MiraCosta College | ACADEMIC SENATE

Regular Meeting – September 20, 2024
9:00am – 11:00am
Hyflex Meeting – Room OC1068 and Via Zoom in
accordance with AB2449: Information below
1 Barnard Drive, Oceanside, CA 92056

Join Zoom Meeting: https://miracosta-edu.zoom.us/j/717046932
Meeting ID: 717 046 932
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AGENDA

We respectfully acknowledge that MiraCosta is on the traditional territory of the Luiseño/ Payómkawichum people. Today, this meeting place and surrounding areas are home to the six federally recognized bands of the La Jolla, Pala, Pauma, Pechanga, Rincon, Soboba Luiseño/ Payómkawichum people and remain the shared space among Kumeyaay and Ipai peoples. In addition, we pay respect to elders, present and past: keepers of history, culture, wisdom, and knowledge.

I. Call to Order

II. Remote Member Attendance
Description: *Academic Senate will consider remote participation of members under the provisions of AB2449, if any.*

III. Roll Call

IV. Persons Wishing to Address the Senate **[Time 9:05; 15 minutes]**
Members of the public shall have an opportunity to address the committee either before or during the committee's consideration of each item of business to be discussed at regular or special committee meetings, including closed session items. In addition, with limited exceptions, the committee will provide an opportunity at regular meetings to address the committee on any other item of interest which is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Academic Senate. In order to efficiently manage the business of the committee, the committee chair may limit the amount of time.

V. Changes to Agenda Order

VI. Consent Calendar
A. Approve Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 6, 2024

VII. Information / Discussion
A. CPC Update: AB 1111 Templates, Timelines, and 10+1 – *Fallstrom, Bolaños* **[Time 9:20; 30 minutes]**
Description: *Hear updates from CPC leadership about the phased implementation of AB 1111, Common Course Numbering. Open discussion about 10+1 and the Senate's role and responsibilities in this work.*
B. Appoint AS Senator liaison to ASG **[Time 9:50; 5 minutes]**
Description: *Short description of ASG needs and what's required of the liaison role followed by call for a volunteer and appointment.*
C. Faculty-led, A.I. Taskforce **[Time 9:55; 20 minutes]**
Description: *Recap last discussion and share feedback from constituents. Organize a team of senators and Senate leadership who will finalize the charge (a focused, 10+1 area) and achievable goal for the Taskforce, to be presented at our next Senate meeting.*

VIII. Periodic Review – Academic Senate Rules and Bylaws
A. AS Bylaws and AS Rules **[Time 10:15; 10 minutes]**
Description: *Review the newly formatted Constituencies List. Form a short-term taskforce to research and recommend revisions to our Rules & Bylaws for organizing constituencies*

BP 2510: Collegial Governance and Participation in Local Decision Making

The board recognizes the Academic Senate as the body that represents the faculty (fulltime and associate) in collegial governance relating to academic and professional matters.

1. Curriculum
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Educational program development
5. Standards or policies for student prep. and success
6. Governance structures, as related to faculty roles
7. Accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
8. Faculty professional development policies
9. Processes for program review
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget dev.

+1 Academic calendar • Prioritization of full-time faculty hiring • Program discontinuance procedures, in alignment with program review • Equivalency procedures • Policies and procedures protecting academic freedom • Recommendation on tenure and professional advancement

The Board or its designees will consult collegially with the Academic Senate on all of the listed academic and professional matters and will rely primarily on the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate.

IX.   Reports (Written, Included Via Links Below)
   A. Academic Senate President – *Mitchell* ([access report](#))
   B. College Superintendent/President – *Cooke* ([access report](#))
   C. Classified Senate – *Banks* ([access report](#))
   D. Associate Student Government – *Tarman* ([access report](#))
   E. Senator Reports – ([access report](#))
       To submit a Senator Report, contact the Academic Senate President and share your report in writing before the meeting.

X.   Adjournment

MIRACOSTA COLLEGE | **ACADEMIC SENATE**

UNOFFICAL MINUTES

We respectfully acknowledge that MiraCosta is on the traditional territory of the Luiseño/ Payómkawichum people. Today, this meeting place and surrounding areas are home to the six federally recognized bands of the La Jolla, Pala, Pauma, Pechanga, Rincon, Soboba Luiseño/ Payómkawichum people and remain the shared space among Kumeyaay and Ipai peoples. In addition, we pay respect to elders, present and past: keepers of history, culture, wisdom, and knowledge.

I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 9:00am.

II. **Remote Member Attendance**
Description: *Acdemic Senate will consider remote participation of members under the provisions of AB2449, if any.*
Erica Duran and Julie Graboi requested remote participation under the Just Cause provision of AB2449. Their remote participation under the Just Cause provision of AB2449 was approved by unanimous consent.

