



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The UNIVERSITY *of* OKLAHOMA

AI WORKING GROUPS FINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

In March 2025, the University of Oklahoma (OU) launched a university-wide strategy to establish itself as a leader in artificial intelligence (AI) innovation, research, education, and implementation. The former Interim Chief AI Officer implemented a strategy that involved five interdisciplinary working groups: AI Research, Healthcare Implementation, AI Education: Training and Teaching, Infrastructure & Resources, and Governance & Policy.

In addition, an AI webinar series was organized and seed funding was awarded to 20 AI-focused projects. Data Institute for Societal Challenges coordinated these efforts throughout the Spring and Summer and 2025. The activities of the working groups, which are described in this report, have laid the foundation for OU's long-term leadership in AI.

An [initial roadmap](#) report was developed in May 2025 to highlight opportunities and challenges, brainstorm ideas, and plan future activities. Subsequently, the working groups have implemented these plans and achieved significant accomplishments across research, teaching, infrastructure, healthcare, and governance. Collectively, these efforts demonstrate OU's commitment to ethical, scalable, and innovative AI adoption.

- **AI Research** convened faculty and students across campuses, launched a recurring AI Lunch-and-Learn series, and produced best practice guidelines to accelerate responsible AI-driven scholarship across disciplines.
- **AI Healthcare Implementation** piloted projects in secure data environments, predictive modeling, and clinical applications while advancing governance frameworks to ensure safe and equitable AI use in healthcare settings.
- **AI Education: Teaching and Training** developed the university's first *AI 101 student tutorial* (beta release Fall 2025), created faculty training modules, and launched workshops to strengthen AI literacy across the OU community.
- **AI Infrastructure & Resources** documented currently available AI resources at OU, established enterprise-class AI tools, and introduced cloud- and HPC-based environments that integrate into both teaching and research.
- **AI Governance & Policy** published OU's first AI usage principles and guidelines, gathered community feedback, and recommended a permanent AI Advisory Council to support ethical and adaptive AI governance.

These milestones mark OU's transition from planning to implementation. The working groups recommend moving forward by:

1. Converting successful pilots into scalable, university-wide services.
2. Establishing permanent advisory and governance structures.
3. Expanding faculty hiring, training, and research capacity in AI.
4. Scaling AI education for students, faculty, and staff.
5. Building secure infrastructure to support sensitive and high-impact AI applications, particularly in healthcare.

More details about the activities or recommendations of the working groups are provided in the following sections. Building on this foundation, OU is now positioned to advance into the next phase of its AI strategy: scaling innovations, deepening cross-campus collaboration, and strengthening OU's reputation as a national leader in ethical and impactful AI research, teaching, and implementation.

Working Group: Infrastructure and Resources

Co-Leads: Chongle Pan (Computer Science and Bioengineering/DISC) and Chris Jones (IT Administration)

I. Introduction

The Infrastructure & Resources Working Group accelerates AI-enabled research, teaching, and operations at the University of Oklahoma by coordinating shared platforms, expertise, and responsible practices. Convening academic units, Information Technology (IT), and University Libraries (UL), our mission is to equip the OU community with scalable and accessible infrastructure and knowledge.

We aim to integrate and expand accelerated computing capacity—HPC GPUs, high-speed storage, and cloud/container platforms and make these resources easy to use through classroom-ready environments, Jupyter/NRP workspaces, GPU workstations, and no-code options. Alongside access, we aim to provide training, consultations, and documentation that translates advanced tooling into everyday practice. Planned outcomes from this working group will include more AI/ML compute capacity and faster I/O for large datasets; streamlined onboarding and convenient access for researchers, instructors, and students; and durable, production-grade pathways that keep successful prototypes running responsibly at scale.

Our work is intentionally interwoven with other OU working groups. With Research, we will co-prioritize GPU allocations, share data pipelines, and standardize MLOps patterns that move projects from grant to publication and deployment. With Education, we will adapt research infrastructure for teaching through managed course environments, modular curricular materials, and faculty development. With Health, we will collaborate on compliant workflows—HIPAA-aligned data enclaves, secure model governance, and clinical inference pathways—so health researchers and practitioners can innovate safely and effectively.

