Policy Session: AI in Education

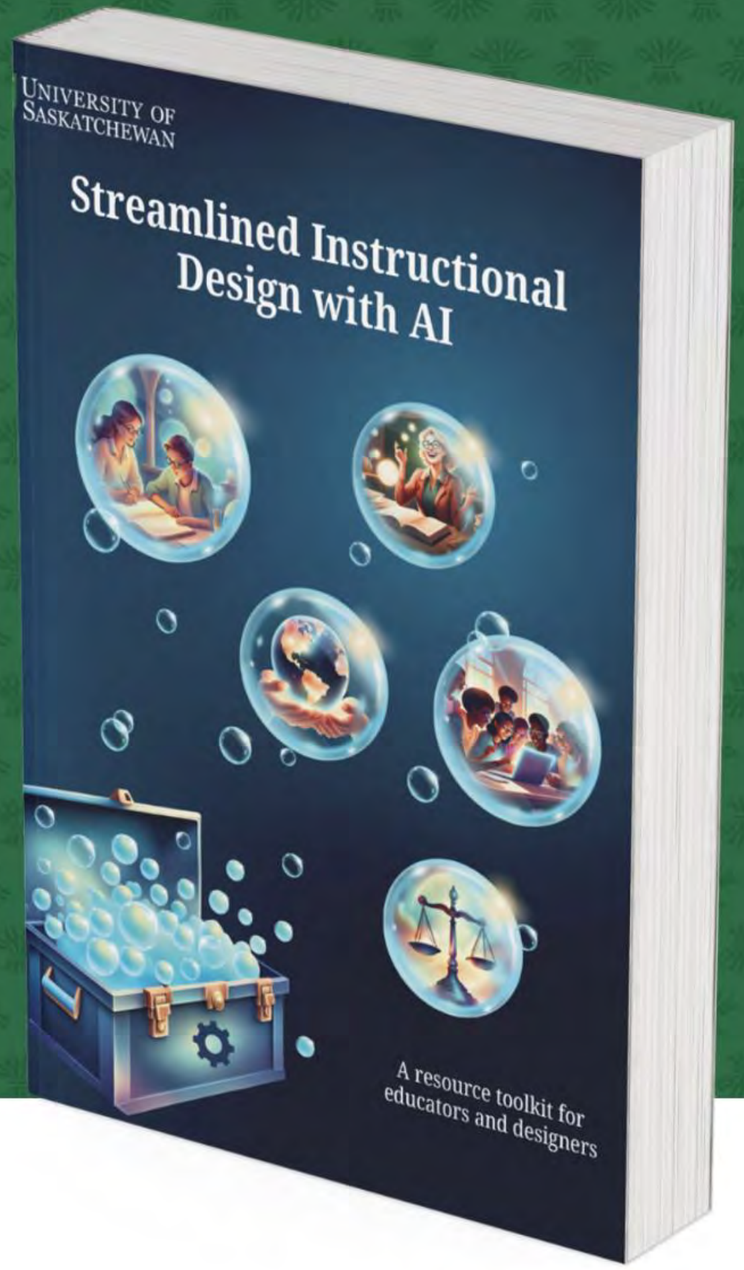
Dr. Paula MacDowell, PhD
paula.macdowell@usask.ca

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

Session Overview

- Research on AI in Higher Education
- Canada's AI Regulatory History
- Policy Priorities for AI in Education
- Promises of AI & Harms We Can't Ignore