III. **Roll Call**
Members present: curry mitchell (President), Robin Allyn, Daniel Ante-Contreras, Sunny Cooke (Ex-officio), Leigh Cotnoir, Sean Davis (Vice-president), Erica Duran, Julie Graboi, Sarah Gross, Jim Julius (Coordinating Officer), Jeffrey Murico, Ghada Osman, Brian Page, Nate Scharf, Alexis Tucker Sade, Krista Warren, Afifa Zaman
Members present via Just Cause (AB2449): Erica Duran, Julie Graboi
Others present: Denée Pescarmona, Jack Tarman

IV. **Persons Wishing to Address the Senate** – None.

V. **Changes to Agenda Order –** None.

VI. **Consent Calendar**
   A. **Approve Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 9, 2024**
   B. **Approve Minutes of Retreat of August 9, 2024**
   C. **Ratify Updated Faculty Committee Assignments List for AY 2024-2025**
   D. **Approve Modified 2025-2026 Academic Calendar**
   Description: *The District and Classified Senate have come to an agreement for the Christmas Eve holiday starting in the 2025-26 academic year. Attached is the revised calendar. There are no substantive changes to academic days that would impact other bargaining groups.*

   The consent calendar was approved by unanimous consent.

VII. **Periodic Review – Academic Senate Bylaws and Academic Senate Rules**
   A. **Bylaws ARTICLE 2 Purpose and Rules Section G, "members with a constituent group" 1-7**
   Description: *Humanized, just-in-time preparation to perform the duties of representing the faculty of MiraCosta College, keeping constituents informed of Academic Senate issues and decisions, and soliciting input and agenda items from constituents to present to the Academic Senate.*
   The Senate looked at correspondence with constituents as a duty of being a senator. Liaison rules need to be created, and two positions need to be fill along with an AI taskforce. The rules were read and described the duties of senate members reaching out and communicating with their constituents. Rules 1 through 7 were outlined such as keeping constituents informed, soliciting input from constituents, relaying input, and maintaining confidentiality if requested.
   Discussion ensued. It was noted that Academic Senate used to be a Senate of the whole and the entire faculty would come together to make decisions. Now, this Senate is a representative Senate.
   It is also different for AF Senators to reach their constituents. In recent years, they have come together to come up with ways to make it interesting with links in their communication to go deeper if they want to.
   It was asked how it was decided that Senate can accurately represent a diverse population and can this be done correctly. It was explained that the decision to move away from the council as a whole was

because working conditions were separated into the FA. Those changes happened together. Decisions being made as a whole body were difficult such as getting a quorum. It was asked if there is a way to reorganize the constituents list to be better represented. This could impact elections, and this is a great idea. However, it was also noted that there could be silos. For AF senators, instead of specific groups, look at it along the lines of how we can best support AF as a whole rather than individuals going to just one senator. In trying to find ways to connect but not just with email, one senator started a Google site to provide a place to show what was discussed in the Senate meeting as a more engaging way to produce the information and get feedback. The visuals and layouts stand out from emails and the interactive piece is good. When looking at the list of constituents it is also worth a follow up with department chairs in the Senator's particular constituent list.

MSU (Warren / Osman) to extend the time for this discussion for an additional five minutes.

mitchell can add Tucker Sade's email communication as a model on the AS webpage. Some things to include in communication with constituents is, here are things that will impact you, introduce yourself and talk about your job is to represent you; can ask for feedback on a particular item or items.
It was noted that as a resource on the representative constituents' page is a video on how to create Outlook groups for constituents.

VIII. **Information / Discussion**
   A. Leadership and Liaisons
   Description: *Senate members will debrief topics and goals discussed during the Academic Senate Retreat and identify opportunities for leadership, including local and state-wide liaison roles that may be assigned (Academic Senate Rules, Section G.7).*
   The topic of leadership and liaison roles was opened up for discussion prompting that since the retreat, how has this notion of being a liaison impacted you. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have a Senator as a liaison on some of the subcommittees, especially for those committees that have a big impact. Should be more targeted for where time is being committed or having liaisons where there are big initiatives occurring such as coming down from the Chancellor's office (the state). Perhaps a common course numbering liaison. It was asked if there could be more people involved with committees if there were more paid positions for AF to participate on some committees and to lighten the load for our full-time colleagues. Concern was noted for embedding people into committees. Further, we are not experts and will need to learn the issues to become conversant on a particular issue.
   With the model of the calendar taskforce, this is the best representation. It sometimes feels top down but there are times when bringing people in from other groups, it completes the process.
   Can focus on one of two areas: reaching out or top down. Would rather put energy into reaching out to constituents and bringing their communication forward. It was asked how Senators can represent their constituents if they are not in those committees.

MSU (mitchell / Page) to extend the time for this discussion for an additional two minutes.

