The Council of Independent Colleges

Creating **Tomorrow's Institutions,** Together

2026 Institute for Chief Academic Officers with Chief Advancement, Enrollment, Financial, and Marketing Communication Officers

November 7–10, 2026 ■ Baltimore, Maryland

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Leadership: Moving from Reaction to Strategy



Presenters



Gerald D. Griffin
Provost
Hope College (MI)



Susan Larson
Provost
Concordia College (MN)

Acknowledgements

Thank you for letting us incorporate your ideas,

- Gregor Thuswaldner, Provost & Dean of the Faculty, La Roche University

Agenda

- Opening & Pulse Check
- The AI Landscape: Opportunities & Concerns
- Institutional Audit
- Curricular Integration Framework
- Administrative Uses of AI
- Commitments & Next Steps

Quick Pulse Check

- How many of you have a formal institutional AI policy?
- How many of your students are regularly using AI in their coursework?
- How many of your faculty have experimented with AI in their teaching?
- How many of you feel confident navigating AI conversations with your faculty?
- What's the one word that best describes your institution's current relationship with AI?
- What is your role/responsibility in navigating AI?

Scan the QR or use link to join

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/5in2bYfLJq

AI Pulse Check @ CIC CAO

The AI Landscape in Higher Education

Opportunities

- Personalized learning experiences
- Real-time student feedback & support
- Assessment design & assistance
- Enhanced classroom engagement
- Research acceleration
- Administrative efficiency
- Career preparation for graduates

Challenges & Concerns

- Academic integrity erosion
- Data privacy & security
- "AI slop" — low-quality generated content
- Equity & access gaps
- Faculty distrust & resistance
- Environmental impact of AI infrastructure
- Growing Gen Z skepticism (Gallup, 2025)

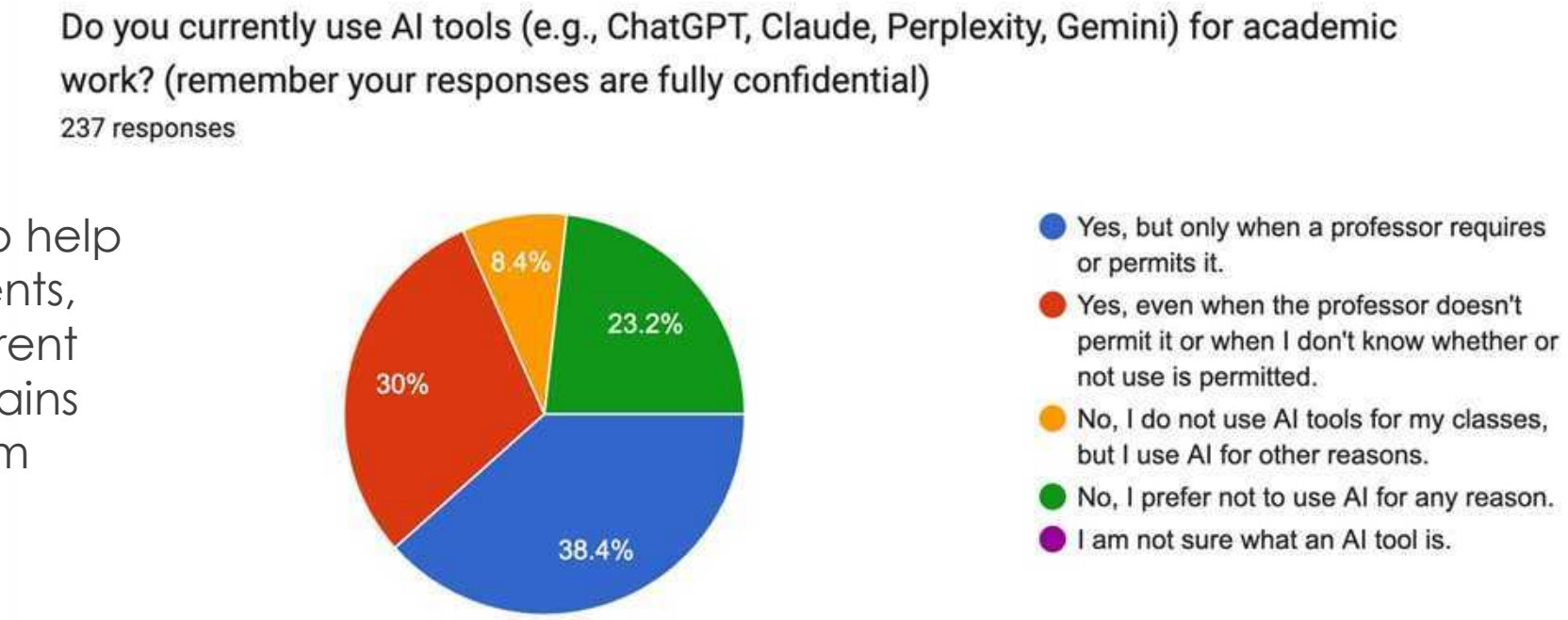
What Are we Hearing?