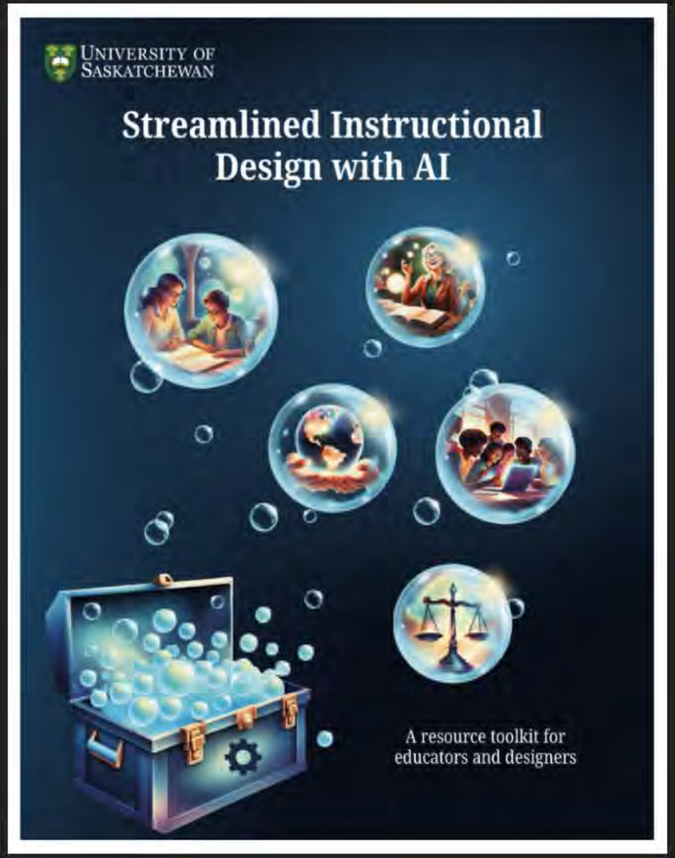


CSG MIDWEST

University of Saskatchewan

Streamlined Instructional Design with AI

Paula MacDowell and ETAD 873

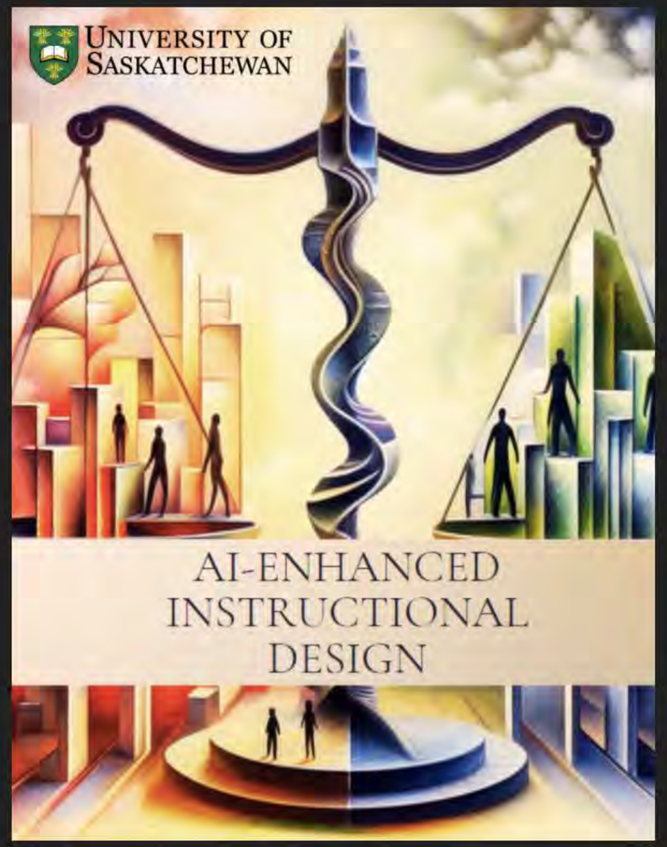


Aiming to demystify artificial intelligence (AI) for educators and instructional designers, this book makes AI more accessible and approachable. By providing practical insights, user-friendly strategies, and engaging narratives, the authors provide support for responsibly integrating AI in diverse classroom settings. By empowering teachers and students with AI tools, the 19 chapters demonstrate equitable and innovative educational practices. Notably, the inclusion of social justice perspectives within the context of AI integration represents a unique and original contribution to this work.

https://openpress.usask.ca/etad873streamlinedinstructionaldesignwithai/

AI-Enhanced Instructional Design

Dr. Paula MacDowell; Kristin Moskalyk; Katrina Korchinski; and ETAD 873



AI provides educators and instructional designers with powerful tools to enhance the student learning experience. This guide presents practical examples of AI applications that are versatile and suitable for a broad spectrum of instructional activities, alongside others that have more specific uses. The textbook explores effective ways AI can generate high-quality course content, foster creativity, personalize learning, and drive innovation. Across the 18 chapters, the authors emphasize the need to work together to ensure AI's ethical and responsible use in educational settings.

https://openpress.usask.ca/etad873aienhancedinstructionaldesign/

Register Login

CJLT RCAT Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology
La Revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie

HOME ABOUT AUTHORS CURRENT ARCHIVES ANNOUNCEMENTS SEARCH

HOME / ARCHIVES / VOL. 50 NO. 4 (2024): SPECIAL ISSUE TECHNOLOGY AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN CANADA / Articles

Preparing Educators to Teach and Create With Generative Artificial Intelligence

Paula MacDowell
University of Saskatchewan
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5456-5571

Kristin Moskalyk
University of Saskatchewan
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-4502-0618

Katrina Korchinski
University of Saskatchewan
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8866-2127

- How do we prepare teachers for a world where machine intelligence is close to, meets, and exceeds (these will vary by task) human intelligence?

