TLC2026 PROGRAMME

16-18 NOVEMBER

CONNECTION, RECONFIGURED:

Reimagining teaching and learning with artificial intelligence

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD
CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

tlc Teaching & Learning Conference

AI Initiative
Leveraging AI for a just world

Provisional Programme: 11 November 2026

On Monday, tea and coffee will be available.
No lunch will be served.
Food can be purchased from Food&Connect on site.

WORKSHOPS

Pre-conference | MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2026

TIME	2A	2B	STUDIO 2
09:00 – 11:00	**WORKSHOP 1** **Exploring AI literacies in and for your discipline** Lauren Butler Mishka Reddy Jade Smith Al Clapper	**WORKSHOP 2** **The inevitability of Generative AI in higher education? Considering preferred education futures** Greig Krull Shanali Govender	**WORKSHOP 3** **Tracking graduate attributes with the Learning Outcomes tool in Amathuba** Thomas King
12:00 – 14:00	**WORKSHOP 4** **Being a mathematical knower and having a feel for knowing Mathematics in times of Generative AI** Faith Katabwa Kate Le Roux Mikaeel Mohammed Ruach Slayen James Mbewu	**WORKSHOP 5** **A Socratic encounter in the age of bots: Harnessing agentic AI to promote critical engagement** Aditi Hunma Moeain Arend	**WORKSHOP 6** **Start with outcomes, not assessment: A principled approach to AI-responsive assessment redesign** Francois Cilliers Cheng-Wen Huang Sukaina Walji
14:00 – 16:00	**WORKSHOP 7** **How does it feel? Zine-making as reflection on AI in education** Mishka Reddy		**WORKSHOP 8** **Creating accessible teaching materials with AI** Jade Smith Kristin van Tonder

THEME KEYS

1 *Disciplinary identities*
2 *Critical and ethical perspectives*
3 *Co-creation, collaboration and social AI*
4 *Equity, access and the uneven landscape*
5 *Student agency and voice*
6 *Future of the university*
7 *Relationships and the relational*
8 *Wild card*

DAY 1 | TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026

08:00 – 09:00	**REGISTRATION**
OPENING PLENARY: AUDITORIUM	
09:00 – 09:20	**Welcome** Professor Brandon Collier-Reed, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Teaching & Learning
09:20 – 09:25	**Acknowledgements and housekeeping**
09:30 – 10:20	**Keynote Panel: What is the University for, in the era of AI?** Jonathan Shock, Caitlin Ferreira, Tanja Bosch, Ryan Nefdt, Annette Hübschle
10:20 – 10:30	**Launch of Introduction to Generative AI programme** Jonathan Shock, Karin Smit
10:30 – 11:00	**Tea break**
11:00 – 12:30	**Keynote Speaker: Phillip Dawson: Assessment design for a time of artificial intelligence** With Sukaina Walji responding as discussant, followed by Q&A
12:30 – 13:30	**Lunch (and move to venues)**

DAY 1 | TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026 (continued)

Time	Auditorium	2A	2B	4A	Time	Studio 2
13:30 – 14:00	**1. When AI can write the code: Rethinking assessment in Computer Science** Michelle Kuttel	**2. What remains ours: Legal reasoning, disciplinary identity, and the reconfigured classroom in the age of generative AI** Sebastian Krafzik Kea Motlogeloa	**3. Generative AI's impact on executive functioning: A Cultural Historical Activity Theory inspired model of pedagogy for using GenAI as a cognitive tool** Joanne Hardman	**4. Negotiating digital sovereignty in South African higher education** Janet Small Jennifer Feldman	13:30 – 13:45	**5. Panic is not pedagogy: Moral panic, refusal and better questions about AI** Tanja Bosch
					13:45 – 14:00	**6. Beyond western symbols: Reclaiming reflection through African artefacts in medical education** Jonathan Muller-Stuurman
14:00 – 14:30	**7. A disciplinary-informed conceptualisation of staff AI literacies and the implications for critical approaches to AI in teaching and learning** Lara Karassellos Mishka Reddy Janet Small Mashudu Raudzingana	**8. A comparative analysis of human expert tutor evaluation of reflective essays to that of AI-enabled automated essay graders: A retrospective review** Ntsiki Mapukata Kulthum Fataar Siwe Toto Lunelle Pienaar Frissiano Honwana	**9. Students, cultural bias and a course chatbot: How fixing one bias installed another** Jeffrey Bagraim	**10. Lecturers' integration of GenAI into pedagogical practices for equitable and inclusive student learning support: A social justice perspective** Ncediwe Mdlulwa Mariam Jacobs-Basadien Tabisa Mayisela	14:00 – 14:15	**11. Confident enough to engage; sceptical enough to scrutinise: Supervised co-production in AI-supported teaching practice** Paula Saner
					14:15 – 14:30	**12. Whose idea was it? AI, assessment, and the collapse of verifiable authorship** Jordan Willis

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DAY 1 | TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026 (continued)

Time	Auditorium	2A	2B	4A	Time	Studio 2
14:30 – 15:00	**13. Closing the feedback desert in an extended curriculum Engineering physics course: Multimodal agentic AI feedback on handwritten tutorial problem sets** Moses Basitere Moeketsi Mosia Jason Minnie	**14. Beyond digital skills: Preparing Health Sciences students for learning and practice in the age of AI** Gregory Doyle Farzanah Samuels Bronwynn Williams Lunelle Pienaar	**15. The responsibility paradox: Who is responsible for the production of bullshit by large language models?** Imaad Abrahams	**16. Generative AI and Open Education: Tensions and possibilities** Bianca Masuku Glenda Cox	14:30 – 14:45	**17. Design and development of virtual 'interactive selector' Chemistry practicals to enhance undergraduate student engagement** Roxanne Mohunlal
					14:45 – 15:00	**18. The curriculum in the prompt: What students' generative AI practices reveal** Jaisubash Jayakumar
15:00 – 16:00	15:00-15:45 (PANEL) **19. Adopt, build, critique: Introduction to literacies in Commerce and the business world in the age of AI** Daniel Munene Aditi Hunma Lucille Roberts Mark Jackson	15:00-15:30 **20. Evaluating AI use in Engineering education** Kyle Abrahams Marijke Fagan-Endres Terry-Ann Franklin 15:30 – 15:45 **21. Assessing the assessments: Educators' perspectives on assessment validity in online postgraduate education in the era of Generative AI** Nabila Youssouf	15:00-15:30 **22. Teaching with AI, teaching against AI, teaching through AI: Innovations, interventions and provocations from Science** Spencer Wheaton Will Horowitz Tom Leadbeater Kevin Barends Lucia Marchetti	15:00-15:45 (PANEL) **23. Students imagining Open Education in an AI-enabled world** Dylan Gandiwa Lucky Geluk Sphesihle Mchunu Nico Pampier Glenda Cox	15:00 – 15:15	**24. Preparing students to use AI responsibly and effectively in CV development** Safia Lagerdien
					15:15 – 15:30	**25. From prompt to purpose: How exploring AI became a student-led career guidance venture** Nadia Waggie Sonwabise Gcolotela

DAY 1 | TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026 (continued)

Time	Auditorium	2A	2B	4A	Time	Studio 2
15:00 – 16:00 (continued)	15:45 – 16:00 **26. Teaching AI with AI** Jan Buys	15:45 – 16:00 **27. The preparedness of Accounting students for fraud risk reasoning** Navitha Sewpersad Lindela Malambe	15:30 – 16:00 **28. Negotiating innovation, efficiency, and integrity: Postgraduate students' experiences of AI use in research and academic writing** Emily Mashonganyika Benedict Lateane	15:45 – 16:00 **29. Classroom attendance: There's an app for that, but so what? Ezcheck.me, student context, and academic performance** Carren Duffy Jeffrey J Bagraim	15:45 – 16:00	**30. Learning through encounter: Art in public university spaces as a catalyst for connection and interdisciplinary learning** Nadja Daehnke Portia Malatjie **31. Comazi: A student-centered approach to generative AI in higher education** Electra Zoumboulis Jacqueline Kew Anthony Rogers Chris Guattari-Stafford
16:30 – 19:00	Conference reception (Please be at the Baxter Concert Hall by 16:20)					

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Conference Reception

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026

For the first time ever, UCT's Teaching and Learning Conference will include a reception hosted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, scheduled to take place at the Baxter Theatre Concert Hall after the close of the first day of the conference.

The programme for the reception is as follows:	
16:30 – 17:00	An excerpt from Autoplay, an immersive hybrid performance by Darkroom Contemporary
17:00 – 17:15	Reflection from Darkroom Contemporary's Director, Louise Coetzer, on the creative process and response from a discussant, Dr Mbongeni Mtshali (Director of Theatre, Dance & Performance Studies at UCT)
17:15 – 17:55	Short talk by Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning followed by reflections by Distinguished Teacher Award recipients
17:55 – 20:00	**Networking, canapés and drinks**

Click or scan to book your free ticket
bit.ly/4zdRd1P

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DAY 2 | WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2026

Time	Auditorium	2A	2B	4A	Time	Studio 2
09:00 – 9:30	**32. From opacity to legibility: A human-centered approach to AI and institutional navigation** Lukho Nqose	**33. What happens when students design the future of AI in learning management systems?** Folasade Adedeji	**34. The intelligence of art vs artificial intelligence** Aika Swai	**35. Can AI hear African learners? Exploring linguistic equity in AI-supported French pronunciation learning among Shona-speaking university students in Zimbabwe** Mzite Gondayi	09:00 – 09:15	**36. Trans(c)ending the university through artificial professors in your pocket** Phadi Mabe
					09:15 – 09:30	**37. Experiential design practices in Landscape Architectural education** Christine Price
9:30 – 10:00	**38. Optimising student course evaluations: a holistic strategy for higher response rates** Bruce Kloot	**39. Using an AI marking tool for integrated case study assessments in a large, postgraduate Accounting programme** Taryn Miller	9:30 – 09:45 **40. The prosthetic returns: AI, colonial technologies, and the reconfiguration of critical thought in higher education** Sibusiso Mnyanda Athi Ruga 09:45 – 10:00 **41. AI is learning to read your students' emotions. Are we ready for what that means?** Nina Breitenbach; Shameemah Abrahams Jaisubash Jayakumar	**42. Preserving indigenous games through artificial intelligence: A chatbot for teaching and learning in Africa** Dick Ng'ambi	09:30 – 09:45	**43. Evaluating AI-assisted feedback in an undergraduate Human Biology course** Paul Steyn
					09:45 – 10:00	**44. AI chemistry mentor: designing a multilingual, Socratic tutor for first-year chemistry** Gerhard Venter Francois Majola

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DAY 2 | WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2026 (continued)

Time	Auditorium	2A	2B	4A	Time	Studio 2
10:00 – 10:30	**45. AI-generated podcasts to support undergraduate Surgical learning** Daniel Nel Aliya Bhorat	**46. "Touching grass" – Experiential learning as a counter to hegemonic encounters with artificial intelligence** Nancy Odendaal Alicia Fortuin	**47. Reconfiguring AI for student learning: Strengthening student thinking in the context of quantitative Finance** Freddy Dipudi	**48. Designing assessments for AI marking: Experiences in Accounting** Ilse Lubbe Magon Gajewski Jacqueline Dean	10:00 – 10:15	**49. Making AI work for you: Calibrating a personalised AI collaborator and protecting agency in and out of academia** AI Clapper
					10:15 – 10:30	**50. AI in Mathematics: A cautionary tale about alignment** Monogaran Naidoo
10:30 – 11:00	Tea break					
11:00 - 11:30	**51. Crossed purposes: How staff and students speak about voice in relation to AI-mediated writing** Sukaina Walji Cheng-Wen Huang Francois Cilliers Soraya Lester	**52. Using AI to widen access to learning beyond the formal curriculum** Liza Hitge	**53. Second language anxiety, belonging and participation in multilingual higher education** Busayo Ige	**54. To attend or not to attend?: Investigating the multifaceted drivers of student absenteeism in Anthropology at the University of Cape Town** Helen Macdonald	11:00 – 11:30	**55. STEM lecturers' use of Gradescope and other pre-AI digital assessment tools at UCT** Michelle Henry Anita Campbell Jumani Clarke Shajid Haque Zahraa Harnaker

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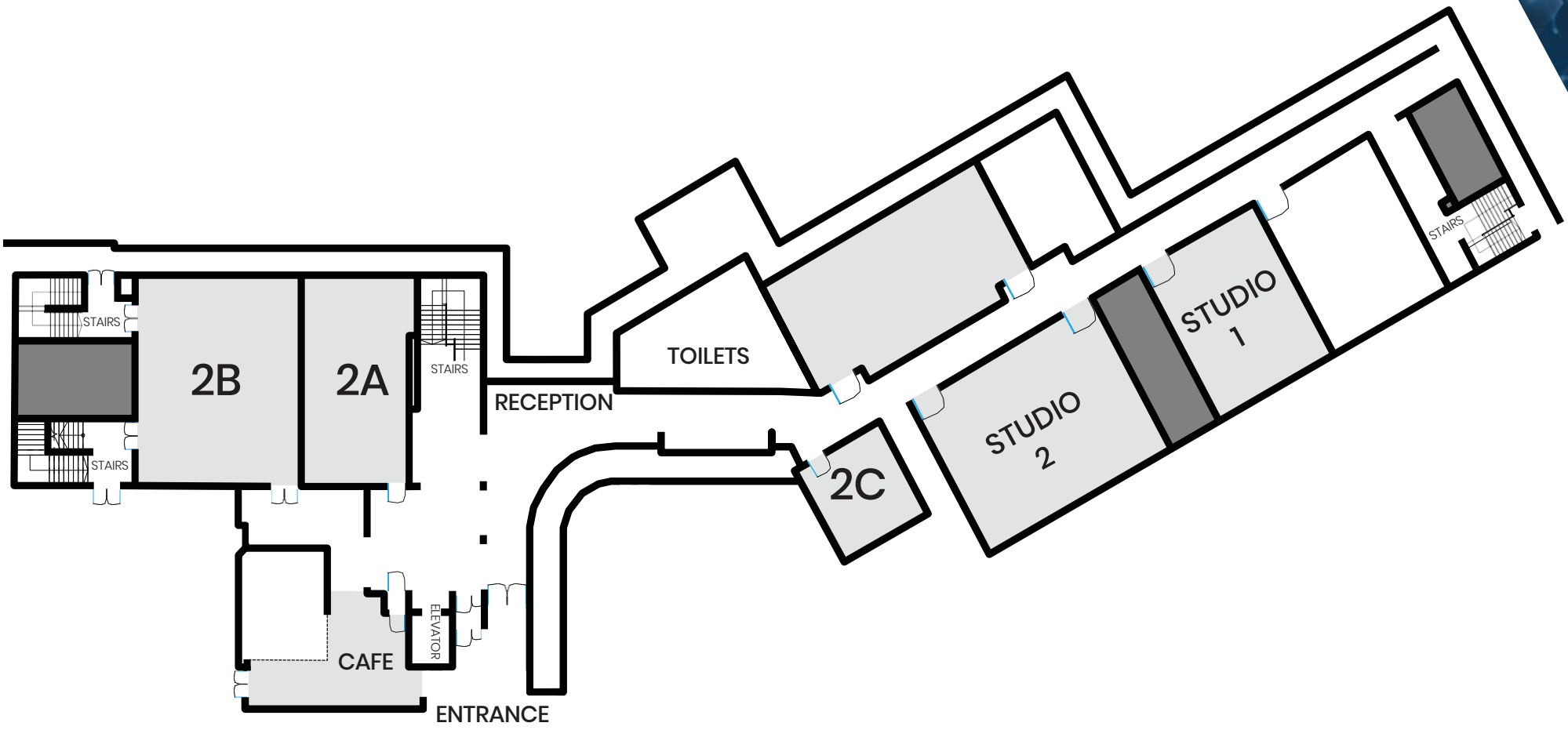
DAY 2 | WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2026 (continued)

