



How Community Colleges are Adapting to Generative Al

How Education Institutions are Navigating the Rise of ChatGPT and Generative Al

Presented by:

The League for Innovation in the Community College in partnership with Packback





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Dr. Rufus Glasper

President and CEO at League for Innovation in the Community College



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Foreword

Our first experience with ChatGPT came when Rufus stuck his nose into his wife's business. She had a question about a complicated set of tax forms, and even though Rufus is a certified CPA, the two of them decided to try asking the increasingly popular AI chatbot first. We at the League had begun hearing from community college faculty members across the country that ChatGPT could do a good job with this sort of fact-based question, and this felt like a great opportunity to see if the rumors were true.

Simply put, ChatGPT blew us away. Within seconds, it had produced a succinct, clear encapsulation of the answer to Rufus's question, one that passed muster in terms of both technical correctness and practical applicability. Of course, as impressive as the chatbot was, it also helped that there was a real-live CPA reading its response and vetting it for accuracy. If someone without the requisite experience had tried to ask the same question, there's no guarantee they would have asked it in the right way — which means the answer they received might not have been as helpful. It might even have been outright wrong.

That's ChatGPT in a nutshell: if you use it right, it can answer nearly any question and point you in the right direction faster than anything else out there. But it can be easy to misuse, too. The unfortunate thing, at least right now, is that we're focusing much more on that second part.

We've all read a lot recently about the way that higher education institutions and their faculty are spending time and money on playing defense.

A profusion of new tools – anti-plagiarism programs, detectors of Algenerated writing – treat ChatGPT as the enemy. In many ways, that's an understandable reaction to any new technology, and there's no doubt that AI is already changing the landscape of instruction. But if we focus on defense at the expense of education, we're setting ourselves back — and missing out on a big opportunity.

If we use ChatGPT and other generative AI tools correctly, they can play a huge role in transforming writing instruction for the better. Already, new AI tools are helping to correct students' grammar and spelling, and helping them structure their writing, so that instructors can engage at the level of ideas rather than just teaching the rules. Creative faculty members are starting to incorporate ChatGPT into their assignments, too, having





students give feedback on Al-written essays or analyze the effectiveness of an Al-generated argument. These approaches recognize not just that this new technology is here to stay, but also that banning it or restricting it will always be a temporary solution. They are taking advantage of the fact that we have a unique opportunity, in these early days, to bring Al and emerging technology into the classroom in ways that can actually boost engagement, critical thinking, and student success.

Of course, that's not to say that all technology is good, or that it's always easy to implement. Rather, our hope – which the insights in this paper help to illuminate – is that community college leaders and faculty members alike can approach the rise of generative Al with curiosity and creativity, rather than fear and concern. The better we understand it, the more we'll be able to implement it in the classroom, and the more prepared we'll be for the many changes that are yet to come.



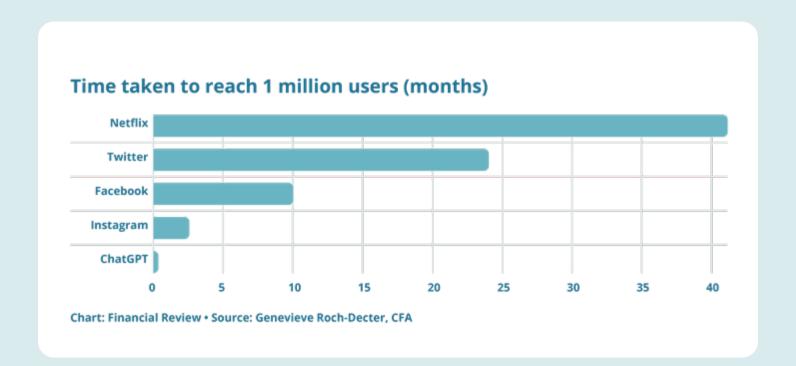




Introduction

After just a few months, ChatGPT has already become a household name. The artificially intelligent chatbot, built by the San Francisco-based organization OpenAI and released in November 2022, reached its first one million users in less than a week. Its ability to not just string sentences together, but seemingly understand complex requests and articulate sophisticated concepts, has transformed our understanding of what AI is capable of — and dominated the national conversation in the process.