VISIONARIUM
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EMERGING AND DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

International Journal of Emerging and Disruptive Innovation in Education : VISIONARIUM

Trustworthy Integration of AI in Online Learning: Supporting Student Agency and Inquiry through Open Pedagogy

Paula MacDowell, *University of Saskatchewan* Follow
Katrina Korchinski, *University of Saskatchewan* Follow
Kristin Moskalyk, *University of Saskatchewan* Follow
Khadijeh Ravan, *University of Saskatchewan* Follow

- We are teaching AIs to strengthen their critical thinking and reasoning skills; now they are becoming smarter than us.
- **The goal is not just smarter machines, but wiser humans.**

AI Policy

- Currently, there is a fragmented landscape of AI legislation across Canada.
- There is no clear accountability for the implementation of AI in public schools, and the unique risks of AI for children (minors).
- We must develop stronger policies to safeguard the rights of students and educators.

CSG MIDWEST

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

Government of Canada | Gouvernement du Canada

MENU

Canada.ca > Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Artificial Intelligence and Data Act

From: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

- In 2022, Canada started work to establish AIDA, a regulatory framework for AI systems.
- AIDA was terminated when Parliament was prorogued ahead of the 2025 federal election.

Did you know?

- Currently, there is no regulatory framework in Canada specific to AI.
- While some regulations in specific areas, such as health and finance, apply to certain uses of AI, there is no approach to ensure that AI systems address systemic risks during their design and development.
- Great strides have been made in ethical AI development methods. While this work continues, common standards are needed to ensure that Canadians can trust the AI systems they use every day.

Government of Canada | Gouvernement du Canada

Search Canada.ca

MENU

Canada.ca > Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Responsible Development and Management of Advanced Generative AI Systems

From: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

- The Voluntary Code does not create new legal obligations or alter existing ones.
- It offers Canadians common standards for responsible generative AI use until formal regulation comes into force.

Accountability – Organizations understand their role with regard to the systems they develop or manage, put in place appropriate risk management systems, and share information with other organizations as needed to avoid gaps.
Safety – Systems are subject to risk assessments, and mitigations needed to ensure safe operation are put in place prior to deployment.
Fairness and Equity – Potential impacts with regard to fairness and equity are assessed and addressed at different phases of development and deployment of the systems.
Transparency – Sufficient information is published to allow consumers to make informed decisions and for experts to evaluate whether risks have been adequately addressed.
Human Oversight and Monitoring – System use is monitored after deployment, and updates are implemented as needed to address any risks that materialize.
Validity and Robustness – Systems operate as intended, are secure against cyber attacks, and their behaviour in response to the range of tasks or situations to which they are likely to be exposed is understood.

AI Policy Priority #1

- Value teacher perspectives. AI policy without inclusion is an illusion.
- As Larry Cuban (1986) reminds us, technology reforms often fail when educators are sidelined.
- AI must serve classrooms, not disrupt them.

Which is Education? Which is AI?

AI Policy Priority #2

- Prioritize teacher training.
- Without empowering teachers, AI in the classroom will fall short of its potential.
- Deprofessionalization is a risk.

CSG MIDWEST

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

"The Isolator" Helmut by Hugo Gernsback, 1925

AI Policy Priority #3

- Innovate responsibly with AI.
- AI in education must serve learners and do no harm.
- Questions to guide every decision: *Is AI ethical, equitable, trustworthy, and sustainable?*

CSG MIDWEST

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

Promises of AI

- ✅ Automation of repetitive tasks, freeing up time for instructors to focus on relationships and empathy.
- ✅ Generate interactive learning experiences (e.g., games, virtual worlds, simulations).
- ✅ Preparing students for our digital society and the workforce.
- ✅ Support for neurodiverse students; continuous quality improvement.

