

Widener University

Faculty AI Use and Literacy Survey

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AAC&U Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and Curriculum Working Group

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AI Disclosure: ChatGPT was used in a variety of ways in the creation of this document. Where it has been used, it is explicitly acknowledged.

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1 Executive Summary*

This preliminary report presents the findings from the Faculty AI Use and Literacy Survey conducted by Widener University, aimed at understanding faculty experiences, attitudes, and needs concerning generative AI in higher education. The survey results reveal a mixed sentiment: while many respondents acknowledge the potential of generative AI as a tool for enhancing productivity and improving learning experiences, concerns about ethical implications, academic integrity, and effective usage remain significant.

Key findings include:

- **Training Needs**: 84% of respondents expressed a desire for more training on generative AI, with preferences for a variety of formats, including asynchronous online (24%), synchronous Zoom (21%), and in-person workshops (16%). Many faculty members also value hands-on, practical learning.
- **Current Use of AI**: 55% of respondents reported some familiarity with generative AI tools, and 45% use them at least weekly, primarily for writing, editing, and summarizing text.
- **Ethical and Pedagogical Concerns**: Approximately one-third of respondents raised concerns about AI's impact on critical thinking, creativity, and the integrity of academic work. Ethical use and policies around AI were noted as areas needing clearer institutional guidance.
- **Barriers to Adoption**: Common barriers include the time required to learn new tools, concerns about unreliable outputs, and ethical considerations related to data security and bias.

These findings suggest a strong need for differentiated training and support, as well as institutional policies that guide the ethical and effective use of AI in teaching, learning, and administrative tasks.

*The completed report was uploaded to ChatGPT and an executive summary was requested. This is a lightly edited version.

2 Preferred Training Formats and Topics for Generative AI

Faculty members expressed strong interest in various training formats, including asynchronous online (24%), synchronous Zoom (21%), and in-person workshops (16%). Hands-on training was preferred by 10% of respondents, indicating a desire for experiential learning. The primary topics of interest include integrating AI in classroom teaching, improving productivity, and understanding ethical implications. **

84% of respondents agree that they could benefit from additional training on generative AI tools indicating a strong demand.

174 Responses

Q: What kinds of training in AI would you find helpful and in what formats?**

Faculty responses to the question on desired AI training indicate a preference for a variety of formats, including asynchronous online, synchronous Zoom, and in-person sessions. Asynchronous options are particularly popular (24%) due to their convenience, while Zoom sessions (21%) and in-person workshops (16%) are also valued for their interactive elements.

Hands-on training was specifically mentioned by some respondents (10%), highlighting a need for practical, experiential learning opportunities. This suggests that institutions should consider a blended approach that includes multiple formats to cater to diverse learning styles.

Regarding the content of the training, respondents are particularly interested in using AI to enhance teaching practices (17%) and reduce workload (13%). Ethical use and preventing cheating were also common themes, indicating a need for more guidance in these areas.

The following themes emerged from the survey results:

Training Format Preferences:

- **Asynchronous Online:** 28 responses (24%)
- **Synchronous Zoom:** 25 responses (21%)
- **In-Person Training:** 18 responses (16%)
- **Hands-On Training:** 12 responses (10%)

Desired Training Topics:

- **AI Use in Classroom:** 20 responses (17%)
- **Ethical Use of AI:** 10 responses (9%)
- **Reducing Workload/Productivity:** 15 responses (13%)
- **AI Detection and Mitigation:** 8 responses (7%)

General Comments:

- **Preference for Convenience:** 10 responses (9%)
- **Disinterest or Rejection:** 4 responses (3%)

**Analysis and summary produced with the use of ChatGPT.

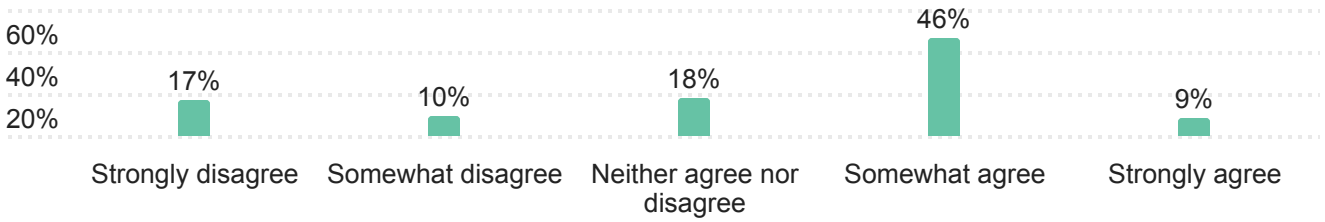
3 Faculty Familiarity with Generative AI Tools

The survey reveals that 55% of respondents have a strong or moderate familiarity with generative AI tools. However, nearly a third indicate they do not feel comfortable with their current level of knowledge. This reflects a need for enhanced support to increase AI literacy among faculty. ***

Q: I have a strong understanding of and familiarity with generative AI tools.