II. Major Accomplishments and Deliverables

- The infrastructure and resources working group held regular meetings and engaged with external parties to document the AI infrastructure that is currently available across OU and develop recommendations for enhancing and expanding these resources. A summary of the current resources is provided below as context for the recommendations in the next section.
- **OU Supercomputing Center for Education & Research/IT:** OSCER/IT now has 135 GPU cards in production, a hundredfold increase in AI compute capacity since January 2021. OSCER is now developing and testing (a) a “burst buffer” of high-speed SSD, to speed up AI training on large datasets of many small files, and (b) support for near-on-demand AI inferencing via preempting long AI training jobs. OSCER/IT was also recently awarded a 3-year, \$1.8M NSF grant for 5 AI Consultants. They will collaborate with 91 research projects at 9 institutions across Oklahoma on adopting AI into their research and/or improving the AI that their research already uses.
- **Digital Scholarship and Data Services (DSDS) | University Libraries (UL):** DSDS extended its existing Jupyter coding environment to support Hugging Face models. This

environment runs in the National Research Platforms' Kubernetes cluster (NRP) and has supported AI workflows using Tensorflow, Keras, and PyTorch since early 2022 and can be accessed at <https://jupyter.lib.ou.edu> (non-GPU) and <https://researcher.lib.ou.edu> (with GPU). DSDS has initiated a test pilot of LibreChat for a no-coding environment to interact with generative models running in AWS Bedrock and open-sourced models running in the NRP. Eight (8) UL workshops are scheduled for Fall 2025 that leverage these environments to teach concepts and tools around AI. Three AI-focused workstations have been purchased and will be set up in the Bizzell on the Norman campus for faculty, staff, and students to experiment and learn with local non-HPC AI workloads.

- **OU Information Technology:** OU IT has enabled enterprise-class, data protected (not used for model training) “everyday AI” chatbot capabilities available for every University of Oklahoma community member. Resources currently available include Microsoft Copilot chatbot and Adobe Firefly (for image creation & manipulation). Adding enterprise-class, data protected (not used for model training) models, such as Google Gemini and NotebookLM, are currently in progress.
- **Data Institute for Societal Challenges (DISC):** As part of its mission to support convergent research across OU, DISC provides members with access to OSCER CPU and GPU resources, including 2 x 64-core CPU-only nodes with 2TB of RAM, 1 x Quad 80GB A100 nodes, 5 x Dual 80GB A100 nodes, 2 x Dual 80GB H100 nodes, and 93 TB OURDisk storage. Consulting services are also available to support the use of these resources. The goal is to facilitate the use of machine learning and AI techniques for researchers who have limited experience with the supercomputer.

III. Recommendations

Looking ahead, we recommend:

- Convert successful AI/ML pilots into dependable, university-wide services by setting clear service levels for interactive work, batch training, and near-on-demand inference so researchers, instructors, and clinicians can plan with predictable turnaround times.
- Establish an internally hosted OU GitHub integrated with OU SSO and OSCER to provide secure, compliant collaboration. Deploy an OU-based HuggingFace repository as a campus model & dataset hub (model registry, licenses, dataset catalog with DOIs and access controls) with a managed inference layer.
- Provide turnkey course images with per-course quotas, roster synchronization with the LMS, and ephemeral student workspaces, so that instructors bring authentic tools into the classroom without drowning in setup. Each term, successful research stacks can be stabilized and promoted into teaching presets.
- Implement a tiered AI/ML data classification scheme using university-wide definitions and standards for all data types, including sensitive and restricted (e.g., PHI/FERPA/ITAR). Each classification should be mapped to approved platforms, each with the appropriate procedural and technical controls. Secure research enclaves for sensitive data will need audit trails, egress reviews, Institutional Review Board (IRB) and data use agreement (DUA) integration, and human-in-the-loop processes for deployments.
- Fund resources with a blended funding model. A centrally funded teaching and research baseline would provide AI/ML capacity for pilot projects at no charge to departments.