Harms We Can't Ignore

- ⚠️ The dehumanization of learning processes; loss of trust and emotional connection.
- ⚠️ The standardization of thinking through algorithms; loss of independent thought.
- ⚠️ Ethical concerns over privacy and data security, surveillance, misinformation, and bias/fairness in AI decisions.
- ⚠️ A growing dependency on systems that may not be sustainable, accessible, equitable, inclusive, or transparent.

CSG MIDWEST

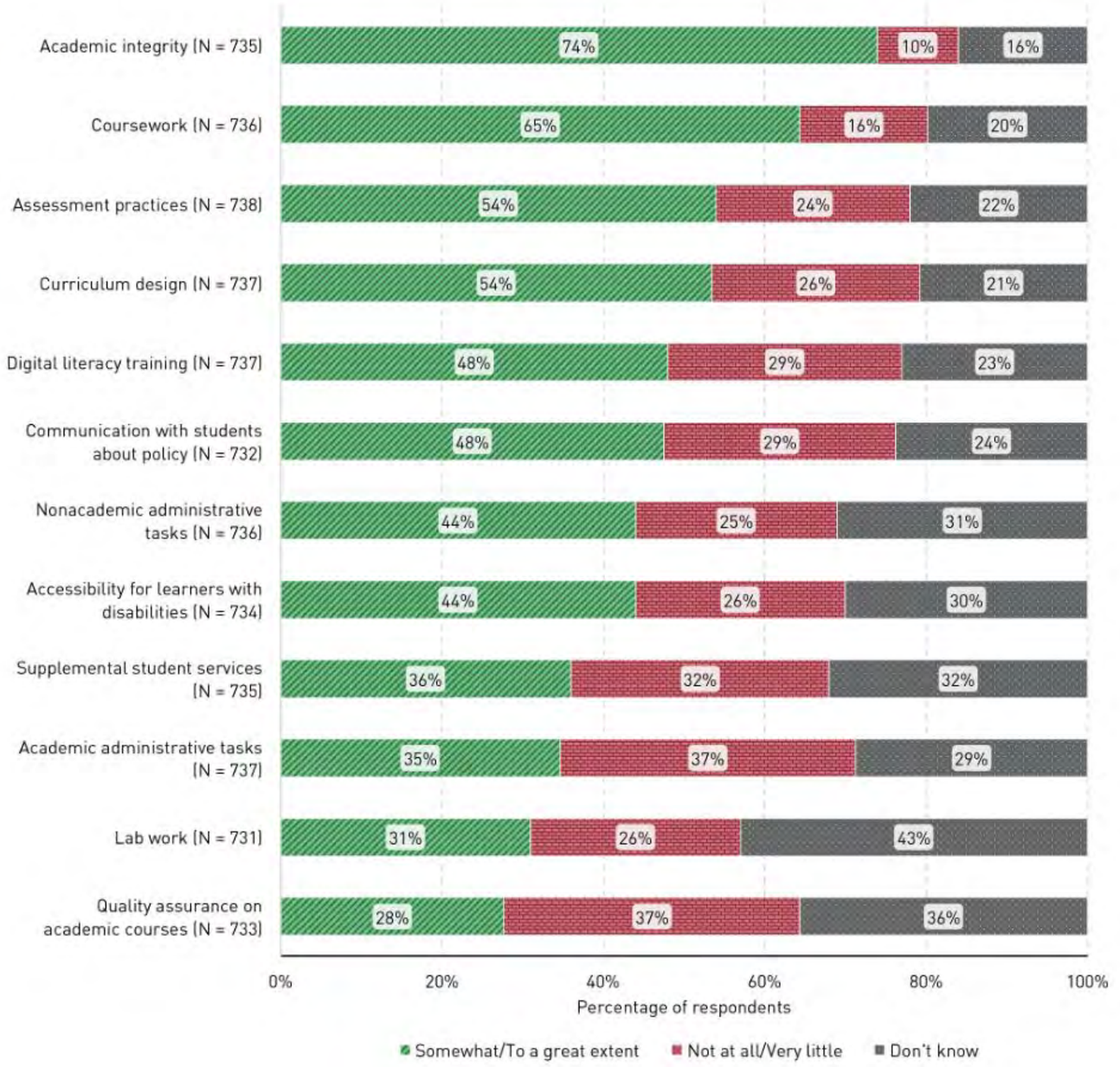
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

https://www.educause.edu/content/2025/2025-educause-ai-landscape-study/introduction-and-key-findings