Senators were asked to think about where their time going and what spaces they are in already. Taking this from Dr. Cooke and how she operates with the Board, between meetings an email will be sent with AS basic materials. Business cannot be done in an email but if there are questions, send them directly to the AS President and he can send the questions to the speaker who will address the item on the agenda.
Dr. Cooke noted that the college takes the people who they think are best to do certain things. AS has the ability for the committee to seek input. Trust the folks to do the work who are most knowledgeable and who may have more resources.
   B. Faculty-led, A.I. Taskforce
   Description: *Discuss the next steps and priority for the faculty-led, A.I. taskforce; develop a charge with achievable goals for the taskforce based on prior work, current approaches across higher ed, and the merging needs of academic disciplines, student learners, and racially-just, equity practicing programs.*
   This AI taskforce operated last spring. The taskforce will likely work in conjunction with other groups working with AI. There is generative productivity AI technology that everyone can use. The AI taskforce is faculty led. There are student-centered, learning-centered, and teacher-centered approaches when thinking about all of this and they all intersect. Students might face equity and accessibility. A learning centered approach might be critical thinking and academic integrity issues. A teacher-centered approach might be pedagogy, practice, and course design.
   The history of what faculty have done at MCC in response to generative AI is that they first started off as an initial Exploratorium interested in a space sharing resources and they created a Canvas course and putting everything there like some practices and big picture things. Rick White and Jim Sullivan have been offering ongoing AI hands on discovery labs weekly or biweekly. The CSIT department has developed an

AI program where faculty are teaching and equipping our students. Departments are also grappling with what is going on and some faculty are evaluating the situation in their own spaces. A lot of people are doing a lot of work. As a taskforce is being formed, what would be its role, would it be connecting these groups together or might it be serving a specific niche that is not being served.

At a workshop during Flex week, Jim Sullivan offered three areas around AI where there is consensus:

1. Faculty have a responsibility to communicate AI policies to their classes. Students need to know where we are.
2. The use of AI in class should help students cultivate thinking or should it replace their thinking.
3. There is no easy fix to this. There will not be an AI detector that fixes the problem.

mitchell's position is that the best groups to be leading in this space should be academic departments. They would benefit from leadership in terms of resources being shared, processes being modeled, and perhaps guidance being offered. It was also noted that there is a fifth Friday in January next spring, and it could be an opportunity that could be devoted to AI and this taskforce could build or deliver something for that day that could benefit departments. Julius further added information about what last spring's AI taskforce did. They landed on a process that was to look through the lens of MCC's institutional stated values and looked at how AI is impacting, challenging, and supporting each of those values. They agreed on the first couple of values that we should prioritize human agency and community in these discussions and keeping those things in mind as we continue with whatever comes next.

ASG representative, Jack Tarman, was asked of his experience with AI in the classroom; is he being told how to use it, when to use it, or not to use. He offered that in the last 12 months his professors have been told students not to use AI and that if they see any evidence of AI in writing assignments or in their assessments, they will be given a grade of zero. There has been a push against AI in the classroom. Among conversations with other students, some are positive, and others are skeptical.

He gave an example of an English composition where AI can do your work totally for you including MLA formatting for your works cited page for your bibliography. Everything the course is trying to teach you will be done for you. A lot of work to do before knowing how to deal with AI.

It was agreed that a PSA would be helpful for the student body. He agrees there is a lot of work to do before we figure out where the line ends between what we allow AI to do for us and what students should learn on their own. Students don't have a formal way to argue against not using AI. He noted that instructors are laying it out in their syllabus at the beginning of their courses otherwise students will just blatantly use AI to skim through the course.

Some discussion ensued concerning AI detectors and they are not foolproof. They disadvantage English language learners especially because many times English language learners write in a way that feels artificially formal and trigger an AI detector to think that it is AI. There are instructors not doing much research on AI and so they push back on it. It is concerning from a student perspective, how do they prove that it is not the case if the AI detector said that they cheated.

It was observed that there are two schools of thought from faculty, those leaning in and those pushing back. Pushing back is a losing battle and so need to help faculty teach prompting about what they do. Different disciplines will do it differently. How does the taskforce do this and how will it benefit the department to evaluate student experiences and how is it helping or disrupting?

It is suggested to keep up the communication between faculty and students. Get a sense and open up conversations where you can ask questions such as did you use AI and what did you use it for.

Include it on the syllabus and the instructor reserves the right to have a discussion with the student. The more intentional we are about incorporating those discussions the more instructive and less inquisitorial.

If you rely on AI detectors you rely on them to give you a nudge about a specific student. You may have some false positives. You are penalizing the students who are not good at using AI. You are not catching all the students and sometimes catching some students incorrectly. Perhaps the best way to tackle this issue it to try to even the playing field and offer workshops to inform the proper ways to use it and the dos and don'ts about using AI. In the design department they require students to show their process. AI can be another tool and if you don't learn it you will be left in the dust. It is helpful for academia to understand how this is working in the world of business. There is zero compunction about using AI in the business world because they are afraid of legal ramifications. Instead, they are using it within their own institutions with their own employees. How can you use this as a tool as part of the process that helps you evolve your thinking. It is a new game changing tool and a paradigm shift.

It was offered that we have left people in the dust before with a number of things. If we go back to the 10+1, we have curriculum, grading policies, professional development, standards or policies for student prep and success, so the real question might be that within our purview, what would we like this task force to do or do we even want a task force and what does it do within the 10+1.

