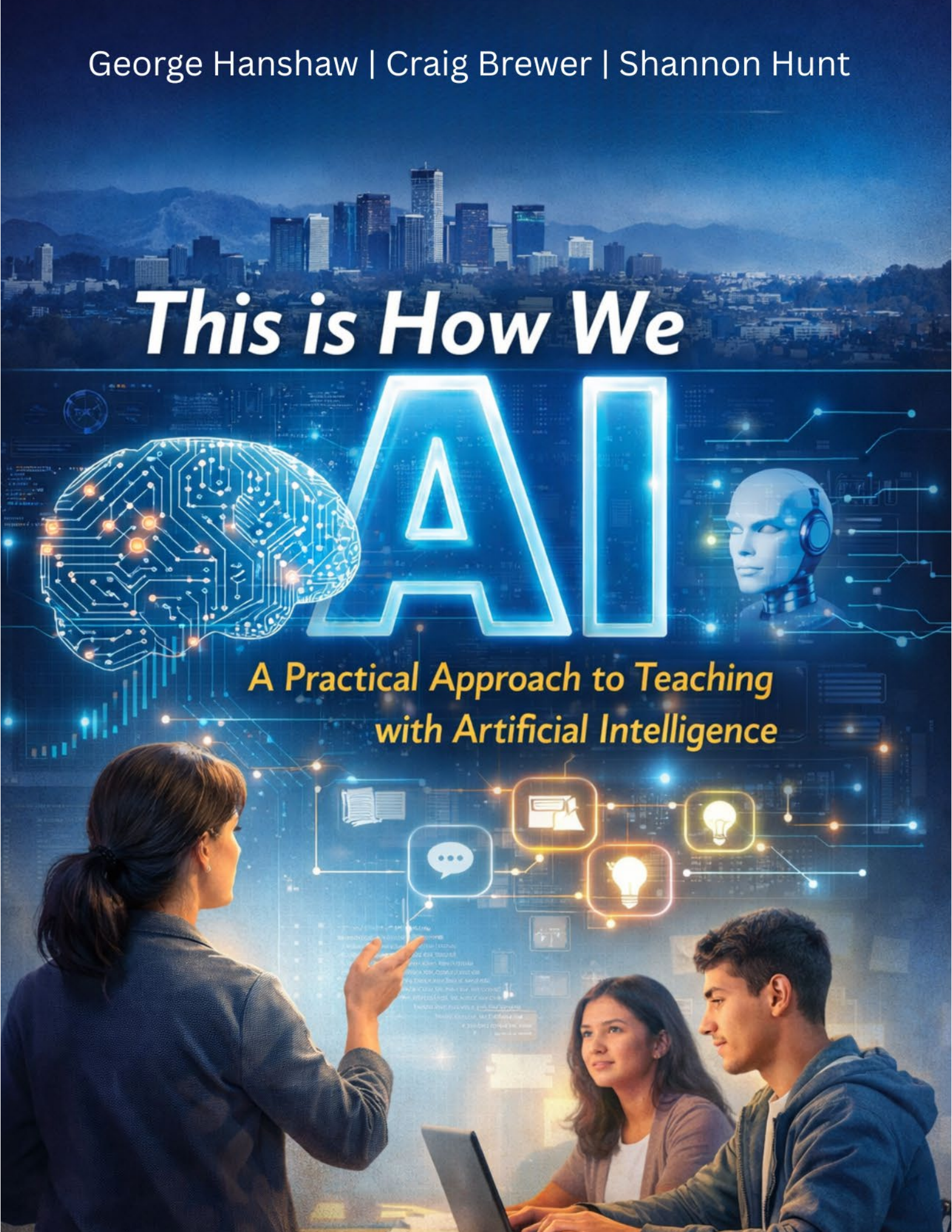
George Hanshaw | Craig Brewer | Shannon Hunt

This is How We AI

A Practical Approach to Teaching with Artificial Intelligence



How We AI: A Practical Approach to Teaching with Artificial Intelligence

By George Hanshaw, Craig Brewer, and Shannon Hunt
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Executive Summary

Artificial intelligence is already reshaping higher education, not simply as a new set of tools but as a shift in **teaching practice**. Just as the move to online learning required new roles, competencies, and ways of thinking about instruction, the normalization of generative AI requires faculty and academic leaders to redesign how learning experiences are structured, supported, and assessed.

This paper, authored by faculty and academic leaders at Los Angeles Pacific University (LAPU), argues that the central question is no longer whether students use AI, but how AI is positioned pedagogically. When AI is treated as a shortcut or answer engine, it undermines learning; when it is framed as a thought partner, practice space, and feedback amplifier, it can deepen engagement, support metacognition, and extend instructional presence, especially in asynchronous and online environments.

Drawing on multiple empirical studies conducted at LAPU with real students in real courses, the document synthesizes what happens when AI course assistants are integrated at scale. These studies show that thoughtfully designed AI integration can support student understanding, increase opportunities for low-stakes practice, and help faculty manage workload, while preserving the centrality of human judgment, relationship, and disciplinary expertise.

For institutions and faculty, the paper offers three core claims:

- Faculty are already teaching in the presence of AI, whether they intend to or not; ignoring AI does not remove it from the learning environment, it only leaves its use unstructured and inequitable.
- Banning or "AI-proofing" assignments is unsustainable and often counterproductive; the more powerful move is to design with AI, making its use visible, purposeful, and aligned with learning outcomes.
- Teaching with AI is fundamentally a design decision: instructors shift from serving primarily as content deliverers to acting as learning architects who frame AI's role, structure practice, and guide sense-making.

The document provides:

- A clear typology of common AI roles in courses (e.g., answer machine, editor, tutor, practice partner, thought partner) and the risks and benefits of each.
- Practical strategies for framing AI with students, modeling expert use, and building "visibility without surveillance" through process-based assignments and guided transparency.
- Ready-to-use design patterns, checklists, and simple redesign moves that faculty can implement immediately—such as shifting grading weight from product to process, embedding AI into practice activities, and requiring reflection on AI interactions.

The intended audience includes faculty, instructional designers, academic leaders, and teaching and learning centers seeking evidence-informed, immediately applicable approaches to AI integration. Rather than prescribing policy, the paper complements local academic integrity frameworks by offering concrete ways to align AI use with rigor, equity, and authentic learning.