- Academic Integrity
- Coursework
- Assessment Practices
- Curriculum Design

Figure 18. Impact of AI on Teaching and Learning Elements



3 Methods to Address Misconduct (Dr. Sarah Eaton)

Punitive	Educative	Restorative
• Crime and punishment approach. • Sanctions should be fair and fit the offense. • Progressive discipline model. Second and subsequent offences result in harsher penalties. • Relatively easy to track and monitor.	• Rehabilitative. • Provides opportunities for students to learn. • Builds skills. • Seeks to reduce recidivism. • Easy to track some aspects (e.g., workshops attended, self-reported learning, rates of recidivism.)	• Seeks to repair harm. • Focus on community-building and long-term relationships. • Can be time-intensive. • All parties should agree to the approach (not appropriate in cases where there is no willingness to accept responsibility).

Boisvert et al., 2020; Moriarty & Wilson, 2022; Sopcak, 2019, 2020; Sopcak & Hood, 2022; Stoesz et al., 2019; Stoesz & Eaton, 2022

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

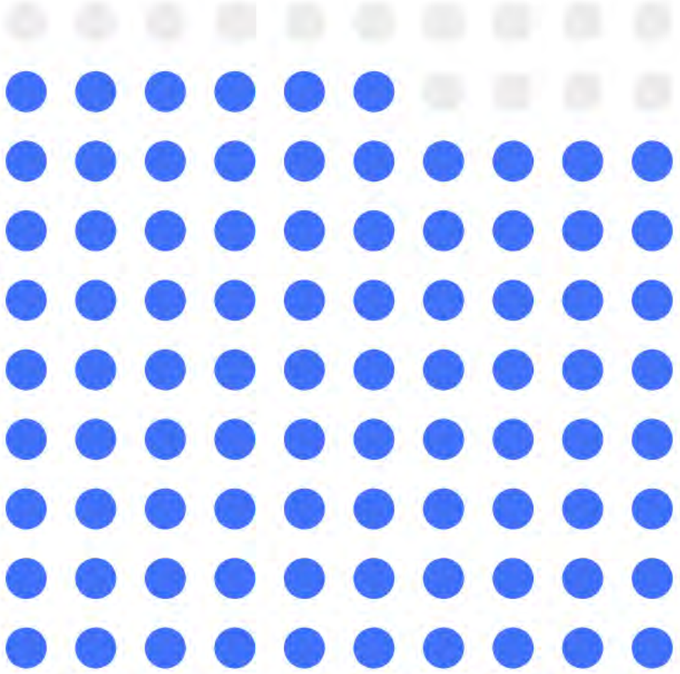
86% of students already use AI in their studies

Percentage of students using AI in their studies

Question: How often do you use AI tools?

86%

of students claim to use AI in their studies

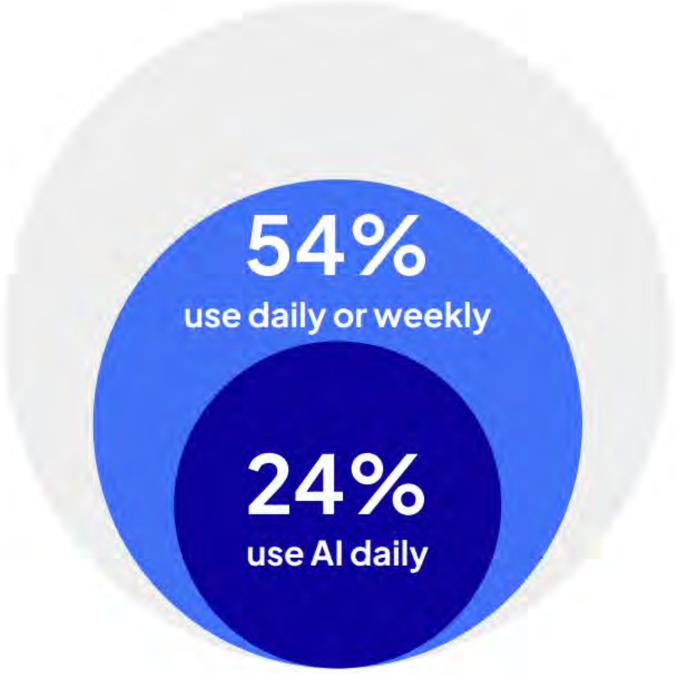


Frequency of students using AI in their studies

Question: How often do you use AI tools?