55% (95) respondents somewhat or strongly agree with the statement that they have a strong familiarity with and understanding of generative artificial intelligence.

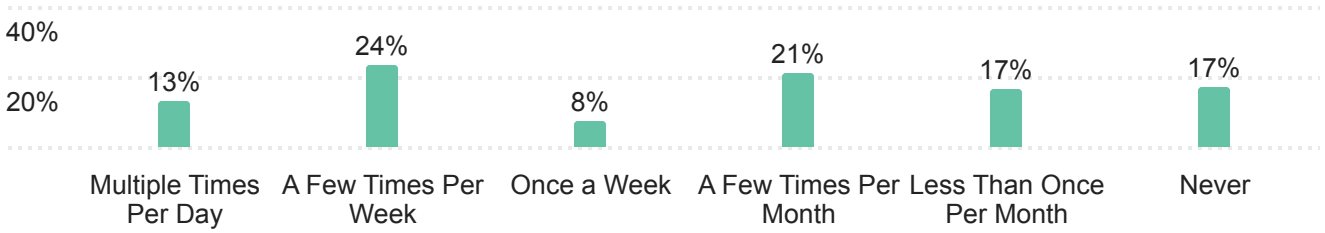
173 Responses



Q: How often do use use generative AI tools (personally or professionally)?

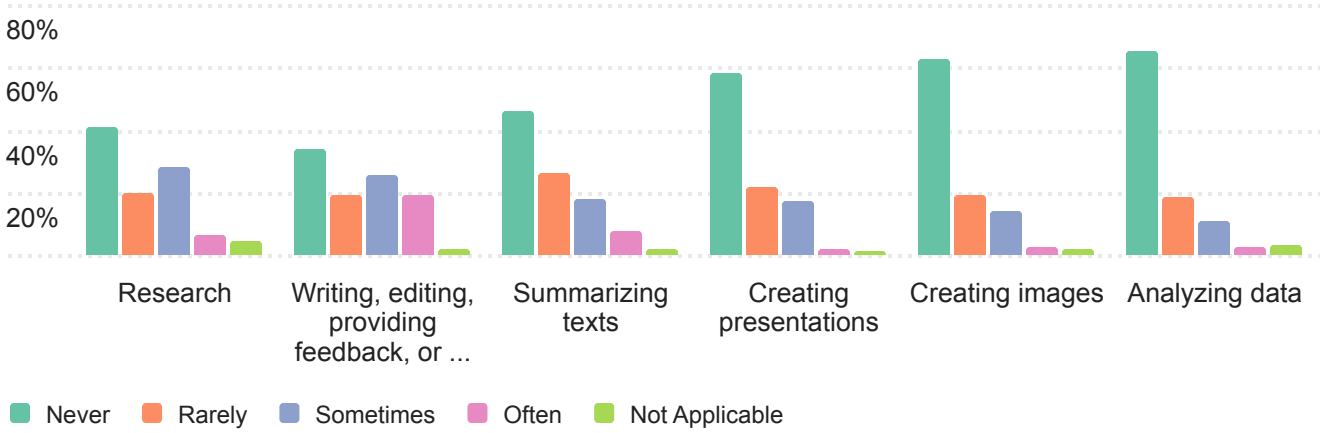
45% (77) of respondents use generative AI tools at least once a week.

173 Responses



Respondents use genAI tools most to write/edit and summarize text.

164 Responses

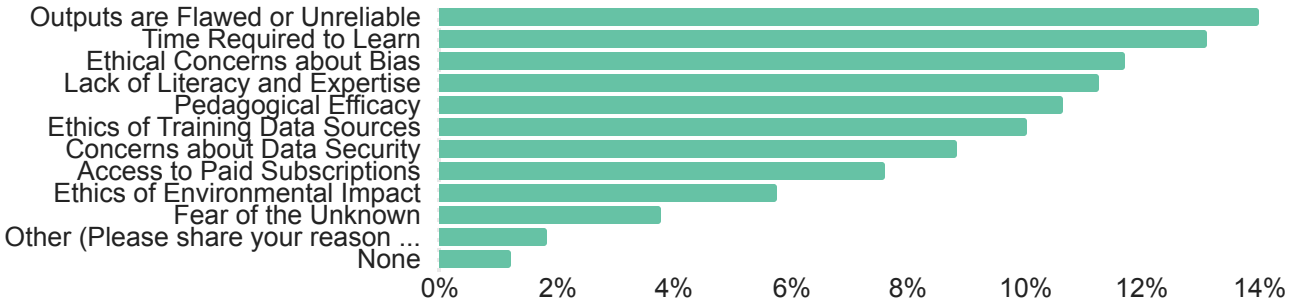


4 Barriers to Adoption of Generative AI Tools

The most significant barriers include concerns about flawed outputs (noted by 92 respondents), the time required to learn the tools (86 respondents), and ethical issues regarding data bias (77 respondents). This section provides a detailed examination of the challenges faculty face in adopting generative AI, underscoring the need for streamlined learning opportunities and addressing ethical uncertainties.***

Q: What are the most significant barriers to your adoption of AI tools and technologies in your work? (Please select all that apply.)