Ultimately, the paper's stance is that teaching with AI remains irreducibly human. AI may provide explanations, practice opportunities, and feedback at scale, but it is faculty who define what counts as good thinking in a discipline, design the conditions for meaningful learning, and build the trusting relationships that help students use AI ethically and effectively. This document is an invitation to move beyond hype and fear toward intentional, research-informed use of AI as a partner in teaching and learning.

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Welcome Message

Artificial intelligence is already reshaping higher education. The real story is not about the tools themselves, but about how we use them to design richer learning experiences, support faculty, and serve students more equitably.

This document is an invitation to explore practical, research-informed ways that AI can enhance teaching and learning right now in your own courses and programs.

Why This Document Matters

Higher education leaders face significant pressure to:

- Improve student outcomes
- Scale high-quality instruction
- Prepare graduates for an AI-rich workplace
- Accomplish these goals with finite time and resources

Thoughtful use of AI can extend faculty capacity, personalize learning, and create new forms of active, authentic practice—without replacing human judgment or relationship.

What You Will Find

Concrete use cases drawn from real classroom implementations, including:

- Role-play assistants
- Socratic tutors
- AI-supported active learning patterns you can adapt quickly

Actionable templates, prompts, and design decisions that help you move from experimentation to responsible, scalable practice in your own institutional context.

Who This Is For

This document serves:

- Academic leaders
- Faculty
- Instructional designers
- Student success professionals

It is designed for colleagues who want to move beyond hype and fear toward practical, ethically grounded uses of AI. It addresses educators ready to ask harder questions about rigor, integrity, equity, and workload—and to use AI as a design partner in addressing them.

How to Read This Document

This document is designed for flexibility:

- **Skim the big ideas** in the section introductions
- **Jump straight to patterns, examples, and checklists** that speak to your role and immediate challenges
- **Share sections with your teams**
- **Test one or two ideas** in an upcoming course or initiative
- **Use what you learn** to shape the next iteration of how your institution "does AI"

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Introduction

Purpose

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence in higher education has been widely framed as a technological disruption. It is seen as something to be adopted, restricted, or regulated. Yet this framing misses the more consequential reality.

Artificial intelligence is not primarily a tool problem; it is a teaching practice shift.

Much like the transition from face-to-face instruction to online learning, the introduction of AI into teaching environments fundamentally reshapes how instructors design learning experiences, how students engage with content, and how instructional presence is enacted across time and space.

The Online Teaching Parallel

The literature has long established that teaching online is different—not because of the tools themselves, but because effective practice requires:

- New roles
- New competencies
- Fundamentally different ways of thinking about learning

A similar moment now confronts higher education with AI. The question is no longer whether AI tools exist or whether students will use them. **The more important question is how teaching practices must evolve in response.**

Early Institutional Approaches: Prevention vs. Design

Early institutional responses to AI have often focused on prevention:

- Detection tools
- Policy statements
- Warnings about academic integrity

While these concerns are understandable, they frame AI as an external threat rather than an instructional design challenge. History suggests this approach is limited. When learning management systems first became widespread, effectiveness did not emerge from simply uploading content. When online discussion forums were introduced, engagement did not improve by default.

In each case, meaningful learning gains occurred only when educators adapted their pedagogy to the affordances and constraints of the medium.

AI Follows This Same Pattern

When positioned as:

- **A shortcut** → it undermines learning

- **An answer engine** → it undermines learning
- **A productivity hack** → it undermines learning

When positioned as:

- **A thought partner** → it can deepen engagement
- **A practice space** → it can support metacognition
- **A feedback amplifier** → it can extend instructional presence, especially in asynchronous and online environments

Purpose of This Document

This document argues that **teaching with AI requires a deliberate shift in instructional practice.** It is not about:

- Replacing instructors
- Automating assessment
- Outsourcing thinking

It is about **designing learning experiences where AI supports active learning, reinforces disciplinary thinking, and helps students practice skills that matter.**

Drawing on multiple empirical studies conducted at Los Angeles Pacific University, this document synthesizes what we have learned about integrating AI course assistants into real courses, with real students, at institutional scale.

Rather than offering abstract theory or speculative futures, this document focuses on practice. It examines:

- How faculty can intentionally frame AI for students
- How AI can be embedded into course design to support engagement and belonging
- How instructors can maintain pedagogical authority while leveraging AI as a scalable learning partner

By doing so, it aims to provide faculty and academic leaders with a practical, evidence-informed approach to teaching with AI—one grounded not in tools, but in teaching practice.

Key Ideas

- Faculty are already teaching in the presence of AI, whether they intend to or not.
- The question is no longer whether AI is used, but how it is positioned pedagogically.
- AI changes roles, timing, presence, and responsibility.

This document positions itself at the intersection of:

- Instructional practice
- Faculty development
- Applied research on artificial intelligence in higher education

Rather than evaluating AI as a standalone technology or offering prescriptive policy guidance, it synthesizes empirical findings from multiple institutional studies to articulate a **practice-oriented framework for teaching with AI.**

The intended audience includes faculty, instructional designers, academic leaders, and teaching and learning centers seeking evidence-informed, immediately applicable approaches to AI integration.

By framing AI as an extension of teaching presence and learning design rather than a replacement for instruction, this document contributes a practical, pedagogically grounded perspective to the emerging literature on AI in higher education—one rooted in what faculty can do differently in their courses today.

Position Statement

Faculty Are Already Teaching in the Presence of AI

Generative AI tools are now embedded in students' academic lives. They are:

- Accessible across devices and contexts
- Frequently used to support studying, drafting, and sense-making

This reality means that even courses with explicit AI restrictions are still taught in the presence of AI. Students make decisions—often privately—about whether and how to use these tools.

As a result, **the instructional environment has already shifted, regardless of institutional policy or individual faculty preference.** Ignoring this presence does not eliminate AI from the learning process; it simply leaves its influence unexamined and unstructured.