54%

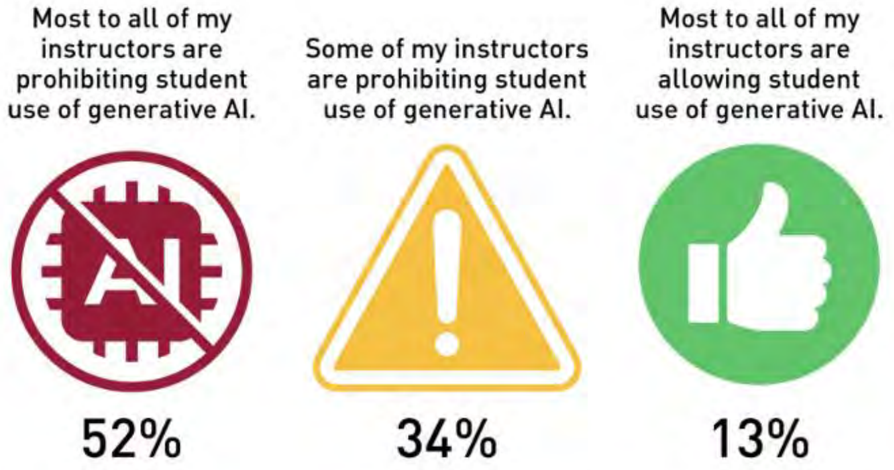
of students use AI at least on a weekly basis



https://www.digitaleducationcouncil.com/post/digital-education-council-global-ai-student-survey-2024

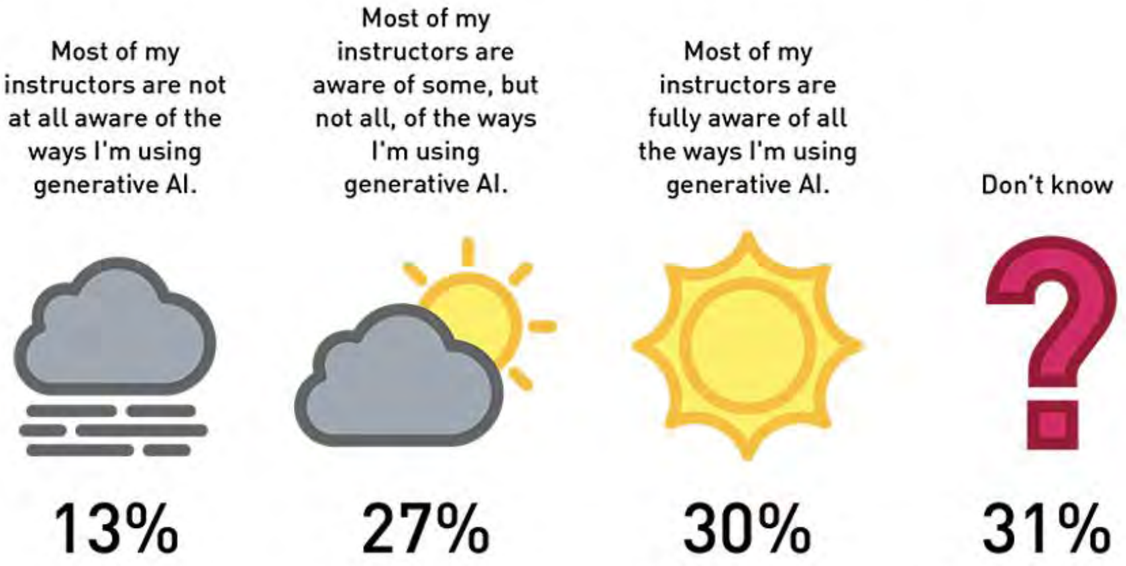
https://www.educause.edu/content/2025/students-and-technology-report#GenerativeAIintheClassroom

Figure 12. Extent to Which Instructors Prohibit or Encourage Student Use of Generative AI



Percentage of respondents (N = 4,068)