External Center grants would invest in shared research capabilities, including hardware and expert staff. Research grants would continue to fund project-specific resources.

Working Group: AI Governance
Co-Leads: April Dickson (IT Administration) and Erin Maher (Sociology/DISC)

I. Introduction

Artificial intelligence is reshaping higher education for students, teachers, staff, and researchers. Universities must balance innovation with ethical implications and security concerns. Academic integrity and personal privacy must be upheld. To do this, universities need to establish a structure for oversight, monitoring, adaptability, and innovation, as well as comprehensive guidelines and policies to guide usage.

The mission of the AI Governance and Policy working group is to develop principles and guidelines, with the goal of establishing adaptive policies for the ethical and trustworthy use of AI at OU. As part of this mission, the workgroup recommends that OU needs to develop a permanent advisory structure and group that reports to the newly hired Chief AI Officer in support of AI governance functions. Our work group provided recommendations based on expert and stakeholder input, consultancy documents, and literature reviews for the basic structure of an AI Advisory Council—to serve as a starting point.

Our working group developed and achieved the following goals:

- Making the case for the need for and importance of oversight of AI use and implementation.
- Gathering input from key stakeholders for buy-in and early issue identification on AI usage at OU.
- Establishing a set of ethical principles for AI use, building off existing frameworks.
- Publishing initial usage guidelines for different overlapping categories of OU users (i.e., students, researchers, faculty, and staff).
- Making data and research-informed recommendations for a permanent advisory structure to assist in governance functions for AI use and implementation.

II. Major Accomplishments and Deliverables

- Developed and sought feedback on AI principles and usage guidelines for overlapping categories of users and stakeholders at OU: students, faculty, researchers, and staff.
- Sent out draft versions of the principles and usage guidelines to the OU community for feedback and made associated revisions.
- Responded personally to all feedback received.
- Published principles and usage guidelines at OU's Policy Office and crosslinked with the new OU AI Website. (Appendix C)
- Conducted literature reviews and comparative research on governance structures within peer institutes of higher education and reviewed consultancy literature on this topic.
- Created recommendations based on this research for the structure, functions, and goals of an AI Advisory Council.
- Modified proposal routing forms at all OU campuses to identify and track projects primarily focused on the use of AI or research on AI.

- Hosted two presentations to AI Leadership Group from Dr. Dee Wu, Professor & Chief, Technology Applications & Translational Research, Department of Radiological Sciences, and Dr. Belinda Biscoe, Associate Senior Vice President for Outreach and Continuing Education.

III. Recommendations

Looking ahead, we recommend:

- For OU to establish an advisory structure consisting of an AI Advisory Council which advises and reports to the OU Chief AI Officer. The Chief AI Officer has decision-making authority and responsibility for AI initiatives and use at OU. (Appendix D). The OU AI Advisory Council will serve as an advisory body to achieve the goals laid out in OU's strategic plan—to be a leader in the ethical use of AI for innovation and excellence in research, teaching, and operations.
- The AI Advisory Council will guide and champion safe and responsible use of AI technologies, ensuring alignment with federal and state laws and regulations, and mitigating risks associated with that use in university-related activities. This body should oversee the ongoing adaptation of the usage guidelines and policy development related to AI use at OU.
- The development of AI Advisory Council training for onboarding new members. We also recommend the development of enforcement mechanisms for AI governance policies when developed that will:
- Identify the enforcement mechanisms and processes with respect to faculty and staff (potentially new systems).
- Integrate student guidelines with the Student Integrity Council and Office of Academic Integrity.
- Integrate research guidelines with the offices of research compliance (including IRB).

Working Group: AI Healthcare
Co-Leads:
David Bard, OUHSC Pediatrics, and Jun Li, OUHSC Molecular Genetics & Genome Sciences

I. Introduction

The Healthcare Implementation and AI Working Group convenes researchers, clinicians, data scientists, and technologists from across the University of Oklahoma to explore the integration of artificial intelligence in healthcare systems. Our mission is to cultivate a collaborative space for identifying and advancing high-impact AI use cases that can improve health outcomes, streamline clinical workflows, and promote equitable access to innovation.

