Artificial Intelligence and Leadership in Academia

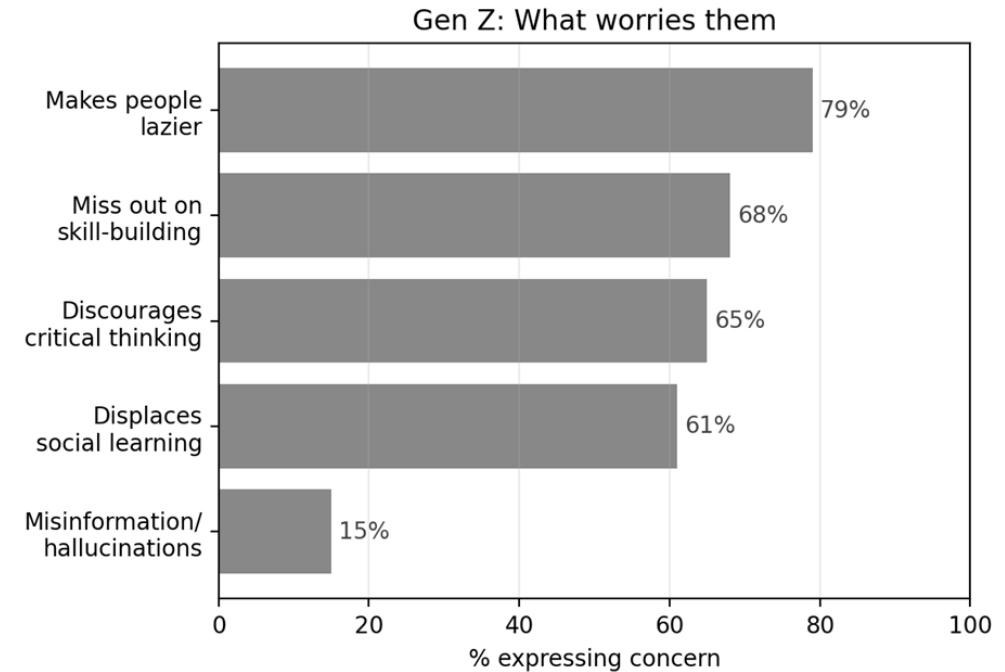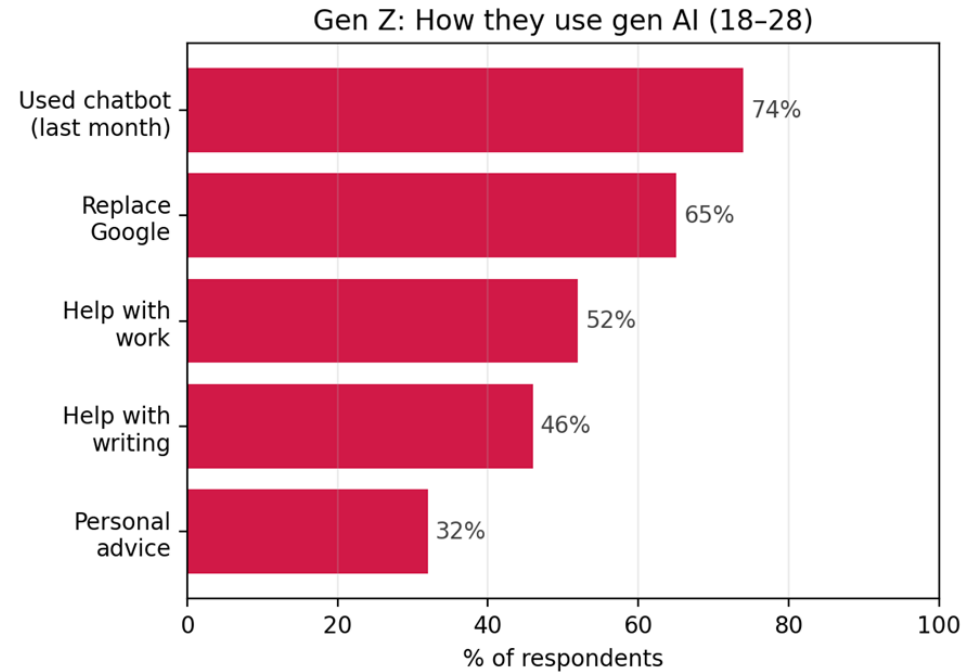*A Path for Academic Leadership*

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Ultimately the goal of AI Literacy should not be to make students better at using AI, but to empower them to be more discerning thinkers, more ethical citizens, and more self-aware beings in a world where AI exists.