ChatGPT's implications for the future of learning have already sparked a whirlwind of interest from educators, policymakers, and students alike. Will the chatbot kill writing instruction as we know it? Is it making us worse people? Is banning it, as school districts from New York to Seattle have already done, the right decision? Or must we all now learn to live with a new world order where AI is an inescapable part of the educational experience? Understanding the ways in which ChatGPT will affect both K-12 and higher education starts with understanding what it is, and how it works. This white paper is designed to provide education leaders with an introduction to not just the mechanics of ChatGPT, but also its likely implications for schools, districts, and higher education institutions.





What is ChatGPT?

While ChatGPT may be the "smartest" Al chatbot available to the public, it's far from the first. Early Al models date back to the advent of spellcheck in the early 1980s, and the idea of chatbots that could simulate human speech began with MIT's ELIZA in 1966. What makes ChatGPT special is its unprecedented use of a relatively new, and rapidly evolving, aspect of AI research: the large language model.



Broadly speaking, a language model is a statistical tool which determines the probability of a given sequence of words occurring in a sentence. Feed in a bunch of text, and the model calculates "what comes next" based on a corpus of sentences that it's already reviewed. Of course, the more existing text that a language model has to review, the better it will perform — hence, the advent of large language models (LLMs), which are based on millions or even billions of sentences. The large language model, GPT3, that underpins ChatGPT was trained on half a trillion words. At the average human speaking speed of 100 words per minute, that's almost ten thousand years of continuous speech.



With thousands of lifetimes' worth of text in its mechanical "brain," it's no wonder that ChatGPT is such an effective predictor of "what comes next." Of course, this style of learning is better suited to some tasks than others. Large language models like the one that runs ChatGPT are particularly good at explaining concepts concisely (like chocolate chip cookie recipes), generating code and content in structured syntax, explaining structured content, and responding to a highly detailed prompt.





What these models can't do as effectively are the higher-order elements of writing (the ones often associated in educational contexts with "critical thinking"). Because they offer the most likely word or phrase to come next, they lack originality. With no guardrails for accuracy or reliability, they often cite false sources as if they're real. And they tend to struggle with responses for questions at a higher order of Bloom's Taxonomy (e.g., questions that ask it to create, evaluate, or analyze, rather than remember and report back). These limitations notwithstanding, ChatGPT has already turned the world of educational writing upside-down.

As of the publication of this white paper, new competitors to ChatGPT are already emerging, including Google's Bard and Baidu's rumored new chatbot. These platforms, and the LLMs that make up their foundation, are more than just "tools;" they represent an entirely new medium of technological development. Similar to the transformative impact of the advent of the internet, the emergence of easy-to-access LLMs will almost certainly be the defining technological development of the decade and will transform every aspect of work, life, and learning. As we've seen, they've already begun to do so.



Implications for Educational Institutions

As is so often the case when new and disruptive technologies arrive on the scene, many education institutions have reacted to ChatGPT with alarm. Much of the discussion among both K-12 districts and universities has focused on the way that essay and discussion prompts may be susceptible to plagiarism by students using ChatGPT. The result is that many institutional leaders are investing in tools that promise to detect Al-generated writing content. Some school districts have banned the use of ChatGPT outright, in hopes that such policies will deter students from cheating with it. Those policies have, in turn, prompted backlash from tech experts and education leaders alike, who have made the case for a more thoughtful approach.

As these policies continue to evolve, what's not in dispute is that ChatGPT and other emerging tools will have long-term impacts on how we learn and work. The development of chatbots built on large language models is exponential in nature: similar to the advent of the internet, they get better with each new piece of content written in the data sets they are trained on, and every interaction that they have with users. And an explosion of new companies has already emerged that build applications on top of LLMs like GPT to provide even more finely-tuned tools for specific use cases. That means that in a matter of months, ChatGPT may render certain professional tasks obsolete or unrecognizably changed — while also creating the need for new tasks and skills to manage the rise of Al-enabled writing.

Consider the likelihood of a world in which businesses use ChatGPT to generate brand-specific marketing copy, or to draft news articles. Jobs that are heavy on content generation but light on critical thinking will quickly be disrupted as AI continues to demonstrate its ability to produce that sort of content more quickly and efficiently than human employees can. But even as ChatGPT threatens to destabilize white-collar work, it will also certainly lead to the creation of new jobs that prioritize collaborating with generative AI models.

