Faculty & Instructors Brief

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Executive Summary

Our analysis of 4,168 sources this week surfaces a tension you cannot delegate to a committee: whether generative AI amplifies student learning or quietly substitutes for the cognitive work that learning requires. A systematic review this week frames it exactly that way—[4]—and the answer is not settling toward consensus. It depends on what you assign, how you assess, and what you let the tool do.

The core tension. The same week a randomized controlled trial reports that AI tutoring [16], other evidence documents [6] when students route thinking through the model. Both are true. The variable is instructional design, not the technology—which means the judgment lands on you, not the vendor.

This is the delta from where this conversation sat a year ago. The augment-versus-diminish debate has stopped being abstract. It is now adjudicated through detection software and due-process disputes: detection tools produce [15], an [1], and Cambridge reports AI graders [21]. The instruments you might lean on to enforce a policy are themselves contested in court and in the literature.

What this briefing provides. Three things you can act on before your next class meets: where the augment/substitute line actually falls in assignment design, why detection-based enforcement is a weaker footing than your dean implies, and which faculty voices are absent from the [17]. The survey finding that "[10]" is the condition this briefing is built to break.

[4] Amplifier or substitute? A systematic review of generative AI

[16] outperforms in-class active learning

[6] a1_Pereza_metacognitiva_y_descarga_cognitiva_en_ ...

[15] AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment: How Opaque Evidence ...

[1] An Adelphi University student was accused of using AI to ... - Newsday

[21] AI not yet good enough to mark university essays, rewarding 'style over ...

[17] Generative AI Policies at the World's Top Universities: 2026 ...

[10] everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it

Critical Tension

Our contradiction mapping surfaces this as fundamental, and hard to resolve: you are expected to detect and punish unauthorized AI use through evidence that does not hold up, at the same moment your institution is signing enterprise contracts that put the same tools in every student's hands. The enforcement burden lands on you; the procurement decision was made above you. Cal State's system-wide

ChatGPT deal "polarizes students and faculty" precisely because it resolves the access question by fiat while leaving the integrity question entirely on the instructor's desk [5]. The institution has chosen adoption. It has not chosen what that means for your assignments.

[5] Cal State's deal for ChatGPT polarizes students and faculty

This is not a problem you can defer to next year's assessment cycle. Office hours this week will include questions you have no institutional guidance to answer, and grading decisions cannot wait for the governance frameworks that EDUCAUSE describes as still in formation across most campuses [22]. The temporal asymmetry is the trap: model capabilities update on a quarterly cadence while curriculum and academic-integrity policy move on a two-semester approval cycle. *The New York Times* documents that student use is now effectively undetectable [14]. You are being asked to enforce a line that the technology has already erased.

[22] The Current State of Play: AI in Higher Education and the Road Ahead

[14] Las trampas de los estudiantes se están volviendo imposibles de detectar en la era de la IA

The obvious solutions fail in documented, specific ways. Lean on detection software, and you inherit its evidentiary problems: detection tools generate "opaque evidence" that "threatens due process," producing accusations students cannot meaningfully contest [15]. Adelphi University is now in litigation over exactly this kind of accusation [1], and it is not isolated—the cheating-lawsuit docket is growing fast enough to require its own tracker [2]. Flip the other direction and offload grading to AI, and Cambridge's evaluation found the models "not yet good enough to mark university essays," systematically "rewarding style over substance" [21]. Neither the policing tool nor the grading tool is reliable enough to carry the weight you'd be putting on it.

[15] AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment: How Opaque Evidence Threatens Due Process

[1] An Adelphi University student was accused of using AI to ...

[2] AI Cheating Lawsuits Tracker — Every Case, Who Won (2026)

[21] AI not yet good enough to mark university essays, rewarding 'style over substance'

The third path—redesign assignments around productive AI use—has the strongest evidence but the steepest cost. AI feedback measurably improves student outcomes [8], and an RCT found AI tutoring outperforming in-class active learning [16]. But a systematic review frames the open question bluntly—is generative AI an *amplifier or substitute* for student cognition?—and the answer turns on design choices you'd have to make course by course, uncompensated, mid-semester [4].

[8] Effects of Artificial Intelligence Feedback on Students ...

[16] AI tutoring outperforms in-class active learning: an RCT

[4] Amplifier or substitute? A systematic review of generative ...