Our goals include:

- Elevating domain-specific knowledge sharing across healthcare settings.
- Encouraging responsible AI development and governance tailored to local health systems.
- Coordinating with other working groups to align on shared infrastructure and data strategy.
- Prototyping scalable models for AI deployment and workforce education.
- We adopted a rotating-host model and met weekly throughout the summer of 2025, combining virtual and hybrid formats to sustain momentum and promote shared learning. In total, we convened 19 sessions, including four hybrid meetings (April 4 kickoff, June 27, July 25, and August 29) and 15 virtual sessions. Though our discussions were not rigidly tied to every roadmap priority, they reflect growing traction in several cross-cutting themes including governance, infrastructure, research pilots, and domain-specific applications.

II. Major Accomplishments and Deliverables

Weekly Meeting Series & Knowledge Exchange Since April 2025: the Working Group met nearly every week. These meetings spotlighted internal projects and fostered shared learning around implementation challenges, ethics, and translational potential. We highlight the following topical contributions:

Infrastructure and Access:

- Wolfgang Jentner (7/11) presented computing infrastructure needs, aligning with the Resources & Infrastructure WG.
- David Bard (8/29) advanced work on a HIPAA-compliant sandbox using NCSA's Nightingale enclave, in coordination with the Resources WG.
- A pilot project has been cleared to test this environment as a proof-of-concept for secure, scalable AI research.
- Group-wide discussions (6/13, 6/27) examined institutional processes for secure data use and access governance.

Clinical and Research Applications:

- Arnold Kanagwa (8/1) showcased inpatient readmission prediction using ML models.
- Faizah Bhatti (8/8) shared their work on AI tools in neonatology and reviewed trends and consortia-scale initiatives nationally.
- David Bard (8/15) previewed a funded pilot applying LLMs for echocardiogram abstraction.
- Hoda Soltani (8/22) contextualized state-space modeling for time-series data, from past applications in soil engineering to more recent adoptions in health sciences, including new models that emerged in the past two years.
- Soheil Hemmati (7/11) shared insights from his AI pilot project focused on developing machine learning models to predict hospital readmission risk for OU Health patients, with an emphasis on feature selection and model optimization across diverse patient cohorts.
- Jun Li (6/6) reviewed foundation models for cell biology published over the past year and discussed their limitations.
- Mike Anderson (6/20) led a discussion of AI adoption in statistical programming, i.e., how the practice of software-writing has been affected. He led a panel discussion on this topic at the annual JSM meeting in August.

Ethics, Law, and Responsible AI:

- Dee Wu (5/23) presented a conceptual framework for applying AI to pediatric and rural healthcare use cases, emphasizing a values-based approach to AI development grounded in real-world clinical needs. His remarks introduced the idea of a “Think Tank” model for responsible AI engagement, integrating implementation planning, workforce development, and cross-sector collaboration.
- Stacey Tovino (7/28) reviewed AI's impact on health law, including recent changes at the federal level and highly varied state laws, some of which are in the early stages of legislation.
- A governance subgroup was established, led by Drs. Sharukh Khajotia, Faizah Bhatti, and Dee Wu, to develop principles and educational strategies across healthcare disciplines.

Pilot Project Engagement:

- The WG supported multiple proposals for internal pilot funding. Of the 20 funded proposals in this cycle, 4 were formally submitted under the HEALTH domain, and 6 others involved WG members working on health-adjacent AI projects (e.g., medical education, data science tools). A list of funded pilots is included in Appendix F.

Cross-WG Coordination:

- We made strong connections with the Infrastructure WG and the Governance and Policy WG and began seeding ideas with the Education WG.
- Upcoming collaborations are expected to inform workforce development and curriculum design for healthcare-specific AI education.

- We have participated in the weekly AI leadership calls where all WGs provided updates. Several WG members also attended the Lunch-and-Learn events for AI Research in Norman.