CLOSING PLENARY: AUDITORIUM	
11:30 – 11:45	**Presentation of Open Textbook Award** Professor Brandon Collier-Reed, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Teaching & Learning
11:45 – 12:00	**Closing comments** Professor Brandon Collier-Reed, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Teaching & Learning
12:00 – 12:10	**Evaluation**
12:30 – 13:30	**Lunch**

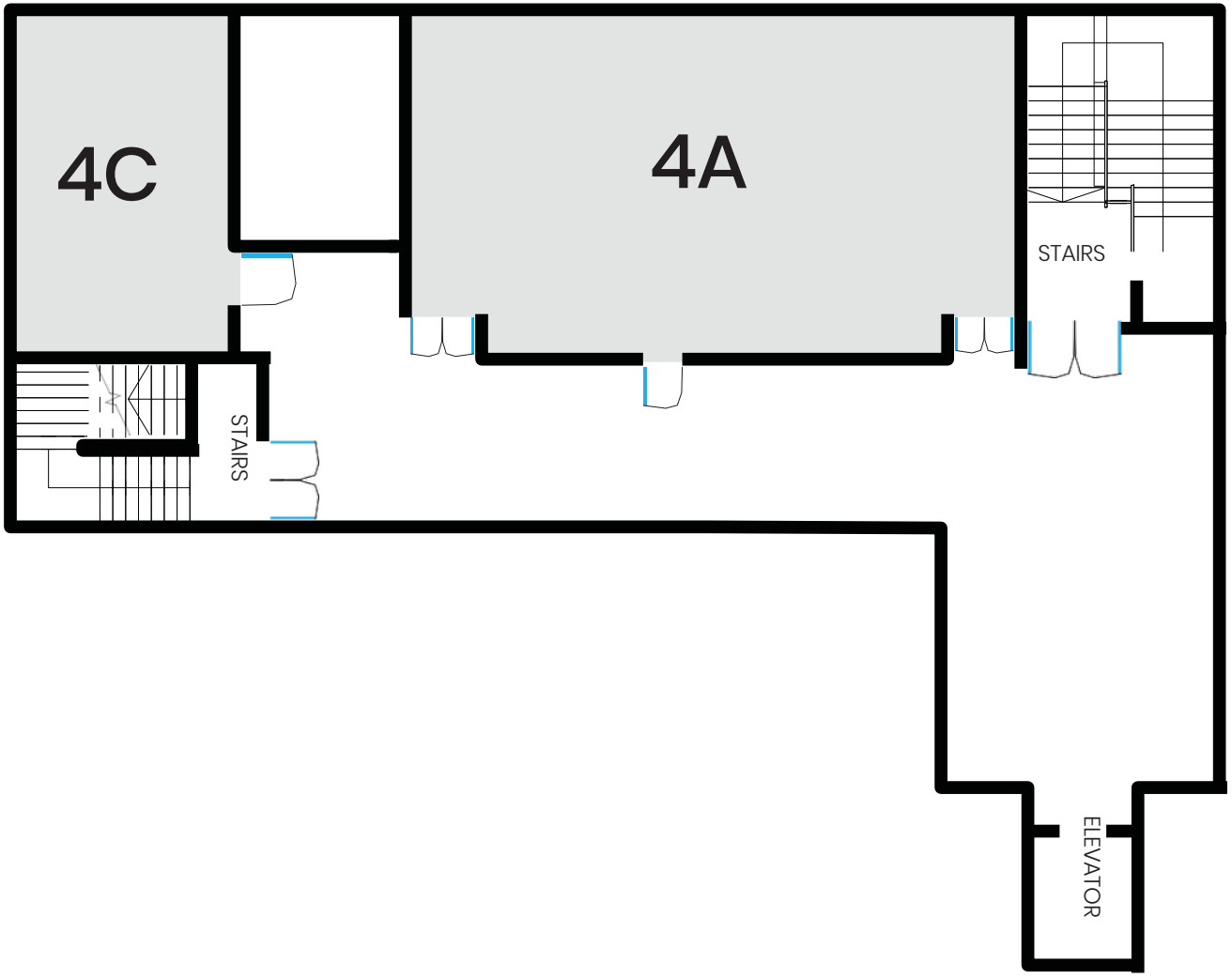
NEVILLE ALEXANDER BUILDING

GROUND FLOOR



NEVILLE ALEXANDER BUILDING

4TH FLOOR



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Thank You

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Keynotes

Keynote address: Assessment design for a time of artificial intelligence

Invited Keynote Speaker

Phillip Dawson

Professor Phillip (Phill) Dawson is a Research Professor in the Faculty of Education at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. He has worked in higher education learning and teaching for more than 20 years. Before joining Monash, he was at Deakin University's Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE), first as Associate Director and, from 2022, as Co-Director. CRADLE is regarded as the world's leading higher education assessment research group by publications and citations.

His research addresses two problems: how to help people make the most of feedback, and how to assess students when artificial intelligence can do so much of what universities have traditionally assessed. He has led an Australian Research Council project on students' feedback literacy, a longitudinal study that uses behaviour change techniques from the health and social sciences. He was one of the leads on Australia's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's (TEQSA) work on assessment reform for the age of AI, and has argued that universities should focus on whether assessments measure what they are meant to measure, rather than on cheating alone. His books include *Defending Assessment Security in a Digital World* (Routledge, 2021) and the co-edited *Re-imagining University Assessment in a Digital World* (Springer, 2020).

His work on assessment and AI, such as *Assessment Reform for the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (Lodge, Howard, Bearman, Dawson, et al., 2023) is highly cited, and he ranks among the leading researchers in higher education internationally. He contributes regularly to public debate. His work has been covered by the BBC, the Financial Times, Times Higher Education and ABC TV, and has been discussed in the Australian Parliament. He holds a PhD from the University of Wollongong.

Note that the keynote address will be livestreamed from Australia in the plenary session on Day 1 of the conference.

Keynote panel: What is the University for, in the era of AI?

Panelists:

Jonathan Shock is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics and the Interim Director of the UCT AI Initiative. He currently leads a number of largescale projects including the African Hub on AI Safety, Peace and Security, and the African Compute Initiative, and is particularly interested in how to mitigate the harmful effects of AI in both the research and the teaching and learning spaces.

Caitlin Ferreira is an Associate Professor in Marketing and the Modular MBA Programme Director at the Graduate School of Business. She is the recipient of the AMBA and BGA MBA Director of the Year Award 2026. Caitlin's research centres on responsible marketing, with a particular focus on the intersection of consumer behaviour and emerging technologies and their implications for sustainable business practices.

Tanja Bosch is Professor of Media Studies and Production in the Centre for Film and Media Studies, and SA-UK Bilateral NRF SARChI Chair in Digital Media Sociology. A NRF B-rated scholar, Tanja is the author of Social Media and Everyday Life in South Africa (Routledge, 2020) and Calibrated Intimacies: Algorithms, Emotion, and the Soft Power of Apps (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026), and co-editor of Digital Citizenship in Africa: Technologies of Agency and Repression (Zed Books, 2023) and Feminist Digital Citizenship in Africa (Bloomsbury, 2025). Tanja also chairs the African Digital Rights Network.

Ryan Nefdt is a Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, a Professorial Fellow at the University of Bristol, and a member of the Neuroscience Institute at UCT. He is an NRF P-rated researcher who works in the philosophy of language, linguistics, and AI. His books include The Philosophy of Linguistics (Cambridge 2025), Linguistic Relativity with Jeff Pelletier (Oxford 2025), The Philosophy of Theoretical Linguistics (Cambridge 2024) and Language, Science and Structure (Oxford 2023). He is trying to get into surfing.

Annette Hübschle is the Chief Research Officer and co-lead of the Global Risk Governance Programme in the Department of Public Law. Her work sits at the intersection of public law, criminology, and economic sociology, and she is known for developing harmscapes as a lens for analysing environmental and security harms across the Global South. Her current research advances AI harmscapes, and she leads the AI governance and community engagement streams of the IDRC-funded African Hub for AI Safety, Peace and Security at UCT.

Abstract for Keynote Panel:

Most of what is said about AI in teaching and learning is said about the present: what students are doing with these tools now, and what we should do about it. The panel asks about the next 3-5 years instead.

Many of the problems now attributed to AI were already there, and what it has mostly done is expose the gap between what we say we value in teaching and what our practices and assessments actually reward. But if these tools come to do most of what we currently train our

students to do, is critical thinking still ground we can hold? Employers are increasingly hiring for fluency with the tools. On Pnet's vacancy data, demand for ordinary roles that require AI tool proficiency grew 488% over six years and began to overtake demand for AI specialists in the first half of 2025. At Standard Bank, 72% of employees now actively use generative AI tools in their work. It is not obvious that the skills we prize most are the ones being rewarded, or that we defend them because they are defensible rather than simply because they have long defined academic expertise.

There is also the question of whose thinking a student is doing, whose knowledge is being reproduced and whose scholarship gets written out of the record. Some things do remain ours. Teaching still depends on intellectual encounter, dialogue and forms of judgement that emerge through engagement with other people, and research on situated inquiry, interpretation and accountable and responsible relationships with the communities that support, co-design and benefit from our research.

We must therefore ask what the role of UCT is in a future in which the conditions of teaching, learning and knowledge production are changing rapidly, and what responsibilities we should continue to claim.

Tuesday 17 November 2026

1: When AI can write the code: Rethinking assessment in Computer Science

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Michelle Kuttel

Generative AI can now produce plausible solutions to many conventional undergraduate programming assignments. This creates an immediate assessment problem, but it also raises a more fundamental disciplinary question: if AI can write the code, what should students learn—and what should we assess—in Computer Science?

This presentation offers a reflective teaching case study of two successive redesigns of a second-year Parallel and Concurrent Programming assignment in Computer Science at UCT. Parallel computing is a way of solving a problem by dividing it into smaller parts that can be worked on at the same time by multiple processors or CPU cores, rather than completing each part one after another. The aim is usually to reduce the total time required to solve the problem. In 2025, anticipating that AI could readily generate much of the required code, the assignment shifted emphasis from code production towards validation, profiling, benchmarking, interpretation, and explanation of when parallelisation was worthwhile.

Reflection on the assignment revealed both possibilities and limitations. AI enabled the development of a larger and more interesting problem, while the requirement for machine-specific performance results made it harder to generate an entirely credible submission without carrying out the work. However, fabricated results and superficial reports remained possible, evidence of actual execution was difficult to verify, and marking remained demanding.

In 2026, the assignment was redesigned, with greater emphasis placed on decisions that require disciplinary judgement: validating correctness, performance experiments, interpreting irregular results, and explaining the limitations of the solution.

The presentation considers what these two iterations suggest about Computer Science as a discipline and what it means to educate students in the field in the era of generative AI. Increasingly, the capabilities we need to develop include problem formulation, technical judgement, verification, experimental design, interpretation and, ultimately, accountability for the solution produced.

2: What remains ours: Legal reasoning, disciplinary identity, and the reconfigured classroom in the age of generative AI

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Sebastian Krafzik; Kea Motlogeloa

Generative AI unsettles a question legal education has rarely had to ask explicitly: what, precisely, does it mean to think like a lawyer, and can that capacity survive tools that can draft, summarise, and argue with fluency? This presentation takes up TLC2026's theme of reconfigured connection from within legal education specifically. The paper is conceptual: it develops a doctrinal and pedagogical argument, rather than reporting empirical data, and proposes a governance framework accordingly. We argue that the disciplinary identity of legal training, in particular close reading, doctrinal analysis, and the construction of argument from authority, is not incidental to what AI can replicate but is precisely the terrain now under pressure, and that institutional responses must be designed rather than improvised. We set out a governance framework built around three objectives: preserving academic integrity, protecting the development of rigorous legal reasoning, and cultivating AI literacy as a professional competency.

We then turn to what this reconfiguration means relationally and unevenly (a) for the educator, whose authority has traditionally rested on expertise now partially replicable by a tool; (b) for the student, negotiating agency and dependence in the same gesture, often with unequal access to the tools in question; and (c) for a discipline whose graduates must exercise professional judgment about technologies their own training did not fully anticipate, raising real questions of equity between students who arrive fluent in these tools and those who do not.

Rather than treating AI as an external disruption to be managed, we ask what its arrival reveals about what legal education was already for, and what, in the reconfigured classroom, a law school still owes its students that no tool can supply.

3: Generative AI's impact on executive functioning: A Cultural Historical Activity Theory inspired model of pedagogy for using GenAI as a cognitive tool

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Joanne Hardman

While there is a large body of knowledge about how GAI is used in higher educational settings, there is a general dearth of information on how GAI impacts on executive functioning (EF) in the brain. Executive functions, located in the frontal cortex of the brain, refer to things like planning, self-regulation, working memory, and sequencing, among other things and are only fully developed at around the age of 25 years. Students who present at university as undergraduates have not yet fully developed their executive functioning, requiring pedagogical input to do so. These functions are entirely social in aetiology with no innate basis. What this means is that these

functions, which are unique to humans, must be taught and cannot be empirically derived through experience.

Drawing on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a framework for studying pedagogy together with the work of Vygotsky and Hedegaard, this presentation argues for a pedagogical approach to GAI that views it as a cognitive tool, capable of impacting on the development of EF. CHAT situates individual human actions within the context of the activity in which they unfold, focusing on the mediating relationship between subject-tool-object, division of labour-community-object and community-rules- subject. Based in dialectical logic where teaching and learning are conceived of as two sides of a single coin, CHAT enables one to track power and control in teaching/learning through time.

The presentation begins by outlining what we know about GAI's impact on executive functioning, before moving on to describe a model of pedagogy that harnesses GAI as a cognitive tool. The model presented illustrates how one teaches from the abstract rather than from the concrete, illustrating how assessment is a tool for accessing students' knowledge base and for developing teaching strategies, in a context where GAI functions as a pedagogical tool. This requires suspending notions that currently underpin much Western education, such as the understanding that a student learns from the concrete to the abstract, as is often discussed in constructivist models of teaching/learning. The presentation proposes that the pedagogical model discussed can serve to develop EF using GAI as a developmental tool.

4: Negotiating digital sovereignty in South African higher education

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Janet Small; Jennifer Feldman

Our purpose is to draw attention to the often invisible, dynamic processes determining digital sovereignty which in real ways enable and constrain our teaching and learning ecosystem. Stepping back from the challenges of dealing with AI in the classroom, we pose broader questions about digitalisation, datafication and autonomy in the higher education sector in South Africa. Using the concept of digital sovereignty, we explore the ways in which our institutions' ability to negotiate digital services and infrastructure with commercial platforms and global technology providers is rooted in longstanding power inequities and contestations.