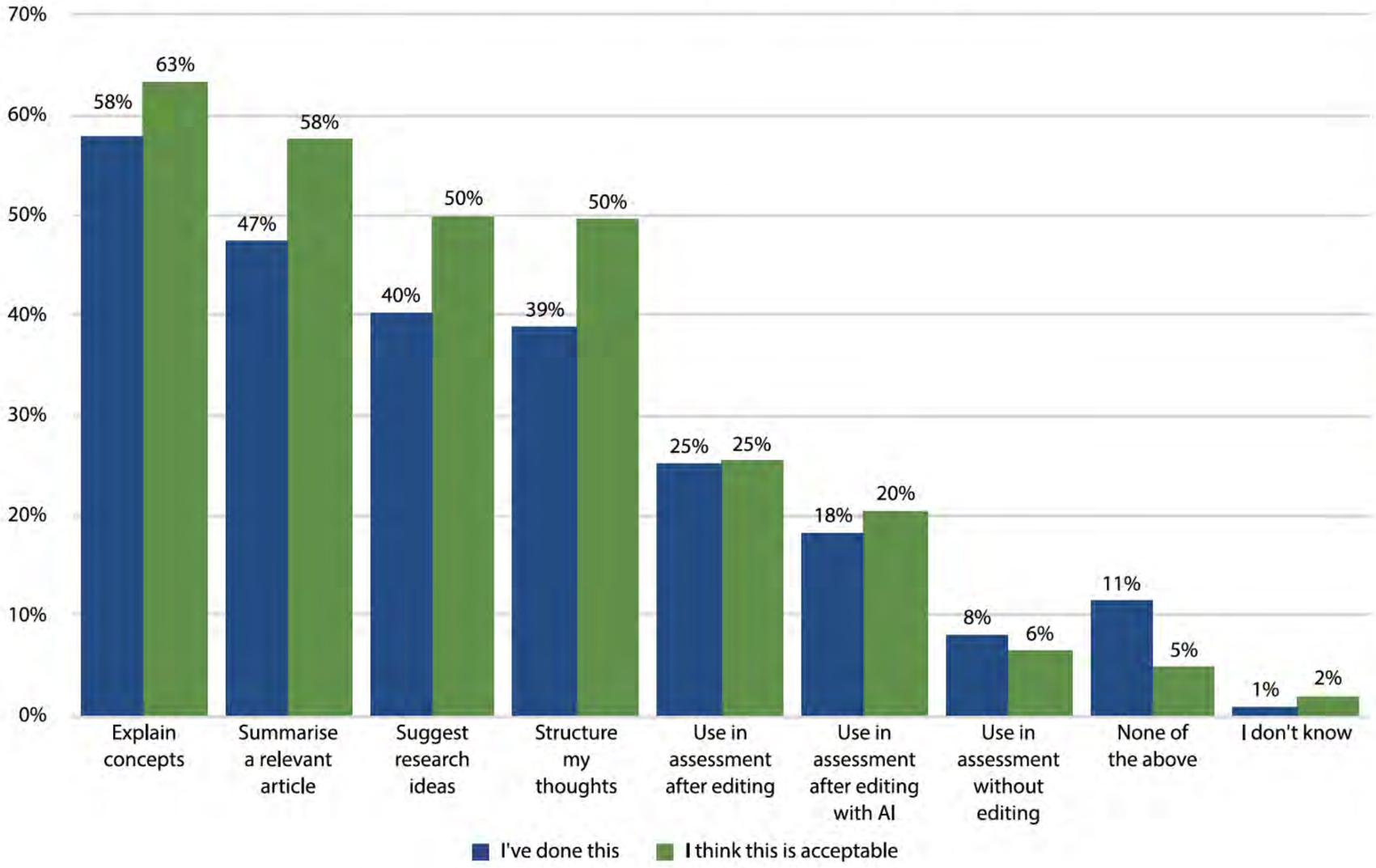
Figure 13. Instructor Awareness of Student Generative AI Use



Percentage of respondents (N = 2,778)

Stealth AI: What happens when students use AI but don't feel safe to talk about it?

Figure 5 What students have done themselves versus what they consider acceptable



Higher Education Policy Institute

Student Generative AI Survey 2025

Intelligence Augmentation

- *Are we preparing our students for redundancy?*
- *Or are we preparing them with the human skills to augment AI, rather than be replaced by machines?*

https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2025/02/26/student-generative-ai-survey-2025/

Key Takeaways: AI in Education Policy

- **Students are more than users of AI, they are creators, innovators, and community leaders.** *Their bold ideas, empathy, imagination, and leadership will shape what comes next.*
- **Policy for AI in education must align with** *societal well-being, human dignity, classroom realities, and ethical intentions.*
- **If we want a future where AI serves humanity, we must build it**—*not tomorrow, but today, starting with every classroom, every conversation, every act of courage.*

Thank you

Policy Session: AI in Education

Dr. Paula MacDowell, PhD
paula.macdowell@usask.ca