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Are You Actually a Human?

Results from a national study on student perceptions of AI.

Jared Brickman, PhD
Carnegie SVP, Research
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KEY OUTCOME

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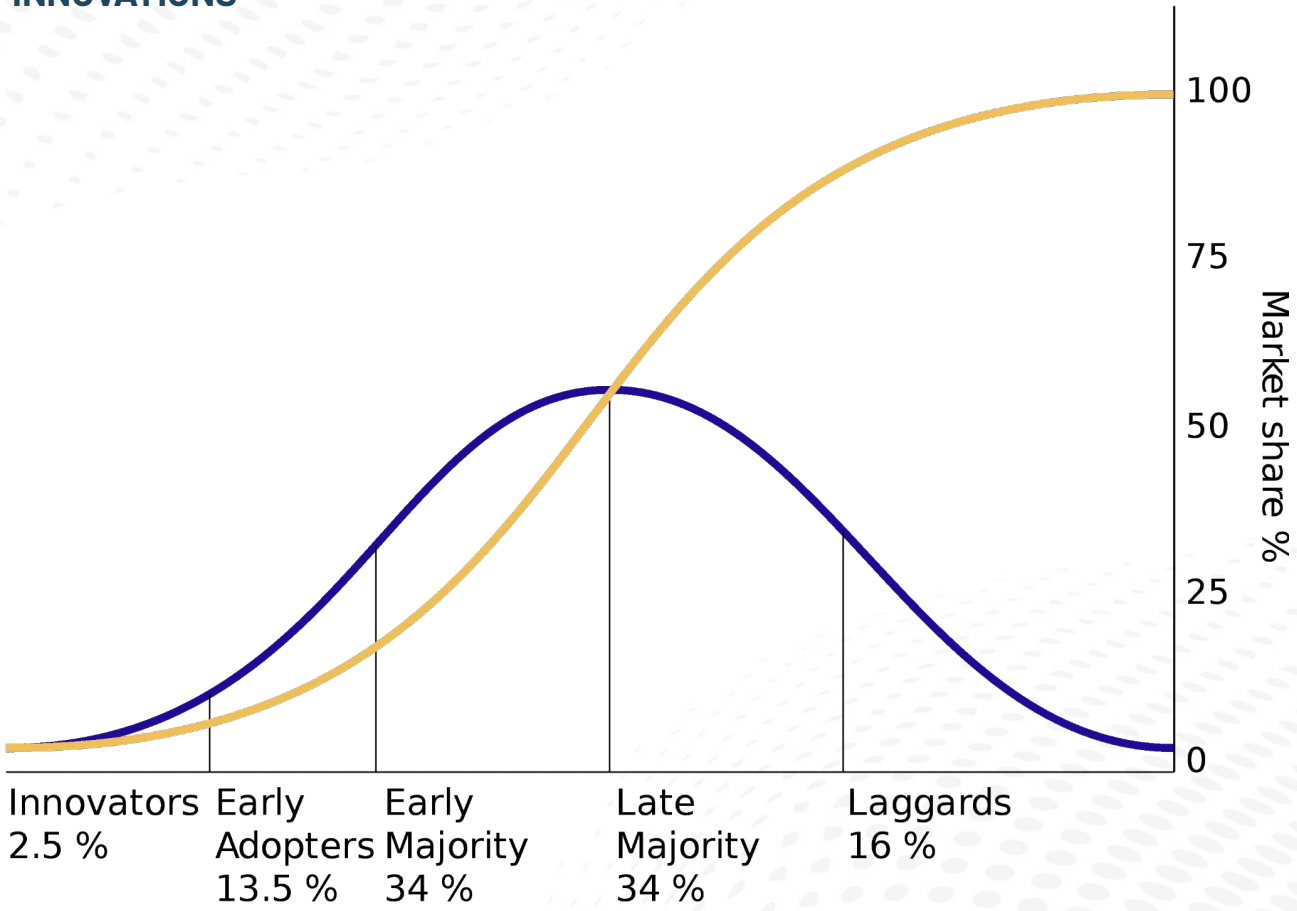
Students see the rise of AI as both inevitable and exciting. They believe it is the Internet or Smartphone of the upcoming generation.

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS



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30% of prospective students use AI

“occasionally” or more.