The concept of sovereignty allows us to reflect on the persistent struggles over who has the power to shape, govern and benefit in an increasingly inequitable digitally-mediated world, and to show how these negotiations percolate through the teaching and learning environment. Drawing on different but related critical perspectives from Hannah Arendt (focusing on authority and power), Nancy Fraser (boundary struggles) and Achille Mbembe (extractive capitalism), this presentation identifies multiple intersecting boundaries where contestation and negotiation about digital sovereignty happens.

We consider how decisions at national, institutional and individual levels percolate and impact on our educational practices – ranging from individual choice of digital tools through to institutional dependence on LMS and cloud vendors, to national digital policy such as POPIA. A question posed is whether our sector and institutions can exercise meaningful authority over the digital

platforms, software and knowledge infrastructure that we use. While it is tempting to consider these to be technical decisions, they are deeply political. Digital sovereignty is dynamic and contested, and unless there is a powerful collective voice for teaching and learning interests articulated by staff, students, researchers and professional support staff, we face the risk of simply (re)negotiating the terms of dependence.

*This work is based on an upcoming publication jointly authored by Jennifer Feldman, Paul Prinsloo, Janet Small and Laura Czerniewicz.

5: Panic Is not pedagogy: Moral panic, refusal and better questions about AI

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Tanja Bosch

Much of what circulates in universities as a critique of generative AI is not critique - it is moral panic, and conflating the two weakens the case for principled, situated refusal. This provocation focuses on that distinction. Read against Goode and Ben-Yehuda's criteria for identifying a moral panic, the academic reaction to AI carries the signature of panic rather than analysis. Its decisive test is disproportion, on which, Goode & Ben-Yehuda argue , the concept rests: alarm has run well ahead of any proportionate appraisal of harm, focusing on the student recast as ‘folk devil’ while the harder questions about teaching go unexamined. Panics are always about something else, and the present anxiety, voiced as fear of de-skilling, the death of the essay, and the erosion of what the conference’s call names as "distinctively ours," reads as displaced unease about the value of academic labour and the standing of the disciplines, when assessment was already in trouble well before 2023.

The panic also poses the wrong question. It asks how to stop students from cheating, directing institutional attention toward detection and surveillance. UCT’s decision to switch off Turnitin’s AI detection score is instructive, highlighting the limits of automated detection and the need to shift attention from policing authorship toward pedagogy, assessment and AI literacy. Detection-based approaches may also disproportionately disadvantage multilingual and second language writers. I propose a different starting point: how to teach and support learning well, how to cultivate critical AI literacies, and how to develop students’ capacity to interrogate the limits, labour and politics of these systems. Refusal then becomes a considered pedagogical stance and one strand of the critical literacy a university ought to foster.

6: Beyond western symbols: Reclaiming reflection through African artefacts in medical education

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Wild card

Johnathan Muller-Stuurman

Reflection is central to experiential learning and professional identity formation in medical education. Yet, it is often operationalised through written journals, structured templates, and linguistically demanding academic discourse rooted in Western traditions. In multilingual and culturally diverse contexts such as South Africa, these approaches may silence students,

constrain authentic meaning-making, or position reflection as performative compliance rather than genuine engagement. These challenges raise questions about whose voices are recognised, whose reflections are legitimised, and what constitutes "deep" learning within undergraduate clinical skills education.

This presentation explores how symbolic artefacts can function as an inclusive "reflective language," enabling students to be seen, heard, and understood within reflective teaching and learning practices while expanding what counts as legitimate reflection.

In a second-year MBChB Clinical Skills programme at the University of Cape Town, students engaged in artefact-based reflection following patient encounters. They created or brought symbolic artefacts—such as objects, drawings, metaphors, or culturally meaningful symbols—and presented them via group video submissions. Artefacts were discussed during facilitated in-class reflective sessions. Student narratives and recorded reflections were analysed using a phenomenographic approach to explore variation in how students experienced and expressed reflection through symbolic and artefact-based modalities.

Artefacts provided an alternative entry point into reflection, reducing reliance on Western academic expression and supporting culturally grounded storytelling. Students used symbolism to convey vulnerability, belonging, fear of failure, and emerging professional identity. Sharing artefacts fostered peer empathy, mutual recognition, and a more equitable reflective space. Overall, artefacts acted as reflective tools rather than illustrations, challenging dominant Western conventions and legitimising diverse ways of knowing.

Artefact-based reflection challenges dominant norms by legitimising diverse ways of meaning-making in undergraduate clinical skills education. It offers a practical, culturally responsive strategy for reimagining reflective pedagogy in the Global South—foregrounding voice, identity, and relational understanding.

7: A disciplinary-informed conceptualisation of staff AI literacies and the implications for critical approaches to AI in teaching and learning

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Lara Karassellos; Mishka Reddy; Janet Small; Mashudu Raudzingana

In this presentation, we share a conceptualisation of AI literacies as socially situated, discipline-embedded practices. We discuss findings from our Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) research project that set out to explore the impact of CILT's staff AI literacies support interventions. These interventions framed AI literacies as universal and transferable skills involving prompt engineering, knowledge of different tools, critical output evaluation, alongside a general set of ethical concerns. Our empirical data challenged this initial framing, however, and demonstrated how staff's perceptions, attitudes, and practices around AI in teaching and learning were interwoven with disciplinary understandings of knowledge, pedagogy, and assessment.

Drawing on semi-structured interviews with academic staff across the Faculties of Commerce, Science, Health Sciences, Humanities, and Engineering and the Built Environment, we explore

how staff's critical and ethical engagement with AI in their teaching and learning contexts is shaped by disciplinary considerations rather than being generic or broadly transferable. With these findings, we ask what the emergence of AI in education makes newly visible about valued disciplinary practices, and what an adequate conceptualisation of AI literacies must hold.

In an effort to advance the practical applications of this research, we are currently developing a framework that supports staff in thinking critically about the impact of AI in their disciplinary contexts. Rather than focusing on generic approaches to course or assessment redesign to address AI, for example, we ask staff to start by interrogating disciplinary literacies, valued forms of academic expression, meaningful student engagement, and valid disciplinary identities. We see this as an important exercise in shifting the focus from the technical to situated considerations that maintain focus on meaningful and transformative teaching and learning.

We hope that attendees walk away with a more nuanced conceptualisation of AI literacies, and the tools to further develop disciplinary-specific AI literacies practices.

8: A comparative analysis of human expert tutor evaluation of reflective essays to that of AI-enabled automated essay graders: A retrospective review

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Ntsiki Mapukata; Kulthum Fataar; Siwe Toto; Lunelle Pienaar; Frissiano Honwana

Globally, within the medical fraternity, mastering academic writing is a scholarly endeavor that undergraduate health sciences students must achieve during their training. Reflective writing has emerged as a critical pedagogical tool, bridging experiential learning with theoretical knowledge while fostering context-specific and transformative learning experiences. The demand for efficient grading of reflective essays, along with a growing interest in digitalization and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, offers opportunities for individualized learning experiences and the evolution of assessment strategies. This project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of AI-enabled essay graders in assessing previously evaluated reflective essays and to assess their performance in providing personalized feedback using course-validated marking rubrics, compared with human expert tutors.

Drawing from the Digital Education Council AI Literacy Framework, the project is a retrospective design and has obtained ethics approval. It uses a mixed-method design and employs secondary data from reflective essays submitted by first-year health sciences students that were previously graded during the 2024 academic year. We piloted three grading tools. The Brightspace-based grading solution was excluded due to exorbitant licensing costs, while Kangaroo.ai tended to inflate grades and was found to have inflexible settings for configuring the grading rubric. The EssayGrader AI's rubric functionality aligned more closely with the course rubric, and its grades and feedback showed greater internal consistency in the testing phase of 12 essays drawn from the 2023 cohort.

In conducting a comparative analysis, the 434 essays were uploaded in four batches, and comprehensive feedback was generated in less than an hour, including general feedback on the class's performance. We noted marked variability between the tool's scores and the human

markers in instances where the essays were prepared with input from AI generative tools. These were excluded from further analysis.

Incorporating AI-enabled essay graders is valuable for their efficiency in generating grades and feedback to students. However, human tutors who are familiar with the content being examined must monitor both the feedback and the language, thereby justifying a complementary process rather than a unilateral approach.

9: Students, cultural bias and AI: how fixing one bias installed another

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Jeffrey Bagraim

Large language models (LLMs) are trained mostly on English texts written in North America and Europe, and their responses reflect those societies' values. Evidence of this bias is largely computational. We know little about how our students notice it, or what correcting it may cost them. These questions matter in South Africa because many of our students draw on knowledge and experiences that the models rarely represent.

In my Industrial and Organisational Psychology Honours module on leading organisational change, students were encouraged to use public AI tools and a bespoke chatbot, Schein-bot, for their assignment. Schein-bot drew directly on the module's reading list. It aimed to anchor answers in the readings, give every student free, sanctioned access, and model legitimate AI use. Schein-bot was both a study aid and an object of critique.

After completing their assignment, students (N = 52) were asked to write a 500-word reflection about using AI for the assignment and whether cultural assumptions were embedded in AI responses. I analysed the reflections thematically (ethics clearance: COM02214/2025). The analysis yielded four themes. Students found bias in framing and tone rather than factual errors. Those who had added South African realities when engaging with the LLMs or chatbot felt their arguments improved. Schein-bot was perceived as less culturally biased, but as privileging one theoretical school of thought. Surprisingly, using LLMs and the chatbot was anxiety-provoking for most of the students.

The ethical consideration is that detecting bias falls to our students, who are rarely credited for it. And curating a chatbot to counter bias can inadvertently narrow the field for students. The presentation outlines proposed changes for the next cohort that colleagues in other disciplines can adapt and apply.

10: Lecturers' integration of GenAI into pedagogical practices for equitable and inclusive student learning support: A social justice perspective

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Ncediwe Mdlulwa; Mariam Jacobs-Basadien; Tabisa Mayisela

The rapid adoption of Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in higher education is reshaping how lecturers design teaching, engage students, and provide learning support. While GenAI tools may enable more personalised teaching and learning practices, including promoting equitable and inclusive student learning outcomes, its benefits are unlikely to be experienced equally. Unequal access to AI technologies, differences in AI literacy, socio-economic disparities, and algorithmic bias may shape who benefits from GenAI-supported pedagogy and who may be left behind. These concerns are particularly important in South African and broader Global South higher education contexts.

The study examines how higher education lecturers' adoption of GenAI shapes their pedagogical practices for equitable and inclusive provision of student learning support. The study is guided by Nancy Fraser's social justice framework, with the dimensions of (re)distribution, (mis)recognition, and (mis)representation to critically examine the implications of GenAI-supported pedagogy for equitable student learning support.

Relevant literature from January 2023-August 2026 was identified through systematic searches of research databases including Scopus, ScienceDirect, ERIC and other scholarly sources. The findings highlight how lecturers integrate GenAI into teaching and student support, the pedagogical opportunities associated with these practices, and the equity and inclusion challenges that emerge.

The study aims to move the discussion beyond whether GenAI improves teaching towards the more critical question: for whom (representation), under what conditions (redistribution and recognition), and with what consequences do these benefits occur? Attendees will encounter a social justice-informed framework for thinking about GenAI-supported pedagogy and practical considerations for designing teaching practices to support student learning that is inclusive and responsive to diverse student needs.

11: Confident enough to engage; sceptical enough to scrutinise: Supervised co-production in AI-supported teaching practice

Show and tell stand up presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Paula Saner

This presentation reflects on the challenges of redesigning existing online course content in the context of generative AI, asking how educators can engage AI tools productively while remaining accountable for the integrity and quality of their work. Drawing on the redesign of online Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) modules, the presentation situates this work not as content creation from scratch, but as a process of updating, aligning and re-presenting

established material. While a substantial content refresh had already been planned in response to new policy developments and emerging topics, engagement around accessibility requirements created an opportunity to fundamentally reconsider how that content was organised, presented and experienced by learners.

A central dimension of this redesign was the transformation of existing self-paced online courses from a narrated, slide-based format into a more accessible learning environment designed around scroll-based content, improved navigation, and compatibility with accessibility technologies. AI tools played a key role in mediating this transition, supporting navigation of unfamiliar domains (such as accessibility), enabling engagement with new platforms, and redistributing labour to create space for higher-order pedagogical decisions. At the same time, their use introduced tensions around epistemic authority, dependency and the subtle shaping of pedagogical choices.

The presentation adopts a reflective, narrative approach to examine how these tensions were managed in practice. Copilot was engaged as a 'collaborator', whose work required close scrutiny, where outputs were iteratively evaluated, accepted, refined or rejected through professional judgement grounded in subject matter expertise. This produced a mode of practice characterised by being confident enough to engage with the tool, while remaining sceptical enough to scrutinise its contributions.

Rather than resolving these tensions, the paper contributes a situated account of supervised co-production in AI-supported curriculum redesign as a form of responsible and reflective practice, offering personal insights into how educators might engage AI as a supportive mechanism while maintaining responsibility, reflexivity and disciplinary integrity.

12: Whose idea was it? AI, assessment, and the collapse of verifiable authorship

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Jordan Willis (student presenter)

Writing assessment has long assumed a recoverable line between what a student contributes and what a tool or collaborator contributes. Generative AI does not just blur this line — it makes it structurally impossible to draw, even when students act with complete honesty. Current responses, including AI-use declarations and permission scales, treat this as a problem of enforcement: get students to comply with clear rules, and validity is protected. This talk argues there is a second, deeper problem that rule-based approaches don't touch: after repeated iterative exchange with AI, there is often no clean fact of the matter about who originated a given idea — not to an assessor, and not always to the person who wrote it. This is not a compliance failure fixable with better rules. It is a structural feature of how iterative AI use works.

This talk takes its own development as its case study. Shaped through extended, iterative exchange with an AI system, its arguments cannot be cleanly divided into "the presenter's" and "the AI's" contributions — not evasively, but as a matter of fact. This is offered not as confession

but demonstration: if the very talk being delivered resists this division, so, more quietly, does the written work assessed in classrooms everywhere.

This reframes assessment's central connection — between what a student thinks and what an educator can verify — as something to be built into how students demonstrate reasoning, not read off a finished text. Attendees will leave with a sharper way to evaluate their own AI-use policies: a working distinction between rules asking students to behave a certain way, and structures that don't depend on students' honesty to remain valid.

13: Closing the feedback desert in an extended curriculum Engineering physics course: Multimodal agentic AI feedback on handwritten tutorial problem sets

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Moses Basitere; Moeketsi Mosia; Jason Minnie (student)

Large-enrolment science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses in the Global South operate within an uneven educational landscape in which access to timely, individualised formative feedback is often constrained. High student-to-assessor ratios, limited teaching capacity and handwritten submission formats that resist conventional automation create a structural condition where feedback is not merely delayed or inadequate but may be entirely absent. This condition is conceptualised as a “feedback desert”. It is especially consequential in extended curriculum programmes, where students require sustained feedback to strengthen conceptual understanding and disciplinary problem-solving.

Using Design Science Research, this study developed and evaluated a multimodal agentic artificial intelligence system that analyses photographs of handwritten Engineering Physics tutorial problem sets, diagnoses errors and generates individualised formative feedback. The system was applied to 148 photographs of handwritten submissions from an extended curriculum Engineering Physics course at a South African university. Errors were examined through inductive thematic analysis to develop a taxonomy. A purposively selected subsample of 20 submissions was subsequently coded using Hattie and Timperley’s four-level feedback model and Sadler’s three conditions for effective feedback.

