

TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Chief Business Officers
Chief Information Systems Officers
Chief Human Resources Officers
Academic Senate Presidents

FROM: James E. Todd, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
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RE: AI in Teaching and Learning: Building Local Frameworks

Purpose

Artificial intelligence (AI), including generative and agentic technologies, is increasingly shaping classrooms, workplaces, and everyday life. Students are already using AI tools to research, write, code, study, create, and solve problems, while faculty are exploring ways AI may support research, instruction, feedback, course design, and student learning. California Community Colleges are at different stages of AI adoption and hold diverse perspectives on its opportunities and risks. Local, consultative conversations are essential to developing teaching-and-learning frameworks that reflect each college's mission, faculty expertise, and student needs.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (The Chancellor's Office), the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), and the California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers (CCCCIO) jointly offer this memorandum to support collegial consultation and local planning as colleges and districts develop shared expectations for the use of generative and agentic AI in teaching and learning. AI presents significant opportunities to enhance teaching, learning, and workforce preparation, while also raising important questions about academic integrity, privacy, equity, accuracy, and student skill development. Colleges are encouraged to consider both the opportunities and the risks as they develop guidance appropriate to their local context.

This guidance is grounded in Vision 2030 and its commitment to Equity in Access, Equity in Success, and Equity in Support. It builds on the Chancellor's Office memoranda "Developing AI Literacy Across the California Community Colleges and Centering AI Safety and Security Across the California Community Colleges," which address AI literacy, the HUMANS principles,

governance, professional development, safety, security, disclosure, human oversight, data protection, and the responsible use of AI technologies. This memorandum focuses specifically on teaching and learning, including classroom practice, assessment, faculty professional judgment, student transparency, workforce preparation, and equitable implementation.

As colleges develop local practices, this work should be by principles that advance:

- student-centered critical thinking and preparation for careers and civic participation;
- equity, accessibility, and learner variability;
- participatory governance, collegial consultation, and local decision-making;
- academic freedom, faculty expertise, and disciplinary judgment;
- responsible innovation and continuous improvement; and
- ethical, transparent, and responsible technology use.

The key recommendation—or action—for each college and district is to develop or strengthen a consultative, locally designed AI teaching and learning and framework that provides clear guidance for students and faculty, distinguishes institutional guardrails from faculty-determined course-level expectations, protects equity and student rights, and establishes a process for ongoing review as technologies, workforce expectations, and instructional practices evolve. The Chancellor’s Office Academic Affairs team will work with colleges and districts to share and highlight effective local frameworks in spring 2027.

This memorandum does not establish a statewide classroom policy or prescribe a single approach for every college, discipline, course, or student population. Rather, it offers recommendations and framing questions to support local decision-making, collegial consultation, and continuous improvement. The goal is to strengthen each college’s capacity to make collaborative decisions, support faculty and students, distinguish institutional guidance from classroom practice, to foster responsible innovation, and to examine how AI impacts equity (including how we equitably prepare students for careers and civic engagement). AI is not simply a tool-adoption issue, an academic integrity issue, or a technology governance issue. It is reshaping our social worlds—including how students learn, how faculty teach, and how knowledge is created, communicated, and applied.

This memorandum is the first in a short series of guidance related to AI in teaching and learning. Subsequent memos are expected to address important AI-related topics, such as teaching both general and discipline-specific AI skills, effective pedagogical practices in an era of AI, academic integrity and assessment design, and faculty professional development related to AI issues.

Framing Questions for Local Engagement

Many early conversations about AI focused on whether students should be allowed to use AI tools or how to detect when they do. Increasingly, colleges are finding that the more important

questions relate to how learning outcomes can be achieved in environments where AI is readily available. As colleges engage in local discussions, the following questions may be useful:

1. How can colleges preserve and strengthen core educational goals such as critical thinking, communication, creativity, information literacy, civic participation, and workforce readiness in an AI-enabled environment?
2. How can colleges support innovation in teaching and learning while maintaining academic integrity and meaningful evidence of student learning?
3. What guidance does students and faculty need, so expectations are transparent and understood before concerns arise?

These areas of inquiry recognize both the opportunities and challenges associated with AI and encourage colleges to focus on educational purpose rather than technology alone.

Generative and Agentic AI in Teaching and Learning

Generative AI tools can create, revise, summarize, translate, analyze, or transform content, including text, images, audio, video, code, and data. Those uses remain central to classroom practice, academic integrity, assessment, authorship, and student learning. AI tools are also becoming **more agentic**: humans may direct AI instruments to pursue multi-step goals, use external tools, retain context, access files or platforms, provide recommendations, interact with users, or escalate issues to a human. In the use of all AI tools, human autonomy is primary.

