

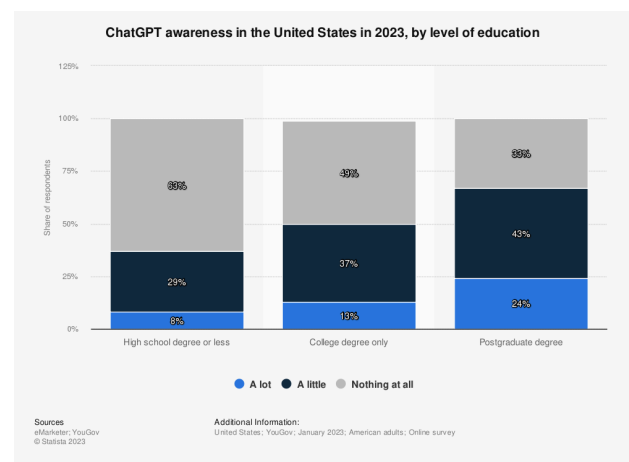
# Piloting Not Policing; AI and Academia's

## Ethos

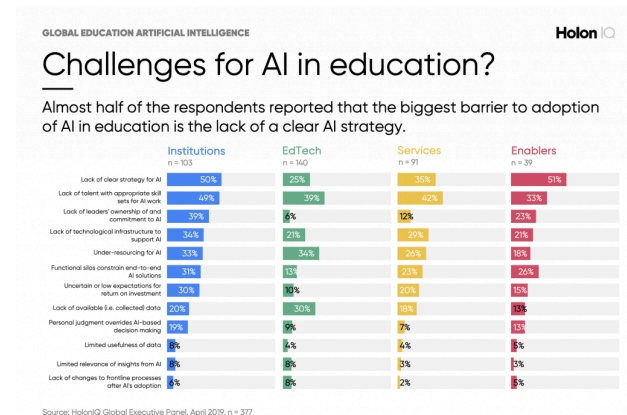
March 18, 2024

### Professor's Values Revealed in Syllabus: Piloting and Policing

Creating a course policy is the beginning of expressing a professor's teaching values; professors with flexibility and empathy may have a more lenient deadline extension policy, while professors who value structure may install hard-set deadlines. Professors must navigate a minefield of trap doors when creating their course syllabus. Some policies may open doorways to new opportunities, while others might open trapdoors that will open the class up to unwelcome practices. The steady flow of values into policy has become expressed in the complexities of integrating AI into academia. Our deliberation was focused on AI policy, AI plagiarism, and how best to



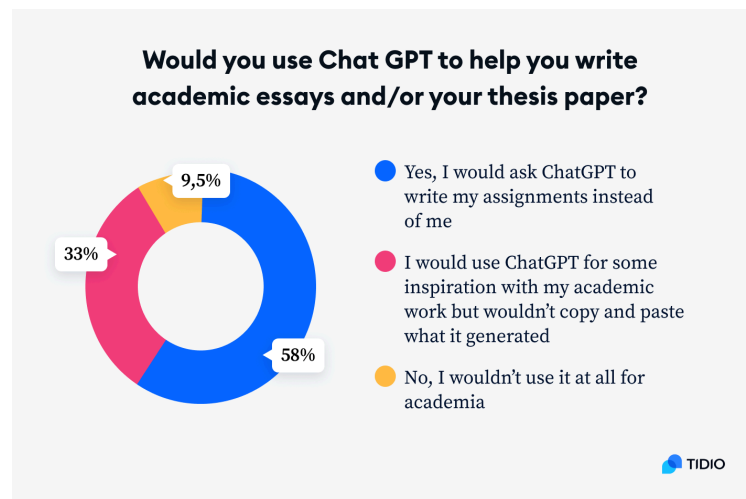
integrate AI into academia. Many students and a few faculty members attended. AI in academia is a civic issue because it affects everyone at Pennsylvania State University or any other institution across the country. At least 37% of students across all education levels are aware of ChatGPT, so any information on its use affects a large proportion of individuals (eMarketer, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of a clear AI strategy is reported to be the biggest barrier to adopting AI technology in education ("20 AI In Education Statistics To Rethink How You Teach 2024"). During our deliberation, it was discovered that professors have the choice between taking the passive approach of policing AI. In contrast, others who value actively improving education have focused on piloting the new technology; piloting AI underscores the connection between piloting new technology, with the values of innovation, adaptability, and classroom progressivism (Marengo, 2024). Integrating artificial intelligence into academia presents new challenges and opportunities for professors; however, in our deliberation, we discovered that piloting artificial intelligence radically transforms the challenges associated with artificial intelligence in academia into opportunities and aligns with the ethos of innovation in academia.