156 Responses



11 Responses

Other (Please share your reason in the textbox.) - Text
Students need to be able to analyze issues themselves rather than just regurgitating what the bot says.
Inertia
Energy required to run AI is very high!
They are fundamentally antithetical to learning in the fields that I teach (reading and writing).
unsure of utility for my content
Reputable institutions still resist usage (NSF grant proposals, academic journals)
Time in my class. This semester I swtiched to the 7-week format, so I didn't have any time to give to explore AI with my students like I wanted to.
It would be helpful to see examples of how to incorporate AI into assignments and course content
Ethical concerns about student growth. Also, I don't need AI to generate "lesson plans" that are generic and/or filled with bias/propoganda
Desire to maintain my own voice and creativity.
Lack of interest

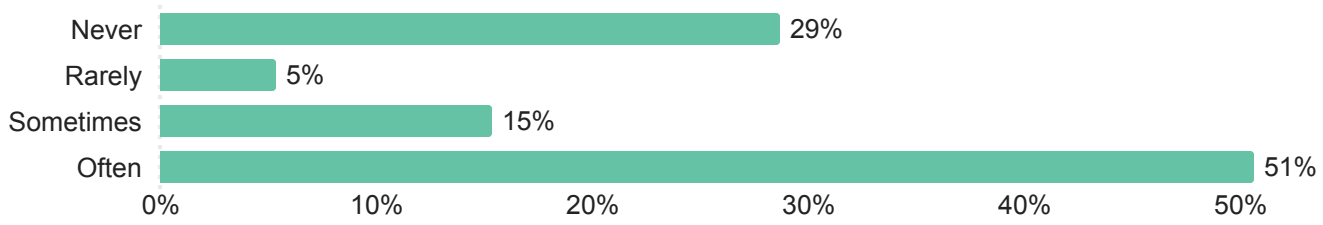
5 Integration of AI in Pedagogy and Classroom Practice

51% of respondents include policies on AI usage in their syllabi, and 26% often or sometimes engage with ethical or pedagogical discussions around AI in their classes. This shows that many faculty are taking steps to introduce AI literacy to students, although some remain uncertain about how to effectively include AI in their curriculum.***

Syllabus Policy

51% (76) of respondents often have a genAI policy on their syllabi and discuss it with their classes, but 29% (43) never do.

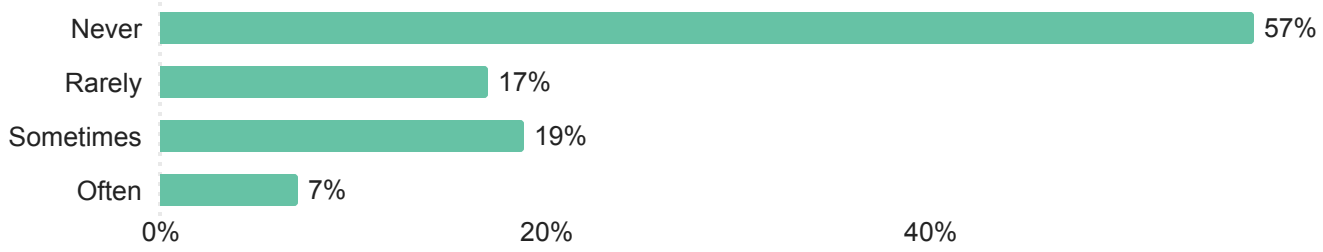
150 Responses



AI Discussed in Class, Readings, Assignments

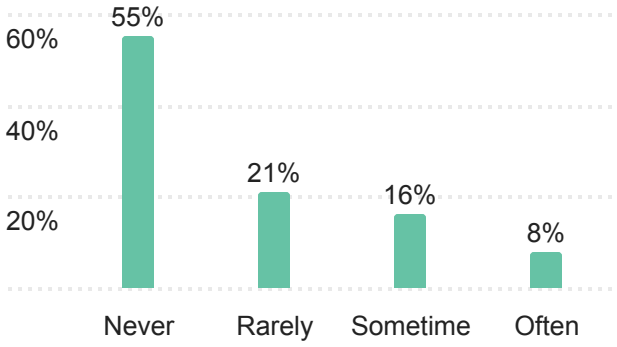
26% (40) of respondents often or sometimes engage with the ethical, economic, or pedagogical impacts of genAI in readings, discussions, or assignments in their classes.