This shift matters for teaching and learning because AI is no longer only an external tool students may choose to use. AI is increasingly embedded in search engines, productivity platforms, learning technologies, writing tools, coding environments, workplace applications, and mobile devices. Local frameworks should therefore address not only what AI produces, but also how colleges teach, assess, support learning, and protect students in environments where AI is present.

Where agentic tools interact with students, provide feedback, or initiate communication in distance education courses, colleges should evaluate the implications for Regular and Substantive Interaction. Interaction generated by an AI agent, rather than by the instructor, may not satisfy the instructor-initiated, regular, and substantive interaction required under [title 5 § 55204](#) and [federal distance education regulations](#), and substituting agentic interaction for instructor interaction may place course compliance and financial aid eligibility at risk.

From Local Decision-Making to Classroom Practice

Colleges and districts should develop or strengthen a local AI teaching and learning framework that provides clear guidance while preserving local context, collegial consultation, and faculty judgment. Because disciplines, courses, modalities, and student populations differ significantly across the California Community Colleges, the framework should not impose a single classroom rule or universal syllabus statement. Instead, it should help each college answer a set of core

questions through local consultation, academic leadership, student support, technology review, accessibility review, and continuous improvement.

The six areas below identify considerations for inquiry to ground, develop, and strengthen frameworks. They are intended to support shared expectations, transparent communication, responsible innovation, and meaningful evidence of student learning while preserving appropriate local decision-making.

1. How Colleges Make Decisions About AI

AI affects multiple aspects of institutional practice, including instruction, assessment, academic integrity, accessibility, privacy, cybersecurity, procurement, technology use, workforce preparation, and student support. **Because AI technologies continue to evolve, colleges should establish a process for reviewing AI-related issues, developing guidance, and ensuring policies and practices are current.**

- **Institutional responsibilities** include privacy, safety, security, accessibility, procurement, intellectual property, and approved technologies.
- **Faculty responsibilities**, exercised through established governance processes, include assignment design, assessment, grading practices, and expectations for student use of AI.

Where AI affects academic and professional matters, colleges and districts should engage local academic senates through established collegial consultation processes. Broader discussions should also include instructional leaders, technology professionals, librarians, accessibility specialists, student support professionals, classified professionals, administrators, and students to ensure guidance reflects educational goals, operational realities, student needs, and faculty roles in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom practice.

Institutional guardrails appropriately address issues such as data privacy, safety, security, accessibility, procurement, intellectual property, student rights, and approved or supported technologies. Faculty, through established governance processes, remain responsible for classroom decisions, including assignment design, grading practices, and expectations for student use of AI, consistent with academic freedom and disciplinary standards.

Colleges should also identify which AI-related decisions fall within the academic senate's purview over academic and professional matters, including curriculum, grading policies, degree and certificate requirements, standards for student preparation and success, program review, and faculty professional development. It is recommended that colleges actively engage student senates and student leadership to assess impacts to student-centered outcomes including support, equity and success. Clearly identifying these responsibilities helps distinguish matters for collegial consultation from administrative decisions.

Finally, colleges should recognize the distinction between collegial consultation and collective bargaining. When AI affects negotiable working conditions—such as workload, evaluation, expectations for faculty or classified professionals, or class size and assignment assumptions—those matters should be addressed through collective bargaining with the exclusive representative. Engaging bargaining units early helps ensure consultation and negotiation proceed on their appropriate tracks.

2. How Students and Faculty Receive Transparent Guidance

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into common technologies, students should receive timely, clear, accessible information about institutional expectations for responsible AI use, academic integrity, privacy, safety and security, intellectual property, student rights, and approved technologies. Colleges may communicate this guidance through orientations, websites, online learning resources, library and tutoring services, student support programs, and other student-facing resources. Institutional guidance should establish baseline expectations, while faculty retain discretion to determine and communicate course- and assignment-specific expectations for AI use.

Local frameworks should support faculty in communicating clear expectations for AI use in their courses. Syllabi and assignment instructions should clarify when AI use is permitted, limited, or prohibited; how AI use should be cited, acknowledged, or disclosed; and whether students are expected to use specific AI tools. Providing adaptable guidance and examples can promote consistency while preserving faculty judgment and disciplinary discretion.

Where AI use is expected or required, colleges should strive to provide equitable access through vetted, institutionally supported tools with appropriate privacy and data protections. Reliance on free consumer tools or personal subscriptions may create inequitable access and should not be the basis for required coursework. Faculty should not be expected to require AI use until appropriate institutional tools are available.