What remains to be seen is the role that ChatGPT will play in a broader set of conversations about the ways that humanity and technology interact. We've already begun to see applications of AI for tasks it is not well-suited to perform — with the widely documented backlash to mental health chatbots as the prime example. The disruption of domains like art and graphic design has also quickly accelerated from the theoretical to the real, thanks to platforms like DALL-E (also built by ChatGPT creator OpenAI). Simply put, the rise of ChatGPT is just one part of the rapidly changing relationship between people and the technological tools we use. After decades of headlines about whether science fiction is becoming reality, a future defined by interactions with AI now seems well within reach, if not inevitable. The question before us is how best to prepare for that future.



INTERVIEWS:

How are real institutional leaders responding to AI?

Administrators from around the country are currently responding to the emergence of generative AI models. We interviewed three administrators with focuses on institutional innovation and technology to share the approaches they are taking within their institutions.

Please note: Quotes have only been edited for length. Responses are reflective of the opinions of these individuals, and are not necessarily representing their entire institution.



Dr. Steven Crawford

District Director for the Maricopa Center for Learning and Innovation Maricopa Community Colleges 01

WHAT HAS MARICOPA'S CURRENT RESPONSE (E.G. POLICY CHANGES, STUDENT COMMUNICATION, ADOPTION OF NEW TOOLS) BEEN SO FAR TO THE EMERGENCE OF LLMS LIKE CHATGPT?

Several of the colleges in the District are having "brown bag" discussions and forming regular discussion groups around the topic of ChatGPT. In the case of the regular discussion groups, they are examining the various implications of the technology now being more widely available. Since these groups are primarily faculty, they are looking to explore what the potential impacts may be from academic integrity issues to how to adopt the technology for use in the teaching and learning process.

A districtwide group is being formed to discuss how we should react as a Community College District and what policy recommendations we might need to make. This group will include administrators, faculty, and other key individuals.

It should be noted that [Maricopa Community Colleges] is the first community college to offer an <u>Associate of Applied Science Degree and Certificate of Completion in Artificial Intelligence.</u>





02

WHAT ARE YOUR PREDICTIONS FOR HOW INSTITUTIONS WILL RESPOND TO THESE TOOLS IN THE 1-5 YEAR FUTURE?

We have already seen a variety of responses from banning the use of LLMs (blocking at the network firewall and/or academic integrity policies) to exploring how to embrace the use of LLMs.

Based on these experiences, I expect that in the next year, three common responses will be:

- To consider LLMs a threat to education and will craft policies to ban the use of LLMs.
- To change their pedagogical approach to offer more authentic assessments that are less based on writing and more project-based.
- To experiment and see how LLMs might be useful in both creating learning experiences and encouraging students to use LLMs in specific contexts and/or limited ways.

What will happen in years 2-5 will be dependent on the technology industry. We have already seen the integration of tools to support automated spelling and grammar checking in a number of tools. I expect further integration/improvement of LLM-related functions into our everyday writing tools (i.e. MS Word, Google Docs, Apple Pages).

Another factor that will impact the use of LLMs will be how the workforce changes. We will need to adapt to those changes so that our students are

prepared to utilize the emerging tools in their field so they are better prepared. This will mean that we will need to change our curriculum to match what is happening in the aligning industries and this could mean a change in the curriculum to match the tools and processes that emerge.





03

IF YOU WERE ADVISING OTHER LEADERS AT INSTITUTIONS, WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST SHOULD BE THEIR TOP PRIORITIES TO CONSIDER IN THE COMING YEAR?

I would advise librarians to assist in helping both faculty and students to understand that results from LLMs are not "the one true answer'. Previously librarians were helpful during the emergence of the internet search engine and then Wikipedia to help individuals evaluate the accuracy of the results.



04

ARE THERE ANY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES THAT MARICOPA IS PLANNING TO LAUNCH TO ADAPT TO OR INCORPORATE CHATGPT/AI/LLMS INTO YOUR COURSE OFFERINGS FOR STUDENTS?

We are just at the beginning of the discussion and have not yet [completed designing] the strategic initiatives we should launch. But we have already begun integrating tools such as those from Packback, and launched our AAS in Artificial Intelligence. I expect the workgroup to have recommendations as to strategic initiatives we should pursue.







Dr. Jeffrey Alexander

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Truckee Meadows Community College

We will continue to encourage instructors to **adopt the**Packback tools in the interim.



01

WHAT HAS TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S CURRENT RESPONSE (E.G. POLICY CHANGES, STUDENT COMMUNICATION, ADOPTION OF NEW TOOLS) BEEN SO FAR TO THE EMERGENCE OF LLMS LIKE CHATGPT?