153 Responses



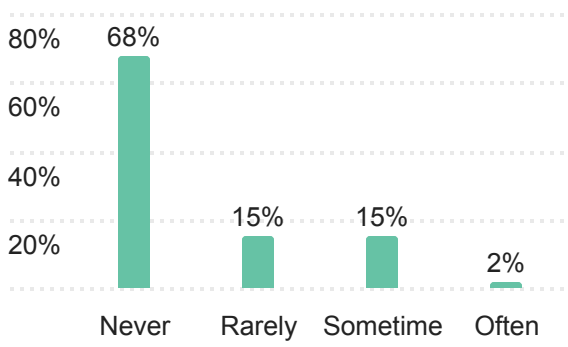
Q: I devote class time to teaching students to effectively use GenAI tools in ways relevant to the course.

156 Responses



Q: Some of my assignments require the use of GenAI tools.

153 Responses

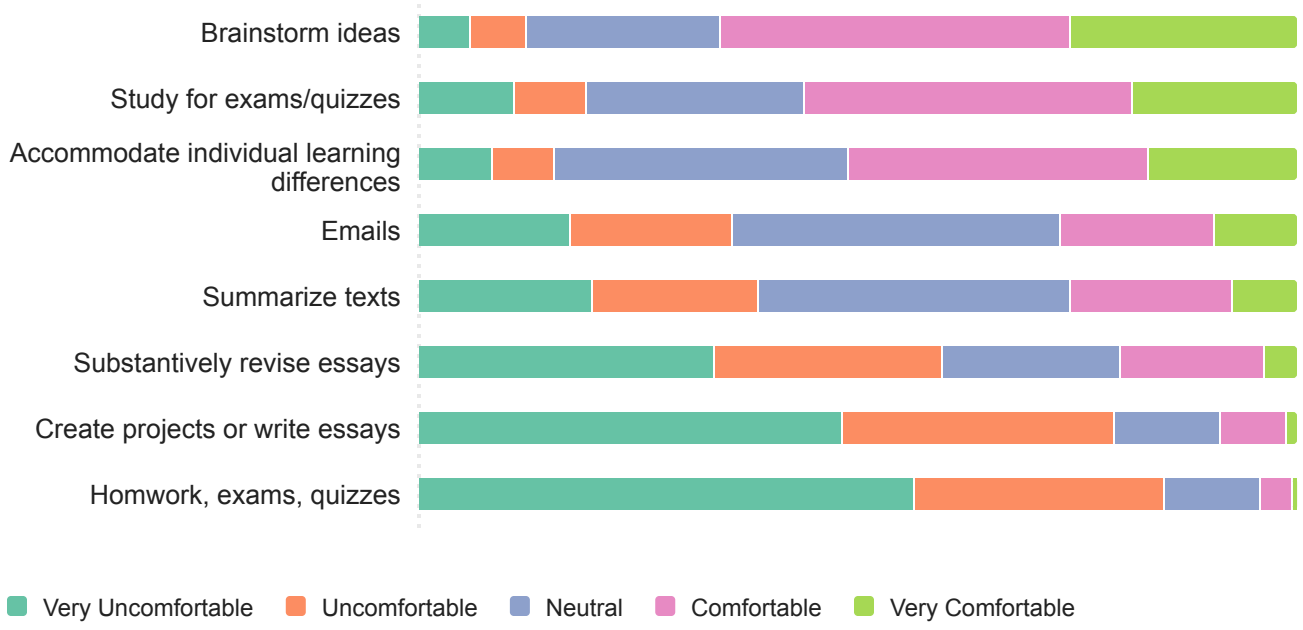


6 Faculty Attitudes Towards Student & Faculty Use of Generative AI

Faculty respondents showed varied levels of comfort with students using generative AI tools. While many support student use for brainstorming and study assistance, they are significantly less comfortable with students using AI for completing homework, essays, or exams. This indicates a nuanced view of where AI can be appropriately applied in learning without undermining academic integrity.***

Q: How would you feel if you learned that your STUDENTS were using ChatGPT or other generative AI tools to:

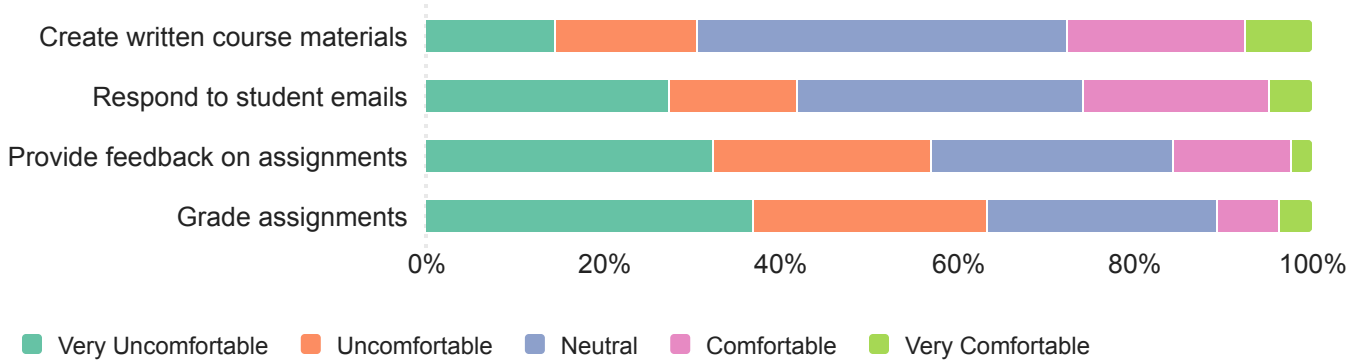
158 Responses



Q: How would you feel if your students learned that YOU were using ChatGPT or other generative AI tools to:

A few respondents expressed concern with the phrasing of this question as it implied that they would use generative AI tools even though they'd already expressed that they do not. These results should interpreted in light of this.

158 Responses

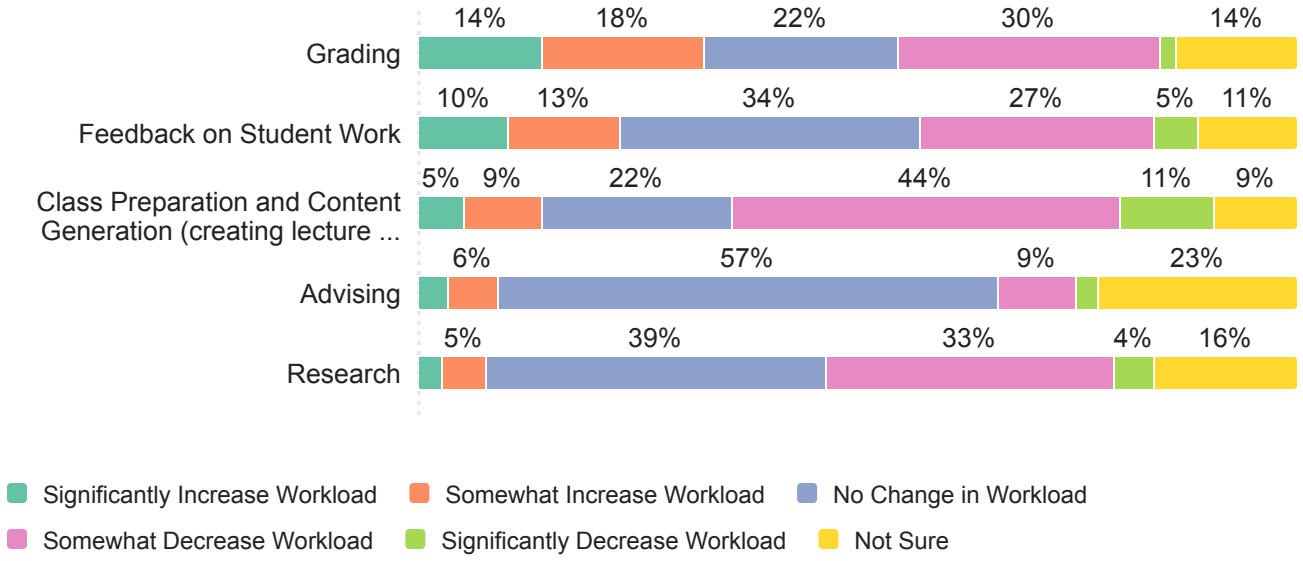


7 Effects of Generative AI on Faculty Work Load

The survey reveals mixed expectations about how AI will impact faculty workload. Many respondents expect AI to decrease workload for tasks like grading and content generation, while others fear it may lead to increased time demands due to the need to verify AI-generated content. This section explores the dual potential of AI to either enhance efficiency or create additional work depending on its implementation.***

Q: How do you think generative AI tools will affect faculty work load in the following areas?

158 Responses



***Summaries written with the help of ChatGPT.

8 Respondents turn to a variety of sources to learn about Generative AI ****

The responses regarding where faculty turn to learn about AI reveal a preference for accessible, independent sources, such as internet searches and self-experimentation, alongside informal peer learning. About 32% of respondents mentioned using internet resources like Google or YouTube, which indicates the importance of easy, on-demand access to information.