III. Recommendations

Looking ahead, we recommend:

- **Advance the Sandbox Infrastructure**
Finalize the NCSA Nightingale agreement and explore parallel pathways for creating a local, enterprise-grade enclave for AI with sensitive health data.
- **Formalize Governance & Training Outputs**
Support the healthcare governance subgroup in developing written guidance and educational tools, especially those tailored to under-resourced settings and high-risk populations (e.g., pediatrics, rural health).
- **Pilot Project Incubation**
Continue to use WG meetings as a platform for pilot vetting, refinement, and cross-project learning. Establish a shared evaluation framework to assess scalability and implementation barriers.
- **Roadmap Re-alignment in Fall 2025**
Conduct a structured review of our group's roadmap contributions to date. Identify under-addressed areas (e.g., workforce development, incentive models for AI adoption, and longitudinal data access) and refine our 2026 priorities accordingly.
- **Strengthen Health System Partnerships**
Identify clinical and operational champions within OU Health and partner systems to ensure implementation recommendations are grounded in clinical realities.

Working Group: AI Education: Teaching and Training
Co-Leads: Geneva Murray (Center for Faculty Excellence) and Jessica Davila (OU Libraries)

I. Introduction

As charged by the Interim Chief AI Officer and in alignment with OU's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Roadmaps, the AI Education Working Group is focused on equipping the OU community with the knowledge, skills, and support systems needed to engage meaningfully with AI. To accomplish this charge, the working group has two overarching goals: training (students, faculty, staff) and teaching (integration of AI into the curricula).

To achieve these goals, the AI Education Working Group has focused on developing a responsible AI training module for students, evaluating external training resources, identifying and advocating for key resources, and leveraging subject matter expertise from across departments and disciplines to support training of faculty and staff.

Through the working group, gaps have been identified and strategies to close those gaps have been addressed through key achievements via collaborative efforts with participants and additional strategies are proposed in this summary report. In addition to the achievements listed here, participants in the working group have used the collaborative nature of the group to inform additional resource development within their own areas and to share resources.

II. Major Accomplishments and Deliverables

Faculty Resources:

- The Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) took the recommendations from the working group to work with the Office of the Provost to require Generative AI policies in syllabi and received approval for that requirement. They also received sample syllabi, assignments, etc., from working group members for inclusion in the faculty module resulting in:
- Generative AI Syllabus Statements: Produced six sample syllabus statements incorporating working group feedback ahead of publication.
- Faculty-focused Module: Expanded faculty-focused Generative AI training module with new sample assignments, portions of video interviews recorded for the student tutorial, and contributions from OU Academic Integrity and the Writing Center, and videos from OU Libraries on AI assistants in e-books and Google Notebook LM. Timeline for release: September 22nd.

OU-wide AI Workshops and Resources

- To advance the scaling of AI training, the libraries incorporated the working group's discussions on skills gaps and AI literacy needs by adopting an AI literacy framework to guide lesson plan development within existing research workshops and instruction programs. To further strengthen this effort, Libraries specialists secured summer seed funding to pilot the use of the National Research Platform's LibreChat, customizable open-source AI Chatbots, along with cloud computing, and advanced hardware.

- Jessica Davila liaised with Tyler Pearson, Varun Sayapaneni, and Mark Laufersweiler in the Libraries, to share use cases for a LibreChat pilot enabling secure AI workshop demonstrations until a campus sandbox is established.
- Libraries developed four new AI workshops (as part of the seed funding) and brought to the forefront the existence of four regularly scheduled workshops that help develop foundational skills for understanding and working with AI.
- AI in the Library Guide developed by Bianca Azartash, Libraries.

Student AI 101 Tutorial

- The AI Education Working Group began by identifying core learning objectives for future AI training in consultation with OU instructors and OU Academic Integrity. These objectives laid the groundwork for the development of an AI 101 asynchronous tutorial focused on responsible AI for students, built through extensive cross-campus collaboration.
- Instructional designers (Keiana Cross and Dollaya Hirunyasiri) built the tutorial with continuous feedback from co-chairs, OU instructors, and the working group as a whole.
- Librarian, (Rachel Lester) is responsible for the Canvas integration.
- Students participated in focus groups; faculty and staff contributed expertise, workshops, and resources.
- The K20 Center provided videography, Jessica Davila from the University Libraries contributed a paid student specialist (Cameron Johnston) to create video graphics and editing, and M. Geneva Murray from the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) negotiated with first year experience instructors in College of Arts and Sciences to deploy the module in their courses.
- The group worked closely with Drs. Jacob Pleasants and Julianna Kershen, who received summer seed money, to align the AI 101 module with the resources they developed for faculty.
- Timeline for release: Beta release, October 2025. Final release, December 2025, ahead of Spring courses.