Thus far, the President spoke about it at Spring kickoff, and so did I. Our theme was on authenticity and subject matter expertise, in addition to raising awareness. I reiterated those updates during my report to the Faculty Senate today. I added that some have asked me whether NSHE will come up with a system-wide response to AI, but I do not believe that this will occur. Instead, I encouraged faculty to adopt a policy and to consider updating our Student Code of Conduct accordingly.

02

HOW DO YOU ANTICIPATE THE EMERGENCE OF LLMS WILL IMPACT CURRICULUM, CERTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT?

I expect that faculty will have to modify certain writing assignments to involve additional in-class work, peer-review, peer-editing, and so forth. Also, some form of Al-generated content detection will need to be part of the standard submission procedure. Our WebCollege team will be watching this space. We will continue to encourage instructors to adopt the Packback tools in the interim.

I can't yet see impacts to certification, assessment, or accreditation, as the conversation is too new. Time will tell.

03

IF YOU WERE ADVISING OTHER LEADERS AT INSTITUTIONS, WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST SHOULD BE THEIR TOP PRIORITIES TO CONSIDER IN THE COMING YEAR?

Top priorities at 2-year colleges should be: the continued development of stacked credentials, especially short skills-certificates that offer innovative and timely training to meet employers' needs; refining an iterative process for gathering data from employers about training needs and skills gaps in order to develop responsive training modules; developing apprenticeships to train and upskill existing employees -- on site where possible; building a resilient bridge from high school CTE programs to college CTE

programs via concurrent enrollment.



PREDICTIONS:

How Generative AI Will Transform Education

As educators and administrators consider the implications of ChatGPT and generative AI, how will their policies and practices begin to shift?

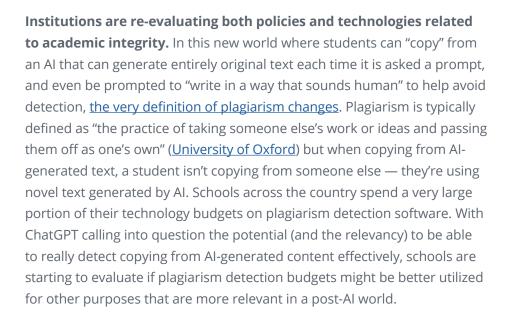
1. Evolving academic integrity policies:

Innovative institutions are viewing "AI detection" as a component of their response, but not a complete solution. An emerging category of technology providers are developing tools that can spot the hallmarks of AI-generated writing, and respond accordingly. These tools range from standalone tools where educators may paste content like GPTZero, to embedded tools that check written assignments as they are submitted, like in Packback's embedded CheckGPT tool. Large plagiarism detection companies like Turnitin are also working to develop AI-generated text detection algorithms.

Detection is an arms race between the ever-improving quality of Al models, and the quality of detection algorithms. One thing is certain; detection will never be a perfect or complete response to these new generative Al tools. As ChatGPT and its peers become more sophisticated, and as new approaches to assessment become increasingly popular, schools and colleges will begin rethinking both their policies and their financial investments around reducing cheating and plagiarism.







Schools are also updating their academic honesty policies to account for "plagiarism" from Al-generated text. Unlike text plagiarized from human sources, where direct evidence of the original source can be found, the only evidence that a piece of text was written by Al are statistical markers about the likelihood of the word patterns. And while unlikely, it is possible for humans to write with similar patterns to Al, leading to false positives. The uncertainty and lack of evidence that copying from an Al introduces makes enforcing the same stringent Academic Integrity policies challenging. Many schools are also anticipating that Al-generated text will become an acceptable part of students' writing processes, at least to some degree, and are evaluating academic integrity policies geared around ensuring students accurately credit their use of Al.

And finally, with Al-generated text being a very new phenomenon, many students may not yet understand that copying from these platforms without credit is a form of academic dishonesty. There is an emerging trend towards a more measured hand on potential cases of Al plagiarism, treating initial "violations" as "teaching moments" to train students on proper accreditation

of Al generated content, rather than immediately filing an academic dishonesty case for the student.

Individual educators, too, are creating class-specific AI policies to help make their stance on AI clear, as in this <u>example</u> from Professor Ethan Mollick, Associate Professor at <u>Wharton</u>.





2. Evolving Curriculum Design and Learning Objectives

Educators and institutions are shifting toward formative assessments.