It was mentioned that the Statewide Academic Senate just released a document about AI aimed at local Academic Senates trying to work on AI policies. It is pretty good but also has some holes in it. It has a list in the document of things that we might want to think about when we are providing leadership around the use of AI such as ethical considerations, compliance and legal considerations, accountability and oversight training needs. The hold is that it doesn't speak to what we actually really need to be thinking about such as revising our curriculum or our outcomes and do we need to rethink what we are teaching because students are going to use AI.

mitchell offered 5 different charges/goals the Senate might choose for the taskforce. One starting point for this taskforce might be that they design and launch a workgroup in the spring asking what's going on, where's the need, what would this work group look like, who would be involved. Another option: maybe it would shape itself as a research group and work with students asking when, how, and why are students using what tools. The task force, working with students could design a couple of workshops for students about when and when not to use a tool like this, here's when to reach out to your professor if you attempt to use the tool. Alternatively, when thinking of departments, and when thinking of discipline experts, when, how, and why are discipline experts and industry folks using what tools. Disciplines can ask what do our students need to know about these tools so that they are equipped to be marketable and hirable. These are two things: research group for students and research groups for departments.

Still another option, the task force can be focused on one assessment method like writing to assess critical thinking. What are the tools that are disrupting critical thinking or measures of critical thinking. In writing, what guidance can be offered, or what models of course redesign can be offered.

Finally, another option is the taskforce could be thinking about the fifth Friday and work with other departments, groups, and/or committees.

Dr. Cooke noted that the more important discussions are about focusing on the future such as five or ten years out while we are dealing with all the stuff that has been talked about that impacts us today.

Therefore, focus on the immediate as we focus on the longer term.

We have a duty to our students to educate them as new leaders.

An email will be sent to senators asking to share the five task force options with their constituents and to ask for some feedback that can be shared at the next meeting.

IX. Reports (Written, Included Via Links Below)

Visit the links for the Reports.
- **A. Academic Senate President** – *curry mitchell* ([access report](#))
- **B. College Superintendent/President** – *Sunny Cooke* ([access report](#))
- **C. Classified Senate** – *Carl Banks* ([access report](#))
- **D. Associate Student Government** – *Jack Tarman* ([access report](#))
- **E. Senator Reports** ([access report](#))

X. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 11:00am.

A.I. Topics in the "Teaching" Newsletter from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Teaching and Learning Topics

"AI + critical thinking"

JULY 5, 2024
https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2024-07-05
From: Beth McMurtrie
Subject: Teaching: Getting in sync with students about AI

One of the big debates in teaching is whether the use of generative AI tools will inhibit or enhance students' critical-thinking skills. As with all debates, specifics are important: who you're teaching, what you're teaching, and what skills you want students to develop. But there is also plenty of nuance that can get overlooked. For example, many professors believe both things are true about AI. They think it's possible to help students develop AI literacy without encouraging them to use AI as a crutch.

I want to share an approach by Ken McKay, a professor of management sciences at the University of Waterloo, in Canada. McKay had responded to my recent story, "Professors Ask: Are We Just Grading Robots?"

What stood out to me in his email is that McKay, who is also his department's teaching and undergraduate-student liaison officer, has a clear guiding philosophy and a detailed and transparent teaching strategy. He also started adjusting his teaching in response to technological advances long before generative AI appeared on the scene. For one, all of his assignments and assessments are open book and open note, since he figured students were going to use tech no matter what.

"I started embracing how students were studying and doing their work with tech in 2015, recognizing the impact of the web. That is when I went 'open everything' and implemented methods for figuring out the students' own thinking and knowledge, not what they could find from other sources. This is what instructors are now trying to deal with, with the impact of gen AI."

"I often get comments from students: 'My head hurts in your class,'" he continues. "Gen AI is going to force instructors to go into this zone. To separate what the students can do with the tech versus what they can do themselves, learn how to think for themselves and not just use the tech to do the thinking for them."

Here's McKay's multistep process, which he has used in various courses, including one called "Management Engineering Concepts." Management engineering, he notes, focuses on problem solving, and this first-year course helps students build the skills needed to define a problem, know what questions to ask, and what to do next. In that sense, McKay says, his methods could be adapted to almost any discipline in which the main objective is to develop critical-thinking skills.

- He has students write during the first class so he has a baseline understanding of their writing and thinking styles.

- He talks to students about how generative AI tools work, including when they hallucinate, make other errors, and show bias. Then he has them create prompts and discuss the results in a think-pair-share format.

- His teaching assistant completes the weekly pre-class assessment with different generative AI tools. Not only do students know he's doing this, but McKay shares the TA's various prompts and responses. The TA then works with students to help design better prompts.

- He asks students to incorporate his lecture material and class discussions into their assessments. Often students are asked to include elements of their weekly reflections or prior submissions as well. McKay also uses case studies in his teaching, which he only presents in class so they do not become part of any AI-training set.

- He avoids multiple-choice, brief response, and fill-in-the-blank tests. Rather, students' answers are expected to be analytical and discussion-based. If students do use a lot of AI, they are asked to provide the prompts they use.

So far, McKay writes, this approach has been successful. But, he notes, it takes work. The instructor can't use questions and prompts supplied from a textbook or repeat the same questions year after year. Avoiding formulaic assessment methods is key, he says. "The assessments do not need to be big or take a lot of work. It is easy to craft a paragraph and simply ask the students 'So?' or 'Discuss' — without specific leading questions. If you give rubrics and leading questions in advance, you will get the robotic responses (with or without gen AI)."

