CSU Generative AI Committee Report

Overview

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is poised to be a broad-reaching disruptive force in U.S. higher education, with implications to all facets of its institutions. While artificial intelligence has been a growing part of our everyday lives for some time, Open AI's release of ChatGPT 3.5 in Fall of 2022 focused the public's attention on Generative AI in a profound way. For some faculty and staff, the proliferation of GenAI technologies feels like a crisis: much like the pivot to online teaching and learning during COVID-19, generative AI requires a dramatic shift in pedagogical practice that policies, norms, and tools will struggle to keep pace with. However, for others, generative AI presents opportunities to enhance the student experience, support student success, and to improve productivity for faculty and staff.

Regardless of one's perspective on generative AI, the reality is that it is here to stay, and it will evolve exponentially in ways that academia will have to reckon with, from teaching and learning to research and campus operations. Many CSU institutions have created guidelines and resources for their own campus communities as they adapt to these technologies, but others have been looking for guidance at the system level. In response to this campus demand, and in parallel with activities by the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU), the CSU Generative AI Committee was convened in the Fall of 2024.

What follows is a report that proposes guiding principles and recommendations by the CSU Generative AI Committee.

Background

The CSU Generative AI Committee (see Acknowledgements) is co-sponsored by the Chancellor's Office divisions of Academic and Student Affairs and Information Technology Services, and co-chaired by Dr. Nathan Evans, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, and Dr. Ed Clark, Chief Information Officer. Members were appointed to the committee by the co-chairs, with the goal of ensuring that the committee included representation from key functional areas. The committee met regularly from January 2024-May 2024 to develop initial guidelines and recommendations for the CSU on generative AI. The committee recognized that generative AI is a dynamic, evolving force and that such guidance would need to be broad and adaptable. Three sub-committees were formed around specific focus areas,

including: 1) teaching, learning, and scholarship; 2) security, privacy, and procurement; and 3) applications for enhanced productivity.

The Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) also had work underway regarding AI in higher education, and had representation on the CSU Generative AI Committee. In 2019, the ASCSU recognized the need to address the revolutionary changes and potential impact of generative AI. This issue was revisited in March 2023 with a resolution calling for a working group on artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education. In 2024, the ASCSU resolved to recognize current systemwide AI professional development opportunities and called for additional AI teaching and learning faculty development. Furthermore, in 2024, the ASCSU passed a resolution requesting more faculty representation on the Chancellor's Office CSU Generative AI Committee. And finally, a resolution was issued concerning student intellectual property and the potential use of generative artificial intelligence detection tools in student course assignment submissions.

Guiding Principles

Through discussions, benchmarking with other institutions, and consideration of the CSU's mission and values, the Generative AI Committee recommends the following principles to inform the use, development, and evaluation of generative AI tools and technologies.

1. **Uphold appropriate and responsible use**. Usage of generative AI in the CSU must align to federal and state regulations and CSU and campus policies. Products may not be adopted or used that violate the law, and efforts should be made to use enterprise solutions with commercial data protection where feasible, rather than freely available tools on the open web.

2. **Mitigate risk and promote good data stewardship**. CSU faculty, staff, students, and other CSU affiliated individuals should safeguard personal data and may not expose CSU data (levels 1 and 2) to generative AI in a way that risks data privacy or security.

3. **Ensure inclusivity and equitable access**. The CSU should promote inclusive and equitable access to GenAI technologies and ensure that all CSU faculty, staff, and students have access to GenAI tools and training necessary to leverage them for teaching, learning, research, and work. Users of generative AI technologies should be aware of potential biases and possible toxic and

inaccurate outputs.

4. **Maintain integrity, honesty, and trust**. Individuals using generative AI should do so within the policies and norms that govern their activities and should cite uses of generative AI whenever possible and appropriate. Individuals should take full responsibility for GenAI-generated materials to make sure that they are sound.

5. **Improve efficiency and enable capacity**. Work done with generative AI must be human-led and human-centered. Applications of generative AI in administrative processes should focus on increasing operational efficiency and reducing duplicative efforts. Campuses should exercise discipline in selecting AI tools, with a bias towards those that have proven impact.

6. **Advocate for continuous learning and adaptation**. As generative AI technologies evolve rapidly, the CSU should support ongoing faculty and staff development, training, and curricular integration to build internal capabilities while preparing our students for success during and beyond their academic studies.

Recommendations

In addition to the guiding principles, the CSU Generative AI Committee also created the following set of recommendations for next steps.

Governance and Other Enabling Structures

The committee recommends ongoing governance in the form of working groups that coordinate and support the CSU's effort to explore and adapt to GenAI. It is recommended that the current committee and sub-committee structure be maintained to build momentum and ensure that diverse campus and stakeholder perspectives are represented. Additionally, it is also recommended that multi-campus collaboratives be formed to explore AI tools and conduct pilot projects while creating relevant taskforce groups as needed to evaluate the benefits of adopting specific AI tools across multiple CSU campuses.

While multiple system-wide or multi-campus groups might be established to support this effort, there is consensus about group timelines and characteristics that would be most beneficial for ongoing work. First, given the rapidly evolving nature of generative AI, any committees or groups formed should have a clearly defined scope and defined expiration dates, at which point the continuance of the structure should be evaluated. Every attempt should be made to make the groups appropriately representative. It is

recommended that IT security and risk/legal functions should be represented on any committee/group. Moreover, chief diversity officers (or similar) and students should be included, where suitable.