Rather than the more summative approach of collecting and grading written work, schools are already moving toward formative assessments geared toward understanding process, instead of final product. In just the few months since ChatGPT was released, educators have begun sharing ideas for formative approaches, like asking students to share more "checkpoints" throughout their work to show how they developed the final end product, as well as incorporating more synchronous activities, presentations, and reflections that ask students to develop presentation and collaboration skills.

A few possible methods of incorporating formative assessments include:

- Providing mastery-oriented coaching (which could be enabled by technology) to help students achieve a "perfect" deliverable before submission;
- Asking students to submit more checkpoints of their work to show their development process from beginning to end, including their brainstorming, research, outlining, editing, and final submission;
- Incorporating self-reflection and metacognition into activities by asking students to reflect on their work, why they made key decisions, and what they would improve.







Educators and institutions are designing more assignments that assume (or require) the use of generative Al. More and more educators are designing assignments with the assumption that ChatGPT or other Al tools are widely used. Instead of antagonizing Al tools, these emerging assignments prioritize their responsible use as a part of student workflows (e.g., asking students to edit or evaluate a draft essay generated by ChatGPT). A few examples include:

- Asking computer science students to perform code review on ChatGPT-generated code;
- Asking students to edit and fact-check an Al-generated essay with known factual and stylistic errors;
- Asking students to openly use ChatGPT in their written assignments, but document exactly where and how they incorporated Al-written text to help build the practice of crediting Al-generated work;
- Asking students to submit the prompt, or set of prompts, they used to achieve a final "output" that meets the assignment criteria, helping them to build <u>prompt engineering</u> skills.

Institutions are reevaluating their learning objectives to better prepare students to coexist with AI in the workplace. As AI becomes ubiquitous across the world of education, it's doing the same in the world of work — which means that schools need to prepare accordingly. We can anticipate that many schools will rescope their learning objectives to focus on helping students develop the skills needed to succeed in an AI-enabled working world. AI text generators like ChatGPT are expected to transform the toolkit and process many professions, from copywriting to coding. Models like ChatGPT always generate quite convincing looking text, which can be dangerous since what they generate is not always factually accurate. Additionally, without thoughtful prompting and editing, the output of these models can be extremely generic.

Students will need to develop key skills needed to successfully collaborate with these tools, including <u>prompt engineering</u>, editing and curation skills, <u>fact-checking and correction</u>, and high-level planning skills to develop the objectives for how they want to utilize these tools to achieve their work or educational goals.

Institutions seeking to be on the forefront of this technological shift may consider adding courses in each discipline that specifically address the use of AI in that field, for example; Generative AI in Journalism, Generative AI in Marketing, or Generative AI in the Creative Arts, etc. Additionally, computer science programs that lack structured coursework around AI are at risk of becoming out of date, with these tools already offering support with automating test writing, code review, and even code writing.



3. Strategic adoption of AI to support student success

Innovative institutions are utilizing the potential of AI to achieve previously impossible feedback speed, personalization, and student support. While it's easy to paint AI with a broad brush in the wake of the release of ChatGPT, generative AI models are far from the only application of AI that is relevant to an educational setting. Not all AI is designed to generate content on behalf of users; AI can be used to classify, recommend, suggest scores, provide instant feedback to students, personalize assignments, and more.



Platforms like ChatGPT use what's commonly known as "generative AI;" that is, artificial intelligence that can generate new material (written, artistic, or otherwise). But generative AI models are not the only application of AI that can have utility and relevance to the classroom. An emerging approach, which could be called instructional AI, marries the most effective elements of generative AI with pedagogical principles proven to support student learning and growth.

Instructional AI, for example, uses student-centered, educational applications of AI to enable more students to succeed and improve instructor quality of life by saving time on rote grading. With learning loss from the COVID-19 pandemic still top of mind for many educators and administrators, Instructional AI partners can play a key role in creating personalized, real-time feedback loops for students that help them develop mastery and build confidence.

University of North Texas is a particularly exciting example of an institution that has been taking a proactive approach to integrating instructional AI for years. The CLEAR research team at UNT recently published a journal article on the results of a multiyear study evaluating the impact of AI-based curriculum technology at their institution. Their findings showed that instructional AI enriches the quality and breadth of feedback students receive, enables instructors to focus on higher-order feedback, and improves student engagement metrics.