Another significant portion (19%) relies on colleagues and professional networks, highlighting the value of peer support and informal knowledge exchange in learning about AI. Formal professional development opportunities (17%) and academic publications (11%) are also commonly utilized, suggesting that structured learning remains an important resource for many faculty members.

However, the data also shows that some faculty feel they do not have a trusted or reliable source for learning about AI, pointing to an opportunity to develop and promote authoritative resources. This gap suggests a potential role for institutions to provide more centralized, trusted educational materials and workshops.

126 Responses



9 Respondents Expressed both Support for Adoption and Ethical and Pedagogical Concerns****

The survey responses on the use of generative AI in higher education reveal a complex mixture of enthusiasm, ethical concern, and resistance. Approximately one-fourth of respondents are supportive, seeing AI as an essential tool for enhancing both administrative efficiency and student learning. However, ethical and pedagogical concerns are significant, with about one-third of respondents worried about AI's impact on critical thinking, creativity, and the integrity of academic work.

There is also a strong call for differentiated training to help faculty integrate AI tools effectively and ethically. Clearer policies on AI use in student assignments and faculty workflows are needed, as many faculty members expressed discomfort about their current understanding of ethical AI integration. Additionally, some respondents were dissatisfied with the survey design, feeling it lacked nuance and made assumptions about their familiarity with AI.

The following themes emerged from the survey responses:

1. **Support for AI Adoption:** 15 responses (25%)
2. **Ethical Concerns:** 20 responses (33%)
3. **Pedagogical Concerns:** 12 responses (20%)
4. **Resistance to AI Use:** 5 responses (8%)
5. **Need for Training and Resources:** 10 responses (17%)
6. **Administrative and Policy Issues:** 8 responses (13%)
7. **Survey Design Feedback:** 5 responses (8%)

Overlapping Themes:

- Some responses discuss both **ethical concerns** and the **need for training** (e.g., concerns about bias leading to a call for ethical training).
- Overlaps between **pedagogical concerns** and **resistance to AI** suggest some resistance may be rooted in fears of negative impacts on student skills.

Selected Quotes:

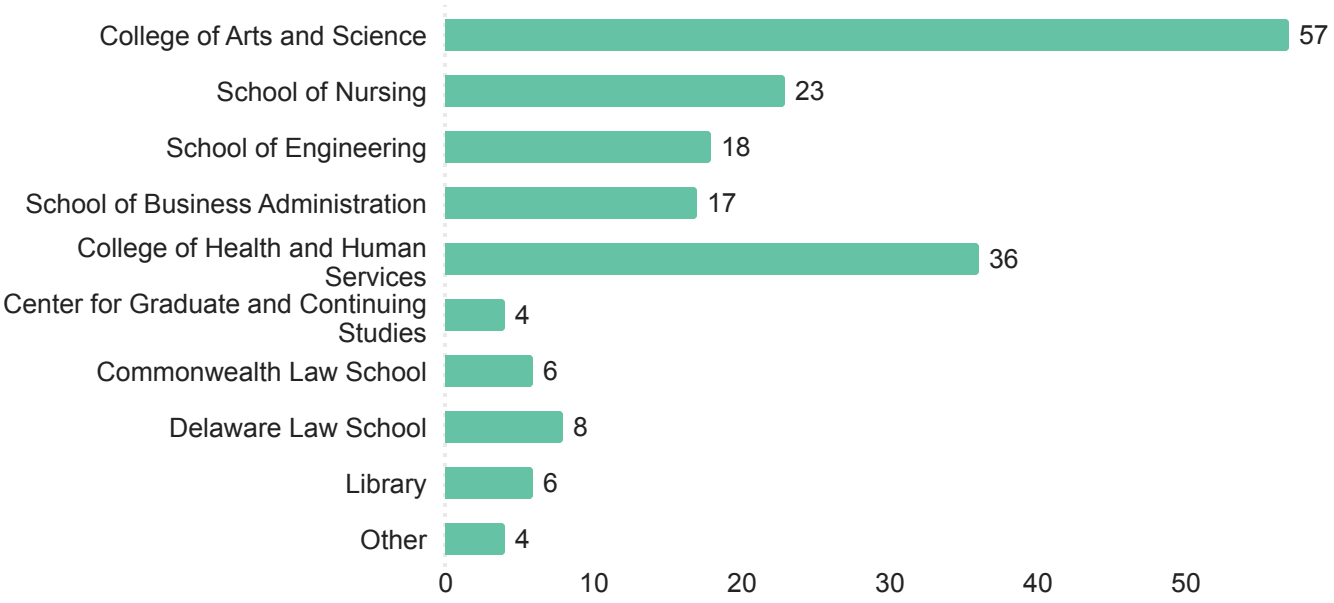
- **Support for AI Adoption:**
  - *"We MUST teach our students about it and empower them to use it appropriately."*
- **Ethical Concerns:**
  - *"Not only is GenAI fraught with ethical issues, even businesses are increasingly skeptical of its positive impact."*
- **Pedagogical Concerns:**
  - *"Our students are losing skills from inappropriate use of AI."*
- **Resistance to AI Use:**
  - *"AI will be the end of higher education and probably civilization."*
- **Policy Issues:**
  - *"We need to revise policies on students' use of AI. Students and faculty need to use it critically and not lazily."*
- **Survey Design Feedback:**
  - *"Those last set of questions were not helpful. The data collected from that item would be invalid."*