THIS IS UP FROM 16% WHEN WE ASKED THE CLASS OF 2023

4,530 COMPLETED SURVEYS OF STUDENTS

26 DATA BREAKOUTS ACROSS REGIONS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

434 COMPLETED INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS

8 OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Questions

+ How do students use AI? Do they use it for college search?
+ What policies do high schools have about the use of AI?
+ Can students tell the difference between AI and human writing?
+ Do students want to learn about AI?
+ Do students believe AI will change their future career/education?

AI IN THIS PRESENTATION

Prompt: A senior vice president of research staring at excel spreadsheets in a futuristic surrealism style.

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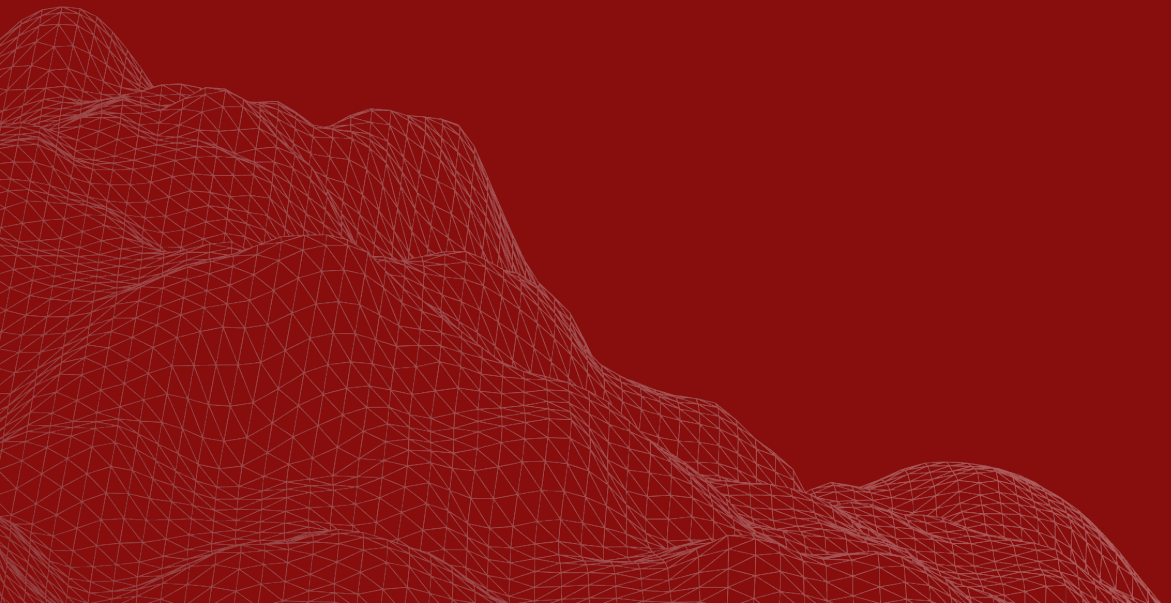
1 Student AI Use



Data Outcomes

Do you use any user-facing AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL-E, Midjourney)?

Do Not Use	Tried/Played With	Use Occasionally	Use Regularly
30%	40%	23%	7%

How familiar are you with how AI tools such as these can be used?

Not at All Familiar	Slightly Familiar	Moderately Familiar	Highly Familiar	Completely Familiar
14%	33%	35%	15%	3%

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“Letting it search the schools that have my major and allowing it to find scholarships. It’s helped me find scholarships for African American students, first generation students, things that just correlate to me. AI can do it far faster than I can do the Google search.”