Five error categories comprising 15 error types were identified. A cross-cutting pattern of “correct answer, wrong understanding” appeared across several topics, demonstrating that numerical correctness does not necessarily indicate sound conceptual understanding. In the coded subsample, process-level feedback dominated (55%), followed by self-regulation feedback (25%) and task-level feedback (20%). Self-level feedback was absent.

The findings demonstrate that multimodal agentic AI can interpret handwritten engineering problem-solving and generate feedback aligned with established feedback theories. The study positions AI as a potentially equity-oriented intervention for extending access to formative feedback in resource-constrained STEM contexts. However, whether students read, understand, trust and act on this feedback remains the focus of a necessary follow-up reception study.

Attendees will leave with a practical, theory-informed framework for piloting multimodal agentic AI feedback on handwritten problem-solving tasks in their own STEM courses, including guidance on error classification, feedback design and responsible implementation.

14: Beyond digital skills: preparing Health Sciences students for learning and practice in the age of AI

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Gregory Doyle; Farzanah Samuels; Bronwynn Williams; Lunelle Pienaar

Generative artificial intelligence has intensified debate about the capabilities students need to participate meaningfully in higher education and prepare for professional practice. Yet this conversation can too easily narrow "digital readiness" to competence with new tools. The Faculty of Health Sciences Digital Literacy Programme at the University of Cape Town takes a broader view, developing interrelated competencies in information and quantitative literacy, digital communication and collaboration, creativity, productivity, responsible use of technology and AI awareness. This work-in-progress presentation draws on an ongoing study of first-year students' experiences of the programme to consider what preparation for learning and practice in the age of AI requires beyond technical skills.

The study uses a multiphase mixed-methods design, combining anonymous end-of-semester questionnaires with focus group discussions. The presentation does not introduce a new research question; instead, it applies an AI-era lens to selected preliminary findings from the approved study, including:

- students' views of the programme's usefulness, relevance, and accessibility;
- elements they identify as supporting their academic work; and
- the contextual factors that facilitate or hinder their engagement.

The session will consider how student accounts can inform a broader conception of readiness that connects digital capability with critical judgement, ethical participation, academic literacies and future professional practice. It will also examine the risk that expanding AI expectations may reinforce uneven starting points if curriculum design assumes prior exposure. Or treats access as equivalent to capability.

Participants will leave with a better understanding of digital and AI literacy provision, and the tools for interogating whose existing capabilities are assumed, how learning is connected to disciplinary purposes, and the support that enables students to develop agency rather than simply comply with new technological expectations.

15: The responsibility paradox: Who is responsible for the production of bullshit by large language models?

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Imaad Abrahams (student presenter)

This presentation aims to critically evaluate the claim that ChatGPT is bullshit* (Hicks, Humphries & Slater, 2024). It will argue that there is a critical misunderstanding of where the agency of bullshitting lies, and this is crucial for informing a philosophically rich policy response to the issues that arise regarding AI in tertiary education. This understanding of bullshitting and responsibility will allow academics and students to understand their own agency in the use of AI. Thus, escaping the paradox. It is important to note that I use the claim "ChatGPT is bullshit" formulated by Hicks, Humphries and Slater (2024) to build my core argument, but the argument is applicable to all generative AI that use Large Language Models (LLMs).

Firstly, I will examine the appropriateness of the label of "bullshit" regarding Frankfurt's (1986) criteria. I will argue that the claim is largely correct, however the focus is mainly on the users as the bullshitters while the LLMs act only as bullshit machines. I will present an argument that demonstrates a much more fitting level of responsibility regarding bullshit to all parties involved: from the developers to the end users. This will be done through a self-produced paradox: the Responsibility Paradox, to aid in grounding a philosophically informed policy response. Secondly, I will explore the policy implications of the diagnosis that the paper produces. If ChatGPT is really a bullshit machine, then what consequences follow for legal regulation and its interaction with it by users? In this presentation I will argue that the current regulatory frameworks, such as the University of Cape Town Framework for AI in Education (2025) and the South Africa National AI Policy Framework (2024) address only surface-level issues of AI problems. Therefore, reframing it using bullshit and the responsibility paradox will assist in being able to address the issue to a much further extent - particularly in the university context where students and academics tend to use LLMs.

Finally, I will outline the limitations of the responses produced within this paper and where further enquiry might be beneficial to be explored. This perspective provides key insights to crafting policy in addressing the relationship that students and academics have with generative AI.

*By bullshit I refer to a Frankfurtian understanding of bullshit where the speaker has an indifference to truth but is interested in convincing the audience of their claim whether it is true or false (Frankfurt, 1986)

16: Generative AI and Open Education: Tensions and possibilities

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Bianca Masuku ; Glenda Cox

The current trajectory of big tech, proprietary AI threatens to widen educational divides rather than narrow them. The financial and environmental costs of commercial AI tools, their dependence on expensive computing infrastructure, and their development primarily for affluent markets all risk

leaving behind precisely the communities that could benefit most from its incorporation as an educational technology. In addition to this, the black box nature of generative AI models results in a lack of transparency where it is unclear who should be attributed and referenced. Data for model training of GenAI is scraped from the internet with a mix of copywritten and openly licensed materials. This results in tensions with the principles of Open Education that are built on attribution, reciprocity, and trust.

Creative Commons has built 25 years of content based on the principles of author attribution. This is under threat and Creative Commons is thinking of ways to tackle author's rights. Examples of academic fracking have shocked authors where publishers are giving their author's copywritten materials away to AI big tech. Only if we commit to developing AI systems that embody openness - as digital public goods, transparency in their structures and functioning, and collaborative governance structures – can we mitigate this imbalance.

This presentation will explore the current conversations and research about the relationship between GenAI and Open Education. Open Education principles and objectives are suggested as a framing to guide the ethical use of GenAI.

Drawing from UCT's history of Open Education initiatives since 2007, we will reflect on projects like the Digital Open Textbooks for Development (DOT4D) initiative at CILT and the Open Textbook Awards as useful examples of open practice within the institution.

The presentation will show how the discussions around the relationship between Open Education and GenAI are necessary as we continue to promote the use of Open Educational Resources at UCT.

17: Design and development of virtual 'interactive selector' Chemistry practicals to enhance undergraduate student engagement

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Roxanne Mohunlal

This presentation explores student learning and focuses on the design and development of interactive 'storytelling-type' virtual pre-practical video resources for undergraduate chemistry students using digital software and AI in an innovative way. The idea is that as the students work through each video, they are presented with concept checks and different outcomes- based on their choice- it will either allow them to continue their learning adventure or end their attempt thereby prompting them to start over. This kind of interaction creates the opportunity for students to think about the experimental steps in a logical manner instead of merely following a recipe as well as building their understanding between theoretical and experimental concepts. By having these in place, students will need to work through this prior to attending their laboratory sessions, making them better prepared, which in turn creates a safer working environment. This also allows all students an equal opportunity to prepare, enhance knowledge and build confidence irrespective of their educational background.

Chemistry is a hands-on field of study where students physically perform experiments and work with different instruments and techniques. The focus of the practical component of first-year chemistry courses is to teach foundational laboratory skills which students further build on as they progress in their degree. The first-year chemistry student cohort comprises students from

diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds which influence their ability to learn, understand and adapt when at university. The reality is that for most students, this is the first time that they are in a laboratory with everything new from the environment and language to experimental concepts, glassware, and so on.

There are several commercially available subscription-based laboratory simulation software packages available which are expensive and have limited language options. This project addresses this gap by bringing together academic and PASS staff and postgraduate students to co-create contextually relevant practical resources that also address language barriers within the South African higher education context. These interactive videos have been developed in English, IsiXhosa and Afrikaans in alignment with the UCT Language Policy that promotes multilingualism. Overall, this new and innovative approach allows us to enhance student engagement, encourages inclusivity and create connections with purpose.

18: The curriculum in the prompt: What students' generative AI practices reveal

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Jaisubash Jayakumar

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is becoming part of how students learn, yet institutional responses often centre on academic integrity, risk and regulation. This proposal asks a different question: what can students' everyday use of GenAI teach us about learning and curriculum? Drawing on preclinical medical education at the University of Cape Town (UCT), this proposal uses students' AI practices as a window into how contemporary learners navigate complexity, uncertainty and the demands of professional education.

A pilot study of Year 2 and Year 3 medical students examined students' open-ended accounts of how and why they use GenAI for learning. An inductive reflexive thematic analysis identified GenAI as a cognitive translator of complex medical knowledge, personalised tutor, assessment rehearsal tool, cognitive-load manager and bridge between fragmented content and integrated understanding. Differences between cohorts were also evident: Year 2 students primarily used GenAI to simplify, clarify and summarise biomedical concepts, whereas Year 3 students more often used it interactively to generate questions, identify knowledge gaps, refine explanations, obtain feedback and connect knowledge to clinical application. Although the cross-sectional design cannot establish developmental progression, the findings suggest a possible movement from AI-assisted comprehension towards AI-assisted metacognitive learning.

Rather than asking whether students should use AI, the session invites educators to ask why they need it. Students' AI practices can function as curriculum intelligence, revealing where learners experience gaps in explanation, feedback, scaffolding, integration or opportunities for active learning. Participants will leave with a practical way of reading AI use as evidence about their own curricula and a reframed question for curriculum conversations: What are students using AI to do that our educational environments could be doing better or differently? It invites cross-disciplinary dialogue about student agency, human connection, curriculum purpose and the evolving role of educators when students can access personalised learning support.

19: Adopt, build, critique: Introduction to literacies in Commerce and the business world in the age of AI

Panel | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Daniel Munene; Aditi Hunma; Lucille Roberts; Mark Jackson

Reimagining higher education in the age of AI is still intricately linked to considerations around social redress in higher education in the South African context, and the present-day challenges facing the African continent. This panel brings together colleagues from the Academic Development Programme and the Hasso Plattner D-School Afrika to reflect on the conceptualisation of a new Commerce course DOC1104F/S 'Introduction to literacies in commerce and the business world' in the age of AI. The design of this course is informed by research around gaps and needs identified by academics across disciplines in Commerce and ADP. These revolve around fostering academic and quantitative literacies that would prepare students for the demands of their Commerce degree. The design must also take cognisance of the challenges of the current context in terms of high unemployment rates, but also opportunities such the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the necessity for an entrepreneurial mindset and the productive use of generative AI for an enriching teaching and learning experience.

The course therefore has both a developmental approach to foster independent thinkers through a hands-on, customised programme designed in collaboration with the D-School, and a literacies component that requires students to apply quantitative concepts to particular Africa-centred case studies, where students adopt a particular country as their 'case'. The role of AI here operates on two levels. Firstly, the design of the case studies activity will be AI-assisted, through building an AI tool that engages students with the intricacies of their adopted case from a quantitative perspective. Secondly, in line with evolving graduate attributes, notably the need to cultivate critical AI literacy, students' research on their adopted case will require them to analyse and critique AI-generated outputs for omissions, hallucinations or biases.

Since the course is currently in its ideation phase, the panel would welcome reflections and suggestions from the audience through a dialogical and interactive presentation format.

20: Evaluating AI Use in Engineering education

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Kyle Abrahams; Marijke Fagan-Endres; Terry-Ann Franklin

Generative AI is now used by engineering students for activities ranging from brainstorming and language editing to coding, analysis and content generation. However, assessment policies often represent this use through a single permission level, which may not capture the multiple ways AI is used within one assignment.

This presentation reports on an ongoing study of generative AI use in undergraduate engineering education at UCT. The study analyses de-identified course marks, assignment instructions, AI-use declarations and supporting appendices. It examines the prevalence and purposes of declared AI use, student compliance with assessment requirements, relationships between declared use and academic performance, and the clarity and consistency of current assessment practices.

The presentation will consider whether existing level-based approaches adequately represent students' actual practices and whether more differentiated, category-based declarations could improve transparency. Attention will be paid to the relationship between the educational significance of AI use, the disciplinary context, and the learning outcomes being assessed. Rather than classifying activities such as language editing, coding, analysis, or content generation as inherently limited or substantive, the study will examine the extent to which AI supports, contributes to, or undertakes the intellectual work that students are expected to demonstrate.

The findings aim to support a more proportionate approach to AI disclosure: one that makes student judgement and disciplinary reasoning visible without turning declarations into a burdensome surveillance exercise. The presentation will conclude with practical recommendations for designing AI declarations and assessment guidance that can be adapted across disciplines.

21. Assessing the assessments: Educators' perspectives on assessment validity in online postgraduate education in the era of generative AI

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Nabila Youssouf

Assessment plays a central role in higher education, shaping how student learning is evaluated and influencing approaches to teaching. In online postgraduate education, the widespread availability of generative artificial intelligence (AI) raises questions about whether existing assessment strategies continue to provide valid evidence of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes.

Educators occupy a particularly important position within this debate, translating learning outcomes into teaching and assessment practices and making judgements about the evidence students produce. Yet their perspectives on whether existing assessments remain valid and fit for purpose warrant greater attention. This study explores educators' perspectives on the validity and pedagogical impact of the assessment strategy used within an online postgraduate module in infectious diseases.

Drawing on constructive alignment and assessment validity, the study examines educators' perceptions of alignment between intended learning outcomes and assessment, the validity of assessment as a measure of student learning, and the influence of generative AI on these judgements. A mixed-methods case study design will employ a survey distributed to 200 educators over a 2-week period, alongside semi-structured interviews with a target sample of 12 educators directly involved in the module. The researcher is an educator on the module under investigation, and this insider positionality will be critically considered throughout the research process. Data collection is scheduled for completion by the end of October 2026.

By foregrounding educator perspectives, the study aims to generate practice-informed evidence to support assessment review and redesign within contemporary online postgraduate education.

22: Teaching with AI, teaching against AI, teaching through AI: Innovations, interventions and provocations from Science

'Tag-team' presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Spencer Wheaton; Will Horowitz, Tom Leadbeater, Kevin Barends and Lucia Marchetti

Generative AI is rapidly becoming part of the educational landscape, but its implications for university teaching and learning remain contested. Within the Faculty of Science at UCT, academics are responding in markedly different ways: some are experimenting enthusiastically with AI to develop teaching materials, generate examples and questions, support feedback, and reshape curricula; others are redesigning assessment to maintain academic integrity and foreground forms of learning that are difficult to outsource to AI; while others remain sceptical, concerned that AI may undermine critical thinking, student engagement, disciplinary learning, or the relational dimensions of education. Some also raise broader ethical and environmental questions about the costs of increasingly intensive AI use.

This tag-team presentation brings together a range of voices from across the Science disciplines to explore these divergent responses. Rather than presenting a single position on AI in education, the session will showcase practical innovations and interventions alongside critical perspectives and principled objections. Contributors will reflect on what they have tried, what they have learned, what has worked—or failed to work—and how their approaches have affected teaching practice, assessment design and expectations of students.

Themes will include using AI to enhance the development and presentation of teaching materials; adapting assessment in response to widespread student access to AI; developing students' capacity for critical and responsible AI use; making AI use visible through declarations or reflective activities; and deciding when AI should, or should not, be part of the learning process.