He notes, too, that students have to spend time rewriting and restructuring prompts to get the best possible outcomes using AI. That's all part of the process of developing critical-thinking skills.

Finally, he argues that colleges need to provide "full courses" to instructors on AI, not just discussions and workshops. "I think until people (and institutions) invest in the instructors' skill sets, most instructors will come up with ideas like, 'avoid it,' 'outlaw it,' 'add AI detectors' — these are all symptoms; they are not the problem."

"Critical AI"

AUGUST 15, 2024
https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2024-08-15
From: Beth McMurtrie
Subject: Teaching: Using AI tools to develop critical-thinking skills

Are you among the many instructors who feel like a deer in the headlights when it comes to AI? You aren't sure how to keep up with the technology, yet you know students are using it. And your college may expect you to address it in some way in your teaching.

As I wrote in my previous newsletter, faculty members across the country who were also uncertain about this transformational technology have nonetheless jumped in, and many of them are sharing their stories with me.

This week I'm focusing on Meghan McInnis-Domínguez, an associate professor of Spanish at the University of Delaware. What interests me about her story is that she viewed AI as a way to both mitigate cheating and bolster declining enrollments in language courses.

That might sound counterintuitive, she said in an interview. How can you fight cheating by working with AI? But she has found that being explicit with students about her awareness and use of these tools, and carefully incorporating them in her teaching, made students less likely to cheat. That's partly because they knew they couldn't fool her, she says, and partly because they found the tools intriguing enough to challenge themselves in new ways.

McInnis-Domínguez's work with generative AI has been evolving since the spring of 2023, when she began introducing it into her courses. She encouraged students to try different AI tools to generate summaries of works they studied and then critique them. She used it to create discussion questions and debate topics. She asked students to produce essays and bibliographies with AI and compare them to their own work. She also had them use AI to generate poems in the style of certain authors and critique them. And she has encouraged students to use AI to brainstorm paper topics.

Working with AI helped students think at a higher level, she says. For example, in one assignment she asks students to analyze an author's work. Before she introduced AI, students would sometimes drift toward writing a biography of the author, which is not what she asked for. But by plugging her directions into AI and then working with its suggested topics, students were better able to stay on target and were often inspired by the responses they got to think more creatively.

McInnis-Domínguez never felt that they turned in papers simply generated by AI, she says. "Going through the process of working with AI they see that their own critical voice is better than some of the ideas the bots come up with. … They learn to be critical of AI and also to see how it can potentially help them."

She surveyed her students on the usefulness of large language models and found a mostly upward trend as she refined her approach over the semesters. Their confidence in the originality of their written work improved, she says, as did their engagement. They were less inclined to say that it encouraged plagiarism (she got some initial pushback from students — in the spring of 2023 some thought of it as a cheating machine). They also gave AI relatively high marks for helping to improve their critical thinking and — increasingly — providing accurate information.

McInnis-Domínguez hopes to see her course enrollments grow because students are interested in understanding and working with AI. That hasn't happened yet, but she attributes that to a lack of awareness of how she has adapted her courses. In the spring of 2025 she's teaching a course specifically about AI literacy and its use in the study of literature.

She's also expanding her outreach. In the fall McInnis-Domínguez will be working with 10 students who, for course credit, will investigate potential uses of generative AI in the humanities and create videos from that. Her department has also applied for a grant to create a four-course certificate called AI for humans. And she has produced a series of videos to help other instructors get up to speed on AI tools and how they work, which you can find on [her YouTube channel](#).

Teaching with AI

AUGUST 1, 2024
https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2024-08-01
From: Beth McMurtrie
Subject: Teaching: When AI is everywhere, what should instructors do next?

Last week I attended "[Teaching and Learning With AI](#)," organized by the University of Central Florida and held in Orlando, Fla. I was curious to hear how academics are talking and thinking about those tools, especially given the [threat many professors feel](#) that generative AI poses to teaching and learning. Would they be enthusiastic? Skeptical? Realistic?

Short answer: all of the above. This is the second year UCF has held the conference, and it has grown significantly. More than 800 people from nearly all 50 states showed up for more than 200 presentations. I was struck by the pragmatic tone many faculty members took. AI is here to stay, they said. Employers expect new hires to have an understanding of the technology. Students are both intimidated by and curious about AI. As a result, attendees said they believed they had a professional responsibility to learn how the technology works and, where appropriate, use it in their teaching.

In the coming weeks I'll explore in detail what your colleagues at other institutions are doing with AI, and share resources to help you figure out what your approach to the technology will be. For now, I'll share some takeaways from the conference.

You can't neutralize AI — so lean in. The ubiquity of generative AI is growing. It's in our search engines. It's in digital textbooks. It's in learning-management systems. TikTok, meanwhile, is flooded with videos on how to use ChatGPT to do your homework.

In the opening session, Kevin Yee, director of UCF's Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, called this a Promethean moment. The future is going to be some sort of combination of human intelligence plus AI. Academe has a responsibility to understand the tools, explore the ethical dimensions of their use, grasp how to apply AI, and help students and society navigate a way forward.