Assessment of External Training Resources

- To address the need for scalable and effective AI training, the working group conducted an inventory and evaluation of external AI training resources across multiple platforms and vendors. Each offering was assessed for suitability in higher education, digital accessibility, quality of delivery, and balanced representation of AI. Highlights of the assessment include:
- OU has a LinkedIn enterprise license, and Price College has a Coursera license, through which the working group was able to gain access to 20 Coursera trial seats for evaluation.
- Five working group members evaluated sample courses over the summer, including: Generative AI for University Leaders (Coursera, licensed content), AI Fluency (Anthropic) for a broad audience, Google AI Essentials (introductory, free content via Coursera), Generative AI (intermediate, Microsoft AI Learning Hub), Introduction to Machine Learning (LinkedIn Learning).
- Strengths identified: Courses provided useful background, practical use cases, and helped learners build confidence in using AI tools and integrating generative AI into workflows.

- Gaps identified: the working group concluded that some courses evaluated lacked sufficient coverage of critical ethical concerns in an academic context or approached them without the depth of critique expected in a higher education setting, including bias and fairness, inaccuracies (hallucinations), plagiarism and intellectual property infringement, environmental impact, safety.
- Some courses (e.g., Google AI Essentials) included promotional content and/or presented productivity claims without sufficient critique of limitations or accuracy, raising concerns that vendor-created training can serve more as marketing for tools they want to sell to institutions and students rather than as unbiased education.
- These findings highlight the importance of investing in AI learning opportunities that not only build technical fluency but also address the ethical dimensions of AI use.
- Peer institutions such as the University of Arizona and Indiana University (IU) offer custom AI courses for their campus community, with IU offering their AI courses as part of their micro-credentialling program.
- Contributions to AI Working Group Deliverables
- Provided feedback on OU's AI Guidelines and Policy, approved August 2025.

III. Recommendations

Looking ahead we recommend:

- Continue the AI Education Working Group to ensure collaborative conversations can continue with stakeholders to address items identified in the 5-year roadmap. Bi-weekly meetings have been scheduled for the Fall semester.
- Convene a Provost-appointed committee as soon as possible to review general education paper requirements of a five-page or ten-page paper “written outside of class.” This requirement from PACGEO was created prior to the release of ChatGPT and may not measure authentic learning. A committee should investigate if this requirement still serves its goals and/or if modifications need to be made in light of student use of Generative AI.
- Deploy the AI 101 module in FYE courses to promote Generative AI literacy, beyond technical expertise and including critical thinking in AI usage.
- Continue to support instructors making informed decisions about Generative AI policies and usage in their classroom. Instructors should be provided with the resources needed to make their own educated decisions about Generative AI in teaching and learning. Their ultimate decision about Generative AI usage in the classroom is one of academic freedom.
- Invest in dedicated staff lines to deliver thoughtful, sustainable Generative AI training across campus, beginning with the Libraries and CFE, which are strategically positioned to scale trainings and engage a critical mass of the campus community. Then expand as additional needs are identified with the Chief AI Officer.
- Fund centralized instructional designer positions to create, and evolve, in-house training resources that are independent of vendor influence and product agnostic.
- Adopt a multi-prong strategy for scaling AI training: develop custom OU-designed AI courses and workshops while also continuing to provide a campus-wide license to LinkedIn (or adopt Coursera) with potential pathways for curated micro-credentialing. This approach brings significant benefits, including the ability to reinforce OU's

academic brand, make intentional pedagogical decisions, and uphold principles of academic freedom.