Local guidance should also address faculty intellectual property by clarifying ownership of AI-assisted instructional materials, the treatment of faculty work submitted to AI systems, and whether faculty may be required to use tools that ingest or train on their materials, consistent with academic freedom, local policy, and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Transparency should also extend to faculty use of AI. When AI supports instructional activities, assessment, feedback, research, or curriculum development, colleges should establish practices that address notification, consent, and clear understanding of opt in/opt out opportunities, especially for students to understand how AI is being used in the learning experience. Local guidance should also identify appropriate processes for students to ask questions or seek review of AI-supported instructional or assessment practices, consistent with local policy and faculty purview.

3. How Faculty Shape Classroom Practice

AI policy should ultimately support sound teaching and learning, not simply regulate technology. Classroom practice is central to that conversation. With an eye to preparing students for future careers and civic engagement, faculty are best positioned to determine when AI supports learning and when it may undermine the knowledge, skills, or competencies an assignment or course is intended to develop. **The question is not simply whether students use AI, but whether instructional activities and assessments enable students to demonstrate the learning outcomes faculty intend to measure.**

A useful distinction is between AI assistance and AI substitution. AI may appropriately support activities such as brainstorming, revision, language assistance, accessibility, feedback, coding support, or exploration. However, AI should not replace human thinking, judgment, analysis, creativity, empathy, performance, or skill development that students are expected to demonstrate.

Local frameworks should preserve faculty judgment while supporting clear communication about expectations for AI use. Faculty should determine when AI use is appropriate and communicate those expectations through course materials and assignments. Frameworks should also encourage instructional practices that make learning visible, such as drafts, reflections, process documentation, presentations, demonstrations, oral explanations, or critiques of AI-generated content to provide meaningful evidence of student learning.

4. How Colleges Support Academic Integrity and Evidence of Learning

The emergence of AI has renewed conversations about academic integrity, particularly in online learning environments. While AI detection tools continue to evolve, many colleges are finding greater value in approaches that focus on evidence of learning rather than detection alone.

Assignments that require students to explain reasoning, document processes, defend conclusions, evaluate sources, verify claims, or apply knowledge in authentic contexts can strengthen both student learning and academic integrity. These approaches may also reduce reliance on AI tools that have raised concerns about accuracy, bias, transparency, due process, privacy, and student trust. Assessment should focus on what students know and can do, including learning where AI was appropriately used.

Local frameworks should support faculty in developing assessment strategies that align with course outcomes while reflecting the realities of an AI-enabled learning environment and workplaces. This does not mean every assignment must be redesigned. It means colleges should create conditions for faculty to identify where assessment practices should evolve and where existing approaches already provide meaningful evidence of student learning.

5. How Colleges Support AI Literacy, Workforce Readiness, Equity, and Accessibility

AI literacy is becoming an essential component of student success, workforce preparation, and civic engagement. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into education and the workplace, **students need the knowledge and judgment to recognize and evaluate AI-generated content, verify information, recognize bias, protect privacy, and use AI safely, responsibly, and ethically.**

AI literacy extends beyond general familiarity with AI tools. Different disciplines, programs, and career pathways require different AI-related knowledge, skills, expectations, and safety considerations. Faculty should consider identifying discipline-specific AI competencies that prepare students for transfer, employment, and civic participation. Professional associations may also provide resources that inform local conversations about AI within specific disciplines. AI literacy includes not only technical proficiency but also the critical inquiry needed to evaluate AI-generated information, question assumptions, and exercise informed human judgment.

Equity, accessibility, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) should remain central considerations when selecting AI technologies and developing local guidance. Access to technology, cost, digital literacy, accommodations, linguistic bias, privacy, and community impacts may all influence how students experience AI.

Accessibility is both an equity imperative and a legal requirement. AI tools adopted for instruction must comply with Section 504 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including the Department of Justice's 2024 rule requiring conformance with WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Colleges should treat accessibility as a condition of adoption by evaluating accessibility documentation before acquiring AI tools for institutional use and before requiring students or faculty to use AI tools.

Colleges should also consider the needs of dual enrollment students and other minors. Because many AI tools impose age restrictions and additional requirements for handling minors' data, colleges should determine which tools are appropriate, when consent is required, and how institutional and student information will be protected.