KEY OUTCOME

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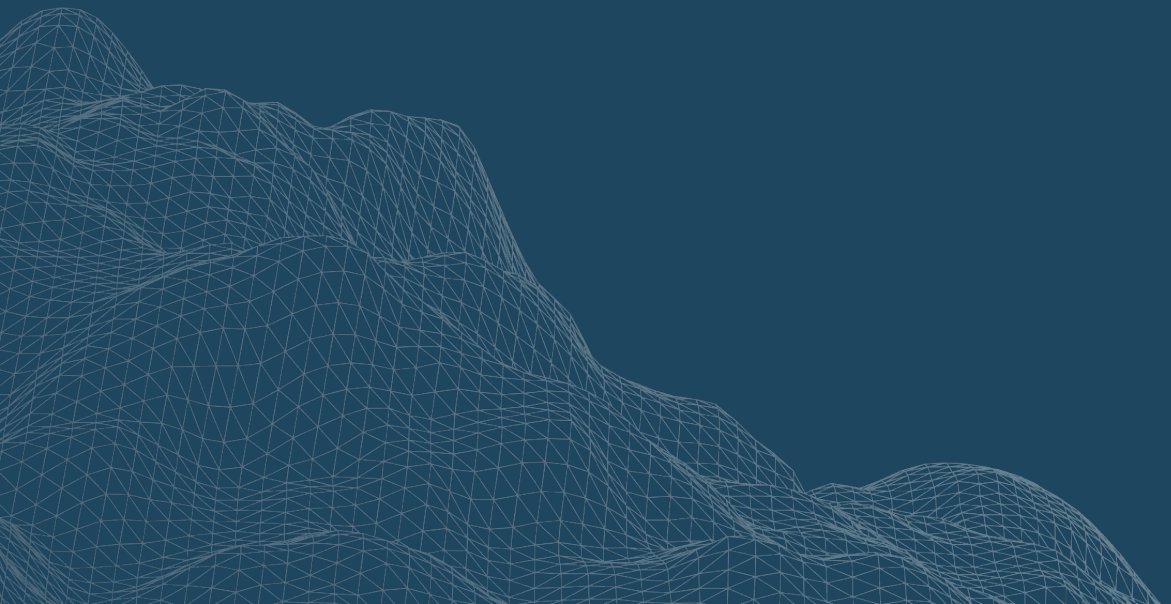
Students will primarily use AI to save time on repetitive tasks and to gather information they might have otherwise missed during their college search.

Other Use Themes

- Many students still lack trust in AI
- Hyper-personalization is a key factor of use
- Students feel tremendous pressure; these tools help some feel like they are doing what they need to be doing

Prompt: A student who looks exhausted staring at a computer screen in a renaissance style painting.

2 Identifying AI Content



Can you tell which passage was written by AI?

PASSAGE A: Achievement in the classroom is born of determination. And if you never say no to a challenge, if your only goal for tomorrow is to beat today, this is your place to earn it.

PASSAGE B: This is a place where ambition thrives and students chase excellence relentlessly, fueled by a culture of achievement, innovation, and unwavering dedication to their academic and personal goals.

Results

PASSAGE A: Achievement in the classroom is born of determination. And if you never say no to a challenge, if your only goal for tomorrow is to beat today, this is your place to earn it.

PASSAGE B: This is a place where ambition thrives and students chase excellence relentlessly, fueled by a culture of achievement, innovation, and unwavering dedication to their academic and personal goals. (AI PASSAGE)

67% PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS CORRECT

Can you tell which passage was written by AI?

PASSAGE A: We are a nurturing college where students form close-knit bonds, faculty offer unwavering guidance, and a culture of empathy fosters a supportive community that values everyone's growth and well-being.

PASSAGE B: We believe education should be an open invitation. Join us as we grow together, learn together, and build a better world as a community with close-knit bonds and great stories.

Results

PASSAGE A: We are a nurturing college where students form close-knit bonds, faculty offer unwavering guidance, and a culture of empathy fosters a supportive community that values everyone's growth and well-being. (AI PASSAGE)

PASSAGE B: We believe education should be an open invitation. Join us as we grow together, learn together, and build a better world as a community with close-knit bonds and great stories.

70% PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS CORRECT

Can you tell which passage was written by AI?

PASSAGE A: Unfettered by the ideas of old and driven by the possibilities of tomorrow, our transformative ideas inspire us to create a more brilliant future.

PASSAGE B: We constantly reimagine the future, pushing boundaries and inspiring change with innovative solutions that revolutionize learning and students' lives.

Results

PASSAGE A: Unfettered by the ideas of old and driven by the possibilities of tomorrow, our transformative ideas inspire us to create a more brilliant future.

PASSAGE B: We constantly reimagine the future, pushing boundaries and inspiring change with innovative solutions that revolutionize learning and students' lives. (AI PASSAGE)

31% PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS CORRECT

STUDENT VOICE

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“I don’t think I’m that confident in which was AI or not. I think that’s the point, though. It all sounds so human now. You can only look for that one weird word or some strange sentence structure to find it.”

