Outcomes of March Faculty Engagement Session on GSE Curriculum Design and Gen AI Integration

These outcomes from our March FES highlight the discussion in the separate breakout rooms on the integration of Gen AI into our master's and doctoral programs. We focused on research skills development, annotated bibliographies and literature reviews, and qualitative analysis.

> There were concerns regarding the ethical use of Gen AI, parental understanding in K-12 settings re. our M.A.T. and certain M.Ed. programs, equity issues in access to tools, and academic integrity.
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> Our discussions emphasized the importance of viewing AI tools as supplements rather than substitutes, aligning Gen AI usage with program and course outcomes, and teaching students to use technology as aids rather than complete solutions.
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> Additionally, there is a call for continued discussion on equitable and effective use of Gen AI, with suggestions including scaffolding ethical and effective use within common courses and fostering collaboration with university resources like libraries. As a sidenote, the provost announced at Faculty Senate last week that the university has decided to address this issue through a series of taskforces, one of which is a Teaching and Learning Taskforce.

Here are the individual breakout rooms' takeaways based on my notes during the general session.

Use of Gen AI for research skills in master's and doctoral programs. (Kelly Conn)

1. There is a need for qualitative and inductive research to understand how K-12 institutions are integrating Gen AI in schools i.e., lesson planning, and making it work in practice, before developing Gen AI curriculum for the M.A.T. and M.Ed. programs.
2. There is a concern about parental involvement in education, noting that lack of parental understanding of Gen AI may impact support for educational tools and initiatives involving Gen AI in K-12 settings.
3. There is a concern that our students understand Gen AI and its potential applications, as well as the ethical considerations involved, such as the importance of understanding use agreements, intellectual property issues, and the use of Gen AI databases without acknowledgment.
4. There are concerns about equity issues regarding access to Gen AI tools and what actions professors are taking to address these disparities.
5. Students have difficulties in distinguishing between summarizing and synthesis, suggesting reflection on whether this challenge and the use of Gen AI for synthesis is detrimental or beneficial.

Use of Gen AI for developing annotated bibliographies and literature reviews. (Dan Serig)

1. There was a concern that Gen AI tools are viewed as supplements to developing literature reviews, rather than substitutes. Skill remains essential for effectively utilizing Gen AI in literature reviews and that falls within our purview as faculty members.
2. There was a concern that there may be a disconnect between what Gen AI tools do and what we emphasize in coursework. How does AI usage align with program and course objectives?
3. A well-organized process log, as a teaching tool for literature reviews, on the diverse perspectives offered on Gen AI sites i.e., Chat GPT, Elicit, Litmaps, Docalysis, would be beneficial.

4. Faculty value Learning from colleagues through walkthroughs and discussions, particularly in understanding how Gen AI tools can be integrated into our teaching practices equitably and effectively.
5. There were concerns on the use of AI tools re. academic integrity i.e., citing Gen AI tool, does not honor the work of the author of the material that Gen AI tools pull from Internet as well as use of AI for synthesis of materials.

Use of Gen AI in qualitative analysis. (Chris Unger)

1. There was discussion on the use of Gen AI tools like ailyze.com and tools that use AI i.e., NVivo, MaxQDA, Atlas.ti for analyzing transcripts and extracting thematic content.
2. There were concerns on the need to emphasize AI tools as aids rather than complete solutions, fostering a mindset of using technology as a tool to support analysis.
3. There were concerns on the cost-effectiveness of Gen AI tool, suggesting their integration into program design to maximize efficiency, and having a select number of Gen AI tools sponsored by the university.
4. There were concerns about students' confidence in using AI tools and their ability to develop the necessary skills to use them effectively.
5. Suggestions for integrating Gen AI tools into the curriculum should include scaffolding the teaching of and use of Gen AI in collaboration with resources like the library, reviewing formative assessments for improvement, and aiming to scaffold learning experiences across the curriculum.

Faculty members present saw a need for continuing our discussion on equitable and effective use of Gen AI in the GSE. An April Faculty Engagement Session will continue our work on integrating Gen AI equitably and effectively in the GSE.

Suggestions included thinking through ways in which we could scaffold ethical and effective use of Gen AI in the common courses taken by master’s and doctoral students, in their respective programs.