

Higher Education at the Inflection Point:

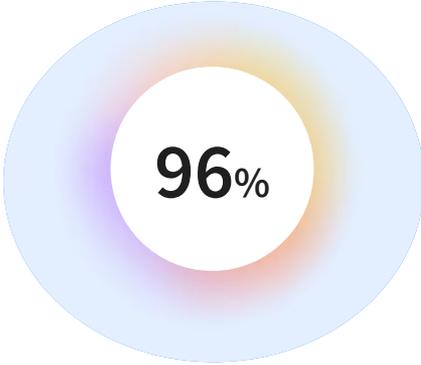
Teaching, Learning, and Belonging in the Age of AI

What our students are already doing—and how we must reinvent to keep up



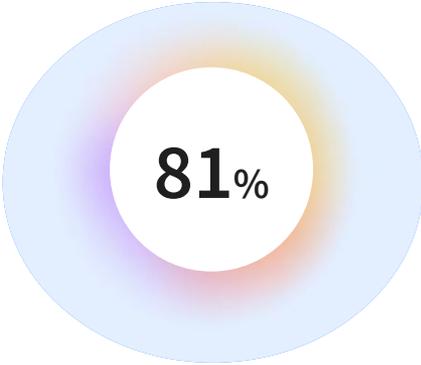
Marni Baker-Stein
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AI Has Already Come To Campus



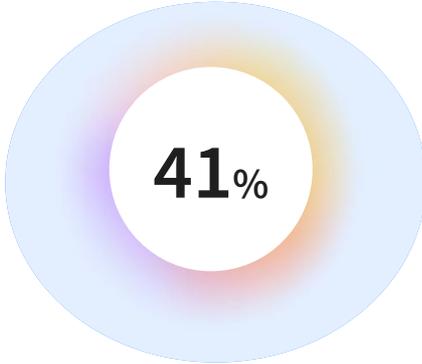
96%

Of students and educators now use AI tools in an educational context



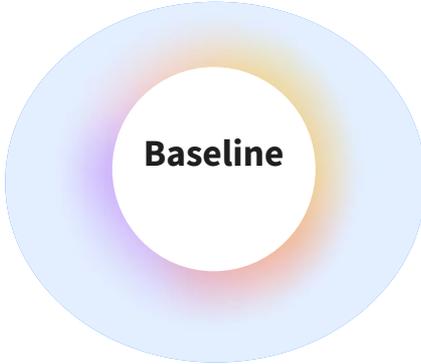
81%

Say AI is positively influencing the higher education experience



41%

Of study tasks are now completed by students with AI support



Baseline

This is no longer a pilot; it is the fundamental shift in how we learn

Students Are Optimizing, Not Waiting

What students are actually doing with AI

Research assistance

51% use AI to explore new topics and gather diverse sources.

Writing support

49% use ai for structural clarity, drafting, and refining arguments

Practice & feedback

46% generate personalized practice tests and preparatory exams

Time management

44% use AI for time management and revision

Students are building personalized learning environments—*with or without us*

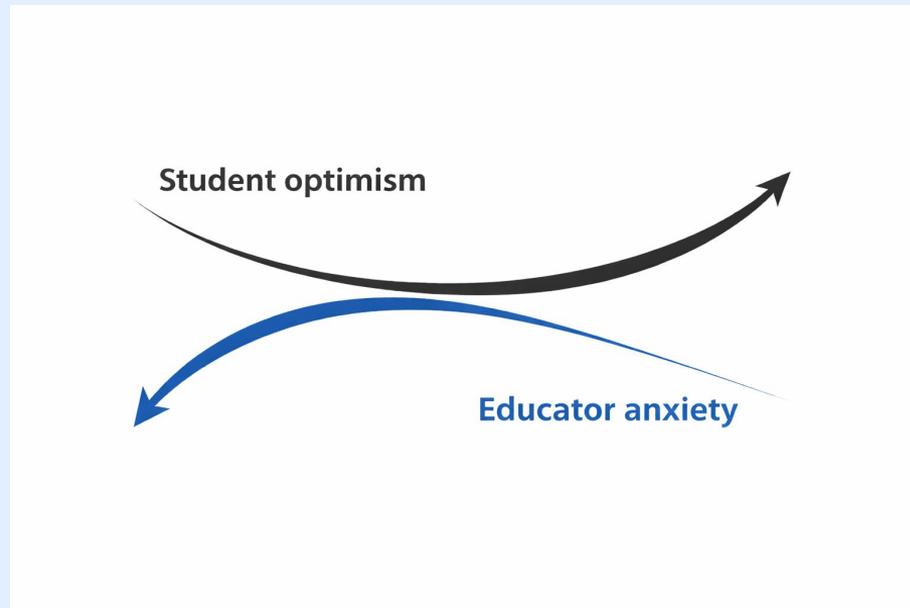
Two Curves Moving in Opposite Directions