6. How Colleges Learn, Innovate, and Share

Because AI technologies continue to evolve rapidly, **colleges should view AI in teaching and learning as an ongoing area of inquiry rather than a one-time policy issue.** Faculty inquiry groups, professional learning, pilot projects, communities of practice, accessibility reviews, student co-design opportunities, and resource repositories can support thoughtful experimentation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

Sharing examples across the system may reduce duplication, accelerate learning, and expand access to successful approaches. The goal is not statewide standardization, but rather a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement, that respects local context, faculty expertise, and institutional autonomy. By learning from one another while preserving local

decision-making, colleges can accelerate innovation, strengthen teaching and learning, and better prepare students for an AI-enabled future.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Colleges and districts should move this guidance into local conversation and action by developing or strengthening a local AI teaching and learning framework that:

- engages faculty, academic senates, administrators, classified professionals, students, and other stakeholders through established governance and collegial consultation processes;
- establishes clear institutional guardrails while supporting faculty discretion in course design, assessment, and classroom expectations;
- provides transparent guidance to students and faculty regarding appropriate AI use, equitable access, safe, secure, and responsible practices;
- supports discipline-specific AI competencies, effective assessment, and meaningful evidence of student learning;
- prepares students for AI-enabled workplaces and civil society evaluates student-facing and institutionally supported AI tools for privacy, security, accessibility, human oversight, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- promotes ongoing professional learning, responsible innovation, periodic review, and the sharing of effective practices across the California Community College System.

Artificial intelligence will continue to evolve, as will its implications for teaching, learning, and the future of work. By engaging in thoughtful local planning, supporting faculty expertise, and centering student learning, California Community Colleges can prepare students to thrive in a world where AI is increasingly integrated into education, employment, and civic life while preserving the values that define high-quality teaching and learning.

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Appendix A: Selected Examples of Effective Models and Practices

The resources below may support local inquiry, consultation, and practice development. External examples are provided as resources for local consideration and adaptation, not as statewide requirements or endorsements of a single approach.

California Community Colleges

- [Developing AI Literacy Across the California Community Colleges](#) (memo ISTI 25-300-01) (PDF)
- [AI Memo Series, Part 2: Centering AI Safety and Security Across the California Community Colleges](#) (memo ISTI 25-300-02) (PDF)
- [AI Across the California Community Colleges Website](#)
- [California Community Colleges AI Policies and Guidelines](#) (list of progress toward policy in each college)

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC)

- [ASCCC Support for AI Literacy Integration](#) (fall 2025, Resolution Number 102.04)
- [ASCCC Academic Integrity Policies in an AI World](#) (ASCCC, spring 2024)

State and National Models and Frameworks

- [UC Berkeley – Appropriate Use of Generative AI Tools](#)
- [Stanford University Teaching Commons – Artificial Intelligence Teaching Guide](#)
- [Stanford Worksheet for creating your AI syllabus statement](#)
- [Stanford – Creating your course policy on AI](#) (does not address agentic agents)
- [Stanford Center for Teaching and Learning – AI Teaching Strategies](#)
- [Columbia University CTR for Teaching & Learning – Exploring AI’s role in your classroom](#)
- [Columbia – Updating Writing Assignments in the Age of AI](#)
- [Sentient Syllabus Project – Syllabus Resources](#)
- [Academic Senate of the California State University Resolution – Possible Use of AI](#)
- [California Virtual Campus – Safeguarding Academic Integrity in the Age of Agentic AI](#)
- [EDUCAUSE – The Impact of AI on Learning Assessment](#)

Appendix B: Example Questions for Local Discussion and Framework Development

These questions are intended to support local conversations, collegial consultation, and collaborative planning as colleges develop or refine guidance related to artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning. They are not intended to serve as a checklist or statewide template. Colleges are encouraged to adapt these questions to their local governance processes, student populations, institutional priorities, and faculty roles in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom practice.

1. How Should Colleges Make Decisions About AI?

As AI evolves, colleges should establish an ongoing collegial consultation process for reviewing new issues, developing guidance, and updating local practices related to academic and professional matters. Consider:

- Who should participate in local AI discussions (e.g., faculty, academic senate, administrators, librarians, counselors, students, IT, accessibility specialists)?
- How will AI-related academic and professional matters be addressed through established shared governance processes?
- Which decisions should be made institutionally, and which should remain within faculty responsibility for curriculum and classroom practice?
- How will local guidance be reviewed and updated as AI technologies evolve?
- How can local policies reflect principles such as ethics, transparency, accountability, legal compliance, and education/training?
- How will local college AI frameworks align with district-wide Board Policies (BP) and Administrative Procedures (AP) while respecting local campus culture, governance structures, and operational needs?