****Analysis and summaries provided with the help of ChatGPT.

Appendix 1: Demographic Data

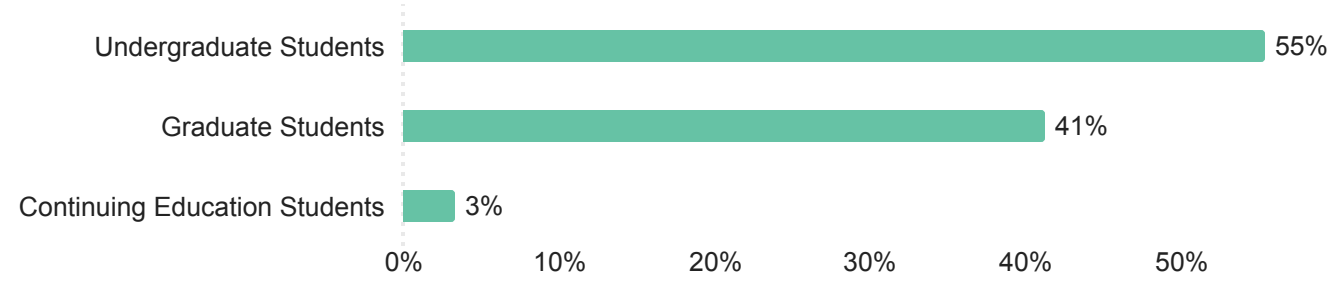
Q: In which School/College is your primary appointment?

179 Responses



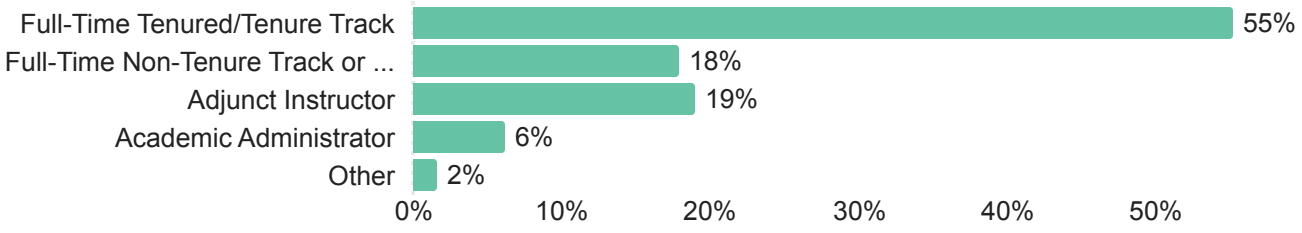
Q: What kinds of students do you primarily teach? (Select all that apply.)

174 Responses



Q: What type of position are you in?

179 Responses



Appendix 2: Text Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Q: Where do you turn to learn about AI?

126 Responses

Where do you turn to learn about AI?
Readings, podcasts, internet, colleagues
Ai
courses offered through linkedin learning or universities
The Internet
Workshops, TLT, librarians, experimentation
the internet!
Publications such as Wired and from colleagues
n/a
Internet search
Teaching and learnig articles, teaching and othr professional conferences
industry articles; social media
Friends and Colleagues
library resources, colleagues
Podcasts
The internet
Using it
Colleagues, online articles on Higher Ed
web
Internet
google

Q: Do you have any additional comments about the use of generative AI in higher education that you would like to share?