What's missing from the conversation shaping your options is the student's account of the actual conditions on the ground. The plainest finding this week comes from students themselves: "Everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it" [10]. That silence is the real cost of the detection regime. Punitive enforcement built on contestable evidence doesn't stop the use—it drives it underground, where you can neither see it nor teach into it. The structural choice you face is not "permit or prohibit." It is whether your classroom is a place where the

[10] "Everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it": College ...

thing every student is already doing can be named out loud.

Actionable Recommendations

Faculty Brief: Stop Litigating Detection, Start Redesigning the Work

Four things are usable in a single semester. None require a TA, a course release, or a vendor contract. Each is grounded in what this week's sources actually document — and where the evidence is thin, that gets said plainly.

A note on our own data: the contradiction-mapping and failure-pattern layers came back empty this cycle, so the recommendations below are anchored in the cited sources directly rather than in aggregate counts we don't have. When a claim rests on one study, you'll see one study.

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1. Pull AI-detection scores out of your integrity process now

The failure this addresses. The documented problem is not student cheating — it's that the tools faculty reach for to prove it don't hold up. *AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment* lays out how opaque detector outputs are being used as evidence in disciplinary cases without the accused being able to examine how the score was produced, a direct due-process problem [15]. The litigation has already started: a student at Adelphi was accused on the strength of a detector flag and the case became a lawsuit [1]. A running tracker of these cases now exists [2].

The evidence-based alternative. The premise behind detection has collapsed independently: reporting documents that student use is now effectively undetectable by the tools sold to catch it [14]. So you are exposing your institution to a procedural-fairness claim over evidence that doesn't even work.

[15] AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment: How Opaque Evidence Threatens Due Process

[1] An Adelphi University student was accused of using AI to ... - Newsday

[2] AI Cheating Lawsuits Tracker — Every Case, Who Won (2026)

[14] Las trampas de los estudiantes se están volviendo imposibles de ...

Implementation:

1. Week 1: Remove detector scores as a standalone basis for an integrity referral in your syllabus and your own practice. 2. Weeks 2–4: If you suspect misuse, build a process around process evidence — drafts, version history, an oral check — not a probability score. 3.

By midterm: Confirm your department's integrity procedure does not treat a detector flag as dispositive.

Why it addresses the core tension. The unresolved tension is between wanting to enforce honesty and lacking a reliable instrument to do it. This doesn't pretend the tension is gone — it stops you from acting as if a broken instrument resolves it.

Realistic outcome. Honestly: this lowers legal and fairness risk. It does not catch more cheating. No source here documents a detector that reliably does.

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2. Redesign one assignment to assume AI access, not prohibit it

The failure this addresses. The most striking finding this week is a culture of silence: a study of college use finds the dominant condition is "everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it" — a gap between blanket prohibition and universal practice that drives use underground [10]. Prohibition isn't producing abstention; it's producing concealment.

[10] Ëveryone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about iẗ: College ...

The evidence-based alternative. Institutions are shifting from rule to judgment — from *norma* to *criterio* — designing for disclosed, bounded use rather than a yes/no ban [7]. The instructional-design literature argues this is exactly the competency AI makes decisive — the assignment design, not the policing, is where the work is [9].

[7] De la norma al criterio: cómo las universidades encaran el ... - LinkedIn

[9] El diseño instruccional, la competencia que la IA vuelve decisiva

Implementation:

1. Week 1: Pick one assignment. Add a required disclosure line: what tool, what prompt, what you changed. 2. Weeks 2–4: Shift a portion of the grade to the parts AI can't fake well — in-class reasoning, defense of choices, connection to your specific course material. 3. By midterm: Compare disclosure rates and quality against last term's silent norm. 4. End of semester: Assess whether you can actually see student reasoning better than before.

Why it addresses the core tension. It converts the enforce-honesty problem into a design problem you control, rather than a surveillance problem you can't win.

Realistic outcome. The disclosure-based framing is documented as an institutional direction, not as a measured learning gain. Treat your first run as a pilot. Your results will vary by discipline.

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3. Use AI for formative feedback — keep it out of summative grading

The failure this addresses. The temptation is to offload grading. The evidence says don't. Cambridge's own evaluation found AI is not yet good enough to mark university essays and systematically rewards "style over substance" [21]. That's a direct accreditation- and validity-relevant finding for anyone weighing automated assessment.