By bringing together experimentation, adaptation, scepticism and dissent, the presentation aims to provoke discussion rather than prescribe solutions, offering a snapshot of how Science academics are navigating—and contesting—the emerging AI landscape.

23: Students imagining Open Education in an AI-enabled world

Panel | Student Agency and Voice

Dylan Gandiwa, Lucky Geluk, Sphesihle Mchunu, Nico Pampier and Glenda Cox

In this panel, UCT students will reflect on some of their experiences in the Unitwin Network in Open Education (UNOE) fellowship project. This fellowship project was created to promote open education and grow student agency and voice, and is built around UNESCO Chairs committed to the field of open education. It is a global network with partners in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Supported by a small grant from the Hewlett foundation, this 'student fellowship' aims to build a global community of students from different countries who are given the opportunity to engage in

discussions and propose imaginaries related to the future of advanced technologies in education and the role of “open” in higher education.

The aim is to enable students to research the role that open education principles and frameworks to both challenge the closed, Global north-biased, generative AI models (GenAI), but also to explore the possibilities of GenAI to produce open materials to increase access to education.

During the course of the panel, students will reflect critically on different aspects of this fellowship including lessons from workshops with experts; research on different AI and open access policies, and experiences of a global webinar titled “Fair and Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Assessment.”

This fellowship project and the varied experiences shared by students will enlighten participants about the importance of fostering a new generation of critical thinkers committed to openness, collaboration, and diverse world knowledges, while embedding student fellowships and mentoring into UNESCO processes.

24: Preparing students to use AI responsibly and effectively in CV development

Show & Tell / Stand-Up Presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Safia Lagerdien

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly changing how students prepare for employment, with generative AI tools increasingly being used to draft CVs, cover letters and professional profiles. While these technologies can help students articulate their experiences more effectively, they also raise important questions about authenticity, self-representation and the skills graduates need to navigate an AI-mediated world. The challenge for career educators is not whether students should use AI, but how they can use it responsibly and strategically.

This show-and-tell session shares how UCT Career Development Consultants are preparing students to engage critically and effectively with AI during the career preparation process. Drawing on workshops, consultations and employability programmes delivered across the university, the session will demonstrate practical approaches used to help students leverage AI tools to improve their CVs while maintaining accuracy, personal voice and professional integrity.

The presentation will showcase examples of how students are taught to use AI for brainstorming achievement statements, tailoring CVs to specific opportunities, identifying skills gaps and enhancing personal branding. Attention will be given to the role of prompt design, critical evaluation of AI-generated content and the importance of ensuring that submitted applications remain authentic representations of students' experiences and capabilities.

Rather than positioning AI as a replacement for career development support, the session explores how AI can become a collaborative partner in students' employability journeys. It highlights the evolving role of career practitioners in helping students develop the critical digital literacy skills required to work alongside AI technologies in academic and professional contexts.

Attendees will leave with practical strategies, examples and resources that they can adapt in their own teaching, advising or student support contexts. The session contributes to broader

discussions about preparing graduates to use AI thoughtfully, ethically and effectively in an increasingly technology-/ AI-enabled workplace.

25. From prompt to purpose: how exploring AI became a student-led career guidance venture

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Nadia Waggie; Sonwabise Gcolotela

Artificial Intelligence is often discussed in higher education as a challenge to teaching, learning and assessment. Less attention is given to how students themselves are engaging with AI as a learning partner, a problem-solving tool and a catalyst for innovation. This show-and-tell session shares the story of a UCT student entrepreneur and the development of Guideian, an AI-powered career guidance platform designed to help young South Africans navigate career choices and assess their job readiness.

Rather than presenting AI as a finished solution, the session traces a learning journey. Sonwabise will demonstrate how curiosity about emerging AI tools led him to experiment with prompt engineering, labour market intelligence, career development concepts and entrepreneurial thinking. Through a series of practical examples, he will show how AI became a partner in learning, helping him test ideas, identify opportunities, and ultimately develop a business concept that addresses a real societal need.

The session will include a live demonstration of Guideian and reflections on the opportunities and tensions of learning with AI. Particular attention will be given to questions of student agency: how students can move beyond being passive users of AI to becoming creators, innovators and problem-solvers. The presentation will also explore how universities can support students in developing the skills needed to work alongside AI while remaining grounded in human judgement, creativity, and purpose.

Attendees will leave with a practical example of student-led AI innovation, insights into how AI can support entrepreneurial learning, and ideas for creating learning environments that encourage experimentation, agency and real-world application. The session contributes to ongoing conversations about the future role of universities in preparing graduates for an AI-mediated world.

26. Teaching AI with AI

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Jan Buys

Large Language Model-based AI agents are increasingly capable of generating teaching materials including lecture slides, assignment briefs, tutorials and test questions with various levels of autonomy. At the same time, students are using AI systems as a tool to support their learning, as well as to assist them, to varying degrees, in completing assignments. The potential for the use (or abuse) of AI in teaching and learning of Computer Science (CS) and AI is particularly large, in part due to the focus of AI developers in improving the coding (programming) abilities of AI systems as well as their interest in using AI models in AI research and development.

In this presentation, I will reflect on some of the successes and limitations of using AI systems to develop or improve teaching materials in Computer Science and AI courses, as well as the challenges in dealing with practical programming assignments that can now easily be completed by an AI agent. This will prompt some discussion on what it means to educate students into a discipline that is foundational to the development of AI but where many of the core skills can already be performed with AI.

27. The preparedness of Accounting students for fraud risk reasoning

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Wild card

Navitha Sewpersadh; Lindela Malambe

This presentation examines how professionally accredited accounting programmes prepare students to reason through fraud-relevant audit concerns, and how assessment shapes whether that reasoning becomes visible. The study is motivated by a curriculum problem: fraud-related content may be present across auditing, ethics, governance, risk and case-based teaching, yet students may not be required to demonstrate how they would recognise and respond to a fraud-relevant concern within the bounded role of statutory audit.

Drawing on a qualitative curriculum case in a South African accredited accounting programme, the study uses interviews with thirteen academics from the focal programme and two contrastive expert informants from programmes with forensic-specific provision. The analysis examines how participants understood fraud-related coverage, assessed application, the audit–forensic boundary, curriculum feasibility and the respective responsibilities of universities and employers in developing professional capability.

The findings show that fraud-related coverage was not absent. Students encountered relevant concepts through professional scepticism, ethics, governance, audit risk and applied case material. However, this coverage did not consistently require assessed work in which students demonstrated the reasoning process expected in entry-level audit work. The central gap was therefore not content absence but limited assessed application. Technical knowledge and professional scepticism were important foundations, but they did not, by themselves, establish entry-level fraud risk reasoning.

The presentation contributes a curriculum-and-assessment mechanism: entry-level fraud risk reasoning becomes visible and assessable when professionally accredited accounting programmes require assessed tasks that make students' reasoning process visible within statutory audit scope. This shifts the curriculum question from whether fraud is covered to whether students must demonstrate how they identify a fraud-relevant concern, connect it to an audit response, evaluate evidence or contradiction, and justify a conclusion or further work. The contribution is bounded to curriculum enactment and assessment design, not specialist forensic competence or workplace performance.

28. Negotiating innovation, efficiency, and integrity: Postgraduate students' experiences of AI use in research and academic writing

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Emily Mashonganyika (student presenter); Benedict Lateane

This presentation reports on an ongoing qualitative research study that is currently undergoing ethics review at the University of Cape Town. It seeks to understand how students use AI, how they define originality, authorship and accountability when using AI, and how they define their role as researchers when AI forms part of the research process. Drawing on Sociotechnical Systems Theory and the concept of researcher identity, the study explores how AI influences students' views of intellectual contribution, scholarly responsibility and knowledge production. The study adopts an interpretivist qualitative approach and proposes the use of semi-structured interviews with Master's and doctoral students who use AI in their research and academic writing. Interview data will be analysed thematically using NVivo. The study is informed by the view that AI use in postgraduate research raises questions about researcher identity, intellectual contribution and the role of AI in knowledge production. The boundaries between human and technological contributions therefore become very important. As postgraduate students integrate AI into brainstorming, idea development, meaning-making and academic writing, they remain responsible for the research they produce. These practices may influence how students think about their work, reflect on their research and understand their agency as researchers. The presentation will outline the rationale, theoretical framing and methodological design of the study, while stimulating discussion on originality, authorship, accountability and researcher identity in AI-mediated research environments. The findings are expected to contribute to discussions on researcher identity, research integrity and responsible AI use in higher education. The study may also provide guidance for universities seeking to support ethical and responsible AI use in postgraduate research.

29. Classroom attendance: There's an app for that, but so what? Ezcheck.Me, student context, and academic performance

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Wild card

Carren Duffy; Jeffrey J Bagraim

Students can watch the recording, read the AI summary, and pass the course without ever sitting in the room. Attendance can no longer be read as a proxy for engagement, motivation, or learning. Yet across the higher education literature it remains one of the more reliable predictors of academic performance. That tension is what prompted our study. This session has three parts:

We show EZCheck.me, the off-the-shelf attendance app we now run in most of our undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the Section of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. A rotating QR code goes up on the lecture screen; students scan it, and the register writes itself. Setup takes minutes and costs very little.

We tell what we have learned from using it: what the attendance data looks like, how students responded to being counted, where the app frustrates us, and why taking attendance is fun (at least for a while).

Then we ask, and this is the part we want most from the session. Our study hopes to move past the attendance-and-marks correlation to what sits behind it: NBT scores, school quintile, financial aid and residence status, and student self-reports of self-efficacy, motivation, and effort regulation. The design is still open. What are we missing? What enables or constrains a student's presence in class? When is an empty seat disengagement, and when is it a student learning well somewhere else?

You will leave the session knowing how to set up an attendance system in your own courses and with a lot of questions about what it all means.

30. Learning through encounter: Art in public university spaces as a catalyst for connection and interdisciplinary learning

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Relationships and the Relational

Nadja Daehnke; Portia Malatjie

As higher education reimagines teaching and learning in the age of artificial intelligence (AI), the value of embodied, situated, and affective learning experiences becomes increasingly significant. This presentation explores how the display of artworks in public university spaces can create opportunities for object-based, interdisciplinary, and adjacent learning within and beyond the formal classroom. It focuses on the use of artworks from the University of Cape Town (UCT) Works of Art Collection

Drawing on examples from collaborations between the UCT Works of Art Collection and various academic and administrative departments, the presentation demonstrates how encounters with artworks in corridors, libraries, foyers, and other shared spaces can encourage curiosity, reflection, dialogue, and connection across disciplines. These encounters invite students and staff to engage with complex social, historical, cultural, and political questions through direct engagement with material objects and their emotional and sensory impact.

The presentation argues that while AI expands access to information and enables new forms of knowledge production, physical artworks offer distinctive opportunities for learning through presence, affect, materiality, and shared experience. Artworks in teaching and learning environments can foster interdisciplinary thinking by creating unexpected connections between people, places, ideas, and fields of knowledge. In this way, public art displays contribute to more connected, reflective, and inclusive learning environments within the contemporary university.

Finally, the presentation seeks to inspire participants to explore how public art might be incorporated into their own teaching and learning contexts. It will also provide an opportunity for discussion and feedback, inviting participants to share existing examples of art- and object-based learning within their curricula, or to identify opportunities for integrating such approaches into future teaching practices.

31. Comazi: A student-centred approach to generative AI in higher education

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Relationships and the Relational

Electra Zoumboulis; Jacqueline Kew; Anthony Rogers; Chris Guattari-Stafford

Research indicates that while AI-assisted tools can provide immediate support to students, open access to generated answers may reduce opportunities for students to solidify foundational knowledge and engage critically with key concepts, altering the relationship between students and the knowledge itself. The use of AI tools can also introduce a new dynamic into the relationship between educators and students, where AI-assisted tools could replace spaces traditionally occupied by interactions with the educator. Comazi, an AI-assisted Q&A tool externally developed in partnership with UCT, was implemented within first year Financial Accounting and Reporting courses at UCT in 2026 in response to these challenges.

Comazi allows educators to upload tutorials and past papers. Students pin questions to relevant sections and, prior to receiving an AI-generated response, work through multiple-choice questions intended to guide their thinking, so that when a response is provided, students have already had an opportunity to engage with the material. The AI-generated response is presented as unverified and is formulated using only the course endorsed materials, with educator's having the option to adjust or verify the response. Students have the option to formulate questions in English, isiXhosa, isiZulu or Afrikaans, with a translation confirmation stage designed to preserve the meaning of their question. Comazi was developed with ease of access being paramount and offers the ability to access the platform cost-free via a computer or smartphone and uses limited data, creating an equitable use of AI.

The first semester pilot and a broader second semester implementation provided an opportunity to iteratively refine the tool. This presentation will examine the evolution of Comazi and student interaction with the tool, including an analysis of the perceptions of its usefulness, its contribution to the learning experience, and whether it allowed for new dimensions of the educator-student relationship to develop. The student voice relating to non-usage will also be explored. AI, with well-considered guardrails, could therefore be positioned as a supplementary tool to strengthen student agency.

Day 2: Wednesday 18 November 2026

32. From opacity to legibility: A human-centered approach to AI and institutional navigation

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Lukho Nqose (student presenter)

Students do not encounter the university only through teaching, assessment and academic content. They also encounter progression rules, prerequisites, concessions, appeals, registration requirements, DP/DPR processes and changing curriculum regulations. These systems may be publicly documented, yet students often experience them only when a decision has already affected them. The issue is therefore not simply whether policy is available, but whether institutional reasoning is intelligible to the people governed by it.

This presentation introduces an exploratory project that began as a curriculum reasoning prototype and has developed into an Institutional Reasoning Engine. The project asks whether technology can help institutions explain how their own approved policies apply to an individual student without changing policy, replacing professional judgment, or delegating institutional authority to artificial intelligence.

The prototype represents policy as reviewed, versioned and deterministic rules. It distinguishes source evidence, proposed claims and accepted institutional facts; connects an explanation to the exact policy release used; and presents incomplete or provisional information as provisional rather than as a final adverse outcome. AI is deliberately bounded to assist with tasks such as document transcription, extraction and explanation. It does not make institutional decisions.

The presentation is informed by preliminary scoping conversations and reflective experience in student governance, not by completed empirical findings. It will outline a future research agenda examining whether greater institutional legibility can strengthen student agency, support earlier and more responsible engagement with university processes, and improve the quality of conversations between students and advisors.

Rather than asking whether AI can make better university decisions, this project asks: how might institutions become more understandable while remaining fair, accountable and institutionally authoritative?

33. What happens when students design the future of AI in learning management systems?

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Folasade Adedeji

As universities explore the integration of AI into Learning Management Systems (LMSs), an important question remains: what happens when students are invited to participate in designing these future learning environments instead of simply using them? This presentation shares preliminary findings from an ongoing participatory design study exploring how university students experience and envision AI integration within LMS environments. While AI promises new possibilities for personalised learning, feedback, support, and engagement, discussions about AI-enabled LMSs often focus on technological capabilities, with limited attention to students' experiences and expectations. This is particularly important in African higher education contexts, where local realities may shape how AI is experienced and understood.