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## Policing AI is Necessary; Piloting AI is Crucial

While policing AI is necessary to some degree, our deliberation revealed that a focus on policing neglects the value that it can bring to the classroom through piloting the technology. Just as policing the use of textbooks is necessary during an exam, at certain points artificial



intelligence may need to be limited in the classroom, especially since 58% of students would use ChatGPT to write an assignment instead of writing it themselves (Fokina); however, the consensus during the deliberation was that piloting artificial intelligence is more conducive to the value of education because, much like rocket fuel when ignited, it harnesses the explosive and spontaneous change brought on by the powerful new developments in artificial intelligence, rather than standing behind the rocket only to get burnt. By piloting the rocket ship that is artificial intelligence, professors can soar to new heights and use the technology to enhance the learning experience. In our deliberation, we discussed how students could constructively use artificial intelligence to enhance their educational experience at Pennsylvania State University. It was uncovered that many of the students who had attended our deliberation had used artificial intelligence at one point or another as a tutor to teach

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them methodologies by which to approach problems. One student who attended the deliberation shared that they had utilized ChatGPT in their math class. ChatGPT is infamously known for being incapable of correctly solving simple math: if it were told to add two large numbers, it wouldn't give the correct answer. However, this student claimed that he gave ChatGPT calculus equations to solve. While the AI's solutions were incorrect, it adequately broke down the steps of the problems he fed it with examples and explanations. Because this student used ChatGPT to explain his calculus homework, he was allowed to solve complex problems with simple guidance, which made his homework a more valuable learning experience. If the emphasis was on policing artificial intelligence, this use of ChatGPT may have been disallowed; however, because AI was being piloted as opposed to police, his learning experience was enriched.

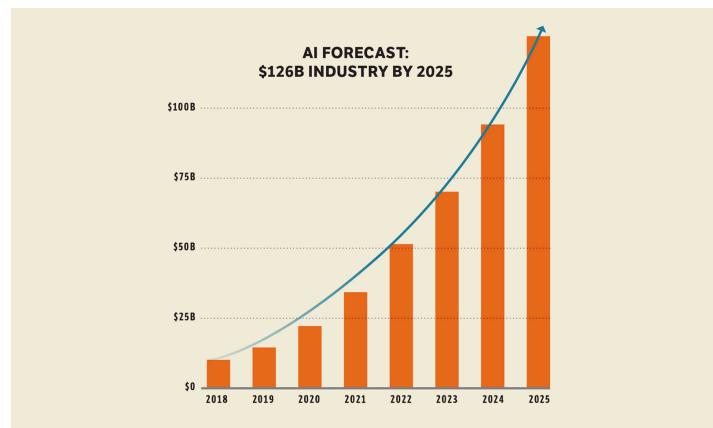
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## Every Challenge is an Opportunity

Baked into the ethos of education, is the ideal of charging head-first into every challenge, treating each as an opportunity to learn; it was made clear in our deliberation that the same philosophy applies to integrating Artificial Intelligence into the classroom. If a professor's course syllabus has an

emphasis on the policy, it leads only to the death of opportunity as time passes because artificial intelligence will be able to bring infinitely more gain to education, especially since the

AI industry is projected to grow



exponentially in the next year (Sahota). On the other hand, if a professor embraces the new life of opportunities brought about by AI, they will not be shaken or blown away by new developments; rather, they will be strengthened by every new development that is a hurdle for those who police. During the deliberation, professors shared how they integrated the use of ChatGPT into the classroom. One professor in particular mentioned how in his graduate classes, he encourages his students to use the tool because he knows that it cannot provide the full answer to his questions. He shared how he designs his assignments with AI in mind. This professor took the challenge presented by artificial intelligence's basic knowledge of his course content and turned it into an opportunity to go deeper in his classes. This professor's

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success in rewriting many of his assignments to accommodate artificial intelligence is indicative of the value he places on both education and innovation. In much the same way, since innovation is in alignment with the ethos of academia, professors should actively be using artificial intelligence to make their classes better as opposed to fighting a losing battle against change.

## **Summary**

In summary, integrating artificial intelligence into academia presents new challenges and opportunities for professors; however, in our deliberation, we discovered that piloting artificial intelligence radically transforms the challenges associated with artificial intelligence in academia into opportunities and aligns with the ethos of innovation in academia. While some may emphasize strict limitations on artificial intelligence, others recognize the potential of piloting this technology to improve academia. Our deliberation underscored the importance of treating artificial intelligence as a tool, rather than an existential threat to education. When piloted effectively, artificial intelligence can bring new insights to academia, and bring professors into a new realm of opportunity as opposed to being buried by the challenges of focusing on policing artificial intelligence.

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