The evidence-based alternative. The same technology has stronger support on the formative side. A controlled study of AI feedback documents measurable effects on student work [8], and an RCT found AI tutoring outperformed in-class active learning on the measured outcomes [16]. The split is real: useful for drafting and practice, not yet trustworthy for the grade of record.

[21] AI not yet good enough to mark university essays, rewarding 'style over ...

[8] Effects of Artificial Intelligence Feedback on Students ... - Springer

[16] AI tutoring outperforms in-class active learning: an RCT ... - Nature

Implementation:

1. Week 1: Offer students AI feedback on a *draft*, with the final grade reserved to you. 2. Weeks 2–4: Sample the AI feedback yourself to catch the style-over-substance bias Cambridge flags. 3. By midterm: Decide which assignments benefit from a formative AI pass and which don't.

Why it addresses the core tension. It separates the two questions — *does this help learning* and *can this certify learning* — that vendors deliberately blur. One has positive evidence; the other has a failing grade from Cambridge.

Realistic outcome. The tutoring and feedback gains come from specific study designs; an RCT result is not a guarantee for your course. The grading caution, by contrast, is firm.

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4. Name cognitive offloading in the assignment itself

The failure this addresses. A consistent thread this week is *descarga cognitiva* — students outsourcing the thinking, not just the typing. Education International frames this as a teaching problem faculty can shape, not an inevitability [13], and the technical-education literature ties unmanaged offloading to "metacognitive laziness" [12].

The evidence-based alternative. The systematic review on whether generative AI amplifies or substitutes for student cognition is exactly the open question to make visible to students rather than an-

[13] Intelligence artificielle et déchargement cognitif

[12] IA en la enseñanza técnica: el riesgo de la descarga cognitiva y el ...

swer for them [4]. Build the metacognitive step into the task: require students to mark where the tool did the thinking and where they did.

[4] Amplifier or substitute? A systematic review of generative ...

Implementation:

1. Week 1: Add one reflection prompt — "what did you delegate, and what did you have to understand anyway?" 2. Weeks 2–4: Read those reflections for where understanding actually broke down. 3. End of semester: Use them to identify which skills your assignments stopped requiring.

Why it addresses the core tension. It treats the amplify-vs-substitute question as unresolved — because the review treats it as unresolved — and puts the discrimination work on the student.

Realistic outcome. This is theoretically grounded and has no longitudinal validation in these sources. It costs you minutes per student. That's the honest trade.

Supporting Evidence

This is the methods section. The four briefings above made claims; here is the corpus those claims rest on, where it is thick, and where it is thin enough to see through. Of 4,168 sources surfaced this week, 1,447 fell into the education category. What follows is what the dimensional analysis actually found — including the places where it found a hole.

Dimensional Patterns

Our dimensional analysis sorted education sources across four probes, and the distribution itself is the first finding. The **stakes-and-position** probe returned the largest share — 1,528 argumentative findings — while **purpose-and-question** returned 632. Read that ratio plainly: the corpus this week is far more interested in *who wins and who loses* under AI in higher ed than in *what AI in higher ed is actually for*. That is a discourse arguing about distribution before it has settled the question of purpose, which is usually a sign of a field reacting to deployment rather than designing it.

The **concepts-and-assumptions** probe (1,187 findings) clusters around a single load-bearing assumption: that cognitive offloading is the central risk worth naming. The Spanish- and French-language sources carry this most explicitly — *pereza metacognitiva* and *déchargement cognitif* appear as named constructs, not passing wor-

ries [13], [12]. The English-language corpus tends to route the same concern through governance and detection rather than cognition — a translation gap worth flagging, because it means the same underlying worry gets institutionalized very differently depending on which literature your campus reads.

The **evidence-and-inference** probe (971 findings) is where the corpus is strongest and most contradictory at once. We have a randomized controlled trial showing AI tutoring outperforming in-class active learning [16], a systematic review still unable to resolve whether generative AI amplifies or substitutes for learning [4], and a meta-level finding from Cambridge that AI grading rewards "style over substance" [21]. The evidence is not absent — it is unsettled, and anyone citing a single study as settled is selecting.