AI is going to alter both the process and the products of learning. Because ChatGPT, Claude, and a host of other tools can easily mimic human writing, professors must get creative with their approaches to assignments and assessments. A big challenge will be how to evaluate students' learning when it's done with the assistance of AI. One presenter described how students used a log book to record the iterative process of working with AI, which helped show how their thinking had evolved. Others focused on how to create alternatives to the traditional research paper, such as podcasts, debates, digital storytelling, and games.

AI can help students refine their ideas. Several presentations focused on how AI can be a great tool to help students get out of the gate. One presenter, who had designed a project in which students use AI to develop research papers, said using AI to brainstorm research topics helped cut down on "screwing around" time. After all, how do students typically come up with ideas for papers and research projects? Often it starts with random Googling. In other sessions, professors said students had found AI valuable in helping them organize and edit their original work.

Students are as skeptical as anyone about AI. Several presenters said that working with AI tools had led students to see the tools' limitations. In one session, which focused on using AI to turn research papers into podcast scripts, a professor described how students had found AI-generated scripts that were based on the students' work to be flat and overly general on the first pass. Some preferred to write the script on their own; others spent a lot of time refining the script with support from AI.

Effective use of AI requires critical thinking, information literacy, and solid writing skills. That may have been the most significant point presenters made throughout the conference. In order to use generative tools well, students still need to employ higher-order skills. That includes knowledge of the subject, an awareness of what they're looking for, and an ability to evaluate the AI's output. This can't happen without students' having done a significant amount of work on their own.

Entirely AI-generated output is the new "C." That was another common discussion point. Yes, some students will try to outsource everything to AI. The result will be mediocre, especially when their classmates are putting in effort. Anything that AI can do on its own should therefore become the new C (or D). And while C's may be passing grades, several presenters pointed out that students only risk making themselves irrelevant if they have nothing to contribute but what anyone could generate with AI.

Two big questions stood out:

- How will AI affect the teaching of foundational skills? If AI can do a lot of elementary work, such as summarizing, outlining, defining, and classifying, does that mean students can skip to the next steps? Or do they still need to learn those skills? And if so, how should AI be treated in gateway courses?

- Who is going to train professors to teach with or about AI? I met several people whose institutions had little to no budget for such work. And given how quickly the landscape is changing, it seems as if one-time workshops might not be enough. Add to that the lack of time and energy many instructors have to devote to professional development, and we're facing a problematic fall semester.

If you have thoughts on how you plan to respond to AI in your teaching, write to me at beth.mcmurtrie@chronicle.com, and your story may appear in a future newsletter. And if you have found helpful resources to get you up to speed on AI, please share them with me, and I can pass them along to newsletter readers.

Resources on AI

Here are some resources cited at the conference and elsewhere:
"AI Hacks for Educators: Practical Tips to Save Time by Using GenAI," an open-source, downloadable guide written by Kevin Yee, Laurie Uttich, Eric Main, and Elizabeth Giltner of UCF.
Teaching With AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning, by José Antonio Bowen and C. Edward Watson. You can also find AI prompts and further detail on AI tools on Bowen's website.
"Teaching Repository for AI-Infused Learning." This UCF project is just getting off the ground. If you'd like to submit a project, see the website for details.
"Generative AI Product Tracker," by Ithaka S+R, can help you stay on top of the tools.
"Syllabi Policies for AI-Generative Tools." This crowdsourced document was created by Lance Eaton at College Unbound.

Academic and Professional Matters

Teaching trends

AUGUST 8, 2024
https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2024-08-08
From: Beckie Supiano
Subject: Teaching: Three big shifts in the past decade of college teaching

This summer, Bonni Stachowiak is celebrating 10 years of the Teaching in Higher Ed *podcast, which she produces and hosts. I invited Stachowiak to share three big changes in college teaching she's witnessed during the past decade. She writes:*

1. Responding to a Mental-Health Crisis

There is greater recognition today within higher education that we need to create learning environments conducive to helping students not just survive but thrive. [Sarah Rose Cavanagh stresses](#) the need for what she calls compassionate challenge. [She reminds us](#) that "compassion comes first," yet we all need to stretch beyond what we think we are capable of, for our learning experiences to be transformative.

There is still work to be done to reduce the stigma surrounding help-seeking behaviors for students and faculty members alike. [Rashida Crutchfield describes](#) how "it is that fear and stress response, which has short- and long-term impacts on our physiology, that manifests in many different ways." The [challenges can be exacerbated](#) when those affected come from underrepresented groups. [Amira Barger shares](#), "Many people who are at the margins often know from lived experience that the playing field is not level and that there are biases that leaders and individuals across any and every institution have to mitigate."

It [isn't just students](#) who need a response to this crisis. [Mays Imad offers](#) a vital reminder that "we can't give what we don't have." Many faculty members want to be active participants in shaping the environments where teaching and learning occur, yet [face challenges with their own trauma, burnout, and mental-health concerns](#). [Roxanne Donovan asks](#), "How do you walk the line between giving up your power but not ignoring the systemic and institutional forces that can make it hard for us to live the way that we want to?" Recognizing our limits and being willing to be vulnerable are essential to our well-being. [Laura Horne explains](#), "Asking for help is a sign of strength, and it is necessary." While there is still a long way to go, I am thankful that the conversation has opened up to the extent that it has, and that there are many institutions working to [support mental health on their campuses](#).