- Improve visibility of events and training opportunities through an RSS feed integrated into the OU AI website.
- Collect data on AI usage by working with OU IT to incorporate questions to the ECAR Faculty Technology Survey and coordinating with stakeholders to measure student usage.
- Expand stakeholder engagement by intentionally recruiting representatives from staff, students, and faculty from fields underrepresented in current AI conversations.

Working Group: Research
Co-Leads: Michael Wimberly (Geography and Environmental Sustainability, DISC) and
Andy Fagg (Computer Science and Bioengineering)

I. Introduction

As part of the Chief AI Officer Plan at the University of Oklahoma, the mission of the Research Working Group is to explore the transformative potential and complex challenges of artificial intelligence (AI) in academic research and other creative activities.

Our scope encompasses an expansive definition of AI, including machine learning, deep learning, generative AI, computer vision, and autonomous systems. We also take a broad view of the scope of AI research, encompassing areas such as: (1) the development of novel AI methods and technologies; (2) the application of AI across diverse academic disciplines, including STEM, social sciences, humanities, and creative arts; and (3) the study of AI's societal implications, including its influences on equity, labor, knowledge production, public trust, and data and model sovereignty.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of AI and the speed at which it is transforming multiple aspects of society, it will be essential for OU to position itself at the forefront of AI and AI-enabled research and creative activities. Achieving this aim will require incisive strategies that build our capacity to explore the underlying technologies and their transformative potential, both positive and negative.

Throughout 2025, the AI research working group has engaged in a variety of activities aimed at enabling AI-related research throughout the University. The group consists of a core team with six members and a larger advisory team with 22 members. These individuals span a wide range of disciplines and include representatives from the Norman, Health Sciences, and Tulsa Campuses.

The work of the group has focused on the following objectives:

- Gather background information and investigate AI research plans at peer institutions.
- Develop and engage with a network of OU faculty with an interest in pursuing AI research.
- Document the challenges and opportunities presented by the emergence of generative AI and other advanced technologies and identify critical resource and knowledge gaps.
- Brainstorm ideas for catalyzing AI research throughout the University.
- To address these objectives, we conducted a series of activities and generated a set of outputs that are documented in the second section of this report. Specific recommendations emerging from these efforts are provided in the third section of the report.

II. Major Accomplishments and Deliverables

- Weekly AI Research Working Group meetings. Beginning March 28th, the AI-Research working group met to discuss the needs of the research community in the AI/ML space, make recommendations for how OU should move forward, and organize several events. Meetings were also used to brainstorm ideas and work on the initial roadmap report in

May and the final report in September. We invited PIs of the AI seed funding research projects to attend and provide updates at several meetings.

- Monthly AI Lunch and Learn gatherings. To build connections and catalyze discussion on AI research related topics, we held three two-hour gatherings open to faculty and staff at OU. Each meeting featured four research talks followed by a panel discussion. The events were held on 6/10, 7/15, and 8/12 and attracted 55, 50, and 28 participants. We felt these meetings were successful at creating the foundations of an AI research community at OU and fostering communication about related opportunities and challenges.
- The AI@OU Canvas page was created to host a set of discussion boards on AI-related topics in the educational and research space, including upcoming course and training opportunities, getting help on AI/ML implementation, and finding research collaborators. A sign-up link is available at: <https://canvas.ou.edu/enroll/BFXYJ9>
- Deep Learning on the OU Supercomputer Crash Course. This six-hour crash course, led by Dr. Andy Fagg, introduced the fundamentals of Deep Neural Networks, how they can be implemented using both JupyterHub and the OU Supercomputer, and how to use the Weights and Biases tool for monitoring and organizing experiments. The workshop was held on August 8 and there were 55 attendees.
- Best Practices for the use of ML in the Humanities, Science and Engineering. We developed a draft document that discusses a range of topics, including forming research teams, attacking research questions with ML, carefully constructing ML computational experiments, and analyzing their results, and managing and sharing data and code. This document is currently undergoing revision, and the draft can be accessed at this link: [good-practices.docx](#).
- Plan for Regularly Scheduled “AI Coffee Hours.” Following on the success of the AI Lunch and Lean gatherings held over the summer, Dr. Sam Huskey has worked with the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) to develop a series of “AI Coffees” that will be held in the upcoming academic year. These events will continue the working group’s efforts to convene faculty from across the university who are interested in AI and facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration.

