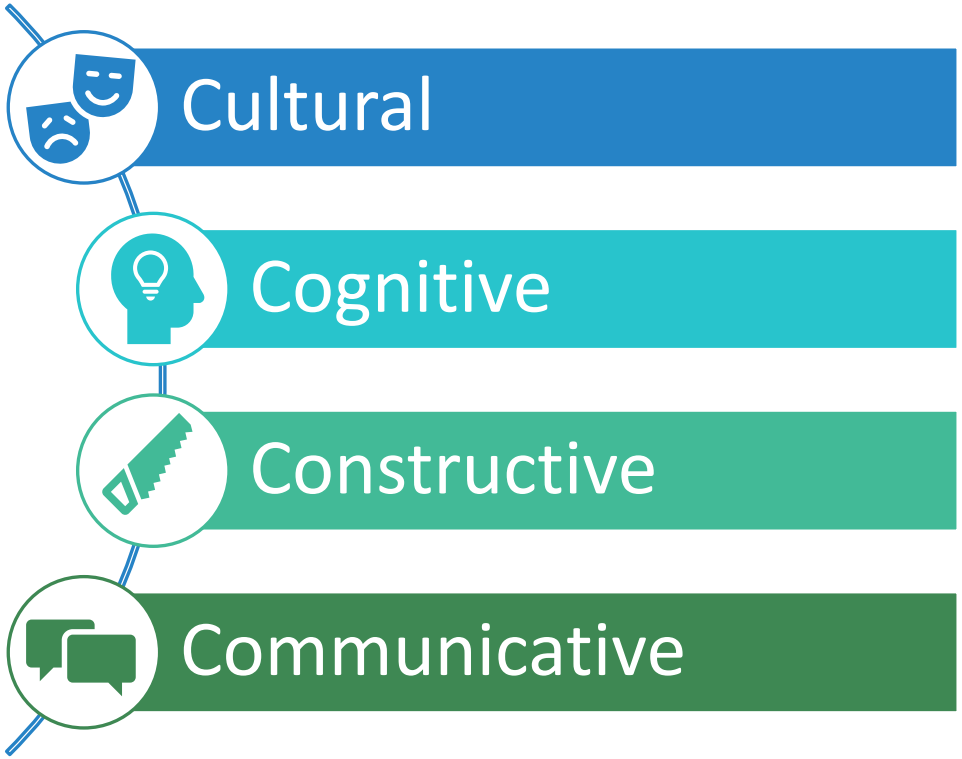
Being Proactive, Not Reactive

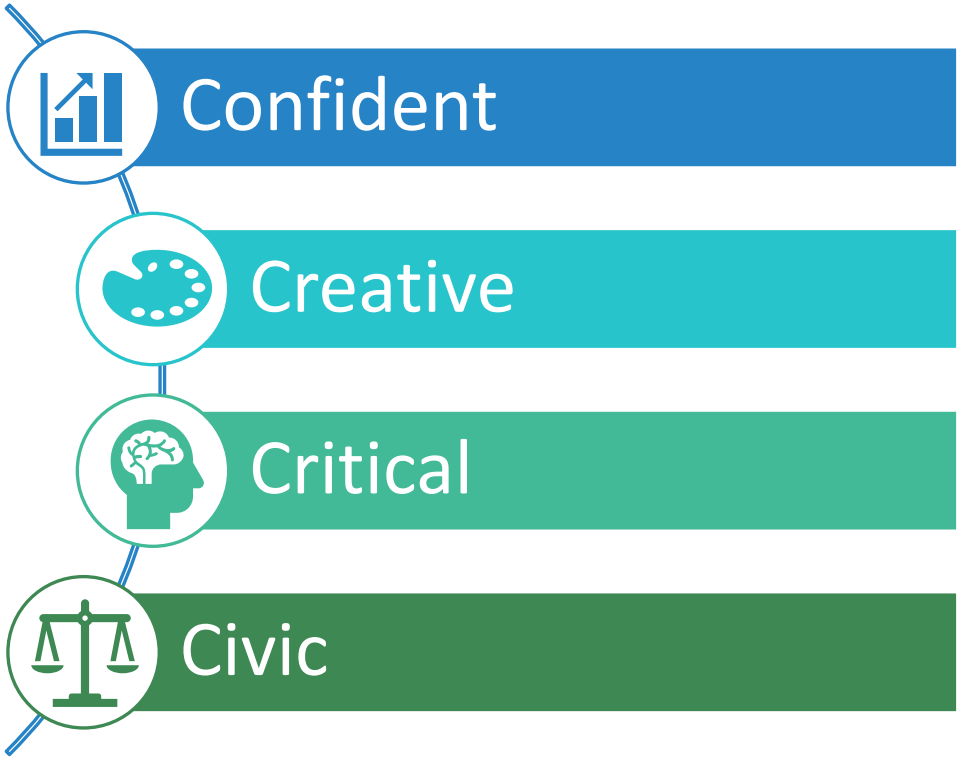
Dimensions of AI Literacies

Gunder, Herron, Weber, Chelf, & Birdwell

https://openedculture.org/projects/dimensions-of-ai-literacies/

AI Literacies





Northeastern University's Humanics

LITERACIES

- Technological literacy
- Data literacy
- Human literacy

COGNITIVE CAPACITIES

- Critical thinking
- Communication & collaboration
- Cultural agility
- Initiative & self-reliance
- Comfort with risk

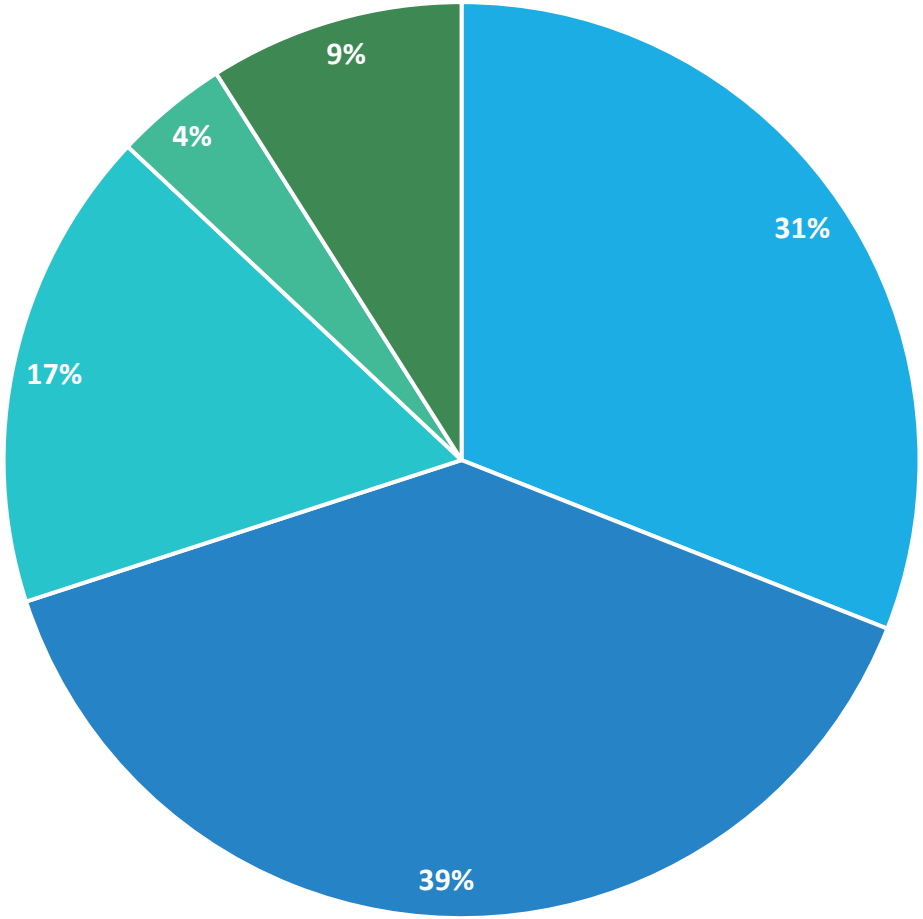
COGNITIVE CAPACITIES

- Flexibility & adaptability
- Opportunity recognition
- Creative innovation
- Future orientation

Strategic Planning

How can AI be used to support your institution’s mission and vision?

AI Policy Development



- We have one or more policies and/or set(s) of guidelines in place
- We are actively working on developing one or more policies and/or set(s) of guidelines and/or revising existing policies and/or guidelines
- We are planning to develop policy and/or guidelines in the next year or two
- We will not be developing policies or guidelines in the foreseeable future
- I don't know

Sebesta. *Supporting Governance, Operations, and Instruction and Learning Through Artificial Intelligence: A Survey of Institutional Policies and Practices 2025.* WCET

WCET AI Policy and Practice Framework

Adapted from: Chan, Cecilia Ka Yuk (2023, April). “A Comprehensive AI Policy Education Framework for University Teaching and Learning.” arXiv:2305.00280v1 [cs.CY].