- **Faculty & Staff :** "I want to engage with AI thoughtfully, but I don't know where to start. And I'm worried that if I experiment, I'll either compromise academic integrity or fall behind colleagues who aren't worrying about it at all."

- Loss of Process-Based Learning
- Skill Atrophy
- Reduced Struggle
- Decreased Deep Thinking
- Decline in Trust of Peers and Students
- Increased Workload

What Are we Hearing?

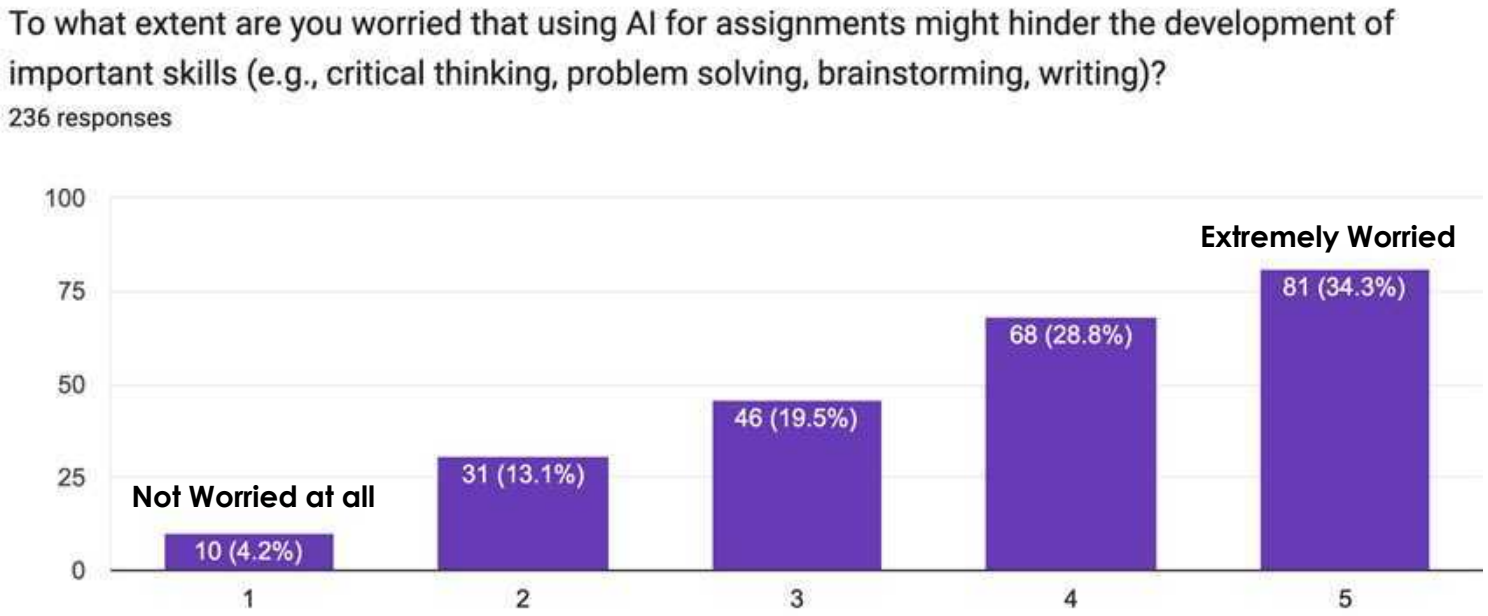
- **Student Response:** "I use AI to help me get unstuck on assignments, but every professor has different rules and nobody really explains why. I don't always know if I'm doing something wrong."



Preliminary Data, Internal Survey at Midwestern Liberal Arts College

What Are we Hearing?

- **Student Response:** "I use AI to help me get unstuck on assignments, but every professor has different rules and nobody really explains why. I don't always know if I'm doing something wrong."



Preliminary Data, Internal Survey at Midwestern Liberal Arts College

Group Reactions (Large Group)

- What are your reactions?
- What resonates with your institution?

Institutional Audit (Small Group Discussion)

At your table, discuss the following questions:

1. Where are students already using AI in your courses, with or without faculty permission?
2. What are the concerns you are hearing from your students and faculty about AI?
3. What is one area where AI could actually improve student learning or success in your department?
4. What is one area where you are most concerned about AI's impact?