Students:

- Overwhelmingly positive about AI's impact on learning

Educators:

- Positivity declining; worries about cheating, erosion of skills
- Only **27%** of educators feel confident they can detect AI-generated work
- Only **25%** feel they have the right skills to use AI to their advantage



The Core Argument :

We Don't Have a Cheating Problem: We Have a Design Problem

AI can now perform many tasks on which our assessments rely

Students are rewarded for outputs that AI can easily generate

Faculty are asked to police what they can't reliably detect

Institutions lack the policies and assessment models to keep up

The system is doing exactly what it was designed to do—
and that design no longer fits the world we're in

This is our redesign moment



Five Shifts Higher Education Must Make

Step 1

From answer checking to **authentic assessment**



Step 2

From AI-avoidance to **AI literacy** as a core outcome



Step 3

From faculty anxiety to **confidence and agency**



Step 4

From assumed community to **designed belonging**



Step 5

From ad hoc policies to living **AI governance**

Assessment that still means something in an AI world

Investing in Faculty Confidence

The new assessment model must require:

1. **Process + provenance** – *Students must show their thinking, not just the final artifact*
2. **Human–AI partnership disclosure** – *Students must document how they used AI, when, and why*
3. **In-the-moment demonstration** – *Live oral defenses, micro-presentations*
4. **Transfer tasks** – *Give a novel scenario, dataset, or constraint*
5. **Collaborative problem-solving** – *Real foundational skills: negotiation, division of labor, argumentation*
6. **Authentic workplace simulations** – *Multi-step applied tasks that unfold over time*

If you can cheat on it, it wasn't measuring the right thing

Building for authentic mastery at scale.

90%

Reduction in plagiarized submissions via integrity-first design

75%

Reduction in low-effort course completions

13M+

Course completions protected by redesigned assessment models

AI Literacy Is the New General Education Requirement

Investing in Faculty Confidence

- Only **28%** of institutions in the study report AI literacy in the curriculum
- Yet employers say they'd prefer a **less-experienced candidate with GenAI skills** over a more-experienced one without them
- AI literacy =
 - Knowing **when** and **how** to use AI
 - Ability to **critically evaluate** AI outputs
 - Understanding **ethics, bias, and privacy**
 - Documenting and **disclosing** AI use

"Every student, every major, should graduate having learned with AI, not just about AI."

Example

Designing AI Literacy Pathways

With partners, we've developed stacked AI literacy offerings:

- Foundations (What is AI? How does GenAI work?)
- Applied use (prompting, workflow design, domain-specific use cases)
- Leadership & governance (for deans, provosts, department chairs)

We see universities:

- Embedding short AI modules into first-year seminars
- Requiring AI ethics / AI for work courses in core curriculum
- Using AI-powered tools (like Coach, Dialogue) to model responsible use

Key insight: teaching with AI is itself the most powerful AI literacy intervention.

If Faculty Feel Left Behind, the System Can't Move

25%

of faculty believe they have the skills to use AI to their advantage

27%

say they can reliably detect AI-generated work

71%

educators are already using AI often or always in their work

Time and space for **exploration**, not just compliance

Communities of practice around AI in teaching

Clear **policy guardrails** that enable experimentation

Incentives that recognize **innovation**, not just risk avoidance

AI as a Teaching Partner, Not a Threat

From faculty behavior we're seeing across the platform:

- **Planning tutorials and lectures** – generating outlines, case prompts, questions
- **Drafting communication** – feedback emails, announcements, rubrics
- **Assessment design** – variant exam questions, scenario-based tasks
- **Data-informed teaching** – surfacing where students struggle and why



Belonging and Equity: AI Can Widen Gaps—or Close Them

- 37% worry AI will **reduce human interaction** and erode interpersonal skills
- Real risks:
 - Students with strong foundations accelerate faster
 - Students without access / skills fall further behind
- Real opportunities:
 - AI as a **24/7 study buddy** that doesn't judge
 - Multilingual, adaptive support for **first-gen, working, and international learners**
 - Just-in-time explanations that build **confidence and agency**