Governance

Refers to how institutions define their vision & values for AI use, establish guiding policies, make decisions about risk, & communicate shared responsibility across roles.

PRIORITY 1: FOUNDATIONAL IMPERATIVES

- Form cross-functional AI task force/steering committee
- Develop & publish public statement of ethical &responsible AI principles
- Align AI use with institutional mission, vision, & values
- Identify & cultivate faculty & staff champions
- Establish “AI-Ready” data governance, privacy, & security policies
- Require AI policy statement in all course syllabi
- Develop an institutional intellectual property policy for AI-generated content
- Include students in policy & guideline development
- Create & nurture a culture of accountability & transparency

PRIORITY 2: STRATEGIC ENABLERS

- Define guidelines for AI use in research & scholarship, including citation standards
- Design policy as a continuous cycle & establish an AI policy review cadence
- Create guidelines to minimize the impact of algorithmic biases
- Integrate AI into institutional strategic plan
- Develop AI strategic plan
- Create roles & regulations dedicated to AI procurement, implementation, use, & sustainability
- Identify dedicated sources of funding to support ongoing AI adoption & implementation

PRIORITY 3: TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- Formulate policy on AI’s role in promotion, tenure, & re-appointment
- Foster safe environments for AI innovation & experimentation
- Develop a framework for public-private partnerships in AI
- Participate with external communities around AI engagement

Operations

Refers to building & maintaining the technological, procedural, & organizational capabilities that enable effective AI adoption. This dimension centers on the infrastructure & workflows needed to implement AI responsibly & sustainably.

PRIORITY 1: FOUNDATIONAL IMPERATIVES

- Conduct audit of AI use across campus
- Conduct an AI risk assessment across campus
- Conduct comprehensive data & systems audit for AI readiness
- Create plan for operationalizing policy
- Launch foundational AI literacies training for all faculty (including part-time), staff, & students
- Provide secure, institutionally-sanctioned access to a foundational GenAI tool
- Establish clear privacy guidelines on prohibited data inputs for public AI tools
- Create centralized review & evaluation process for third-party AI tools
- Develop an AI-ready infrastructure plan, including procurement processes

PRIORITY 2: STRATEGIC ENABLERS

- Define guidelines for AI use in institutional communications & marketing
- Pilot AI for administrative efficiency in key units
- Deploy AI –powered student support services
- Utilize predictive analytics for student success & retention
- Create a future-ready map for comprehensive, role-specific AI professional development programs

PRIORITY 3: TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- Balance use of homegrown & third-party AI tools
- Establish centralized AI support services (“AI Response Teams”)
- Deploy AI for advanced cybersecurity threat detection & response
- Implement AI for budget management
- Implement AI for advanced facility & schedule management
- Develop an in-house “AI Kitchen” for secure model development & testing
- Integrate agentic AI to automate complex cross-departmental workflows
- Create incentives for AI use by all roles across campus

Pedagogy

Encompasses how institutions & educators design learning environments, assess student progress, & support learners through the evolving demands of AI-enabled education.

PRIORITY 1: FOUNDATIONAL IMPERATIVES

- Establish clear, flexible academic integrity policies for AI use that are clearly communicated to students
- Provide faculty with sample syllabus statements (from prohibitive to integrative) for AI use
- Develop policies &/or guidelines on instructional use of AI by faculty
- Establish clear citation standards for acknowledging AI assistance
- Ensure accessibility of AI tools for all student users
- Develop & implement guidance on redesigning assessments to focus on process & critical thinking
- Develop a strategy to mitigate the “Digital AI Divide” regarding access to premium tools
- Align AI use with workforce needs in partnership with industry

PRIORITY 2: STRATEGIC ENABLERS

- Develop Standards for AI literacies & fluency across the curriculum
- Integrate AI literacies as core competencies within the general education curriculum
- Develop standards for regular & substantive interaction compliance with AI instructional use
- Provide instructional design support for AI-augmented courses
- Promote the use of AI to enhance accessibility for students with disabilities
- Align AI use with all institutional, programmatic, & course-level learning outcomes & objectives
- Incentivize faculty to redesign courses, including learning outcomes assignments, & assessments, to be AI-aligned, AI-resistant, &/or AI-inclusive
- Develop strategies to support human-AI partnerships in pedagogies

PRIORITY 3: TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- Create faculty learning communities focused on AI in pedagogy
- Establish student-faculty partnerships for AI tool co-creation & evaluation
- Implement AI-powered personalized & adaptive learning platforms at scale

Presenter

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