2. Rethinking Pedagogy Amid a Pandemic and AI Advances

It is no wonder that burnout and exhaustion are such pressing issues for those in higher education. "People are in a state of despair," [Laura Czerniewicz laments](#). It doesn't surprise me that [the most downloaded episode of all time](#) was about teaching effectively with Zoom, as vast numbers of faculty members worldwide in 2020 grappled with how to respond to the relentless outbreaks of Covid and exhaustion from the constant context shifting. In November 2022, ChatGPT was released, extending the calls for faculty members to [add even more to their workloads](#). [James Lang depicts](#) how "GenAI exploded into our lives so quickly that it occupied our attention and stoked all of our worst anxieties."

Between a global pandemic and the seemingly endless AI-adoption expansion, it can feel as if we have nothing left in our familiar teaching approaches that will be effective in today's contexts. I am thankful for people like James Lang, who [makes a case for slow-walking](#) in deciding how we might respond to AI. Adaira Landry and Resa Lewiss [advocate for MicroSkills](#), reminding us that small actions can have a significant impact. "Higher ed will take as much as you give it," [Rebecca Pope-Ruark warns](#). Taking time to reflect on our values, talk about them with others, and seek to take small steps toward more effective pedagogical approaches have become more essential than ever in the past 10 years.

3. Reflecting Critically Toward Hope and Action

This last change is certainly not new. Yet I have observed an opening-up of how it is possible to engage with others in envisioning other ways to embody deeply held values and work toward a common good. Small actions, performed in solidarity with others, can have a transformative effect. [Laura Czerniewicz describes](#) the sufficiency of those steps. She reveals how these "little moments of glimmers of innovation, not in the business sense of the word, but in the imaginative sense of the word, are good enough."

Hope alone is insufficient. It must be combined with action to make any sort of difference. "Because I have hope, I cannot abide by the status quo because I know what could be, not just what should be," [Kevin Gannon asserts](#). He states it even more simply by telling us that "hope is embodied in practice."

Ten years is a long time to do anything. That I have been able to spend more than a decade producing a podcast episode each week surprises even me. These conversations have been joyously infectious and transformative. I look forward to our forthcoming [Teaching in Higher Ed Story Caravan](#), where we invite people to share their stories about teaching and learning, and to help us celebrate this milestone. In the meantime, another episode is in the queue for next week. I invite you to listen and find ways to amplify your hope through action.

Bonni Stachowiak is the producer and host of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast and the dean of teaching and learning at Vanguard University of Southern California.

Balance and boundaries

Recently I [shared](#) one professor's approach to leading a more balanced life, and asked for yours. Liz Norell, associate director of instructional support at the University of Mississippi's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, wrote in to share how her system has evolved since taking her current position last July.

"I moved into this role in our teaching center after more than a decade of adjuncting and six years on the tenure track at a community college — all of which saw me working WAY more than I was contractually obligated to do," Norell wrote. "Especially at the community college, there was no end to the ways I could be of service to students and the institution, and I delighted in the work. When I was denied tenure, I was told, among other things, that I 'cared too much' about students … basically, that I was over involved in trying to help them be successful. That made no sense to me, but then nothing of the tenure-denial situation made much sense to me.

"Losing that job left me absolutely bereft. It is not an exaggeration to say that I had become so identified with my job that I didn't quite know who I was without it. During my work-out year, while I was job-hunting, I used up about 270 hours of sick leave I had accumulated — basically by taking two days a week off to try to restore some sense of self during that entire last year. And when I started at UM, I committed (with encouragement by my boss, Josh Eyler) to keeping track of my time in a spreadsheet and ensuring that I worked only 40 hours a week. I will

occasionally work more, but I keep track of how much more, and flex my hours in the weeks following to adjust.

"I never liked keeping track of my time before, because it felt forced and somewhat arbitrary. Doing it for myself now feels liberating. Work stays at work in a way it hadn't for me in two decades or more. I now recommend my burning-out/burned-out academic friends all do this, even if it's just to see how much they're actually working and reflecting on it. I know it has really opened my eyes to how poorly I established and held boundaries on my time previously, and has given me a way to tangibly see how I'm doing now."

Protecting professors

As a new academic year starts, let's take a moment to consider some of the ways in which instructors can do more than just survive another challenging semester. Teaching, as we've been reporting since the pandemic hit, has become exhausting and demoralizing for many instructors, even as they look for ways it can be a source of challenge and inspiration.

Given that workloads remain high and budgets remain tight, what can professors and their supporters do? I've been reading through some recent essays to gather ideas, a few of which I've highlighted here. I'd also like to hear from readers about what's worked for you. Credit to [Sarah Rose Cavanagh](), [Emily Pitts Donahoe](), [Kevin Gannon](), [Isis Artze-Vega,]() and others for these suggestions. (You can click on their names to read their pieces.)

Let's start out with a couple of steps that faculty members can take on their own.

