Cross-campus working group tackles AI academic integrity and equity

Institute for Computation & Data-Enabled Insight
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More than 60 University of Arizona faculty and staff members and students have been meeting this summer to help facilitate a campuswide conversation around emerging artificial intelligence technologies and tools.

The Artificial Intelligence, Access and Integrity – or AI² – summer working group began meeting on May 31 and plans to present its outcomes and recommendations on a number of AI topics in the fall.

"The purpose of this group is to bring visibility and coherence to the many discussions and activities happening on campus around artificial intelligence and generative AI," said Barney Maccabe, executive director of the Institute for Computation and Data-Enabled Insight, or ICDI. "With the rapid emergence of novel information technologies such as ChatGPT, scite, DALL·E and others, the potential to significantly influence every aspect of higher education, from the classroom to the research laboratory, is evident."

Members of the AI² Working Group will hold a town hall in the Union Kiva in the Student Union Memorial Center on Sept. 6 from 3-4:30 p.m. to present the progress and outcomes of their work. This event is the first of a series of activities scheduled for the 2023-24 academic year, including panels and a debate. More information about the events is posted on the University's artificial intelligence website.

"Throughout the rapid emergence of easily accessible AI tools over the past year, many questions and concerns have been expressed from across campus about the use of these technologies. This has included consideration of the opportunities for effectively incorporating them into our teaching and learning mission," said Greg Heileman, vice provost for undergraduate education. "The AI² working group has done a wonderful job of addressing these questions, concerns and opportunities in order to provide recommendations and guidance through a centralized web portal."

Since the public release of ChatGPT in November, colleges and universities around the country have expressed concerns about the possibility of students using AI-powered tools to cheat on assignments or tests. At the same time, there have been discussions around using AI in research and about the potential advantages of using AI in education to adapt and restructure teaching methods.

ChatGPT – a type of generative AI – and other AI tools use machine learning algorithms and existing data from broad digital and social sources to generate original, humanlike material including text, videos and images.

"In one sense, these AI technologies are simply tools, like electronic calculators, smartphones and information search tools, that will be integrated into higher education in due time," Maccabe said. "What's different, though, is that the rate in which these technologies are being introduced will continue to increase, leaving little time to understand the impact of one technology before the next technology needs to be considered."

In May, ICDI, the Faculty Senate, the Office of the Provost and the office of Research, Innovation and Impact surveyed faculty members to learn about their understanding, use, thoughts and insights into AI tools, and to identify those interested in serving on an AI² summer working group. More than 250 faculty members responded and more than 100 indicated they wanted to join the working group over the summer. Students and staff members also joined.

The group has been gathering information and conducting collaborative research, aiming to provide resources for faculty, staff and students, along with a basic training path for AI literacy skills and optimal use of AI tools.

The working group divided into teams to address eight topics identified as priorities for students, faculty and industry partners. The teams and the work they will undertake are:

- **AI in Industry:** Will begin a process to define the University's role in advancing the responsible use of AI in Arizona and industry, fostering a substantive business community dialogue on AI's implications for economic development, work and humanity.
- **AI Equity:** Will investigate and promote current developments on campus that relate to AI access and equity among students, faculty members and D2L teams to create a responsive plan that considers access and equity concerns and aligns with future developments.
- **AI Data Acumen:** Will propose recommendations for University goals, principles and practices in formal and informal instruction to build an understanding of AI and its societal implications, focusing on students, faculty, researchers, staff and administrators.
- **AI Training:** Will provide foundational interdisciplinary and easily accessible AI education offered by a compilation of resources and training, intended to develop AI literacy skills, offer clear pathways for skill development with a specific emphasis on data and information literacy, and empower individuals across disciplines and within the institution to use AI tools and services effectively and ethically.
AI Integrity: Will explore and define principles that can be used by the University when determining how students and faculty can ethically use artificial intelligence technologies, examine the current code of academic conduct to determine whether to recommend changes that account for the increasing availability of AI technologies, and recommend changes to how courses are designed and taught to ensure that students' learning experiences are enhanced, not hindered, by AI technology in an equitable manner.

Syllabus Guidance: Will explore transparency in the responsible use of AI and creating productive learning environments by providing clear, ethical and effective guidance on AI applications in every syllabus. The guidelines will recognize diverse needs, provide sample syllabus statements, consider AI tools as supportive technology for learning, address potential access inequities, suggest how to acknowledge/cite generative AI use, inform students about AI detection and surveillance, and promote AI literacy.

AI Communications: Will develop a web-based clearinghouse as a dynamic and up-to-date University AI information hub accessible to the campus community and beyond.

AI Fall Events: Will organize and facilitate events that are accessible to the entire campus community and provide a foundation for discussion.

The working group encourages students interested in providing their perspectives on AI in education to contribute to the listed topics. The group also will survey the campus community early in the fall semester to learn more about AI use and interest at the University. For further information about joining the working groups this fall, contact Angela Cruze[2], program manager for ICDI.

In addition to convening the working groups, ICDI plans to launch an AI Exchange in the fall, providing a matchmaking service that connects AI experts at the University of Arizona with people in Arizona who need to understand how emerging AI technologies will impact their futures.

"AI is ubiquitous," Maccabe said. "The intent with all of these efforts is to make the vast AI expertise at the University available to the campus community and to the people of Arizona."

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