Practical Framing: The Current Teaching Reality

The Question Is No Longer Whether AI Is Used, But How It Is Positioned Pedagogically

Once AI's presence is acknowledged, the pedagogical question becomes unavoidable: **What role does AI play in learning?**

When left undefined, AI is often positioned by default as:

- A shortcut
- An answer engine
- A replacement for thinking

When intentionally framed, however, it can function as:

- A practice partner
- A feedback mechanism
- A reflective prompt that supports learning without supplanting it

The difference lies not in the technology itself, but in the instructional choices faculty make about how AI is introduced, modeled, and constrained within learning activities.

AI Reshapes Roles, Timing, Presence, and Responsibility

Just as online teaching required faculty to rethink instructional presence, feedback cycles, and student responsibility, AI introduces similar shifts.

Learning can now occur:

- Outside traditional instructional timelines
- With feedback from multiple sources
- With students afforded new forms of autonomy

Faculty roles increasingly emphasize:

- Design
- Framing
- Sense-making
- (Rather than content delivery alone)

Teaching with AI, like teaching online, is not a simple modality change—it is a reconfiguration of instructional relationships and responsibilities.

What Faculty Are Experiencing

Faculty are navigating a complex and often emotionally charged teaching environment shaped by the rapid normalization of generative AI. Many report:

- Uncertainty about how students are using AI
- Concern about overreliance or misuse
- Anxiety about whether traditional assessments still measure learning

Students, in turn, express:

- Confusion about what is allowed
- Fear of doing something wrong
- Pressure to keep up with perceived norms of AI use

These dynamics can:

- Strain trust

- Complicate feedback
- Increase cognitive and emotional load for both instructors and learners

Importantly, these experiences are not isolated; they reflect a systemic shift in the learning environment rather than individual failures of teaching or student integrity.

Why Banning or Ignoring AI Is Insufficient

Institutional bans or silence around AI often fail to produce the intended outcomes.

Prohibitions are problematic because they:

- Are difficult to enforce
- Are inconsistently interpreted
- Are frequently disconnected from students' lived realities

When AI is not addressed explicitly, students are left to make private, unexamined decisions about its use. In that context:

- Students with greater access to technology, informal guidance, and academic confidence are more likely to leverage AI productively
- Others may either avoid it or rely on it in higher-risk, surface-level ways
- This can widen existing inequities in access to support and quality of learning

Similarly, ignoring AI does not preserve traditional pedagogy; it simply removes instructional guidance from a changed context. In practice, absence of framing often leads to greater misuse, not less, as students attempt to navigate ambiguous expectations on their own.

Teaching With AI Is Not About Outsourcing Thinking—It Is About Redesigning Learning

At its core, teaching with AI is a design challenge, not a delegation of intellectual labor.

The presence of AI requires educators to reconsider:

- Where thinking happens
- How practice is structured
- What evidence of learning looks like

Rather than replacing cognitive effort, **effective AI-integrated teaching redistributes it**, shifting emphasis toward:

- Sense-making
- Application
- Reflection
- Judgment

This redesign invites faculty to:

- Clarify learning goals
- Create opportunities for guided practice
- Make thinking visible in new ways

In this framing, AI becomes a context for learning to think more deliberately, not a means of avoiding it.

AI Should Be Framed as a Learning Partner, Not a Shortcut or Answer Engine

How AI is positioned within a course significantly shapes how students engage with it.

When AI is implicitly framed as a means to generate answers or complete tasks, students are more likely to disengage from the cognitive work of learning.

In contrast, framing AI as a learning partner—one that asks questions, offers feedback, and supports iteration—encourages students to remain active participants in the learning process.

This framing aligns AI use with practices such as:

- Drafting
- Revising
- Reflecting
- Problem-solving

(Rather than submission-ready output)

The instructional goal is **not to eliminate AI from learning, but to orient its use toward thinking with students rather than thinking for them.**

Faculty Framing of AI Strongly Influences How Students Use It

Students look to instructors for cues about what constitutes appropriate, ethical, and effective academic practice.

When faculty explicitly discuss AI, model its use, and connect it to course learning outcomes, students are more likely to adopt productive and transparent approaches.

Conversely, when AI is addressed only through policy statements or left unspoken, students often rely on:

- Assumptions
- Peer norms
- External guidance that may not align with instructional intent

Clear faculty framing:

- Reduces ambiguity
- Supports academic integrity
- Helps students understand how AI fits within the intellectual work of the discipline

In this sense, AI use becomes a pedagogical conversation rather than an individual guessing game.

Practical Framing: An Instructional Response

AI Is Most Effective When Embedded Into Learning Activities, Not Added On Top of Them

AI integration is most successful when it is intentionally designed into learning activities rather than offered as an optional or peripheral tool.

Embedded uses—such as:

- Guided practice
- Structured reflection
- Iterative feedback

—position AI as part of the learning process itself.

This approach:

- Minimizes extraneous cognitive load
- Normalizes appropriate use
- Ensures alignment with course objectives
- Maintains instructional authority over how learning unfolds
- Allows faculty to shape both the purpose and boundaries of AI interaction
- Supports deeper engagement and more coherent instructional experiences

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A Simple Typology: Ways AI Shows Up in Courses

Common AI Roles in Courses

Understanding how AI functions in practice helps faculty make intentional choices about when and how to integrate it. This typology describes six common roles AI plays in student learning.

AI as Answer Machine

What it looks like:
Students ask AI for direct answers to questions or complete task outputs:

- "Write my essay"
- "Solve this problem"
- "Give me the answer to question 5"

The AI functions as a shortcut to completion rather than a learning tool.

Why it's problematic:
This use bypasses cognitive engagement entirely. When students treat AI as an answer machine, they avoid the thinking, struggling, and sense-making that produce learning. The student's role becomes passive: ask, receive, submit.

When it might be justified:
In rare cases—such as confirming basic factual information already learned or generating starting points for exploration—this use may be acceptable if explicitly framed and limited by the instructor.

Instructional implication:
If you don't want AI used this way, you must design tasks that make "answer machine" use insufficient or detectable. This might mean:

- Requiring process documentation
- Including reflection on AI interaction
- Structuring tasks that demand original synthesis AI cannot provide

AI as Editor

What it looks like:
Students draft work independently, then use AI to review grammar, improve clarity, refine structure, or suggest stronger phrasing. The student retains authorship and makes decisions about which suggestions to accept or reject.