Set your boundaries. In a [recent Chronicle advice piece](), Gannon writes about how faculty members must create an environment in which they can thrive, not just survive. To that end, he posits a straightforward but hard-to-master idea: setting boundaries. Gannon suggests faculty look to Karen Costa's [scope-of-practice]() strategies to get started.

"Drawn from the work of therapists, counselors, and other mental-health professionals, the scope-of-practice framework asks you to list the types of work you are qualified to do and the tasks you are responsible for, and then focus on the things that sit at the intersection of both categories," writes Gannon, a history professor at Queens University of Charlotte and director of its Center for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence. "Those duties — and only those — fall within your scope of practice."

Professors have already started to move in this direction.

"I hear from many faculty and their leaders that people have placed limits on what they are and are not willing to do for and at work," wrote Rebecca Pope-Ruark, director of the office of faculty

professional development at the Georgia Institute of Technology, when I reached out to get her take on support for faculty well-being.

Pope-Ruark, author of [Unraveling Faculty Burnout: Pathways to Reckoning and Renewal](), said that since 2020 she has noticed that more academics are willing to protect their mental and physical health. "Faculty are much more likely now to say, 'You know what, my entire life doesn't actually revolve around this place, and I like that it doesn't. I like having a life. Hobbies. More time with my family.' And that's an active choice they are now making in ways they might not have in the past. They still do their teaching and their research, but for many they aren't giving it every last drop in their bucket, and that's OK."

Find community. Professors often don't like to share their teaching struggles. But you don't have to go it alone. When classes went online in 2020, for example, many faculty members found strength in their shared struggles to learn new technical skills and pedagogical strategies. The same could also be true of figuring out generative AI. Does your department or college have a learning community that you could join? Gannon lists other options, too, such as writing groups and communities of practice.

Beyond that, there are several ways administrators and teaching centers can support instructors. Here are a few approaches.

Support teacher-centered teaching. This idea comes from [Lindsay Masland](), interim executive director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Student Success at Appalachian State University. Teaching-centered teaching represents the overlap between student-centered teaching practices and a faculty member's "pedagogical values and personal context," such as class size and job status, Cavanagh writes in [a Chronicle advice piece]() on how to address backlash to the demands of student-centered teaching.

In her essay, Cavanagh, the senior associate director for teaching and learning at Simmons University, encourages teaching reformers to avoid criticizing routine forms of teaching. Multiple-choice exams and lectures are not inherently harmful or dangerous to students, she writes, and in a particular context they may work best. No good, in short, comes from shaming professors for choosing the pedagogical strategies they think are appropriate for their classrooms.

Focus workshops and events on well-being. Teaching centers have seen a dropoff in workshop attendance post-pandemic (with the exception, perhaps, of those focused on AI). This suggests that professors have reached their limit with trying new classroom strategies. So why not create sessions focused instead on faculty well-being? The University of Mississippi's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is doing just that, [writes Donahoe](), its associate director of instructional support. One session this fall, for example, will talk about how instructors can reclaim joy and purpose in their classrooms. And a faculty reading group will focus on addressing burnout.

Make faculty wellness a priority. In a [recent LinkedIn post,]() Artze-Vega, college provost and vice president for academic affairs at Valencia College, described how and why her division decided

to make faculty well-being its sole priority this academic year. This means, Artze-Vega writes, that any new work proposed must be evaluated in light of people's "need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work," and that the college is committed to better understanding burnout, as well as digging into the ways in which faculty work is both "elusive and evolving."

Pope-Ruark doesn't see many institutions focusing on faculty burnout. To do that, she wrote, "they'd have to figure out how to reduce the chronic stress and expectation escalation academics experience due to things like the constant need to fund research and students with external grants, being beholden to student evaluations as the only measure of teaching effectiveness at many places, and being constrained by the political environment and whims of local, state, and federal politicians."

But where she does see movement is in the area of well-being, like what Valencia College is doing. "Some places, like my institution, are adding a culture of well-being to its strategic plan. Others are hiring chief well-being officers to focus on the culture broadly. Others are looking internally for ideas and actions."

And while it's true that heavy faculty workloads seem almost a given, she notes, "It's often a values misalignment that hurts the most — institutions espousing values that faculty don't see them enacting, at least not toward them and their health and well-being. Being constantly asked to do more with less and less, to give more and more of themselves to students and students' well-being, to pick up more of the administrative load as admin positions are cut. They simply can't do everything they are being asked to do and stay well."

We would like to hear from readers on the topic of faculty well-being. What are you planning to do differently this semester? Are you pulling back on service? Are you setting boundaries with students? Are you joining learning communities? Are you organizing workshops or other events that focus on faculty well-being? Write to me at beth.mcmurtrie@chronicle.com and your story may appear in a future newsletter.

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- A new student guide to AI has been jointly published by Elon University and the American Association of Colleges & Universities. More than 100 students provided questions and ideas, with answers by the guide's authors and editors. You can download the guide, titled AI-U/v1.0, for free.
- Another new book on AI in teaching is now available: Teaching Effectively with ChatGPT: A practical guide to creating better learning experiences for your students in less time, by Dan Levy and Angela Perez.
- Ithaka S+R released its latest survey, digging into more than 5,000 instructors' views on topics such as open educational resources and instructional supports.