III. Recommendations

Looking ahead, we recommend:

- Strategic Campuswide AI-Focused Hiring Plan. Creating such a hiring plan will position OU to take advantage of developments in AI to enhance teaching and research across the university. This initiative should be multi-pronged: basic research into AI technologies, applications of AI and machine learning across the full range of academic disciplines, and research into the ethical and societal implications of the current and future-oriented downstream impacts of AI.
- Strategic Campuswide Post-Doctoral Program in AI. An initiative to hire postdocs with recent training in AI would encompass multiple colleges and departments with a range of research emphases as described under the faculty hiring plan. The rationale is that recently trained Ph.D. graduates are well positioned to rapidly conduct and publish new research and help catalyze campus-wide teams, and the program would require less funding over a shorter time frame than the recruitment of new faculty.

- Faculty Fellows Program in AI. In parallel with the preceding recommendations for new hires, it is imperative to provide opportunities for existing faculty to reimagine, retool, and connect their research programs with the latest developments in AI. We therefore recommend implementing a fellowship program through which faculty can obtain course releases and training to allow them to gain new AI skills and apply them to their research.
- AI Consulting. Establish a framework for AI consulting to provide technical expertise for faculty incorporating AI into their research. We envision something analogous to traditional statistical consulting services but with a broader emphasis that would encompass AI and machine learning techniques. We also note that various organizations already provide some services in this area (e.g., OU Libraries, OSCER, and the Data Institute for Societal Challenges), but these should be expanded and there should be a clearinghouse through which faculty, staff, and students can discover and access these services.
- Plan for Evolving Research Computing Needs. As more researchers incorporate AI in their workflows, requirements for computational resources and storage will change. There should be a process to assess these changes with respect to the available resources and make plans for future resource acquisitions. Such solutions would range from capital investment by OU to strategic grant applications.
- Data/Model Archival, Curation and Management. Researchers should be strongly encouraged to create open Data Management Plans (DMPs) that go beyond proposal requirements. A robust DMP documents data sources, model architectures, and metadata needed to train and evaluate AI/ML models, while also tracking outputs. DMPs guide computational resources and storage planning, as well as curation and archiving. Clear research data policies and governance are essential to support their development. We will develop plans on how to expand current resources and define policies for data governance.
- Create an AI Studio to provide a physical space where researchers can meet, share ideas, get technical assistance, learn about what others are doing, catalyze team building, and display their products. Having a welcoming physical space that provides access to shared resources can help to ‘seed’ new collaborations. This would need to be a comfortable space for small to medium sized groups to gather and it would need to be accessible to people from a variety of fields. We note that the OU libraries are envisioning a new direction in their digital scholarship services designed to spark collaboration that can help to meet this need.
- Support for a Center or “Study Group” with a specific focus on understanding AI in its human context/social and ethical aspects of AI. AI researchers in the STEM fields will need partners in the social sciences, arts, and humanities who have the capacity to work with them, and conscious efforts must be made to develop this capacity. There is an opportunity for OU to distinguish itself in this area, and even a relatively small number of stable resources could pay significant rewards. This initiative could take multiple forms, including a center, a team with a center, or a less formal study group of a community of practice.
- Foster Connections Between the AI Working Groups. There are many areas of overlap among the AI Working Group themes. For example, sufficient infrastructure and effective governance are essential to support robust research programs on AI. Research on AI can help to inform best practices for education, and new courses are needed to teach students

about the opportunities and challenges of incorporating AI into research. Efforts should be made to connect across the working groups to address these and other cross-cutting topics.

- Explore the Implications of AI for IRB Review. The use of AI for research can have ethical implications, particularly when personally identifiable data or other types of protected data are involved. Specific issues may be related to novel and unfamiliar study designs, re-identification risks, unintended consequences of data merger, data security, algorithmic bias, informed consent, and lack of AI expertise by IRB reviewers. There is a need for a comprehensive review of the current IRB framework to ensure that it can handle the challenges posed by rapidly developing AI technologies.