AI Gallery Homepage

# Faculty Engagement: Developing A Shared Approach to Equitable Gen AI Use

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| **Course Subject:** | Graduate School of Education |
| **Student Level:** | Doctoral |
| **Number of Students:** | 600 (total population of the doctoral program) |
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## What Faculty Did

Over the course of a year, faculty from the Graduate School of Education convened a series of “Faculty Engagement Sessions” to share AI practices, discuss areas of opportunity and concern, develop a set of guidelines, and identify specific junctures in the doctoral program’s curriculum that would be optimal for introducing and preparing students for appropriate use of generative AI within their doctoral work.

Approximately 18 faculty participated in the sessions. The engagement sessions were developed by faculty for faculty, which afforded a level of faculty autonomy that is essential to successful adoption of teaching innovations. The engagement sessions included an iterative process of documentation to mirror outcomes of each session back to the faculty. This participatory approach led to the creation of a program-level guiding principles document and ad hoc committee to support ongoing integration of AI across the learning experience of doctoral students.

**Purpose**

The ultimate goal was to develop a comprehensive strategy for the GSE's doctoral program to ensure that all students, regardless of means and prior experience, would be prepared to use AI appropriately and ethically for key tasks in their dissertation work. Significant attention was given to when, and how, to engage students in the cultivation of doctoral-level critical thinking that is augmented–not supplanted–by generative AI. Equity was a major driver of faculty concern in this initiative, with focus on fairness, inclusivity, and equal opportunity for all students.

Faculty members brought a wide range of prior knowledge and experience with generative AI to these gatherings. Some had never used it, while others had already incorporated it into their coursework. Learning what others were doing helped the group realize that variations in orientation to AI across sections of the same course raised an equity concern of uneven access. Engagement Sessions were designed to create a space for faculty to develop their own understanding of generative AI, locate this major technological development within their personal philosophies of teaching, and collaboratively plan for a system-wide programmatic response that would be widely accepted.

**Assessment**

The initiative's success is evidenced by its many outcomes: a program-level guidance document on the ethical use of AI, multiple conference presentations, peer-reviewed journal manuscripts, and the formation of an ongoing ad hoc committee.

**Faculty Reflections**

It takes work and time to attain meaningful integration of AI across a program's curriculum. Faculty need the opportunity to connect, increase their own proficiency

with AI, and have a shared conversation about why, where, and how to integrate AI into the student learning process.

While Gen AI has the potential to enhance learning, it is important to recognize that certain skills such as discernment, critical thinking, and contextualization remain essential human elements that AI tools cannot replace. There is evidence that experts are in a better position to use AI meaningfully in their research than novices because they know how to review the output critically. How can we equip students with key AI proficiencies without shortcutting an element of productive struggle that is essential to learning?

As Gen AI tools continue to evolve and become more prevalent in educational settings, faculty must remain open to exploring new technologies and adapting our teaching practices to leverage the benefits of Gen AI while upholding academic integrity and ethical standards.

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Stages of the practice are outlined below in broad terms, with specific examples of how those stages were enacted within the Graduate School of Education's doctoral program. Depending on the program, additional stages may be needed, or some stages might be able to be skipped or truncated.

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| **Stage 1** | **Early Adopters Share their Experience**<br><br>A number of faculty were already using generative AI in their research and teaching practice. During one of the early sessions, these faculty demonstrated how they used AI tools and talked about their experience with it, including what they found valuable and why they thought it was important to address generative AI at the program level. This included discussion of how their individual philosophies of education shaped their thinking about generative AI, and included opportunities for uncovering diverse perspectives and approaches. |
| **Stage 2** | **Exploration of Generative AI Implications for Equity** |