KEY OUTCOME

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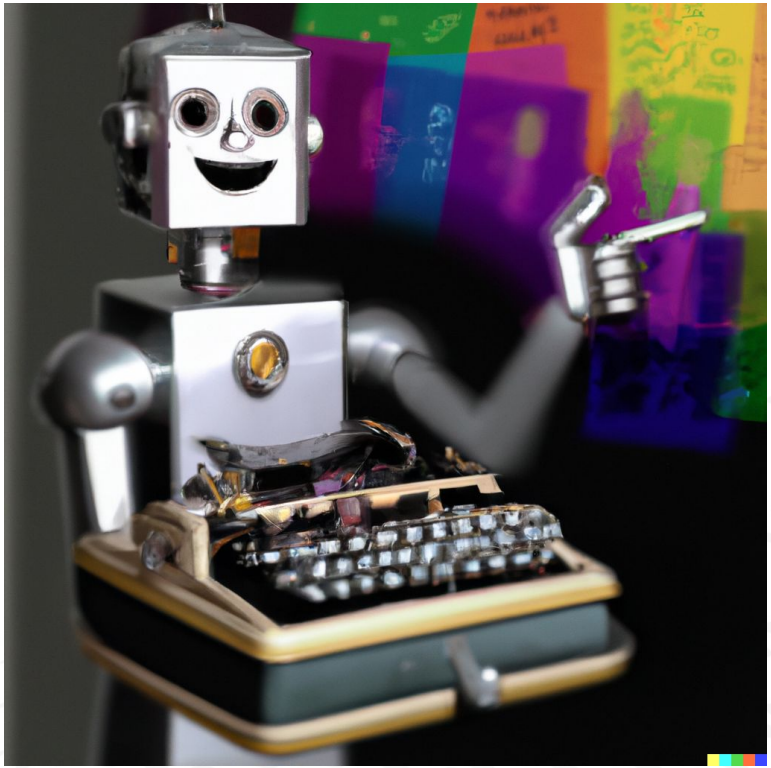
Students decided which passages were written by AI by looking at the wording, such as flat and repetitive language, lack of understanding of emotion or true purpose, or the use of fancy or unfamiliar words.

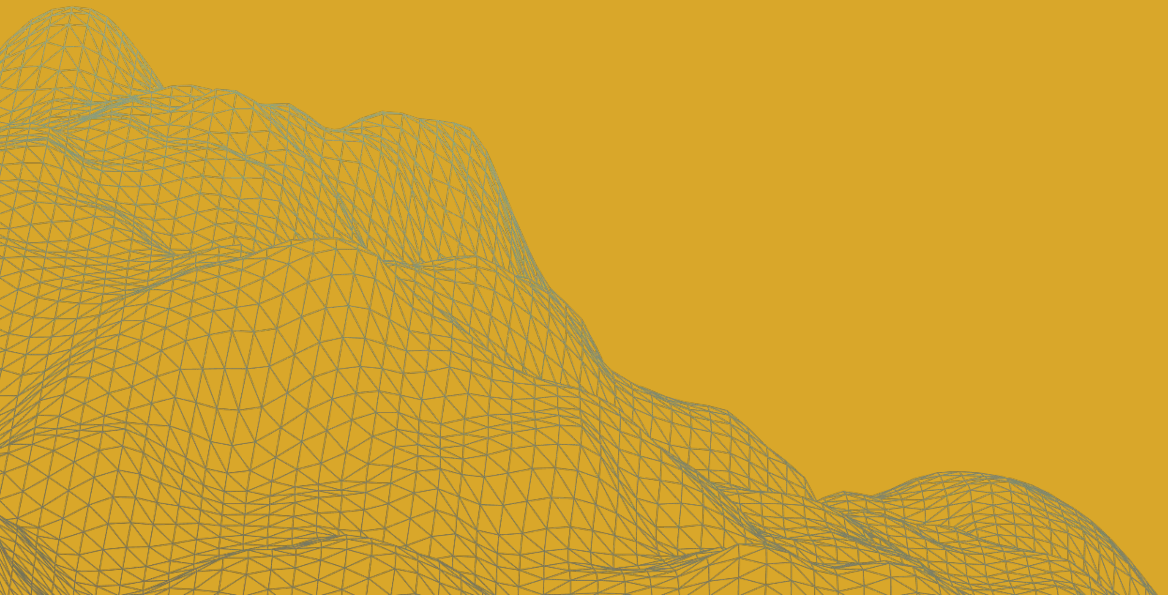
Other Content Themes

- More use of AI did lead to higher identification scores
- Students identified training on human intelligence as the reason the task was difficult
- Perhaps surprisingly, 54% students scored the AI passages as better, with 17% saying there was no preference and only 30% for the human passages



Prompt: A robot with a big smile at a typewriter designed in fun digital art style.