Why it can be productive:
When students use AI as an editor, they maintain agency over their work. Editing requires critical judgment—students must evaluate AI feedback, decide what fits their intent, and revise accordingly. This supports iterative improvement without eliminating student thinking.

Why it can be problematic:
If students accept all AI suggestions uncritically, editing becomes passive. They may improve surface features without understanding why changes work, or they may lose their own voice by deferring entirely to AI-generated phrasing.

Instructional implication:
Frame AI editing as a dialogue, not dictation. Ask students to:

- Document what AI suggested
- Note what they kept
- Note what they rejected
- Explain why

Require reflective commentary on how AI feedback influenced their revision process.

AI as Practice Partner/Coach

What it looks like:
Students engage with AI to practice skills, simulate real-world scenarios, receive feedback on performance, or rehearse dialogue. Examples include:

- Mock interviews
- Language conversation practice
- Public speaking preparation
- Clinical case simulations

Why it's highly effective:
Practice is essential for skill development, but traditional practice opportunities are often limited by:

- Time constraints
- Availability of partners
- Fear of judgment

AI provides low-stakes, repeated practice with immediate feedback, allowing students to build competence and confidence before high-stakes performance.

Key design considerations:
For AI to function effectively as a practice partner, students need clear criteria for evaluating their own performance. Simply practicing with AI isn't enough—students must:

- Reflect on what they're learning
- Identify patterns in their performance
- Adjust their approach based on feedback

Instructional implication:
Structure practice activities with:

- Explicit learning goals
- Performance criteria
- Reflection prompts

Ask students to document multiple practice sessions, noting:

- What changed between attempts
- What they learned from AI-generated feedback

Tie AI practice to authentic assessment where students demonstrate skills in non-AI contexts.

AI as Tutor

What it looks like:
Students use AI to explain concepts they don't understand, answer follow-up questions, provide examples, or clarify confusion. AI functions as an always-available explainer that responds to individual needs without judgment.

Why it supports learning:
Tutoring is one of the most pedagogically valuable roles for AI. When students use AI to deepen understanding—not to bypass initial effort—they benefit from:

- Personalized explanation
- Multiple representations of concepts
- The ability to ask follow-up questions at their own pace

AI tutoring works best when it scaffolds understanding rather than providing finished answers.

Potential risks:
If students turn to AI before attempting to understand material independently, they may develop:

- Learned helplessness
- Failure to build foundational problem-solving skills

Over-reliance on AI tutoring can also prevent students from developing comfort with productive struggle.

Instructional implication:
Frame AI tutoring as a supplement to, not a replacement for, initial engagement with course material. Encourage students to:

- Attempt problems first
- Then use AI to clarify specific points of confusion

Consider asking students to document:

- What they learned from AI explanations
- How it changed their understanding

AI as Thought Partner

What it looks like:
Students engage AI in dialogue to explore ideas, test reasoning, challenge assumptions, or consider alternative perspectives. AI acts as an intellectual sparring partner—pushing back on weak arguments, surfacing counterpoints, and helping students refine their thinking.

Why it's high-value:
This is arguably the most cognitively demanding and pedagogically productive use of AI. When students use AI as a thought partner, they remain intellectually active:

- Articulating ideas
- Defending positions

- Evaluating critiques
- Revising their understanding

This mirrors the kind of dialogic learning that occurs in strong mentorship relationships.

How it differs from other roles:
Unlike Answer Machine (which bypasses thinking) or Tutor (which explains), Thought Partner requires students to drive the conversation and make judgments. The student must:

- Determine what questions to ask
- Respond to AI challenges
- Decide when AI's suggestions are useful versus misleading

Instructional implication:
Design prompts that position AI as a critical interlocutor:

- "Ask AI to argue against your thesis"
- "Have AI generate three objections to your proposed solution"
- "Use AI to identify gaps in your evidence"

Require students to document and reflect on these exchanges, explaining how AI-generated pushback shaped their final thinking.

Why Role Confusion Creates Problems

The problem:
When instructors don't explicitly name how AI should function, mismatches arise between faculty expectations and student behavior. Faculty may assume students know AI is "allowed for brainstorming but not drafting" or "acceptable for editing but not generating," but without clear framing, students guess—and often guess wrong.

The consequence:
This creates:

- Unnecessary conflict
- Eroded trust
- Increased emotional labor for both faculty and students

Faculty feel students are "cheating" when they're often just confused about boundaries. Students feel unfairly accused when they believed they were following unstated norms.

Faculty takeaway:
If you don't define AI's role, students will—and their definitions will be shaped by what's easiest, not what supports learning.

How AI Changes the Instructor's Role (But Doesn't Replace It)

AI doesn't eliminate the need for instructors—it changes where instructional effort is invested. This section helps faculty understand how their roles evolve when AI becomes an active learning tool, shifting from content delivery and gatekeeping toward design, judgment, and relational coaching. The goal is to normalize role transformation without threatening professional identity.

Key Insight: The instructor's expertise becomes more valuable, not less, but it shows up in different ways.

From Content Expert to Learning Architect

What this means:
Instructors increasingly design the conditions for learning rather than serving as the sole source of information. With AI capable of:

- Answering factual questions
- Explaining concepts
- Providing examples on demand

—the instructor's content knowledge is now most valuable when applied to **course design decisions:**

- Sequencing learning experiences
- Crafting constraints that promote thinking
- Engineering cognitive friction that supports deep learning

Designing prompts, constraints, and learning moves:
Instructors create the scaffolding that shapes how students interact with AI—deciding:

- When AI should challenge
- When AI should clarify
- When AI should extend student thinking

Example:
Rather than lecturing on argument structure, an instructor designs a prompt that asks AI to play devil's advocate against a student's thesis, requiring students to defend and refine their reasoning.

Strategic use of constraints:
"Use AI to generate three possible thesis statements, then explain which one creates the most productive tension with your evidence"

Teaching Presence in an AI-Supported Course

Modeling AI Use for Students

What this means:
Students learn how to use AI appropriately not from policy documents, but from watching instructors model thoughtful, disciplinary-grounded AI use. When faculty demonstrate their own AI interactions—including where they stop, what they question, and what they choose not to use—students gain practical understanding of expert judgment in an AI-enhanced environment.