Current examples of effective practices:

- [Developing AI Literacy Across the California Community Colleges](#) (memo ISTI 25-300-01) (PDF)
- AI Microsite: [AI Across the California Community Colleges Website](#)
- [California Community Colleges AI Policies and Guidelines](#) (list of progress toward policy in each college)
- [Academic Senate of the California State University Resolution – Possible Use of AI](#)

2. How Will Students and Faculty Receive Clear Guidance?

Students and faculty benefit from timely, consistent, transparent communication regarding AI expectations and responsibilities. Consider:

How will students learn about institutional guidance, course expectations, and their rights related to AI? Is access to this guidance clear and easily accessible?

- How will faculty communicate when AI is allowed, limited, required, or prohibited in courses and assignments?
- What guidance will be provided regarding: Privacy, safety and data security? Intellectual property? AI citation or disclosure? Equitable access to AI tools?
- How will students ask questions or appeal decisions involving AI-related academic integrity or assessment?
- How will faculty communicate their own use of AI in teaching, feedback, or assessment, including ensuring Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) requirements for Distance Education are satisfied?

Current examples of effective practices:

- [Centering AI Safety and Security Across the California Community Colleges](#) (memo ISTI 25-300-02) (PDF)
- [UC Berkeley – Appropriate Use of Generative AI Tools](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations; §600.2 – Distance Education](#)

3. How Can Faculty Shape Classroom Practice?

Local guidance should support faculty judgment in designing learning experiences that align AI use with course outcomes and encourage clear communication with students about AI in the classroom. Consider:

- How will AI expectations be communicated through syllabi and assignment instructions?
- How can students distinguish between AI use that supports learning and AI use that replaces learning the assignment is intended to measure?
- How will accessibility, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), appropriate Disability Services and Programs for Students (DSPS) accommodations or alternatives, affordability, and equitable access be considered when AI tools are required or recommended?
- What resources or professional learning would help faculty adapt assignments and assessments?
- What institutionally-approved tools or licenses are available?

Current examples of effective practices:

- [ASCCC Support for AI Literacy Integration](#) (fall 2025, Resolution Number 102.04)
- [ASCCC Academic Integrity Policies in an AI World](#) (ASCCC, spring 2024)
- [Stanford Worksheet for creating your AI syllabus statement](#)
- [Stanford – Creating your course policy on AI](#) (does not address agentic agents)

- [Sentient Syllabus Project – Syllabus Resources](#)
- [Columbia University CTR for Teaching & Learning – Exploring AI’s role in your classroom](#)

4. How Should Colleges Think About Assessment in an AI Era?

Rather than focusing only on AI detection, colleges may wish to consider how students demonstrate meaningful learning. Consider:

- What evidence of learning will demonstrate independent understanding, skill, or judgment?
- How might assessments place greater emphasis on process, reflection, application, or performance?
- How will student safety, security, privacy, due process, and equity be protected when AI-related academic integrity concerns arise?
- Examples might include iterative assignments, oral explanations, demonstrations of skill, reflective writing, or requiring students to explain how AI was used and what they contributed.

Current examples of effective practices:

- [EDUCAUSE – The Impact of AI on Learning Assessment](#)
- [Columbia – Updating Writing Assignments in the Age of AI](#)
- [We Teach with AI – Assessment and Grading](#) (Teach with AI by Bowen & Watson Web Resources)

5. How Will Colleges Prepare Students for an AI-Enabled World?

AI literacy is increasingly becoming part of college, career, and civic readiness. Consider:

- What foundational AI knowledge should all students develop?
- What AI knowledge and skills do faculty need to support teaching and learning?
- How will programs prepare students for discipline-specific uses of AI?
- How will colleges help students develop critical thinking alongside AI skills?
- How will AI initiatives be adapted for noncredit and adult education programs to support workforce readiness, rapid upskilling, and digital literacy development?
- Topics might include problem-framing, prompting, detecting and evaluating AI outputs, identifying bias and hallucinations, verifying information, protecting safety, security, privacy, ethical use, understanding AI limitations, and appropriate citation or disclosure.

Current examples of effective practices:

- [Teaching Naked – Deep Research Prompts](#)
- [Designing Learning with AI – We Teach with AI](#)

6. How Will Colleges Continue Learning, Improving, and Innovating?

AI technologies will continue to evolve. Local guidance should support ongoing learning rather than one-time policy development. Consider:

- How can faculty and staff safely explore new AI tools?
- What review process should be used before implementing AI systems that interact with students or institutional data?
- What safeguards are needed for privacy, accessibility, human oversight, safety and security?
- What professional development would benefit faculty and staff?
- How will effective practices and lessons learned be shared across the college, as well as with regional consortia, the California Virtual Campus (CVC), the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), and other statewide communities of practice?