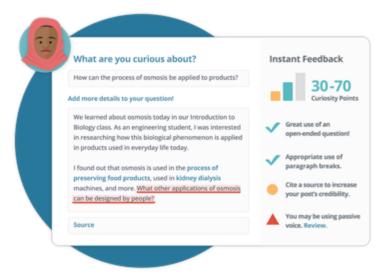
WHAT'S NEXT:

The Rise of Instructional Al

The most fully realized example of instructional AI currently in use is <u>Packback</u>, whose AI-enabled approach to writing coaching and inquiry-based student discussion has been used by more than 1.5 million students to date.

Rather than generating text on behalf of students (like generative Al models do), Packback uses its instructional Al models to provide highly personalized, instantaneous feedback to students that teaches them how–and why–to improve their written work. Similarly, the platform uses the same underlying Al to provide educators with powerful grading assistance, through highlighting key passages, suggested scores for each category of the rubric, and providing instructors with detailed originality reporting, while still keeping the educator as the decision-maker for all final assessment decisions.

Rooted in the well-known cognitive framework Bloom's Taxonomy (mentioned above), Packback's approach uses AI to assign students a "curiosity score" that evaluates their discussion posts based on clarity, open-endedness, and use of external sources. The platform's more recent Deep Dives tool applies the same principle to long-form essay writing, using AI to support students as they research, develop outlines and theses, and craft longer essays and papers.



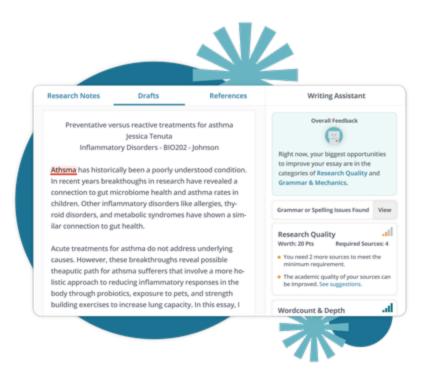




Because Packback's AI reviews and makes suggestions in real time as students write, it offers a uniquely formative approach to writing — in which students can integrate feedback during the writing process itself, rather than waiting for an instructor's review. Instructors, in turn, spend less time evaluating grammar and spelling, and more time engaging with their students' underlying ideas and thought processes.

Though its instructional AI platform was popular even before the advent of ChatGPT, Packback has adapted its suite of products to respond to the rise of AI-generated writing tools. In December 2022, Packback made a detection tool available to its users that has a near-zero false positive rate on identifying AI-generated posts and essays. Like other such tools (e.g., CopyLeaks and Turnitin, both of which have developed or are developing detection mechanisms), Packback can provide a helpful stopgap during this period of uncertainty as instructors rethink writing instruction for an AI-driven age.

But the underlying ideas behind instructional AI demand that educators and technology developers alike go beyond a prevent-and-detect approach to ChatGPT. In the months to come, Packback and its partners, including the League for Innovation in the Community College, will be issuing guidance and providing ongoing training to help instructors with specific pedagogical changes, including ideas for classroom assignments, designed to embrace the growing role of AI in educational settings.







CONCLUSION:

Looking Ahead

If one thing is clear from the precipitous rise of ChatGPT over the past few months, it's that AI has crossed the rubicon from a potential disruptive force into a very real, and inescapable, part of the education experience. How can educators' and administrators' response to this particular tool inform the way we respond to future such disruptions?

The coming months and years are likely to bring a steady stream of emerging technologies like ChatGPT that make use of the enormous power and potential of artificial intelligence. As these technologies become easier to design and develop, they'll be more readily available to the public — which means that education leaders should prepare for them to show up in classroom settings sooner rather than later, whether they like it or not. What we've learned from ChatGPT, even in a relatively short time, is that fear and backlash are unproductive (and even counterproductive) ways to engage with such tools. The schools and classrooms that have weathered the storm are those that have instead treated generative AI as a catalyst to rethink their assignments and assessments in ways that help students prepare for a future that is increasingly dependent on the relationship between human and machine.

When the next disruptive AI force arrives, administrators and instructors alike should take the lessons of ChatGPT to heart. None of these tools are likely to shake the foundational elements of education that matter most: its grounding in relationships between teacher and student, and its focus on cultivating curiosity and critical thinking. With those principles in mind, high school and university leaders alike will be able to meet future technological challenges – and opportunities – with open-mindedness and adaptability, and better prepare their students to navigate an increasingly AI-driven world.