Conducted at a South African university, the study engages undergraduate and postgraduate students from diverse disciplines through participatory focus groups that combine discussion and collaborative design activities. The research explores students' current AI practices, their expectations of future AI-supported LMSs, and their views on issues such as trust, transparency, learner autonomy, and responsible AI use. The study examines how connections between learners, AI, and institutional learning platforms might be reimagined by positioning students as contributors to educational technology.

The presentation will highlight emerging themes from the data and introduce student-centered design principles emerging from students' perspectives to guide the development of future AI-enabled learning environments. Attendees will gain insights into students' experiences, expectations, and priorities regarding AI integration in LMSs. In doing so, the presentation contributes to reimagining teaching and learning with AI by exploring how student voices can help shape more contextually grounded and responsible AI integration.

34. The intelligence of art vs artificial intelligence

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Aika Swai

The rapid proliferation of AI has shifted the difference between human intelligence and artificial intelligence into focus by asking what it is about the human being that AI cannot replicate or substitute. Positioning Harry Garuba as a key thinker towards the preservation of critical thinking within the Humanities, this paper interrogates the potential with which Garuba's ideas exercise a certain kind of integrity towards the art of intelligence and the intelligence of art when contextualized by AI. Although Garuba articulated his stance towards a 'critical Humanities' well before AI irreversibly reshaped the educational climate and landscape at the University of Cape Town, I detect a perennial urgency in the way Garuba calls for a re-ordering of knowledge about the human condition and a need to innovate a re-application of theories that speak to animist

consciousness, the representation thereof as well as the decoding of its representation as human practices embedded in critical thinking, which is fundamentally critical to the Humanities. In his seminal article "Explorations in Animist Materialism" (2003), Garuba calls for the development of a close reading method that appreciates and validates animist consciousness. Garuba looks at animist thought as something that spiritualizes the material world and animist realism as a representational practice that does epistemic justice to animistic modes of thought. What makes the article so curricular and visionary is the way Garuba models what such close reading entails, followed by an invitation to consider other writers in the same light. This paper proposes ideas for course design and instructional practice that amplify the value of closely reading for animist consciousness as a form of art intelligence. Through this deliberate word play, I define art intelligence as a type of critical thinking capable of recognizing animist consciousness not only as representational practice, but also as a profoundly human praxis that refurbishes the ethical sovereignty of being a human *being*. I argue that because of AI proliferation, there is a new premium on this sovereignty.

35. Can AI hear African learners? Exploring linguistic equity in AI-supported French pronunciation learning among Shona-speaking university students in Zimbabwe

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Mzite Gondayi

The rapid emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping teaching and learning in higher education. In foreign language education, AI-supported technologies increasingly offer opportunities for personalised speaking practice, automated speech recognition, immediate feedback, and learning beyond the classroom. Pronunciation learning is particularly relevant, as speech-enabled AI technologies can listen to learners' speech, compare it with target-language models, and provide feedback. Yet an important question remains insufficiently explored: how do these technologies respond to learners whose linguistic backgrounds differ from those predominantly represented in their development and training?

The presentation explores this question through the experiences of Shona-speaking university students learning French as a foreign language in Zimbabwe. Drawing on a technology-enhanced study of pronunciation remediation, it examines the potential of AI-supported tools to support French pronunciation learning while addressing difficulties associated with cross-linguistic influence. It pays particular attention to pronunciation features that challenge Shona-speaking learners, including French nasal vowels, front rounded vowels, and semi-vowels, as well as difficulties arising from differences between French orthography and pronunciation.

The presentation argues that the educational value of AI-supported pronunciation technologies cannot be separated from learners' linguistic and sociocultural contexts. While AI can expand opportunities for pronunciation practice and strengthen learner autonomy, access to technology alone does not ensure linguistic equity. An equitable approach requires consideration of whose speech is recognised, whose pronunciation difficulties are understood, what forms of feedback are generated, and whether AI-supported learning accommodates diverse phonological backgrounds.

By centring Shona-speaking learners, this presentation contributes to African perspectives on debates about AI and higher education. It moves beyond asking whether African students have access to AI to pose a more fundamental question: Does AI hear, understand, and support African learners in linguistically meaningful ways?

36. Trans(c)ending the university through artificial professors in your pocket

Show and Tell | The Future of the University

Phadi Mabe

For two centuries the university has been a testing centre disguised as a sanctuary: scarce books gathered into libraries, scarce experts into faculties, students examined to prove that scarce knowledge had migrated from page to brain. Generative AI ends the rarity. The artificial professor is already in the student's pocket, patient, tireless, endlessly available, and soon trained on individual academics, their cadences and arguments, producing something closer to a human clone than a study aid. We may be occupying some of the last classrooms built on the premise that a human must teach another human what they already know.

I call this the extinction of (not) knowing: not the death of intelligence, but of retrievable knowledge as currency, an atomic bomb of accessible information for which there are not enough brains left standing. Perhaps it is also the extinction of not knowing, and of the innocent bliss ignorance once permitted. Either way, the question shifts from what students need to know towards what remains worth knowing when anything can be known on demand.

I propose the Trans(c)ending University as response. If information was the old university's commodity, data is the new gold, and the campus becomes the mine. Libraries become data banks, holding oral testimony, spatial measurement, indigenous knowledge, community memory, precisely what remains ungathered and therefore untouchable by any model. South African universities, marginal to the archive AI was trained on, sit on this rush's richest, least-mined seams.

The classroom at UCT could potentially become a community in which knowledge and learning are restored as a social event. The thesis framed is that in a post AI world we don't sell knowledge anymore but we offer experiences of knowing for all citizens through artificial professors in everyone's pocket.

37. Experiential design practices in Landscape Architectural education

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Wildcard

Christine Price

In this show-and-tell, I will share three characteristics of design research and practice, as well as examples of how I scaffold its use in my teaching and assessment practices. I will show how desktop-based understandings shift when students engage through:

- Creative, intuitive design and representational practices
- Embodied, sensory and emotional engagement with place

- Active co-research processes

Design research makes use of creativity to unlock ways of knowing that other forms of inquiry may not achieve. One aspect of these ways of knowing is making and representational practices. While "design" can sometimes be product-focused, design research is process-driven and creates opportunities for the transformation of knowledge through the act of making. Lastly, the literal landscape in which we apply and explore design research becomes a site of human and more-than-human knowledges. The landscape is more than a place for memory, but landscape as memory that calls for engagement through embodied, intuitive, interpretive and emotional experiences.

The key takeaway of this presentation is how to students for independent design research masters by recognising them as active makers: creative, embodied re-presenters of knowledge.

38. Optimising student course evaluations: a holistic strategy for higher response rates

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Bruce Kloot

Student course evaluations are vital for quality assurance in teaching and learning. Not only do robust evaluations help lecturers identify gaps and modify their practice, they shift the focus from what is taught to how it is received from a critical stakeholder – they give students a voice.

However, low participation rates limit the value of course evaluations. While literature establishes that a 60–70% response rate is required to draw meaningful conclusions (Gauer et al., 2025), only 10% of EBE undergraduate course evaluations currently meet this threshold. To bridge this gap, we designed a holistic strategy – called Teaching Assessment System for Improved Responses (TASIR) – aiming for response rates of 80% or above. This strategy relies on four pillars:

- A streamlined instrument: a survey of just four questions, tightly focused on teaching and learning.
- Micro incentives: an automated extra-credit micro incentive (ECMI) of 0.25–0.50% for students completing the survey (Sundstrom et al., 2016).
- Professional framing: the survey is framed by the principals of professional practice to promote constructive, confidential student input (Gauer et al., 2025).
- AI-powered qualitative analysis: the strategy harnesses AI tools in Amathuba's Explorance Blue to provide targeted data.

A small pilot project produced a 79% response rate and generated 27 pages of rich student data, capturing the depth of a traditional survey that is far longer and more tedious for students to complete. AI tools were efficiently leveraged to synthesise these data into concise, actionable feedback. Following this, an expanded, cross-faculty pilot is being launched in the second semester of 2026.

The TASIR strategy has the potential to address the persistent and university-wide problem of low course evaluation response rates. Using a streamlined, robust survey instrument and leaning on

AI-powered qualitative tools, students get to provide meaningful input for improved teaching and learning.

39. Using an AI marking tool for integrated case study assessments in a large, postgraduate Accounting programme

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Taryn Miller

The purpose of this session is to share our experience of utilising an AI marking tool for the first time in 2026 in a large postgraduate accounting short course called the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) Professional Programme. This programme prepares approximately 1 500 aspiring Chartered Accountants ahead of their final qualifying exam. Aligned with the qualifying exam, we utilise integrated case study assessments that evaluate professional competencies across a range of accounting sub-disciplines.

Large classes pose specific risks to sustainability and excellence due to the burden of developing and accurately assessing learning outcomes. This burden is exacerbated in competency-based courses, where passing requires meeting specific combinations of skills rather than achieving a fixed 50% score. AI grading can mitigate some of these risks through its efficiency and consistency. However, existing literature questions AI's ability to accurately grade complex, largely narrative assessments. Furthermore, there is limited guidance on managing the transition to AI marking.

Previously, over 100 human markers evaluated candidates and provided detailed feedback, highlighting competencies achieved, strengths, weaknesses, and improvement strategies. From 2024 to early 2026, we partnered with a Cape Town-based EdTech firm to develop an AI marking tool. In 2026, we deployed this tool across five different case study assessments.

The session aims to share the phases of human involvement incorporated into the AI marking process, the multiple supplementary actions taken to ensure responsible roll-out, our view on grading accuracy, including an example of the feedback generated, our strategy to redeploy human markers as coaches/mentors, and examples of how we engaged with candidates throughout. Together, these learnings provide a framework of relevant considerations for colleagues considering similar AI grading strategies.

40. The prosthetic returns: AI, colonial technologies, and the reconfiguration of critical thought in higher education

Show and tell / stand up presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Sibusiso Mnyanda; Athi Ruga

This presentation draws on the history of the Lovedale Press (1823–1890) as a colonial prosthetic—a material and administrative apparatus designed to produce governable colonial subjects through the standardisation of language, the training of African intermediaries, and the control of knowledge production. Yet the Press also became an incubator of African intellectual renaissance, producing intellectuals who repurposed its technologies for liberation. This paper

argues that artificial intelligence in higher education functions as a contemporary colonial prosthetic: a technology that threatens to diminish critical thinking and intellectual autonomy while simultaneously offering possibilities for epistemic reconfiguration.

Drawing on Emma Park's concept of infrastructural attachments, Ann Laura Stoler's archival theory, and Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, the paper proposes that the paradox of AI: its capacity to both constrain and enable intellectual liberation; can be navigated through pedagogical strategies that treat AI not as a substitute for intellectual labour but as material for critical interrogation. The paper offers a framework for reimagining teaching and learning with AI that centres epistemic justice, critical AI literacy, and the repurposing of algorithmic tools for decolonial knowledge production.

Just as African intellectuals at Lovedale turned the missionary press into a platform for self-representation, contemporary educators and students can reconfigure AI from an instrument of cognitive surrender into a prosthetic for critical thought.

41. AI is learning to read your students' emotions. Are we ready for what that means?

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Relationships and the Relational

Nina Breitenbach (student presenter); Shameemah Abrahams; Jaisubash Jayakumar

Across medicine and nursing education, a quiet shift is underway. AI systems are being built to detect students' stress, frustration, or engagement, through facial expressions, physiological signals, or the language they use. This happens during simulations, virtual patient encounters, and clinical training. The promise is compelling: training environments that respond to how a learner feels, not just what they know. But as these tools edge closer to real classrooms, a critical question is being left behind. What does it mean for a machine to read a student's emotional state, and who is asking whether it should?

This presentation presents findings from a completed scoping review of the international literature on AI-based emotion detection in medical and nursing education, mapping how these technologies are being used or proposed, and what ethical scrutiny, if any, has accompanied them. The evidence reveals a field still finding its feet: most systems can detect a student's emotional state, but few are built to meaningfully respond to it. Additionally, ethical consideration, of surveillance, consent, bias, and the shifting nature of trust between student and educator, is strikingly absent from the reports.

Attendees will leave with a clear, evidence-based picture of where emotional-AI in health sciences education currently stands, and a set of critical questions to bring into their own practice. What changes in the student-educator relationship when a machine is doing the noticing, and how should ethical reflection catch up before adoption outpaces it?

This presentation speaks directly to Critical and Ethical Perspectives, surfacing a significant gap in ethical scrutiny ahead of deployment, and to Relationships and the Relational, questioning what emotion-sensing technology does to trust, disclosure, and the human dynamics at the heart of teaching.

42. Preserving indigenous games through artificial intelligence: A chatbot for teaching and learning in Africa

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Dick Ng'ambi

This presentation introduces the Open Educational Resource of Indigenous Games in Africa (OERiGA) Chatbot, an AI-powered conversational agent built to help teachers and learners discover, understand, and integrate indigenous African games into classroom teaching. The chatbot has been trained using a curated repository of indigenous games from 12 African countries and aligned with the South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Users can engage with the chatbot to discover games relevant to specific subjects, grades, and learning outcomes, thereby enabling the meaningful incorporation of indigenous knowledge into formal education. In higher education, the indigenous games have potential to serve as pedagogical tools for foundational knowledge acquisition, such as logical thinking, algorithmic thinking, computational reasoning, and problem-solving skills which are critical to pursue careers in engineering, and computer sciences. Through this approach, indigenous games become not only objects of preservation but also active pedagogical tools for twenty-first-century learning environments.

The Open Educational Resource of Indigenous Games in Africa (OERiGA) project was established to document, preserve, and promote indigenous games across the African continent. A key innovation emerging from the project is the OERiGA Indigenous Games Chatbot, an artificial intelligence-powered conversational agent designed to serve as an expert resource on indigenous games. This presentation will introduce the OERiGA project, outline its goals and methodology, and showcase the digital artefacts developed to support the preservation and educational use of indigenous games. The presentation will conclude with a brief introduction to the book, *Play to Learn: A Guide to Indigenous Games in Africa*, which integrates the OERiGA Chatbot to provide readers with an interactive and dynamic learning experience.

This session will be useful for anyone interested in developing a customised chatbot for either a course or project.

43. Evaluating AI-assisted feedback in an undergraduate Human Biology course

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Paul Steyn

How can educators retain the pedagogical value of open-ended assessment when growing student numbers and increasing academic workloads make detailed marking and individualized feedback increasingly difficult? This project explored the use of a general, publicly available GenAI model (Microsoft Copilot) to support the marking and formative feedback of written assessments in a second-year undergraduate Human Biology course at the University of Cape Town.

Experienced Human Physiology lecturers developed assessment questions and model answers aligned with course content and intended learning outcomes. AI was then used to evaluate

students' open-ended responses against lecturer-developed criteria and generate individualized formative feedback informed by each student's answer. AI-generated marks were compared with independent human marking to examine accuracy and consistency, while students and staff evaluated the perceived fairness, appropriateness and educational value of the AI-supported approach.

Importantly, the project moved beyond the question of whether AI can replicate a human-assigned mark. It investigated whether AI-assisted assessment could reduce the workload associated with open-ended questions sufficiently to make richer forms of assessment more sustainable, while simultaneously providing students with timely and individualized feedback. The project also explored a less readily quantifiable issue: how does introducing AI into the feedback process affect the student–educator relationship when a traditionally human interaction becomes partially mediated by technology?