3 Outlook on AI and the Future



Acceptable to Students

- Using AI to help with comms that are reviewed by humans
- Using AI to individualize content where possible
- Using AI chatbots if identified clearly and with alternative options for a human
- Using AI to plan, strategize, or learn about students
- Using AI to help with the job internally

Not Acceptable

- Using AI in anything related to an admissions decision
- Using AI to communicate critical information like financial aid or acceptance
- Using AI without attribution and clear identification
- Using AI to “spy” on students before or during college
- Using AI to replace humans in the workplace broadly

Data Outcomes

Do you believe AI will impact your future job? (Interview Only)

No	Unsure/Unlikely	Yes, Slightly	Yes, Significantly
14%	12%	48%	26%

How interested are you in learning more about AI tools?

Not At All	Slightly	Moderately	Highly	Top Interest
14%	29%	34%	18%	6%

STUDENT VOICE

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“Now when looking at potential careers **you have to look at how likely it is that you will have a career in the future seeing as AI is taking over a lot of manual jobs.** In college there is more access to resources to study and learn from so it would be helpful to use it.”

KEY OUTCOME

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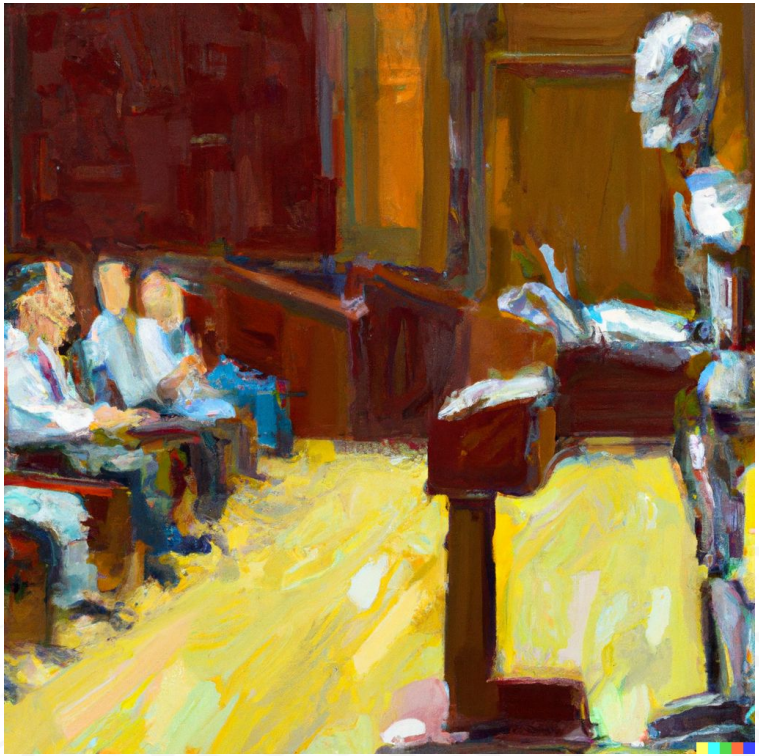
AI will have a significant impact on the college and career decisions that students will make. It will change the way students search for colleges, make decisions about majors, and consider future career prospects.

Other Impact Themes

- Some students think AI is just a “cool” fad that might go away
- Many students worry about deepfakes and information literacy with AI
- Job security was the number one concern for students thinking about their future
- Students want colleges to help them learn AI and support them with classes



Prompt: An oil painting of a robot professor teaching in a college lecture hall.

Confession

- Developing Survey
- Holding Interviews
- Initial Data Analysis
- Qualitative Theming
- Key Outcome Statements
- How to Write Like a Human

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Thank You!

CarnegieHigherEd.com
jbrickman@carnegiehigered.com