# UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

# Report of the Provost and Vice-President Academic

## FOR INFORMATION

**PRESENTED BY:**      Airini, Provost and Vice-President Academic

**DATE OF MEETING:**      April 20, 2024

**SUBJECT:**      **Update on the Use of AI by the University Community**

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 4, 2023, at the request of the Senate Education Committee, a presentation was made to Senate on USask's response to Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) by the office of the provost and vice president academic.

The presentation highlighted:
- An overview of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and recent GenAI developments as a tool in learning and teaching in particular.
- A demonstration of an openly available GenAI tool.
- A discussion of USask's work to date related to use of GenAI in teaching and learning including:
  - [Resources and FAQs on GenAI](#) for the university community including students and faculty, leadership teams, and governance committees.
  - Support for students on [GenAI and academic integrity](#).
  - [Professional Development in use of GenAI](#) for instructors, including support for assessment and course redesign.

Since that time USask has continued its work in developing resources for the university community (e.g., [GenAI tutorial for students](#), [supported use of select Gen AI tools](#), creation of guidelines for use of GenAI in thesis and dissertations).

In January 2024 the Provost and Vice President Academic established an Artificial Intelligence Task Force to consolidate the work happening across campus integrating AI and advance development of institutional principles and guidelines for the use of AI by the university community, aligned with our core areas of work, research, teaching and administration. This is co-chaired by Dr. Nancy Turner (Associate Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning) and Dr. Vince Bruni-Bossio (Interim Associate Provost, Strategic Priorities)

The work of the task force is enabling USask to engage intentionally and strategically with the possibilities and challenges of AI, and the contribution of this technology to USask's vision:

> *We will contribute to a sustainable future by being among the best in the world in areas of special and emerging strengths, through outstanding research, scholarly, and artistic work that addresses the needs and aspirations of our region and the world, and through exceptional teaching and engagement.*
>
> *We will be an outstanding institution of research, learning, knowledge-keeping, reconciliation, and inclusion with and by Indigenous peoples and communities.*

**SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE ACTIVITY TO DATE:**

The task force began its work with a comprehensive landscape review completed in January that examined principles and guidelines developed by other higher education institutions in Canada and internationally, with a particular focus on the U15. This review highlighted key areas addressed effectively by U15 principles/guidelines (i.e., accountability/responsibility, privacy, safety and security, accessibility, and human oversight).

Notable additions to this core list from other national and international promising practices included the significance of intentional AI-literacy development and the power of collaboration between institutions and across sectors in advancing this work to gain efficiency and allow for more agile innovations in this rapidly evolving field. Additionally, the importance of centering human agency in considerations of our intentions and practices in AI use was central in these Canadian and international examples.

These examples, alongside consideration of key AI risks and opportunities explored with the Board of Governors in February 2024, led the task force to position human agency as a foundational tenet of the principles being developed. In practice this means we will commit that humans will make intentional choices and actions in leading our AI use and that a human-centered approach to implementing and managing AI will be maintained. Additionally, our uses of AI will emphasize the enhancement of human well-being and dignity, supporting and enhancing, not replacing, human capabilities.

To ensure alignment with the USask Mission, the AI Principles and Guidelines have been informed by and, where possible, aligned to the USask Principles and Values (see Mission, Vision and Values - University of Saskatchewan (usask.ca) as shown below:

| USask AI Draft Principles Aligned with USask Principles: Outline | |
|---|---|
| Diversity, Equality, and Human Dignity<br>• Draft AI principles include promotion of AI-literacy, and ensuing AI systems are equitable and accessible. | Sustainability<br>• Draft AI principles focus on practices that are sustainable environmentally, economically and socially. |
| Diversity, Equality, and Human Dignity<br>• Draft AI principles include promotion of AI-literacy, and ensuing AI systems are equitable and accessible. | Innovation, Curiosity, and Creativity<br>• Draft AI principles focus on ideas of continuous improvement driven by human curiosity. |
| Different Ways of knowing, Learning and Being<br>• Draft AI principles include collaboration and co-creation of systems informed by diverse local and Indigenous knowledges. | Openness, Transparency, and Accountability<br>• Draft AI principles include transparency in, monitoring of, and communication about AI use. |
| Additional area: Safety and Security<br>• Draft AI principles focus on data privacy and security and high-quality and verifiable data systems | |

**Establishing of Working Groups and Consultation:** The AI Taskforce has formed three working/consultation groups focused on (1) offering insight into the development of AI principles, and (2) developing guidelines for implementing the principles in teaching, research, and administration.

Consultations have begun with Teaching Learning and Academic Resource Committee (TLARC) and Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Works (RSAW) Committee and the Associate Deans Academic (ADAs) and Associate Deans Research (ADRs) as shown below:

**Research**
Consultation will include: RSAW, ADRs and key researchers

**Teaching & Learning**
Consultation will include TLARC, ADAs and key instructors

**Administration & Support Services**
Consultations will include interviews with USask leaders

**TASK FORCE IMPLICATIONS AND TIMELINE:** The work of this task force is crucial in allowing USask to harness AI's potential while aligning it with our vision, priorities, and commitment to equity, Indigenous advancement, and innovation. The principles and guidelines will align with and inform development of policy (e.g., academic integrity, assessment policy) and reflect our values and University Plan 2025, setting the standard in learning, research, and engagement. The process set out below has and will allow for comprehensive research, stakeholder engagement, and consultation, ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered.

**NOTES ON OBJECTIVES AND TIMELINES:**
- January: AI Task Force Launched
- Mid-January: Landscape review and themed analysis completed including national and international promising practices with a specific focus on U15.
- Mid-January to mid-February: Development of principles
- Mid to end of March: Working/consultation groups established in, (1) Teaching and learning, (2) Research, Scholarship and Artistic Works, and (3) Administration and Support Service
- Mid-February to early March: Internal consultation on draft principles including committees of University Council
- March – April: Refine principles
- March: Working/consultation groups commence guideline development
- May 2024: Present proposed guidelines/principles for discussion with PEC
- May: Consultation on research, teaching, and administration guidelines
- June 30, 2024: Working groups complete guidelines for implementing the principles.

By implementing these principles and guidelines, the university can responsibly and effectively utilize AI to advance research, teaching, and societal impact.