Curricular Integration: What Does Meaningful Integration Look Like?

- **For Every Student:** What should ALL graduates know or be able to do with AI?
- **For the Major:** How does AI change what it means to be an expert in a discipline?
- **For Future AI Leaders:** Technical pathways, research, and leadership development
- **For Career Preparation:** What AI-related skills are expected right now?

AI Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand what AI is, how it works, and its limitations
- Use AI tools critically and ethically — not just efficiently
- Recognize AI-generated content and evaluate its quality
- Understand the ethical and civic implications of AI
- Apply AI literacy across disciplines and career contexts
- Engage with AI as a tool for inquiry, not a replacement for thinking

- Which courses/areas at your institution are best positioned to build foundational AI literacy for all students?

For the Major

How does AI change what it means to be an expert in a discipline?

- Identify discipline-specific AI tools and their professional applications
- Redesign assignments — not just AI-proof them
- Integrate AI ethics relevant to your field (healthcare, law, journalism, etc.)
- Incorporate AI into research methods and scholarly inquiry
- Prepare students for AI-augmented professional environments
- Which assignments should be redesigned?
- Where are we adding AI, and where are we willing to remove or replace content?
- How are we, as leaders, resourcing and recognizing this redesign work?

Leaders & Careers

For Future AI Leaders

- Technical AI pathways and specializations
- Undergraduate research (URSCA) with AI focus
- Ethics, policy, and governance of AI
- Interdisciplinary AI innovation projects

Career Preparation

- AI skills expected in your field right now
- Internships and experiential learning with AI
- Transferable AI competencies across sectors
- Portfolio development showcasing AI literacy

Discussion (Small Group)

Discuss at your table:

- Thinking about your graduates, which of these areas would most improve their readiness for an AI-shaped world?
- Which student learning outcomes in your departments and general education may need to evolve?
- What is one concrete step you could take in the next week? month? year?

Ethical Considerations & Practical Strategies

Ethical Imperatives:

- Academic integrity — clear, consistent policies
- Data privacy for students and faculty
- Equity of access to AI tools
- Transparency in AI use expectations
- Environmental responsibility

Practical Strategies:

- Develop department-level AI use guidelines
- • Engage faculty in co-creating AI policies
- • Design assessments that value process, not just product
- • Build AI literacy into advising conversations
- • Connect AI use to institutional mission explicitly

Faculty & Professional Development

- **Book Club:** *Teaching with AI* (updated edition), a lot of new content on classroom integration
- **More Than Words:** rethinking writing and thinking in an AI age
- **CIC AI Ready Network:** peer learning, workshops, and grants for humanists
- **Cross-departmental AI working groups** and faculty learning communities
- **Workshops** on AI-resistant and AI-enhanced assignment design
- **Undergraduate research opportunities** integrating AI (URSCA)

AI Assisting the Administrator's Role

Administrative Efficiency:

- Meeting notes and action item summaries
- Schedule planning and workload modeling
- Drafting communications and reports
- Synthesizing faculty feedback and survey data
- Curriculum mapping and review support

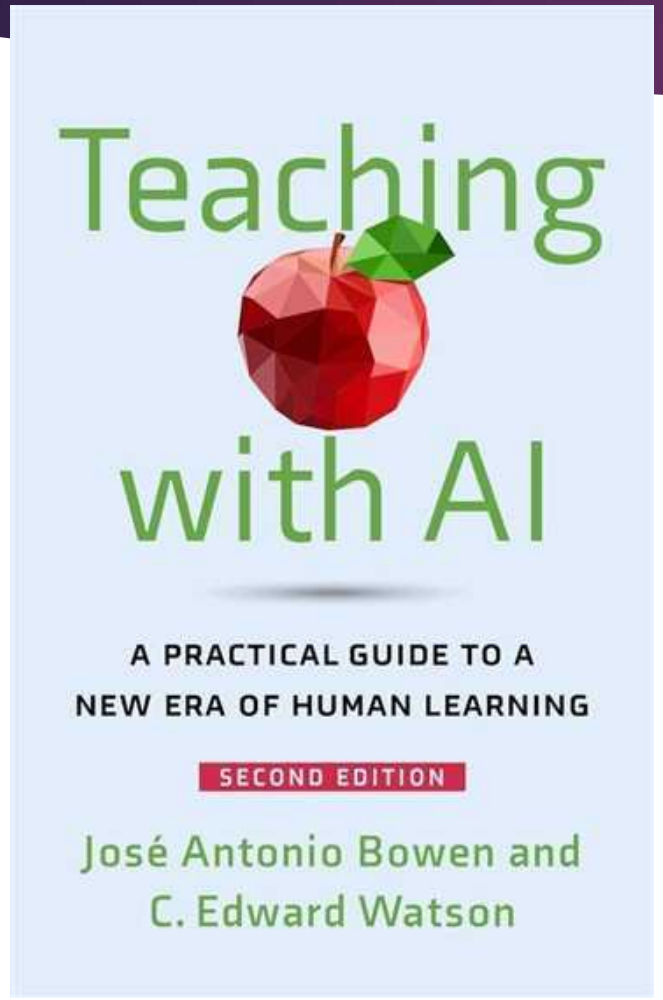
Leadership & Culture:

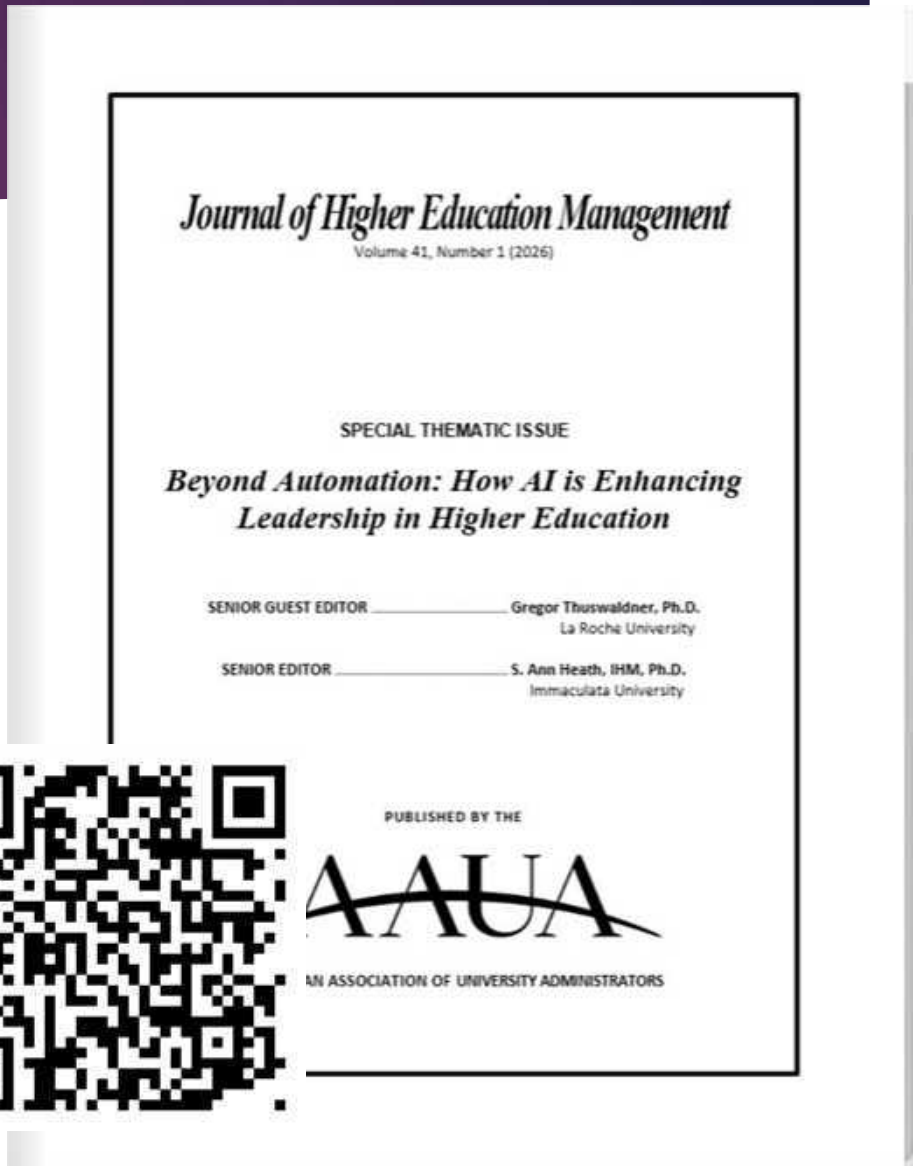
- Framing AI policy conversations with faculty
- Supporting faculty development initiatives
- Modeling responsible AI use for your institution
- Guiding critical inquiry about AI in your field
- Connecting faculty to resources and networks

Discussion Prompt

- How are you using or might you use AI to assist in your administrative work?

Recommended Reading





Thank you for attending this session!