--Michael G Wagner, Drexel University Digital Media
Program Director

AI and our Students

HBR (Jan 28, 2026): Gallup/Walton Family Foundation survey (Oct 2025; ~2,500 U.S. adults 18–28)

Gen Z: How they use gen AI (18–28)

- Used chatbot (last month): 74%
- Replace Google: 65%
- Help with work: 52%
- Help with writing: 46%
- Personal advice: 32%

% of respondents

Gen Z: What worries them

- Makes people lazier: 79%
- Miss out on skill-building: 68%
- Discourages critical thinking: 65%
- Displaces social learning: 61%
- Misinformation/ hallucinations: 15%

% expressing concern

Under the Hood – ChatBots or LLMs

Trained on the Open Web, Reddit, Wikipedia, etc.

Training allows them to predict what is needed from the "prompt" that you give them and communicate using natural language

Give them specific prompts to get more targeted responses

Provide them data such as emails, spreadsheets, documents

Clarify goal, context, and desired format

Offer guidance on audience, tone, speaker perspective or voice

Respond to answers with additional suggestions

Under the Hood – Research Tools

Open web-based AI tools

Trained on Semantic Scholar database of Open Access articles and some publisher abstracts (not Elsevier!), i.e. Research Rabbit, Consensus, SciSpace, etc.

Trained on full-text Open Access articles, "snippets" from other research materials on the web, including books, court opinions, and other scholarly material, i.e. Google Scholar Labs

Subscription database AI tools

Trained only on the research articles and/or abstracts of the journals covered within the database

Trained on full-text only if the publishers have given permission

Tools include natural language searching, summaries of articles, and some chatbot-like tools (Scopus and JSTOR)
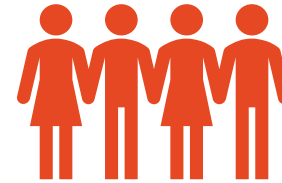
AI Ethics and Rutgers—Newark

LLMs trained on the web bring in the same biases as the web

Difficult to know what you are searching

ChatGPT trains on Reddit and Wikipedia among other open websites

Appropriate for some uses, but remain aware of bias and ethical concerns embedded in the training

Ethics comes from leadership, in the classroom and in the administration
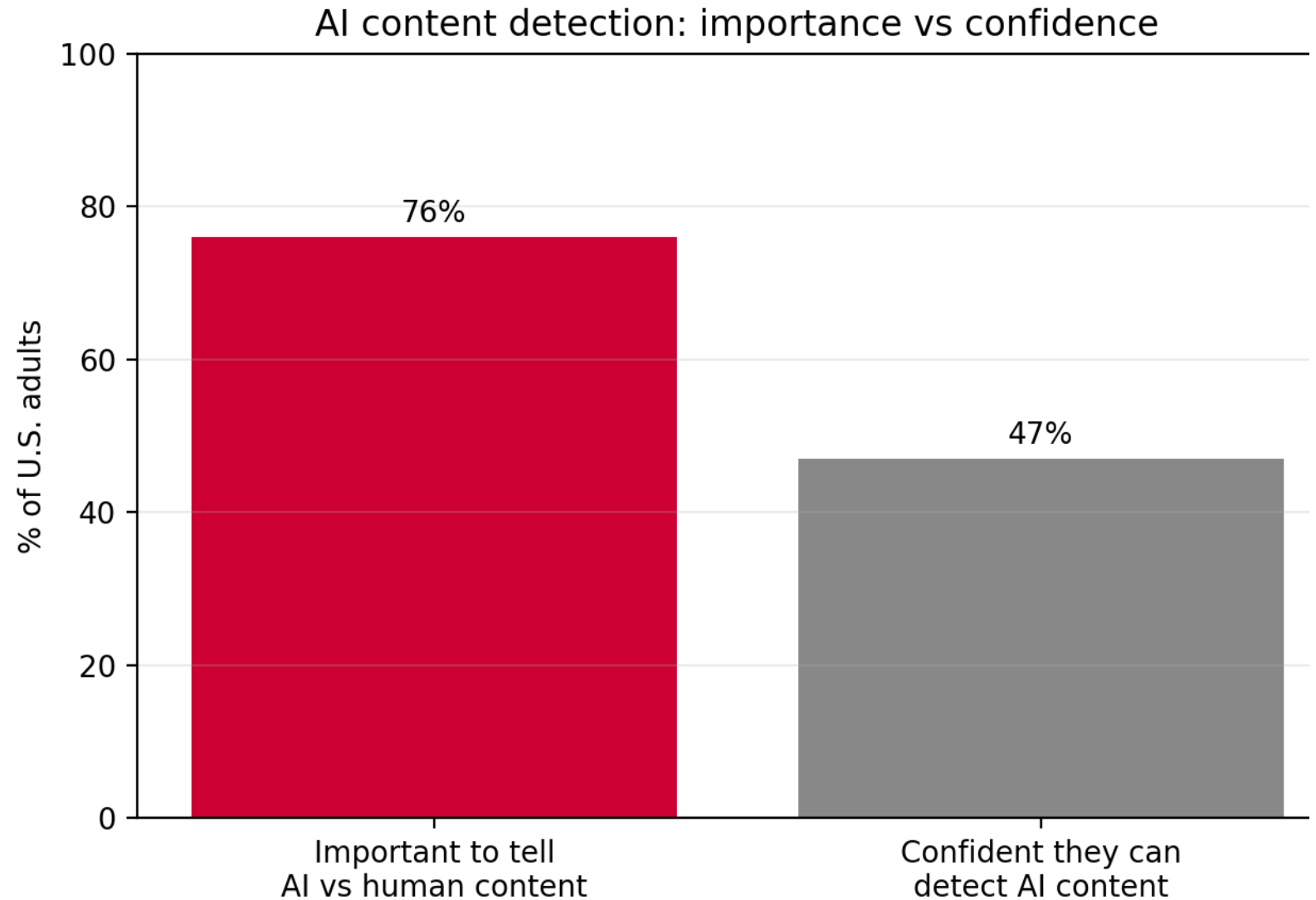
Creating informed citizens is core to our mission