Why demonstration matters more than policy statements:

- Policies tell students what not to do; modeling shows them what to do
- Students need to see the messy, iterative process of using AI as a thinking tool, not just the polished end result
- Modeling normalizes AI use while simultaneously teaching critical evaluation
- When instructors share their own AI prompts, students see how experts ask better questions

What to show students explicitly:

- Share your prompts: "Here's the prompt I used to brainstorm ideas for this lecture—notice how I asked for multiple perspectives rather than one answer"
- Show your editing process: "AI generated this paragraph, but I rewrote it because it missed the key tension between these two theories"
- Narrate your decision-making: "I used AI to outline possible structures for this argument, then I chose the one that best fit my evidence"
- Model questioning AI output: "When AI gives me an answer, I always ask myself: Is this accurate? Is it relevant? Does it reflect how practitioners in our field actually think?"
- Demonstrate where you stop using AI: "AI can help me draft, but only I can determine whether this argument is intellectually honest and aligned with my values"

Practical modeling strategies:

- **In synchronous settings:** Share your screen and walk through a live AI interaction, thinking aloud
- **In asynchronous courses:** Record short videos showing your AI use with narration
- **In assignment instructions:** Include sample prompts you would use and explain why they work
- **In feedback:** Reference your own AI use when relevant ("I used AI to generate possible counterarguments to test your thesis")
- **In discussion boards:** Occasionally share how you used AI and what you learned from the process

Visibility Without Surveillance

Key Quote: "AI Does Not Reduce Presence—It Redistributes It." —George Hanshaw

What this means:
Transparency in AI use is not the same as surveillance. Instructors don't need to monitor every AI interaction to maintain academic integrity or teaching presence. Instead, visibility is built through pedagogical design that makes AI use part of the learning process—not something to hide or police.

Why faculty do not need to monitor every AI interaction:

- Surveillance erodes trust and creates adversarial relationships between students and instructors
- Detection tools are unreliable and create false accusations that harm innocent students
- Time spent policing AI use is time not spent designing meaningful learning experiences
- Students are more likely to use AI productively when it's normalized, not stigmatized
- Monitoring focuses on catching dishonesty rather than developing student capacity for ethical judgment

Build transparency into assignments:
Ask students to document their AI use as part of the submission (e.g., "Include a brief note about how you used AI for this assignment")

Create reflection prompts that surface AI use naturally:
"What resources did you consult? What worked? What didn't?"

Frame AI use as a learning strategy, not a potential violation:
"Thinking tools you might use: textbooks, peer discussion, AI brainstorming"

Use process-based assignments where AI interaction is visible by design:

- Drafts with revision notes
- Decision journals
- Annotated AI transcripts

Establish community norms through dialogue:
"In our class, AI is a tool for thinking, not a replacement for thinking"

Shifting From Detection to Dialogue

Instead of asking:

- "Did you use AI?" → Ask **"How did you use AI, and what did you learn from the process?"**
- "This sounds like AI" → Ask **"Walk me through your thinking process on this section"**
- Running detection software → **Design assignments where the process is as important as the product**
- Assuming AI use is cheating → **Create opportunities for students to explain their choices**

Building Guided Transparency

- **Provide models of good AI use documentation:** "Here's how I would document my AI interaction for this task"
- **Reward reflective AI use:** Give credit for thoughtful explanations of AI collaboration
- **Make AI use discussable:** Normalize talking about AI in office hours, discussion boards, and peer review
- **Emphasize learning over compliance:** "The goal isn't to avoid AI—it's to use it in ways that deepen your understanding"

Trust, Norms, and Guided Transparency

Effective AI integration rests on a foundation of trust, clear community norms, and transparent expectations. Rather than relying on surveillance or detection, faculty create environments where:

- Students understand AI's pedagogical purpose
- Using AI thoughtfully is normalized and rewarded
- Process documentation makes thinking visible
- Dialogue about AI use is ongoing and judgment-free
- Faculty model critical engagement with AI themselves

This approach transforms AI from a threat to be detected into a learning tool to be discussed, refined, and intentionally used.

Designing Assignments That Work With AI

This is arguably the most practical and immediately applicable section for faculty. The goal is to move beyond reactive "AI-proofing" toward proactive, pedagogically sound assignment design that treats AI as a tool for learning rather than a threat to academic integrity. This section provides concrete, actionable strategies faculty can implement immediately.

Key Insight: The best response to AI isn't to design around it—it's to design with it, making AI use visible, purposeful, and pedagogically intentional.

AI-Resistant vs AI-Intentional Design

What this means:
Many faculty initially respond to AI by trying to create "AI-proof" assignments—tasks so specific, timed, or personalized that AI cannot complete them. This approach is exhausting, often ineffective, and misses the pedagogical opportunity. AI-intentional design instead asks: **How can I structure learning so that AI use supports rather than shortcuts the learning process?**

Why "AI-proof" assignments often fail:

- AI capabilities evolve faster than assignment redesigns can keep pace
- Restriction-based approaches create adversarial relationships between students and instructors
- Students find workarounds, leading to an escalating arms race
- Overly constrained assignments may reduce authentic learning opportunities
- Focus on preventing AI use distracts from focus on promoting deep learning
- "AI-proof" often means removing the very challenges that develop critical thinking

The value of AI-transparent assignments:

- Transparency shifts the question from "Did you use AI?" to "How did you use AI, and what did you learn?"
- When AI use is expected and documented, it becomes a pedagogical tool rather than a violation
- Students learn to use AI responsibly when its use is normalized and guided
- Instructors gain insight into student thinking processes through AI interaction logs
- Assessment focuses on reasoning, judgment, and process—things AI cannot demonstrate alone

Design Patterns That Scale

What this means:
Rather than redesigning every assignment from scratch, faculty can apply proven design patterns that position AI as a learning tool across different contexts. These patterns are adaptable, scalable, and grounded in sound pedagogy.

Pattern 1: AI as Drafting Partner

How it works:
Students use AI to generate initial drafts, outlines, or brainstorming content. The learning happens in the revision, analysis, and refinement process.