Examples of student responses, AI- and human-assigned marks, and AI-generated feedback will illustrate both the potential and limitations of the approach. The session will invite participants to critically consider where AI can add value to assessment, where human academic judgement remains essential, and how AI might be incorporated without diminishing the relational and pedagogical dimensions of feedback. The ethical implications of anonymity as well as data privacy will also be discussed in the session.

The work was made possible by the UCT AI innovation grant and has shed light on the practical framework for evaluating AI-assisted assessment across five dimensions: marking accuracy, feedback quality, fairness, workload reduction, and human academic oversight.

44. AI Chemistry mentor: designing a multilingual, Socratic tutor for first-year Chemistry

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Gerhard Venter; Francois Majola

Generative AI can answer many undergraduate chemistry questions quickly and convincingly. That creates an opportunity for student support, but also a teaching problem: if an AI system simply gives students the answer, it may bypass rather than support learning.

This presentation introduces AI Chemistry Mentor, a multilingual tutoring tool developed for first-year chemistry at UCT. The project was supported by the UCT AI Innovation Grant 2025. It explored whether a general-purpose large language model could be constrained to behave more like a tutor than an answer engine. Its central design feature is a dynamic system prompt that encourages short, Socratic exchanges, asks one guiding question at a time, adapts the level of scaffolding, and avoids complete worked solutions or final numerical answers. The system also supports English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, using translation tools and curated chemistry terminology to improve accessibility.

A small pilot provided practical experience in designing, deploying and evaluating a discipline-specific AI tutor. It highlighted the difficulty of preserving technical chemistry terminology across languages, the importance of constraining AI behaviour explicitly, and the need to distinguish

between what a system is designed to do and what has actually been demonstrated in student use. The experience also highlighted the importance of adapting a general-purpose AI system to the particular content, terminology and teaching approach of the discipline in which it is used.

Rather than presenting AI Chemistry Mentor as a finished solution, this talk will share it as a practical teaching innovation and reflect on what was learned from building and piloting it. The aim is to offer colleagues a concise example of how generative AI can be shaped to support disciplinary learning without simply replacing student thinking.

45. AI-generated podcasts to support undergraduate Surgical learning

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Daniel Nel; Aliya Bhorat (student presenter)

Undergraduate surgical education is cognitively demanding, particularly in resource-constrained settings where learning materials and limited faculty time may contribute to cognitive overload and reduced preparedness. AI-generated podcasts offer a flexible, low-cost learning resource, but their use across an undergraduate surgical curriculum has not been evaluated in South Africa.

A mixed-methods study was conducted among fifth-year UCT medical students completing an 8-week General Surgery rotation in May-June 2026. Fifty faculty-verified, AI-generated podcasts (NotebookLM) derived from the UCT General Surgery textbook were available during the rotation. Student experiences were evaluated using a validated survey. Focus groups with purposively sampled students explored experiences and perceptions in depth, with the data analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Twenty-four of 45 eligible students completed the survey (53% response rate), of whom 21 had used the podcasts. The platform recorded 2,900 downloads, 80% from mobile devices. Among podcast users, 81% considered the episode length appropriate and most listened at home (86%), while commuting (53%), or before teaching (71%) and clinical encounters (57%). Most found the podcasts accessible (95%) and aligned with the textbook (86%); 81% reported improved understanding of core surgical concepts, 71% felt less overwhelmed by reading requirements, and 67% reported improved retention of surgical concepts.

Four themes emerged: (1) trust was grounded in the locally developed source material and faculty review rather than the AI itself; (2) podcasts provided an initial conceptual framework that made textbook content more digestible and less overwhelming; (3) they improved preparedness, confidence, and participation in clinical learning; and (4) they offered a convenient alternative to reading and encouraged broader use of podcast-based learning.

AI-generated, faculty-verified podcasts provided an accessible and trusted adjunct to undergraduate surgical learning, helping students structure complex content, reduce perceived cognitive burden, and engage more confidently in clinical learning.

46. “Touching grass” – Experiential learning as a counter to hegemonic encounters with Artificial Intelligence

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Wild card

Nancy Odendaal; Alicia Fortuin

The notion of ‘touching grass’ evolved as a reaction to the ubiquity of digital media and dominance of screens. In an era characterized by artificial intelligence, curated content, and pervasive commentary, it is tempting to allow external sources to shape our perspectives. However, cultivating independent thought is both more challenging and ultimately more rewarding. This capacity for critical thinking develops through attentive observation, engagement of the senses, and the accumulation of personal experience. In the discipline of Urban Studies, an emphasis on an embedded Southern perspective runs counter to a full embrace of digitation and automation of city processes. Whilst Artificial Intelligence (AI) has profound implications for the city, we nevertheless argue that recognition of technology innovation, especially with regards to infrastructure, needs to go hand in hand with an experiential approach to understanding the city.

This presentation reflects on a postgraduate student project at the African Centre for Cities that has been running for two years. Postgraduate students from a diverse array of geographic and socio-cultural backgrounds used embodiment practices to interrogate the city’s colonial history and contested claims to legacy and space. As part of this research studio, participants were required to swim and walk across nine coastal sites, engage with multiple local actors, produce a podcast using the sonic and visual material gathered, and, finally, prepare counter maps of the areas they focused on. They were encouraged to engage in technology and infrastructure as part of a socio-technical process, where human agency and technological power are in conversation with one another.

The aim of this presentation is to examine the extent to which such embodied approaches can contribute to new spatialities, and how experiential learning can shift perspectives on the urban. The exercise is intentionally visceral and situated. We make the pedagogical argument that ‘touching grass’ is essential to holistic learning that engages students corporeally, emotionally and intellectually in an embedded and deeply contextualised way. We further argue that in the age of AI, such encounters will not necessarily be a counter, but a reminder of the value of experiential learning given algorithmic tendencies. Furthermore, we conclude that such an approach could enable graduates to engage AI more meaningfully and granularly in relation to everyday encounters in the city.

47. Reconfiguring AI for student learning: Strengthening student thinking in the context of quantitative Finance

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | The Future of the University

Freddy Dipudi (PhD student submission)

As generative AI becomes embedded in students’ study practices, the challenge for universities is shifting from whether students should use AI to how it can be intentionally designed to enhance learning without replacing the intellectual work students need to do. This is particularly important

in quantitative finance, where learning requires mathematical reasoning, conceptual understanding, coding proficiency and independent problem-solving.

The QuantMethods-GPT is a course-tuned AI Study Companion developed for the MCom in Risk Management of Financial Markets at UCT. The companion supports students with explanations, mathematical derivations, coding, practice and test and exam preparation. Rather than functioning simply as an answer generator, it is designed to make reasoning visible and support independent learning. Academic-integrity guardrails further constrain its role in assessed work by providing guidance, hints and validation rather than completing assessments.

We demonstrate the Study Companion and share evidence from its use by MCom students. Feedback from 22 students shows encouraging learning utility: 81.8% found it useful for tutorials, 86.4% reported that it supported their work with mathematical derivations and units, and 77.3% valued it for independent practice and test/exam preparation. Furthermore, 77.3% wanted an AI Study Companion available across their courses. However, students continued to use public AI platforms, while only 45.5% reported that the companion improved the questions they asked lecturers or tutors.

These findings highlight both the potential and the limits of institutionally designed AI. The presentation considers how AI can be reconfigured from an answer-generating tool into a learning companion that complements human teaching, supports productive struggle and strengthens student agency, reasoning and disciplinary thinking.

48. Designing assessments for AI marking: Experiences in Accounting

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Ilse Lubbe; Magon Gajewski; Jacqueline Dean

The focus of this presentation is to share our experiences with assessment design requirements, challenges, and workflows that support reliable and pedagogically sound AI-assisted marking. This presentation follows on from our project work on the design and development of AI marking of accounting assessments.

Recent advances in AI have created new opportunities for supporting assessment processes in higher education. Previous presentations about this project (e.g. at UCT's AI in Education Community of Practice) have primarily focused on evaluating the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated marking relative to human markers, with less attention given to the assessment design considerations required for effective AI-assisted marking. Building on our earlier work confirming the accuracy of digitalisation and AI marking of accounting scripts, this presentation explores the challenges, workflows, and principles for integrating AI into the design, development, and marking of accounting assessments.

Using a design-based reflective approach, this study analyses our experiences of testing AI marking in accounting education. It focuses on the practical requirements for effective implementation, including assessment design, rubric development, pre-planning, educator oversight, and anticipating varied student interpretations. We will share how discipline-specific factors, assessment objectives, and contextual considerations influence AI marking outcomes,

and discuss how content, context, and assessment objectives shape the level of alignment between assessment design and AI evaluation processes.

The findings propose a set of principles for designing assessments that are suitable for AI-assisted marking while maintaining academic standards and pedagogical integrity. These principles emphasise the importance of transparent assessment criteria, structured rubrics, careful question design, ongoing educator involvement, and iterative refinement of marking workflows. By shifting the focus from AI marking accuracy to the broader assessment ecosystem, the study provides practical guidance for integrating AI into assessment practices.

49. Making AI work for you: Calibrating a personalised AI collaborator and protecting agency in and out of academia

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Alden Clapper

As generative AI expands across higher education, guidance often emphasises baseline AI literacy and operational mechanics (e.g. how to prompt) over genuine pedagogical fluency (how to think with it). Aligned with the theme of co-creation and collaboration, this show-and-tell demonstrates how educators and students can transform generative tools from automated shortcuts into disciplined, calibrated thinking partners.

Replacing passive input with deliberate engagement, the presentation illustrates how lecturers can establish and communicate a discipline's non-negotiable core competencies from day one, while identifying intentional opportunities for AI augmentation. Rather than relying on rigid formulas, the session unpacks how to configure personalised persistent collaborator profiles—giving your AI a permanent set of ground rules—and operational guardrails that actively safeguard critical thinking.

Drawing on real-world examples of interrogating outputs, the presentation highlights how critical discernment allows users to challenge and refine AI-generated outputs and suggestions rather than accepting them at face value. Attendees will observe how clear ethical boundaries empower students to maintain intellectual ownership and transparency in their work. Additionally, attendees walk away with a practical framework for ethical AI partnership, and access to a downloadable AI fluency starter pack featuring ready-to-use calibration frameworks applicable in and beyond the classroom.

50. AI in Mathematics: A cautionary tale about alignment

Show & tell / stand up presentation | Critical and Ethical Perspectives

Monos Naidoo

The full impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is yet to be seen. AI is set to introduce a golden age of knowledge, extending our boundaries of scientific knowledge and capabilities. However, this will only be if our society anticipates, prepares and transforms to meet the new era. If not, then contradictions in the terrain of education and society, in general, will only be exacerbated. Positive outcomes must be juxtaposed against the possible dangers this technology poses for humanity.

Its impact is already being felt in the education and research sectors. With regard to teaching and learning, I will mention e-learning software incorporating AI, such as SOWISO ('Software Wiskunde for Onderwys'), which was developed in conjunction with the University of Amsterdam. The software identifies students' misconceptions and calculation errors as they work through a problem, and is able to guide them accordingly. It has been used by UNISA (since 2024) and by TUT (where I introduced SOWISO in my lecturing from 2009 - 2019) for their first and second year mathematics students, with students responding very positively to its use.

In mathematical research, groundbreaking work has been done, which would have been otherwise impossible without AI. A recent example which will be discussed is the proposed solution of the Navier-Stokes Equation by AI agents (the computing cost of which is estimated to be equivalent to $15 million dollars). Twenty-seven Fields' medalists (winners of mathematics' equivalent of the Nobel prize), including the well-known Terrence Tao, released a cautionary declaration in September 2026, entitled "The Severe Misalignment of AI in Mathematics."

I will explore the implications of this misalignment, and the tensions that arise because of it, for the teaching and learning of mathematics in higher education.

51. Crossed purposes: How staff and students speak about voice in relation to AI-mediated writing

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Student Agency and Voice

Sukaina Walji; Cheng-Wen Huang; Francois Cilliers; Soraya Lester

Staff encountering AI-mediated student writing describe a recurring unease: work that is competent and polished but somehow "missing the voice." For them, voice means the development of argument and intellectual ownership, something students should acquire through participation in academic practice. Some worry that reliance on AI may silence students writing in an additional language, echoing cautions that AI-mediated writing can dilute authorial voice and homogenise expression (Sanz-Tejeda et al., 2026).

Students describe the problem differently. For them, "academic" writing is an expected register: formal and linguistically sophisticated, but not one they always feel able to produce. They describe using AI to make their own, less formal writing "look much more appropriate." What staff experience as the disappearance of student voice can thus be experienced by students as gaining access to the kind of voice the university values, echoing accounts of multilingual scholars using GenAI as epistemic agency (Pretorius et al., 2025).

Putting these accounts side by side exposes a hidden curriculum of academic writing (Lea & Street, 1998). Students are expected to develop a scholarly voice while mastering tacit conventions for how legitimate academic writing should sound, conventions unevenly accessible across languages and educational backgrounds. GenAI unsettles this arrangement by making the authorised register more readily available. The question, then, may not be whether AI preserves or erodes voice, but what we mean by voice, whose forms of expression universities recognise as legitimate, and what we are assessing when we reward "academic" writing, since academic prose has long served as a proxy for reasoning (Webb-Davies et al., 2026). Drawing on survey and focus-

group data from staff and students, we distinguish voice as intellectual ownership and authorship from voice as access to academic register, highlighting the equity implications of these contrasting conceptions.

52. Using AI to widen access to learning beyond the formal curriculum

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Relationships and the Relational

Liza Hitge

How might AI help universities extend access to co-curricular learning while preserving meaningful reflection and assessment? This presentation offers practical insights into AI-assisted assessment, effective rubric and prompt design, and responsible AI use in educational contexts.

The presentation draws on an AI Innovation Grant project in the UCT Careers Service exploring the use of OpenAI to assess student reflections in UCT Plus, a programme that recognises learning through leadership, volunteering and other co-curricular activities through transcript recognition. As participation grows, so does the assessment workload, raising an important question: how can universities expand access to co-curricular learning programmes when meaningful reflection and assessment require substantial human resources?

In 2025, approximately 1,700 UCT Plus reflections required assessment. The project developed an AI-assisted assessment system using rubric-based prompting and compared AI-generated assessments with those completed by student assessors, examining quality, consistency, turnaround time and scalability.

The presentation will share the project journey, including prompt and rubric development, creation of a prototype platform, testing, consent and ethical considerations, and lessons learned. Early findings suggest that assessment quality is strongly shaped by rubric design, while subjectivity in human marking and the difficulty of evaluating evidence of skills, values and knowledge present challenges for both human and AI assessors.

Using UCT Plus as a case study, the presentation considers whether AI can help extend access to meaningful learning beyond the formal curriculum without diminishing the reflection, assessment and student development that give these experiences their educational value.

53. Second language anxiety, belonging and participation in multilingual higher education

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Wild card

Busayo Ige

South African universities operate within highly multilingual contexts, yet English remains the dominant language of teaching, learning, and assessment. For many students from historically marginalised linguistic backgrounds, participation in English-medium classrooms is accompanied by second language anxiety (SLA), with implications for confidence, engagement, and belonging. Although multilingualism is widely recognised as an educational asset, less attention has been paid to how institutional language hierarchies influence students' willingness to participate in academic and clinical learning environments.