Young adults are worried about AI diminishing critical thinking

Few survey respondents feel confident distinguishing between authentic and AI-generated content

The Confidence Gap

Source: Pew Research Center, "How Americans View AI and Its Impact on People and Society" (Sep 17, 2025)

AI content detection: importance vs confidence

% of U.S. adults

76% — Important to tell AI vs human content

47% — Confident they can detect AI content
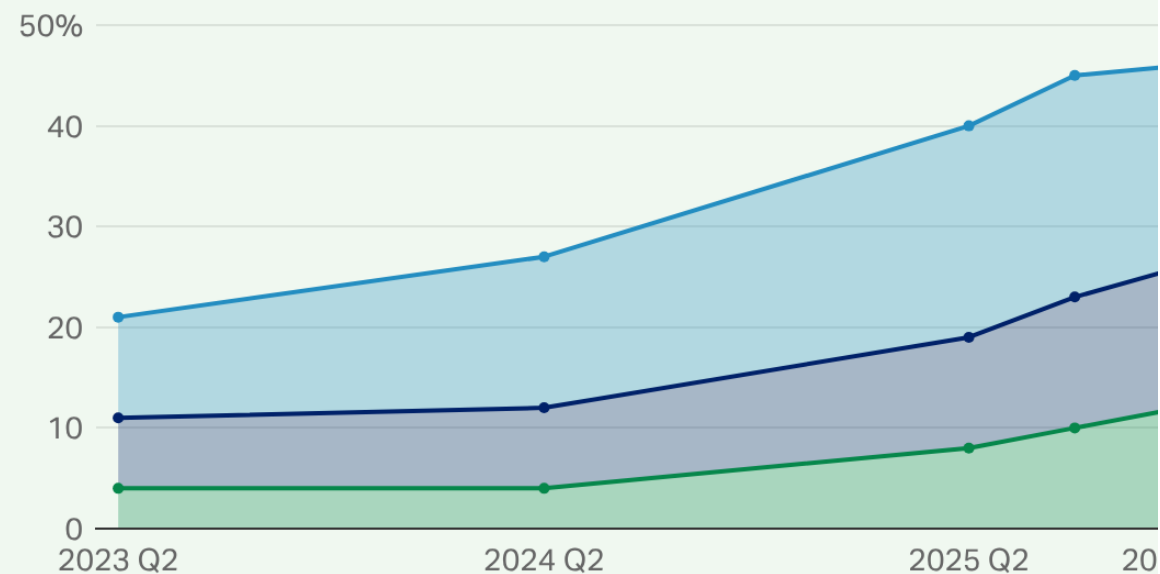
Current US Workers

How Much Are U.S. Workers Using AI?

Daily AI users (% of employees using AI daily in their role)
Frequent AI users (% using AI daily or a few times a week)
Total AI users (% using AI daily, a few times a week, a few times a mont... a few times a year)

▶ *Click to see the full question wording.*

Not all response options shown

GAI

Discussion

How do we lead ethically?

How do we encourage experimentation within enterprise boundaries?

Who do we empower and engage?

What are we willing to invest?

How Do We Lead?

Foster	Foster Innovation While Leading with Ethics
Promote	Promote Open Dialogue and Experimentation
Empower	Empower with Tools and Clear Expectations
Educate	Educate on Bias and Data Sources
Address	Address the "Confidence Gap"
Discover	Discover the Best Tool for the Work