Other Scaffolding

The committee also made the following recommendations for required supporting structures.

- Provide guidance to help the CSU mitigate risk.
- Provide change management best practice guidance to campuses.
- Provide strong systemwide guidance and up-to-date training on data privacy and security to include relevant information on GenAI, particularly on CSU-protected data.
- Centrally support efforts toward adopting National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidance for improved information security and research compliance.
- Advocate for a CSU data governance strategy.
- Create a systemwide Generative AI Community of Practice.
- Consider folding guidance and training aids into existing resources such as Curriculum Guides, Faculty Handbooks, etc.

Resources and Technology Investments

Adapting to a new, fast-evolving technology such as generative AI requires coordination, investment, and collaboration. To that end, the committee had several suggestions for systemwide collaborations to increase visibility and share best practices about campus-based activities.

Systemwide Inventories to Enable Collaboration

- Create an inventory of initiatives at a systemwide and at a campus level.
- Create a pathway to allow successful pilot initiatives at a campus or system level to be expanded to serve other interested institutions.
- Create a library (inventory) of AI tools that could help community members evaluate and select AI tools for implementation.

Leverage and Extend Existing Vendor Relations

- Capitalize on current investments in enterprise tools rolling out AI features and applications with commercial data protection.
- Increase collaboration with vendors and content providers that are developing AI tools.

Enable Testing and Exploration

- Partner with IT to enable broad experimentation and testing with multiple tools.
- Provide enterprise level access to GenAI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) to enable faculty, staff, and students to try new tools and adapt to the new technology.

Invest in Multi-Campus Solutions

- Coordinate large projects that address mission-critical challenges and scale beyond the purview of a single campus, like transfer and transcript evaluation.

Training, Support, and Capacity Building

With the potential scale and scope of disruption due to generative AI, ongoing training and support is critical to prepare faculty, staff, and students for the adoption, integration, and evaluation of these technologies. Therefore, the committee recommends the following actions:

Sharing Faculty Development Opportunities

- Increase visibility and availability of campus and systemwide training opportunities, such as the Introduction to AI for Teaching and Learning online course and the Academic Applications of AI faculty micro-credential.
- Encourage campuses to survey campus stakeholders to establish a baseline of perceptions and use of generative AI that can be measured over time.
- Provide faculty with opportunities to play with the most sophisticated GenAI tools while creating space to make sense of the implications for teaching and learning, both across and within disciplines.
- Provide opportunities for faculty and students to co-create GenAI learning objectives, competencies, compacts/agreements, and activities.

Capacity-Building

- Develop a set of core/comprehensive GenAI competencies for faculty, staff and administrators. See an example
- Provide resources for curriculum revisions that produce cheating-resistant assignments and assessments.
- Define AI literacies and identify ways to incorporate into curricula.
- Support the efforts of CSU Libraries (COLD) and the library profession to adapt the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education to include AI Literacies.
- Collect and disseminate classroom use cases.
- Consider developing a curriculum for GenAI-focused majors or certificates.

Business Processes and Operations

One of the most significant potential benefits of generative AI lies in its ability to alleviate administrative workloads by automating repetitive and redundant tasks. The following recommendations consider the potential of generative AI to augment digital transformation efforts and steps that could enable process improvement.

AI and Existing Processes/Policies

- Review and update supplemental terms & conditions in procurement contracts to account for GenAI.
- New and amended contracts should go through legal review of any artificial intelligence-related matters.
- Review existing policies to account for the impact of GenAI and update as needed.
- Define a review and approval process for new GenAI functionality being added to existing products licensed by the CSU.

Suggested Opportunities for AI Integration

- Identify shared services (such as information technology security and compliance) that would benefit from the integration of GenAI.
- Review digital workflows for error reduction potential, shorter workflows, and lowering administrative barriers.
- Explore areas that could be augmented by custom bot technology, such as student advising and technology help desks.
- Repurpose repetitive, predictable work to GenAI.

Conclusion

The CSU Generative AI Committee recognizes the transformative potential of generative AI and the need for proactive adaptation. Because of current uncertainties, the committee has developed guidelines and recommendations to position the CSU for success in this rapidly evolving landscape. By adopting principles informed by the CSU's mission and values, the CSU can navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by generative AI while prioritizing human involvement, ethical use, and risk mitigation.

To ensure effective implementation and ongoing support, the committee recommends establishing a governance structure comprising working groups and multi-campus collaboratives. These groups will coordinate efforts to explore and adapt to GenAI, conduct pilot projects, and evaluate the benefits of adopting specific GenAI tools across multiple CSU campuses. Maintaining the current committee and sub-committee

structure, in parallel with ASCSU's working groups, will provide diverse perspectives and build momentum, while forming relevant taskforce groups as needed will facilitate agile decision-making.

By embracing these recommendations, the CSU can position itself as a leader in the responsible and innovative adoption of generative AI in higher education. The committee's guidance will enable the CSU to harness the power of this technology while upholding its commitment to educational excellence and serving the diverse needs of its students and stakeholders.

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Resources

- Welcome | Systemwide Generative AI Resources (calstate.edu)
- SDSU AI Student Survey Instrument | ScholarWorks (calstate.edu)
- AI-EDU Arxiv (calstate.edu)