86 Responses

Do you have any additional comments about the use of generative AI in higher education that you would like to share?
We need to be ahead of the curve. There is no room to wait, we need to be mindful, careful, and not afraid.
I see its usefulness akin to Wikipedia. You wouldn't turn in a paper with Wikipedia as your only source, but you can start there to get an overview and dive into some of the sources they list. Same thing with AI; you can use it as a starting off point and then click on the links generated for sources to get into the research while being mindful that AIs can hallucinate so their responses need to be fact checked.
There appears to be significant potential and pitfalls; we have a ways to go
I think that professors need to teach and model AI literacy, and it's our responsibility to be curious, work through our resistance, and embrace how we can integrated AI into our classes
NA
Some of these questions were not well phrased. For example, I was asked how I would feel if my students found out I was using AI to do tasks associated with my courses. But I don't use AI for anything associated with my course. By answering "very uncomfortble" there's a way in which I was admitting to doing something I don't do.
n/a
Better to teach with it and prepare them to leverage it in their professional lives
I want to learn more about it; I want to use it ethically and responsibly, but I don't want it to stifle my creativity or reduce my critical thinking/analysis
I think that generative AI should be embraced but taught to be used effectively and ethically
Any training should be differentiated. Regular users in their own group being taught new skills.
na
I am not afraid of it, just don't kn ow enough about it
Generative AI as it currently exists is highly flawed (see Mata v Avianca), so I personally have no plans for its use
It is very important to properly use AI to increase productivity and model correct usage to our students
I would love resources

Not only is GenAI fraught with ethical issues (and literal unsustainability, given how much power it requires to use), even businesses are increasingly skeptical of its positive impact. The idea that we would use something so flawed to teach students is an insult to critical thinking, made even more ridiculous by the fact that even businesses are wary of the costs.

AI already is becoming commonplace. Every google search that I do provides me with an AI summary. Most of it is accurate, some of it is not. We need to revise policies on students' use of AI. Students and faculty need to use it critically and not lazily. We should not license specialty AI without a strong understanding of the software's strengths, shortcomings and biases.

none

With participant permission, I use AI to summarize meeting transcripts to help keep track of meeting content and action items.

Q: What kind of trainings on AI would you find helpful and in what format (e.g., in person, Zoom, asynchronous online, a SharePoint site, particular topics)?

109 Responses

What kind of trainings on AI would you find helpful and in what format (e.g., in person, Zoom, asynchronous online, a SharePoint site, particular topics)?

A balance of just-in-time training resources that are easily accessible at any time, any place WITH a blend of opportunities to engage with high end users and in sessions where folx come together to learn, share, and discover.

asynchronous online or sharepoint

any

in-person, Zoom, or asynchronous online. I find that AI workshops tend to have limited effectiveness unless they include substantial time for faculty to play with tools, be wowed by them, and then process their concerns and emotions. If a workshop tries to rush this unstructured play-and-reflection time, the workshop falls apart due to participant distraction.

training on do various tasks more efficiently

asynchronous online and SharePoint site

none

Sharepoint site, types of assignments that can utilize AI appropriately and emphasize shortcomings/drawbacks

What are the various types ie, those that can generate PPTs, vs, analyze data,etc. I think in person or synchrounous online. If i'm left to work asynchronously it may not be prioritized as workload increases throughout the semester.

Trainings on how to use AI responsibly in the classroom to make lectures more exciting and interactive. How do use AI to reduce my workload in areas that are routine, or do not require very specific training/expertise. I would value ANY format of learning (in-person, Zoom, asynch)

sharepoint/asynchronous online

ALL formats: prompt engineering

Lexis and Westlaw AI, CHATGPT

in person, Zoom, asynchronous online

zoom or in person synchronous

Zoom, asynchronous online

Asynchronus online - organized not generically but by TASK: So, you want to X with generative AI? Here's how to do that!

in person training with a dedicated purpose or theme (learn how to use AI-tool to do admin task, or ways to grade student work, or to create documentation for meetings, etc)

combination of synchronous zoom, asynchronous online and sharepoint options on customized topics

Asynchronous

Q: Do you have any feedback to share about the access to Microsoft Copilot provided by Widener?

77 Responses

Do you have any feedback to share about the access to Microsft Copilot provided by Widener?

I use it extensively. It changes and is mostly getting better over time.

n/a

I haven't used it yet and don't recall how to access it; I've used ChatGPT

I taught my students how to use Microsoft's Draft Coach, and it resulted in incorrect MLA citations. This was a good moment for modeling healthy skepticism of AI, but it was disappointing that a tool I'd been encouraged to share with stuudents (in the TLT course design bootcamp) didn't actually help them. Or, it didn't help all students with citations, at least.

I haven't been using it. Would like further instruction on its applications.

NA

no
I'm going to try it out!
I don't know about it
na
Not aware of the availability of this tool
Yes. Widener has access to all of the generative AI work that employees do through the Copilot system and can track someone's use. I find this incredibly problematic for privacy and intellectual property reasons
I like having access to a tool
I like it -- thank you!
Have not used it, don't plan to use it
It is good, but it would be nice to have access to more specialized tools
None
I wish it wasn't available
All GenAI, including Copilot, are biased. The fact that I have colleagues asking AI to generate summaries and synthesize data, as if it could do so objectively, is disturbing and angering. The university has a responsibility to ensure faculty are behaving ethically and thoughtfully.
appreciate it's availability