[13] Intelligence artificielle et déchargement cognitif

[12] IA en la enseñanza técnica: el riesgo de la descarga cognitiva y el tempo como deontología

[16] AI tutoring outperforms in-class active learning: an RCT

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Point of View — Whose Voice Is Missing

The contradiction and missing-perspectives maps returned **zero formally mapped entries** this week. That is not a clean bill of health; it is a limitation of the instrument. The absence of a populated 'missing_perspectives' table means we cannot give you the clean "instructors X%, students Y%, parents 0.29%" breakdown that better-instrumented weeks produce. What we can say from reading the citable set directly: student voice surfaces almost entirely through the *accused* frame — the Adelphi plaintiff [1], the detection-and-due-process literature [15] — rather than as designers of their own learning. The one source that lets students speak in their own register frames the whole condition as silence: "Everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it" [10].

[1] An Adelphi University student was accused of using AI

[15] AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment: How Opaque Evidence Threatens Due Process

[10] "Everyone's using it, but no one is allowed to talk about it": College ...

Discourse Patterns

The metaphor instrument returned no structured data this week, so we will not manufacture a percentage. But the unstructured pattern in the citable set is legible: governance has become the dominant frame, and it carries a financial metaphor. AI is now described as "fundable" — but only conditional on governance maturity [3]. Watch that move: it reframes a pedagogical question as a credit-worthiness question, and it positions vendors and administrators — not faculty — as the parties who certify readiness.

[3] AI Is Now Fundable In Higher Ed—But Only With Real Governance

Causal attribution splits cleanly on the cheating question. The detection-tool literature attributes integrity failures to *individual* student conduct; the due-process and policy literature attributes them to

structural opacity — tools whose evidence cannot be audited [7]. For a faculty member, the attribution choice is the policy: if you accept the individual frame, you adopt detection; if you accept the structural frame, you redesign assessment.

[7] De la norma al criterio: cómo las universidades encaran el uso de IA

Failure Patterns and Gaps

The structured ‘failure_patterns‘ table was empty this week — zero documented, categorized failures. We flag that as an instrument limitation, not evidence of safety. The narrative failures are visible in the corpus even where the taxonomy didn't catch them: the NPR finding that AI's risks in schools may outweigh benefits [20], surveillance-tool privacy failures [18], and bias reflected back at LGBTIQ+ profiles [19].

[20] Report: The risks of AI in schools outweigh the benefits

[18] Programas de IA para monitorear a estudiantes tienen riesgos de privacidad

[19] Rainbow Ghosting: public support for diversity fades, hate speech rises 38 %, and AI reflects these biases back to LGBTIQ+ profiles

The decision-relevant gap: we cannot advise on long-term learning outcomes, because the corpus is dominated by single-semester studies and policy commentary. The Cal State–OpenAI deal is a case in point — a system-wide ChatGPT contract polarizing the people who teach under it [5], with no longitudinal evidence yet on what it does to learning across a degree.

[5] Cal State's deal for ChatGPT polarizes students and faculty

Secondary Tensions

Beyond the cognition-versus-capability tension the briefings work, two secondary tensions run through the corpus. First, **governance-as-enabler versus governance-as-vendor-capture**: the same governance frameworks pitched as faculty protection [11] are the precondition vendors need to make their products fundable. Second, **detection versus design**: every dollar spent litigating detection accuracy [2] is a dollar not spent on instructional design, the competency the same corpus now calls decisive [9]. These are not mapped with difficulty ratings this week — that machinery returned empty — but they are the fault lines the citable evidence keeps reopening.

[11] How to build AI governance your school or university can actually use

[2] AI Cheating Lawsuits Tracker

[9] El diseño instruccional, la competencia que la IA vuelve decisiva

References

1. An Adelphi University student was accused of using AI to ... - Newsday
2. AI Cheating Lawsuits Tracker — Every Case, Who Won (2026)
3. AI Is Now Fundable In Higher Ed—But Only With Real Governance

4. Amplifier or substitute? A systematic review of generative AI

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8. Effects of Artificial Intelligence Feedback on Students ...

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11. How to build AI governance your school or university can actually use

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14. Las trampas de los estudiantes se están volviendo imposibles de detectar en la era de la IA

15. AI Detection Tools and Academic Punishment: How Opaque Evidence ...

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17. Generative AI Policies at the World's Top Universities: 2026 ...

18. Programas de IA para monitorear a estudiantes tienen riesgos de privacidad

19. Rainbow Ghosting: public support for diversity fades, hate speech rises 38 %, and AI reflects these biases back to LGBTIQ+ profiles

20. Report: The risks of AI in schools outweigh the benefits

21. AI not yet good enough to mark university essays, rewarding 'style over ...

22. The Current State of Play: AI in Higher Education and the Road Ahead