Example:
"Use AI to draft three possible thesis statements for your argument. Evaluate each one:

- Which is most defensible?
- Which creates the most productive tension with your evidence?

Revise your chosen thesis and explain your reasoning."

Assessment focus:
Student's critical evaluation and revision decisions, not the AI-generated draft

Pattern 2: AI as Socratic Questioner

How it works:
Students prompt AI to challenge their thinking, ask probing questions, or identify weaknesses in their arguments. This develops metacognitive awareness and self-assessment skills.

Example:
"Share your draft argument with AI and ask it to play devil's advocate. Document the questions it raises and explain how you would respond to each challenge."

What this accomplishes:
Forces students to defend their reasoning and anticipate counterarguments

Pattern 3: AI as Role-Play Character

How it works:
AI simulates perspectives, personas, or scenarios for students to engage with. Particularly useful for developing empathy, communication skills, and situational judgment.

Example:
Use AI to simulate:

- A client interview (psychology)
- A patient interview (nursing)
- A client consultation (business)
- A historical figure (history)

Document the interaction and reflect on what you learned about communication strategies.

What this accomplishes:
Provides low-stakes practice for high-stakes professional scenarios

Pattern 4: AI as Feedback Mirror

How it works:
Students submit work to AI for feedback, then critically evaluate whether that feedback is useful, accurate, and aligned with course standards. This teaches students to distinguish helpful feedback from generic or misaligned responses.

Example:
"Submit your draft to AI and request feedback. Then write a response:

- Which suggestions are helpful?
- Which miss the point?
- What does this tell you about how to use AI feedback productively?"

What this accomplishes:
Develops critical evaluation skills and reduces over-reliance on AI judgment

Simple Redesign Moves Faculty Can Make This Term

What this means:
Faculty don't need to overhaul entire courses to integrate AI thoughtfully. Small, strategic adjustments to existing assignments can make AI use pedagogically productive without requiring extensive redesign time.

Move 1: Add a Reflection Layer

The simplest intervention:
Add a brief reflection prompt to any existing assignment.

Example prompt:
"How did you use AI (if at all) for this assignment? What did it help with? What did you have to do yourself?"

Why it works:

- Reflection makes AI use visible and encourages metacognitive awareness
- Can be added to any assignment without changing the core task
- Provides instructors with insight into how students are actually using AI

Move 2: Require AI Interaction Logs or Summaries

How it works:
Ask students to include a brief summary of their AI interactions as an appendix to their work.

Example:
"Attach a log of prompts you used and responses you received. Highlight which parts you kept, revised, or rejected."

Why it works:

- Makes the process transparent without requiring surveillance
- Teaches students to be intentional about how they prompt and evaluate AI
- Shifts focus from product to process

Move 3: Shift Grading Weight From Product to Process

How it works:
Allocate points for documented thinking, decision-making, and revision.

Example grading breakdown:

- 60% final product
- 20% process documentation
- 20% reflection on AI use

Why it works:

- Signals to students that the journey matters as much as the destination
- Reduces incentive to have AI complete work wholesale
- Creates opportunities to assess learning that AI cannot demonstrate

Move 4: Build in Multiple Checkpoints

How it works:
Break larger assignments into stages with required submissions at each step.

Example:
Submit your research question, annotated sources, outline, draft, and final revision separately

Why it works:

- Makes it harder to outsource the entire process to AI
- Provides natural opportunities for instructor feedback and student revision
- Surfaces student thinking at multiple points in the process

Shift Grading Weight From Product to Process

When assignments include multiple submission points and documented thinking processes, grading naturally shifts from evaluating only the final product to assessing the learning journey. This shift:

- Acknowledges that meaningful learning involves struggle, revision, and iteration
- Creates visibility into where students are developing (or struggling) with concepts
- Makes AI use part of the transparent learning process rather than a hidden shortcut
- Rewards the cognitive work that leads to understanding

Faculty Checklist: "Before You Finalize an Assignment, Ask..."

Use this practical checklist before publishing any assignment to ensure AI use supports rather than shortcuts learning.

1. Is the learning goal clear?
    - Can students articulate what they're supposed to learn from this task?
    - Does the assignment assess that learning goal directly?
2. Could AI complete this assignment wholesale?
    - If yes, what would be lost if a student submitted AI-generated work?
    - Does the assignment require judgment, context, or disciplinary expertise that AI cannot provide?
3. Is there space for student thinking to be visible?
    - Does the assignment include reflection, process documentation, or decision-making?
    - Can students demonstrate their reasoning, not just their conclusions?
4. Have I clarified AI's role for this task?
    - Do students know whether AI use is expected, optional, or prohibited?

    - Have I explained why AI should (or shouldn't) be used for this particular learning goal?
5. Am I assessing what matters most?
    - Does my grading prioritize the skills and understanding I actually want students to develop?
    - Am I rewarding thinking and process, not just polished products?
6. Is there a checkpoint or feedback opportunity?
    - Will I see student work in progress, or only the final submission?
    - Do students have a chance to revise based on feedback?
7. Would I feel comfortable if students used AI exactly as I've designed this task?
    - If not, what needs to change—the task itself or my expectations about AI use?

Student Experience: What AI Actually Changes for Learners

Who Benefits the Most

AI doesn't help all students equally. Research and practice show that certain student populations experience the most significant gains from AI-enhanced learning support.

Students Who Feel Underprepared

Students entering courses without strong foundational knowledge benefit significantly from AI tutors that provide scaffolding without judgment. These students often hesitate to ask basic questions in class or office hours, but will readily engage with AI tools that patiently explain concepts multiple times.

Example:
A student who struggled with algebra in high school can use AI to review prerequisite concepts before tackling calculus homework, building confidence along the way.

Non-Traditional and Asynchronous Learners

Working adults, parents, and students with irregular schedules especially benefit from 24/7 AI availability. Unlike office hours or tutoring centers with fixed schedules, AI provides on-demand support that fits their lives.

Example:
A parent studying after children go to bed can get immediate help with statistics problems at 11 PM, maintaining momentum in their learning.