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| | The stated purpose of this session was to build a common understanding of how Gen AI can be integrated equitably into the doctoral program's curriculum. Prior to this Engagement Session, faculty were given several readings to inform their thinking about AI, for example the federal Office of Technology's 2023 report on Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning.<br><br>Faculty participated in breakout discussions, with a note-taker embedded in each group. Those notes were synthesized into a document that was shared back with the participants. The synthesis document served as a mechanism for authoring a guidance document on ethical use of generative AI that represented a range of perspectives and shared understanding. An outcomes document was generated following each session, which was shared with faculty prior to the next gathering – share examples in "Related Materials" below.<br><br>For example, this meeting generated five "outcomes" statements that were summarized and explained in the document:<br><br>1. There is a recognition of the need to integrate responsible use of Gen AI into both doctoral and master's programs' curricula.<br>2. There is a concern about helping students develop an ethical perspective on when and why it might be inappropriate to use Gen AI.<br>3. There is an emphasis on preparing graduates to become agents of change in a professional landscape that includes AI.<br>4. There is a recognition of the need for policies related to Gen AI use.<br>5. Students enter programs with varying levels of prior Gen AI expertise. |
| **Stage 3** | **Play, Performance, and Dialogue**<br><br>Faculty experimented with the use of generative AI tools in support of dissertation deliverables that are core to the program, specifically the |

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| | literature review. Faculty members used several generative AI tools to perform key literature review processes, with actual dissertation topics, with several generative AI tools.<br><br>The group discussed how the process of literature review had changed over the years with the development of new technologies (from card catalogs and microfiche to generative AI). Faculty voiced their concerns and the opportunities they envisioned for how generative AI might connect to the literature review process.<br><br>The discussion led to the development of statements of concern that informed future work of the group. The full set of statements can be accessed in the March Outcomes document in Related Materials below.<br><br>*Sample Statement:*<br><br>*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 acknowledgement.*<br><br>*Skills are essential to effectively using generative AI in literature reviews, and that falls within our purview as faculty members to clarify those essential skills for students, base them on unique human abilities, and design our projects to elicit/demonstrate them.* |
| **Stage 4** | **Grappling with the Use of AI for Qualitative Analysis**<br><br>Faculty explored and experimented with the use of generative AI for qualitative research, a methodology that is foundational to the program. Many tools designed to support qualitative analysis are increasingly AI integrated, and general tools such as ChatGPT can be leveraged for this purpose. The faculty identified concerns (e.g., data ethics, potential for bias, use of AI that shortcuts the generative |

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| | process of qualitative analysis) and also considered the potential benefits of using AI appropriately in support of the analysis process.<br><br>An outcome of this discussion was the idea of developing a sequence of activities across all research courses to scaffold and assist the development of student capacities in relation to the use of generative AI in support of qualitative research, and student understanding of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate use of AI in this aspect of their doctoral work. This served to also advance efforts that are underway to systematically integrate generative AI across the doctoral program curriculum. |
| **Stage 5** | **Faculty Statement on Generative AI Use**<br><br>Faculty met for a summer retreat, and as part of that gathering they reviewed session outcome documents and discussed next steps. The EdD Program Director drafted a statement that faculty had an opportunity to review and revise. This statement was also vetted by the college's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The full statement is available for download in "Related Materials" at the bottom of this page.<br><br>*Excerpt from Statement:*<br><br>*We assert that generative AI is most useful for those who have expertise.*<br><br>*Our responsibility as a faculty is to prepare you to become scholar-practitioners in accordance with the Program Learning Outcomes. Becoming a scholar-practitioner requires developing expertise in the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies required for scholarly research.*<br><br>*In accordance with these beliefs, we discourage the use of generative AI early in the learning process so that you develop expertise in research design. Later, we will encourage you to use generative AI as a constructive collaborator, as a tool to improve your original work, and as a tool for* |

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| | *efficiency. AI should never be the main author or creator of any work you claim as your own.* |
| **Note** | The process outlined above is based on the premise that faculty beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes play a driving role in technology acceptance and inclusion within classrooms. Sessions were 60 minutes in duration. During each session detailed notes were kept and shared back to faculty, creating an iterative process of consensus-building and authorship of products such as guidelines on ethical use of AI. |

### Related Materials

- Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning
- December 2023 Engagement Session Outcomes
- March 2024 Engagement Session Outcomes
- April 2024 Engagement Session Outcomes
- Faculty Statement on Generative AI Use