THE TASK FORCE FOR AI IN EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

From Patricia Prelock, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, and David Ebert, Chief AI Officer.

Artificial intelligence is already present in nearly every aspect of teaching and learning at the University of Arizona. Our students use it to study, gather information, draft documents, and help solve problems; our instructors use it to design lessons, teach classes, and assess learning. The question before us is not whether AI belongs in a University of Arizona education, nor whether we can hold it at arm's length. The question is what we owe our students: an education that develops their capacity to think, question, create, and work with others, and that also prepares them for the future being reshaped by AI.

These two obligations are in genuine tension, and we do not accept that either must yield. We reject the premise that comprehensive adoption of AI at all levels of education is inevitable and self-justifying, and equally the premise that our task is to defend the curriculum against it. Depending on the moment and the goal, these tools are something to teach with, something to teach about, or something to deliberately teach without. Our aim is intentionality and discernment at every level of the institution: knowing what to adopt, what to redesign, and what to protect.

We therefore convene the **Task Force for AI in Education** and ask it to do the following.

1. **Produce Principles for AI in Education at the University of Arizona.** Create a short, durable, public statement with guiding principles for how we use AI for education at UA. It should be no more than two pages, defining what responsible, human-centered AI in education means for the University of Arizona. It should seek to protect cognitive and social development while still embracing the untold opportunity of these tools. It should state what is distinctive about a University of Arizona education in an AI-saturated environment and be specific enough to ground decision making for individuals and units. Name the commitments that govern our teaching and learning, including those to students' cognitive, intellectual, and social development, and how to weigh them when they conflict. Preserve latitude for units and instructors while allowing the university to assure students, families, and employers that a University of Arizona degree means something specific. *In developing the Principles, the task force should build on relevant research, best practices and existing University efforts, and invite perspectives and targeted input from faculty, students, staff, and academic leadership*.

2. **Craft an Action Plan for translating these Principles into practice.** These Principles are the foundation, not the whole of the work. Recommend the next steps required to convert them into concrete and unified guidance for policy and practice. Our acceptance of this plan will authorize the next stage of work.
    a. How can we communicate these Principles broadly?
    b. What should change in curriculum, program structure, and assessment design?
    c. Which policies, documents, and requirements need revision, enhancement or increased visibility, including those governing academic integrity?
    d. How can we ensure these principles and recommended changes align with shared values?
    e. How can we know our goals are being met, and how do we evolve these goals in an ever-changing environment?
    f. What will this require in people, time, and investment?
    g. Where further work is needed beyond these questions, say so and propose where it belongs?

Deliverables and timeline

- A working draft of the **Principles**, circulated for open university comment, by December 11, 2026.
- An interim update to the Provost and Chief AI Officer by January 15, 2027.
- The **Principles for AI in Education** at the University of Arizona, by February 19, 2027.
- **Action Plan** outlining recommendations for translating principles into practice, by April 16, 2027.
- The Chair will update the Provost and Chief AI Officer monthly.

Conduct

We ask the task force to embody the University's values—integrity, compassion, exploration, adaptation, inclusion, and determination—in a community-led process grounded in mutual respect and focused on our core educational mission. Furthermore, the task force should bring a broad array of disciplinary and institutional perspectives into the dialogue, especially those of faculty and students who remain skeptical of AI's role in education.

Scope

This charge addresses AI in teaching and learning within resident undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs. Outside its scope are Arizona Online, UAGC, non-degree certificates, AI in research, administrative operations, tool procurement, employment matters, and individual academic integrity cases. Implementation of the resulting action plan guidance rests with the Office of the Provost, the individual colleges, and standing governance bodies.

Task Force Members

- Jennifer Savary, Associate Director of AI for Education and Curriculum; Associate Professor of Marketing, Eller College of Management
- Amy Kimme Hea, Interim Vice Provost for Academic Affairs; Professor, Department of English
- Lisa Elfring, Vice Provost, Assessment, Teaching and Technology
- John Pollard, Dean, W.A. Franke Honors College; Professor of Practice
- Anna Cooper, Faculty Representative, appointed by the Faculty Senate (Faculty Senator; Associate Professor, School of Theatre, Film & Television, College of Fine Arts)
- Faculty Representative, appointed by the Committee of Eleven
- Lara Tarantini, M.A., Staff Representative, appointed by Staff Council / UASC (Senior Instructional Technologist, University Center for Assessment, Teaching, and Technology - UCATT)
- Vanessa Macamo, LL.M., Graduate Student Representative, appointed by GPSC (GPSC President, 2026–2027; Ph.D. Candidate, Special Education, Department of Disability & Psychoeducational Studies, College of Education)
- Harsh Patel, Undergraduate Student Representative, appointed by ASUA (ASUA Senator-at-Large; B.S. Candidate, Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence)

Task Force Facilitators and Members, AI Leadership Collective in the Education Domain:

Ji Hong, Professor; Austin Ross, Senior Lecturer; Jonathan Tullis, Associate Professor

Appendix 1: Potential questions to motivate Task Force conversations

- *How do we adopt AI without undermining core human-centered learning and the social connections vital to college experience?*
- *What capacities should higher education develop that remain essential regardless of AI's rapid development?*
- *How do we tell the difference between AI that deepens learning and AI that shortcuts it, and who should be making that call?*
- *What does authentic, credible assessment look like when LLMs can produce polished products while bypassing the cognitive struggle?*
- *What if student access to AI evolved over time—perhaps restricting reliance early on to protect foundational skill-building, then accelerating it after mastery to expand what's possible?*
- *When automated tools can generate rubrics, draft assignments, and grade work, what core instructional tasks must always remain exclusively human?*
- *How do we ensure that AI-driven efficiency for instructors leads to deeper mentoring and connection, rather than higher class sizes and automated administration?*
- *What principles of transparency and accountability must govern instructor use of AI, and who holds faculty accountable if an AI tool introduces bias, errors, or hallucinations into course materials?*
- *Where are students and instructors in encountering barriers to access, and what would it take to close them?*
- *What foundational AI competencies should everyone master, and where in the curriculum are those skills guaranteed?*
- *What complex, high-level problems can our students tackle now that were previously out of reach?*
- *What are examples of instructors already teaching exceptionally well with or about these tools, and what would it take to spread it?*
- *Where would AI let programs and people do genuinely different work, rather than the same work faster?*
- *Beyond using these tools competently, what should graduates understand about their consequences — bias, privacy, ownership, labor, environmental cost — and where in the curriculum does that get taught?*
- *Adapting pedagogy and assessment to AI requires significant effort—how do we ensure this labor is sustainably supported and valued by the university without leading to faculty burnout?*
- *How do we offer clear, actionable AI guidance that fosters consistency and sound decision-making, respects instructor autonomy, and avoids rigid, one-size-fits-all mandates?*
- *What should a University of Arizona degree mean in an AI-saturated world (that a degree elsewhere might not)?*