Students Navigating Language and Literacy Challenges

AI can explain concepts in multiple ways and simplify or expand explanations to match a student's processing needs. This is particularly valuable for students:

- Learning in a second language
- With learning differences that affect reading speed or comprehension
- Who benefit from alternative representations of concepts

International and Geographically Isolated Learners

Access to specialized support—tutoring in specific subjects, feedback on writing, practice conversations—is often limited for these student populations. AI provides round-the-clock access to support that would otherwise be unavailable.

What Students Say AI Helps With

When students describe their AI usage, three themes consistently emerge: clarity, confidence, and momentum. These aren't about replacing instructors—they're about removing friction in the learning process.

Clarity: Breaking Down Complex Explanations

Students appreciate AI's ability to rephrase difficult concepts in multiple ways until understanding clicks. Unlike textbooks with fixed explanations, AI can:

- Adjust language complexity
- Provide analogies
- Break ideas into smaller chunks

Student voice:
"When I didn't understand the professor's explanation of standard deviation, ChatGPT gave me five different ways to think about it. The third one finally made sense."

Confidence: Practice Without Pressure

Many students feel anxious about demonstrating incomplete understanding in front of peers or instructors. AI provides a judgment-free space for trial and error.

Student voice:
"I can ask the same question ten times without feeling stupid. That helps me get to the point where I'm confident enough to participate in class discussions."

Momentum: Overcoming Sticking Points

AI helps students maintain forward progress when they encounter obstacles. Instead of waiting hours or days for instructor feedback, students can get immediate guidance that keeps their learning trajectory moving.

Student voice:
"I was stuck on problem 3 at midnight. Instead of giving up and falling behind, I used Claude to understand where my logic was wrong. By morning, I had completed the whole assignment."

Where Students Still Need Faculty the Most

While AI provides valuable support, students consistently identify areas where human faculty expertise remains irreplaceable.

Judgment and Evaluation

Students recognize that AI cannot assess the quality of their thinking or provide the kind of evaluative feedback that shapes professional judgment.

Student voice:
"ChatGPT can tell me if my code works, but my professor tells me if it's elegant, maintainable, and following industry best practices."

Meaning-Making and Context

AI struggles with disciplinary context, current debates, and the nuanced interpretation that comes from years of expertise in a field.

Student voice:
"AI gave me three interpretations of the poem, but only my literature professor could explain which interpretation scholars currently debate and why that matters for understanding the author's broader work."

Feedback on Thinking, Not Grammar

Students value AI for catching surface-level errors but recognize that deep feedback on argumentation, reasoning, and intellectual development requires human expertise.

Student voice:
"Grammarly fixes my commas. My professor challenges my assumptions and asks questions that make me think harder about my thesis."

The Takeaway

AI changes the student experience by providing accessible, immediate support for clarity, confidence, and momentum. But this support complements rather than replaces faculty expertise in judgment, meaning-making, and substantive intellectual feedback.

The most effective learning environments leverage both:

- **AI** for scaffolding and immediate support
- **Faculty** for evaluation, context, and the development of disciplinary thinking

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Ethical, Pedagogical, and Practical Guardrails

Ethical, pedagogical, and practical guardrails for AI in teaching focus on cultivating discernment, protecting academic integrity, and preserving the fundamentally human parts of learning. These are framed as instructional choices, not compliance rules.

Ethical Use as a Teaching Practice

Design activities where students must critique AI outputs
Identify biases, gaps, and errors so AI becomes an object of inquiry rather than an invisible author of their work.

Make your own AI use transparent
Share what you used, why, and its limits. Ask students to do the same via AI-use notes or process logs that document prompts and revisions.

Connect AI use to course outcomes
Explicitly name what thinking students must still do themselves (e.g., argument selection, evidence evaluation, ethical reasoning), and assess those moves directly.

Common Faculty Concerns

Concern 1: Cheating

Strategy: Reduce the payoff of AI-only work by:

- Requiring process artifacts (drafts, reflections, oral check-ins)
- Designing tasks that anchor in class discourse, local data, or personal experience that generic tools cannot easily replicate

Concern 2: Overreliance

Strategy: Set clear norms and provide models

- Frame as "AI as first draft, you as editor"
- Dedicate class time to comparing AI-generated work with student-created versions to highlight where human insight adds depth, nuance, and context

Concern 3: Hallucinations

Strategy: Build verification into the learning process

- Require students to verify AI-generated claims with cited, authoritative sources
- Label any AI-generated text or references
- Grade the quality of verification rather than the AI output itself

Concern 4: Equity and Access

Strategy: Ensure inclusive design

- Offer low- or no-tech alternatives to every AI-enabled task
- Teach basic AI literacy in class
- Avoid grading on AI tool proficiency so that access differences do not become achievement differences

What AI Should Never Replace

Assessment of Values

Keep value-laden judgments (ethics, professionalism, civic responsibility) grounded in human dialogue. Use AI only to surface scenarios or questions, not to score students' character or beliefs.

Relational Feedback

Reserve at least part of your feedback load for human-to-human comments—especially on identity, motivation, and belonging. Use AI, at most, to help draft or organize comments that you then personalize.

Human Judgment

Retain final authority for:

- Grading
- Academic integrity decisions
- High-stakes recommendations

Treat AI outputs as advisory signals that must be interpreted in light of context, student history, and professional standards.

Getting Started: A Low-Risk Entry Point

The goal of this section is to move faculty from reflection to action. Rather than overwhelming instructors with everything they could do, this section offers three concrete, low-stakes entry points that minimize risk while building confidence. These are designed to be implementable immediately—this week, this assignment, this mindset shift.

Key Insight: You don't need to transform your entire course overnight. Small, intentional changes create momentum and demonstrate what's possible.

One-Week Changes: Add One AI-Supported Activity

What this means:
Rather than redesigning an entire course, start with a single activity that introduces students to productive AI use within your existing course structure. This low-risk approach lets you experiment, observe student responses, and adjust before scaling up.

Add One AI-Supported Activity

Choose one class session or discussion forum this week where students can practice using AI as a learning tool.

Example activities:

- "Use AI to brainstorm three potential research questions for your project. Evaluate which one is most feasible and explain why."
- "Ask AI to explain [key concept from this week]. Then identify one thing AI got right and one thing it oversimplified or missed."
- "Use AI to generate practice quiz questions on this week's readings. Test yourself, then explain which questions were most useful for learning."