Example: Using AI to Expand, Not Replace, Human Support

Coach: AI-powered personal tutor built on trusted course content

- 24/7 explanations, practice questions, and study guidance
- Learners who use Coach complete **37% more learning items per day**

Dialogue: AI-guided conversations that scaffold understanding in **22 languages**

What we've learned:

- Students treat these tools as **partners**, not “answer machines”
- When combined with human teaching, they **increase engagement and persistence**, especially for learners who previously felt “behind”

The screenshot displays the Coursera Coach interface. On the left, a video player shows a woman in a red blazer sitting in a chair. Below the video, the title "Foundations of generative AI" is visible. A "coach" chat window is open, featuring a blue robot icon with glasses and the text "Hi, Alex! How can I help?". Below this, there are four buttons: "Give me a summary", "Give me real-life examples", "Explain this topic in simple terms", and "Give me practice questions". At the bottom of the chat window, there is a "Transcript" tab and a "Notes" tab. The video player has a "Transcript" tab selected, showing a timestamp of "0:00" and a description: "Advancements in AI technology are reshaping how we work. Let's explore one of the key developments at the center of this transformation, generative AI. As the name suggests, generative AI is AI that can generate new content such as text, images, or".

Policy Is Not a PDF. It's a Practice

In 2026,

26%

of universities globally
have a formal AI policy;
UK leads at 30%

60-65%

fear unregulated AI
could undermine
degrees

A healthy AI governance model:

- **Clear expectations** for students and faculty
- **Disclosure norms** (what must be documented, when, and how)
- **Assessment principles** (what must be human-driven)
- Regular **review cycles** (e.g., every 6–12 months)
- Co-created with **students, faculty, and institutional leadership**

Example: From Policing AI to Designing With It

Institutions we work with are moving from “Don’t use AI” to:

- “Here’s how and when to use AI in this course”
- “Here’s what counts as help vs misconduct”
- “Here’s how you should document your AI use”

Policy is paired with:

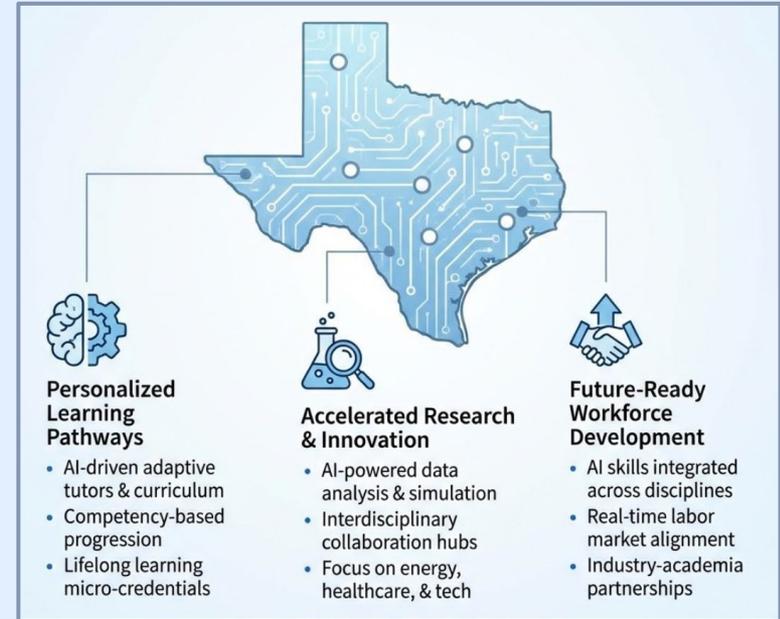
- Sample **syllabus language**
- **Assignment templates** that demand transparency
- **Faculty training** on scenario-based decision-making

Result:

Less fear, more clarity, and room for **responsible experimentation**

What Reinvented Higher Education Could Look Like ... in Texas

- Every student graduates with **AI literacy and authentic, demonstrated skills**
- Every course uses at least one **AI-empowered learning experience**
- Assessments are designed for **thinking**, not just producing
- Faculty have **ongoing support**, time, and recognition for innovation
- Belonging is **intentionally architected**, not left to chance
- Degrees remain **trusted signals** of capability in an AI-rich labor market



We Can Protect the Old System—or Build the New One

- Students have already crossed the AI threshold
- Faculty are asking for support, not slogans
- Institutions can choose:
 - Double down on **detection and fear**, or
 - Lead with **design, integrity, and human-centered innovation**

✦ AI-powered

✦ Customized

✦ **Trusted**

✦ Skills-first

✦ Immersive

Q&A

Thank you