This qualitative case study explored the influence of second language anxiety on participation among multilingual Health Sciences students at an English-medium South African university. Thirteen second- and third-year students from Audiology, Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, and Physiotherapy programmes participated in an open-ended qualitative survey. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

Four interrelated themes were identified: fear of negative evaluation by lecturers and peers; avoidant behaviours and classroom withdrawal; perceptions of linguistic hierarchies and accent-related stigma; and coping strategies used to manage anxiety. Participants described anxiety as particularly pronounced during the transition into university, where English proficiency was often equated with academic competence. Fear of making mistakes contributed to strategic silence, reduced classroom participation, and diminished confidence, even when students possessed relevant knowledge.

Experiences in clinical settings were more complex. While assessment and supervision could heighten anxiety, interactions with patients often enabled students to draw on their multilingual repertoires, positioning language diversity as a professional resource rather than a deficit. These findings suggest that second language anxiety is not merely an individual challenge but is shaped by institutional language ideologies and pedagogical practices.

The study highlights the importance of teaching approaches that reduce face-threatening interactions, create low-risk opportunities for participation, and recognize linguistic diversity as a resource for learning. Practical recommendations include targeted first-year support, peer-assisted learning, inclusive assessment practices, and educator development initiatives to foster belonging, confidence, and equitable participation in multilingual higher education.

54. To attend or not to attend?: Investigating the multifaceted drivers of student absenteeism in Anthropology at the University of Cape Town

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Wild card

Helen Macdonald

While global higher education faces a marked decline in lecture attendance, South African research on this dynamic is heavily concentrated in Commerce, leaving a significant gap in the Humanities. Addressing this, the Department of Anthropology has launched a mixed-methods pilot project in Semester 2, 2026, to investigate the multifaceted drivers of undergraduate absenteeism.

The Department is anchored by six members of whom three hold Distinguished Teachers Awards and a Dean's Teaching Award. Anthropology is lauded by students for providing ‘vivid’, ‘thought-provoking’, and ‘grounded’ instruction. However, current research suggests that excellence in teaching, sustained redesigned curriculum or the rise of and rush towards AI are insufficient to overcome the systemic barriers to student engagement and their agency in learning.

Rather than treating non-attendance as a simple disciplinary issue, the pilot aligns with Bheki Mthembu’s (2025) theoretical lens of social justice and human dignity, which draws on Nancy Fraser’s paradigms of redistribution and recognition. This presentation draws on survey findings that captured baseline data that asked students across Anthropology undergraduate courses to reflect retrospectively on their Semester 1 attendance and project their planned Semester 2

behaviours. By mapping how structural barriers like transport unreliability, 'time poverty', finances, social isolation, and campus conditions intersect with pedagogy, this pilot aims to shift institutional perspectives.

Ultimately, the talk will outline how the anticipated survey results will feed into collaborative departmental workshops, guiding curriculum redesign, strategic timetabling, and the fostering of a culture of 'radical hospitality' that can serve as a model for the wider Humanities Faculty.

55. STEM lecturers' use of Gradescope and other pre-AI digital assessment tools at UCT

Scholarly, higher education research and project-based presentation | Wild card

Michelle Henry; Anita Campbell; Jumani Clarke; Shajid Haque; Zahraa Harnaker

In an increasingly digital world, and the shift to more online/blended teaching and learning practices, we need a better understanding of the benefits, challenges, and potential of digital assessment tools in higher education. This research study explored the use of Gradescope and other pre-AI digital assessment tools in science and engineering courses at UCT. This study aimed to examine trends in adoption, as well as the perceived benefits and challenges of these tools in science and engineering assessment, and how these tools impact teaching and student learning.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 lecturers (six Maths, three Numeracy Centre, one Statistics, two Physics) from the University of Cape Town. We generated and coded interview clauses based on four categories: the tool used, the feature mentioned, the sentiment expressed and the overall evaluation. Interviews were initially coded by the interviewer, then blind coded by another interviewer, until a final consensus was reached Lecturers had used a variety of digital tools including Gradescope, Amathuba Quizzes, WebAssign, Pearson, Acadly, Vula and Mentimeter. When expressing their sentiment about using these tools, responses were significantly more positive for Gradescope (69% of Gradescope-specific sentiment comments were positive) and Pearson (82%), whereas Amathuba Quizzes received the most negative sentiments (42%). Sixty-one percent of overall evaluation comments about Gradescope were perceived benefits, significantly higher than any other tool (49% Pearson, 44% WebAssign). Across all tools, the most common positive statements/perceived benefits were around feedback and less admin/resources. Unlike the other tools, lecturers felt Gradescope was beneficial in terms of speed. The most common negative statements/perceived challenges were around setup time and accessibility. In terms of impact on behaviour, lecturers felt that Gradescope and Pearson played an important role in teaching, learning and student engagement.

Our results indicate that lecturers perceived the digital assessment tools they used as positive and beneficial. In an increasingly digital world where science and engineering are moving more towards online teaching and learning (and in some instances more efficient) such affordances are imperative. When teaching at scale in higher education institutions, and the need for more efficient teaching and learning practices, digital assessment tools afford lecturers with (a) more efficient marking practices, (b) providing more accessible feedback to students, and (c) less time and resources devoted to assessment set-ups. Given the ever-changing landscape of technology, teaching, and learning, understanding how digital tools can enhance feedback, streamline assessment, and support student learning is needed.

Workshops Monday 16 November 2026

Workshop 1: Exploring AI literacies in and for your discipline

120 mins | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Lauren Butler; Mishka Reddy; Jade Smith; Al Clapper (student presenter)

Since Chat GPT became commercially available in 2022, the higher education sector has been grappling with the use of generative AI in teaching and learning practices. At UCT, there have been varied approaches and responses from different faculties and departments. At the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT), we have developed general AI literacies guides for staff and students. However, these resources have limited applications without discipline-specific adaptations. Students and teaching staff will benefit most from discipline-specific AI literacies that respond to the complexities, practices, and nuances of their fields.

This workshop provides a space for you to explore AI literacies for your specific course, in your discipline, and for your students. Using a template, you will identify and explore some of the literacies related to your course and begin to unpack the AI literacies that are relevant to your discipline and your students. The workshop is also an opportunity to connect with colleagues across departments, share challenges and ideas, and learn from different disciplinary perspectives.

Workshop 2: The inevitability of generative AI in higher education? Considering preferred education futures

120 mins | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Greig Krull; Shanali Govender

'Inevitability of AI' narratives have emerged in higher education and society, such as AI saving us time and the need for AI literacy skills for employability. As UCT staff, we may (consciously or unconsciously) perpetuate these narratives in how we support students. While multiple and varied AI narratives have emerged, we will draw on decolonial approaches and futures thinking to unpack some of the inevitability narratives of Generative AI use in higher education. This workshop aims to help staff and students analyse the AI narratives within UCT and whose interests they serve and whose futures they assume. It also aims to help participants consider their roles in supporting future equitable approaches to Generative AI. Using the concepts of epistemic disobedience and delinking, this workshop invites participants to consider how we frame the use of Generative AI and to consider the types of (preferred) futures we would like to see in our

learning and teaching contexts. For example, what are the different narratives and who do they serve? What are the associated values and ethical perspectives? What changes would we make to the way AI is managed? The key question of the workshop is: How can we rethink assumptions about AI to imagine and co-create sustainable/equitable/contextually responsive higher education futures? From a decolonial perspective, we might ask how GenAI can act as a site of reproduction of, or resistance to, colonial power structures. The envisioned outcome is for participants to leave with an approach to navigate the narratives around Generative AI in their departments and ideas to explore towards preferred futures, which can be used to inform their learning and teaching. This can help to reconsider contextual approaches to AI in curriculum development and assessment design.

Workshop 3: Tracking graduate attributes with the Learning Outcomes tool in Amathuba

120 mins | Wild card

Thomas King

Courses, particularly those that report to professional or external regulatory bodies (such as the Engineering Council for South Africa, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, or the Health Professions Council of South Africa), often face pressures to report on a wide range of student outcomes that go beyond specific courses and points-based grades.

While this workshop will be most useful for courses with externally defined Learning Outcomes (graduate attributes, professional values and attributes, etc.) that they need to report on, it is open to academic staff and administrators in any course. During the session we will explore the use of the Learning Outcomes tool in Amathuba, from importing existing learning outcomes from an Outcome Set (such as the ECSA Graduate Attributes), to creating course-specific learning outcomes for your own use. We will show you how to associate learning outcomes with assessments and rubric criteria, as well as the learning materials included in your Content tool, and how to assess using Learning Outcomes in the process of marking student submissions.

We will also explore the Lumi Outcome function in Amathuba, which uses AI to suggest Learning Outcome Alignments for Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Pages, and how to use the Outcomes Alignment tool in Content to track how your learning outcomes are aligned to activities and materials in your course. Lastly, we will show you dashboards where you can track Learning Outcomes achievement across different courses and/or years, and how this data could be used for reporting purposes.

After completing this workshop, participants should have either imported or developed an appropriate set of Learning Outcomes, and associated them with the key assessments in their programmes and courses. They should be able to assess students using Learning Outcomes and extract that information for reporting purposes.

Workshop 4: Being a mathematical knower and having a feel for knowing Mathematics in times of Generative AI

120 mins | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Faith Katabwa (student presenter); James Mbewu; Mikaeel Mohamed (student presenter); Ruach Slayen; Kate Le Roux

In this workshop we explore opportunities for first-year mathematics students to identify as mathematical knowers, that is, to experience university mathematics as meaningful and as a space where they belong. Historically, core first-year mathematics at UCT has sought to offer students a firm foundation, relative to school mathematics, for further study and application in other sciences, while continuing to grapple with legacy educational inequities in who is seen as a mathematical knower. In this context, generative AI has emerged as a resource that can, with increasing accuracy, perform mathematics practices long valued in first-year mathematics — recognising patterns, conjecturing, proving, performing procedures — and answer students' questions directly, on demand.

This workshop is designed for us – students, tutors and lecturers – to practise our critical (AI) literacies, together: to explore what ways of knowing we value in core first-year mathematics that takes equity and access seriously. And to consider what pedagogies and learning resources (viewed broadly, with AI as a possibility) might enable relevant mathematical 'knowing'.

Our team brings four years of work – as curriculum designers, lecturers, and tutors – seeking to make inroads into the stubborn challenges of access and success in undergraduate mathematics. We seek to create opportunities for students to learn and use mathematics practices – discourse practices, learning practices, language practices – identified in research and practice as important in first-year mathematics. The workshop has three parts, each with a take-way.

- Part 1: experiencing being a mathematical knower in an activity assuming only school mathematics knowledge.
- Part 2: (critically) discussing our mathematics practices, and related pedagogies and resources.
- Part 3: identifying ideas and relations for taking our learning forward in practice.

Workshop 5: A Socratic encounter in the age of bots: Harnessing agentic AI to promote critical engagement

120 mins | Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

Aditi Hunma; Moeain Arend

'Connection reconfigured' is a timely invitation to consider the nexus between human, AI agent and a fast-evolving world in the age of bots. Our interest in the social uses of literacies on our academic literacies courses (DOH1002F Writing in the Humanities, and ASL1203S Writing Across Borders) urges us to stay abreast of technological advances that students encounter in their day-to-day lives. As uncomfortable as change may be, it gets us to reflect on how innovation at the

service of pedagogy can transform the purveyors, recipients and tools of knowledge in productive ways.

This workshop presents a special opportunity for facilitators and participants alike to interact with a newly launched critical reading AI agent, Sokraites. Who is Sokraites? As the name suggests, it is an agent whose behaviour models that of the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates. In an age of readily available answers, we are reminded of Socrates's words, 'To find yourself, think for yourself'. We wonder if there is still a place for this form of experiential learning. The culprit we are told is AI that masquerades, hallucinates and displaces the thinker. But what if it weren't the thinker, but the questioner? Sokraites was thus carefully designed by Aditi Hunma and Moeain Arend at UCT in partnership with Isazi.ai to pose questions on academic readings to allow each student to develop a personalised reading pathway. As participants experience this Socratic encounter for themselves, we also share some points of caution.

The workshop culminates with participants putting together a schema that gives expression to how they could harness AI in their disciplines to promote their pedagogical vision. It would also allow participants to imagine how students' connection with their humanity, their thinking and sentient selves could be reconfigured.

Workshop 6: Start with outcomes, not assessment: A principled approach to AI-responsive assessment redesign

120 mins | The Future of the University

Francois Cilliers; Cheng-Wen Huang; Sukaina Walji

Generative AI has prompted universities to "safeguard" assessment through tighter controls, altered formats and new integrity measures. But what if redesigning assessment is the wrong place to start? Before deciding how to protect or change an assessment, we need to ask a more fundamental question: what knowledge, capabilities and ways of thinking should students still be expected to develop and demonstrate in a world where AI can perform increasingly complex academic work?

In this hands-on workshop, you'll be invited to reconsider assessment by starting with scrutiny of your intended learning outcomes. We'll introduce two practical tools developed through a collaborative institutional project on generative AI and assessment: a five-category typology for reviewing the relevance and implications of learning outcomes in an AI-pervasive context, and a Framework for Purposeful Assessment Redesign for working from educational purpose through outcomes to assessment choices.

Working with cross-disciplinary examples and then your own outcomes, you'll scrutinise outcomes and consider whether they should be retained, revised, removed or supplemented before exploring implications for assessment design and testing emerging ideas against equity and social-justice considerations.

You will leave with an approach to redesigning assessment that stays true to educational purpose and an action plan for your course or programme.

Workshop 7: How does it feel? Zine-making as reflection on AI in education

120 mins | Disciplinary Identities and AI

Mishka Reddy

A zine is a self-published, easily reproduced, printed form of self-expression. Pronounced as "zeen," they are typically booklets made in small batches and distributed.

Using magazines, scissors, glue, and pens, each participant will make one page in response to a prompt of their choosing: how AI in education makes them feel, a metaphor for AI, whose knowledge inspires them, or a value they want to protect in education. On the same page, participants will also depict their discipline in words and images, showing how their thinking is shaped by the field they work in. The workshop will conclude with a circle discussion in which participants surface some feelings and thoughts that emerged through the zine-making experience.

No artistic skill is needed.

Individual pages will be collected and compiled into a zine that will be shared digitally with all participants after the session.

Workshop 8: Creating accessible teaching materials with AI

120 mins | Relationships and the Relational

Jade Smith; Kristin van Tonder

Keen to make your teaching materials more accessible, but stretched for time? Join our workshop at TLC to explore how to use AI to remove barriers to learning, faster.

Teaching is a relationship of care, and removing barriers to learning is part of that care. Yet educators work under significant time constraints, making accessibility feel like another demanding task rather than an integral part of teaching. This workshop offers a practical, supportive space to explore how accessibility can become part of everyday teaching practice.

Drawing on the ENABLE framework, we will position accessibility as universal access. This means that accessible teaching materials benefit all students, including students with disabilities, with different learning preferences, with limited internet access, or those learning in different environments.

Using a PowerPoint presentation provided, we will investigate accessibility using the Microsoft Office Accessibility Checker and focus on interpreting the checker's results. Participants will experiment with AI as a time-saving tool for accessibility. In particular, we will use a prompt template to generate meaningful alternative text for different kinds of images, including photographs, graphs, diagrams, and infographics that you might use in your teaching materials.

Come ready to investigate, discuss, and improve a set of teaching materials with us.