Model One Interaction

Show students how you would use AI for a similar task:

- Walk through your prompt
- Share the AI's response
- Explain your evaluation process

Example:
"Here's how I would ask AI to help me outline an argument. Notice how I start with a clear prompt, then critically evaluate what it gives me."

This normalizes AI use and teaches students what expert interaction looks like.

Why this works:

- Low stakes: If it doesn't work perfectly, it's just one activity—not an entire course redesign
- Observable: You can see how students respond and what they struggle with
- Iterative: You learn what works before committing to larger changes
- Builds confidence: Both yours and your students'

One-Assignment Redesign: Before/After Example

What this means:
Take one existing assignment and make a single strategic change that positions AI as a learning tool rather than a threat. This section provides a concrete before/after example that faculty can adapt to their own context.

Traditional Essay Assignment

Before:

"Write a 5-page argumentative essay on [topic]. Submit your final draft by the due date."

Why this is vulnerable:

- No process visibility—instructor only sees final product
- AI could complete the entire assignment
- No opportunity for instructor feedback before final submission
- Grading focuses entirely on product quality

After: AI-Intentional Essay Assignment

"Write a 5-page argumentative essay on [topic]. Your submission must include:

1. **Your final essay**
2. **A brief process narrative (1-2 paragraphs) explaining:**
    - How you developed your thesis
    - What resources you used (including AI, if applicable)
    - One significant revision you made and why
3. **If you used AI:** Include 2-3 prompts you found most useful and explain what you learned from the AI's responses"

Why this works:

- **Process visibility:** Instructor sees student thinking, not just polished prose
- **Pedagogically productive:** Students must reflect on how they used AI and what they learned
- **Assessment shifts:** Instructor grades thinking and decision-making alongside the final product
- **Minimal additional work:** The reflection adds 10-15 minutes to student work and surfaces exactly the information instructors need

One Mindset Shift: From "How Do I Stop This?" to "How Do I Teach With This?"

What this means:
The most important change isn't pedagogical—it's psychological. Faculty who successfully integrate AI make a fundamental shift from resistance and control to intentional design and guided use.

The Restrictive Mindset

"How do I prevent students from using AI?"
"How do I detect AI-generated work?"
"How do I make assignments AI-proof?"

This mindset creates:

- Exhaustion
- Frustration
- Adversarial relationships

The Pedagogical Mindset

"How do I teach students to use AI responsibly?"
"How do I design assignments where AI use supports learning?"
"What do I want students to learn that AI cannot do for them?"

This mindset creates:

- Agency
- Clarity
- Productive learning environments

Practical Reflection Questions for This Shift

- What would it look like if my best student used AI thoughtfully for this assignment?
- What skills do I actually want to develop? Can I assess those directly?
- Am I spending more time trying to prevent AI use than designing meaningful learning?
- What would happen if I treated AI like any other learning resource—useful when used well, problematic when misused?

Closing Thought

You don't need to be an AI expert to teach well in an AI-enhanced environment. You need to be a thoughtful educator who makes intentional design decisions about when, how, and why AI fits into student learning.

The pathway is clear:

- Start small
- Experiment
- Observe
- Adjust

The goal isn't perfection—it's forward movement.

Conclusion: Teaching With AI Is a Design Decision

Design as a Lever

AI is not a shortcut—it's a force multiplier for good design.

The most significant institutions in higher education are not using AI to replace teaching—they are using it to amplify what already works.

When:

- Learning objectives are clear
- Assessment aligns with those objectives
- Students receive timely, actionable feedback

—AI becomes a powerful lever to scale those practices.

But when:

- Assignments are vague
- Assessment measures compliance rather than understanding
- Feedback is too late to matter

—AI simply accelerates dysfunction.

The lesson is clear: AI does not fix weak pedagogy. It reveals it.

The institutions seeing meaningful gains are those that:

- Invested in instructional design first
- Adopted AI tools second
- Use the technology to extend faculty capacity
- Differentiate support
- Increase the authenticity of student practice

Quality Depends on Framing

The quality of learning depends less on the AI tool and more on how instructors frame its use.

Two faculty members can use the same AI tool in the same course and produce entirely different learning outcomes. The difference is not the technology—it is the instructional frame.

One instructor might ban AI use and spend hours policing submissions, while another designs assignments where AI use is transparent, purposeful, and pedagogically productive. The latter understands that students will engage with AI regardless of policy, and so the real question is not if they use it, but **how they are taught to use it critically, ethically, and in service of deeper learning.**

This framing shift—from control to pedagogy—is what separates institutions that fear AI from those that leverage it.

Your students are already using these tools. The question is whether you will guide that use or ignore it.

Teaching With AI Remains Human

AI can:

- Generate explanations
- Provide feedback
- Simulate conversations
- Surface patterns in student work

But it cannot:

- Care about a student's growth
- Recognize when someone is struggling beneath the surface
- Adapt instruction based on the lived context of a classroom

The skills that have always mattered most in teaching remain irreplaceable:

- Designing meaningful learning experiences
- Asking the right questions
- Fostering intellectual curiosity
- Building trust

What changes is the workflow: faculty can:

- Offload repetitive grading
- Automate low-stakes feedback
- Use AI as a co-design partner for assignments and assessments

This creates space for the human work that actually transforms students:

- Mentorship
- Dialogue
- The kind of high-quality, individualized support that has historically been available only to the most privileged learners

AI does not make teaching less human. It makes humanistic teaching more scalable.

Your Next Step

You do not need permission, a task force, or a perfect policy to start teaching with AI.

You need:

- One well-designed assignment
- One thoughtful conversation with students about responsible use
- A willingness to learn from what happens next

The pathway is simple:

1. Pick a course
2. Try one of the patterns in this document
3. Observe what changes
4. Share what you learn with a colleague
5. Adjust
6. Iterate
7. Scale what works

The future of higher education will be written by educators who are willing to experiment—not by those who wait for certainty that will never come.

Document prepared by George Hanshaw, Craig Brewer, and Shannon Hunt at Los Angeles Pacific University. For inquiries and distribution, please contact the Office of Digital Learning Solutions.

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