

Qualitative Coding of Senate Retreat on Artificial Intelligence Policies

**Academic Senate Retreat
October 30th, 2025**

Executive Summary

Based on the strongest, most frequently reinforced themes from the tables:

1. AI Literacy and Training is the single most important cross-campus need identified.
2. Ethical guardrails, harm prevention, and confidentiality protections should inform any policy.
3. Clear rules and expectations for assignments are essential to create guardrails.
4. Disclosure and transparency are linked to the ideas of trust and accountability.
5. Flexible, principles-based policy is preferred to rigid prescriptions.
6. The policy should be inclusive, equitable, and reflective of student and staff needs, not only faculty perspectives.
7. The policy should avoid overly negative or impractical frameworks that create burdens or disincentivize responsible innovation.

Summary From Coding Process

At the most recent, 2025 Academic Senate Retreat faculty, staff, students, and administrators gathered to discuss Artificial Intelligence (AI), and policies that govern its use in academia. The participants were presented with examples from other campuses, and brainstormed areas of most and least importance for a policy on our own campus. Across ten tables, participants strongly converge on the need for a unified but adaptable AI policy that is ethically grounded, privacy-protective, and supportive of learning. The most important elements include AI literacy and training, protection of confidential or regulated data, ethical guardrails aligned with institutional values, and clear assignment-level expectations regarding permissible AI use. Broadly, participants view AI as beneficial when it supports learning and is paired with transparent disclosure practices and well-defined guidelines. The participants overall favor flexible, principle-driven policies that can adapt to rapidly evolving technology rather than rigid regulatory frameworks we may not yet understand. There were strong theses concerning privacy, harm reduction, ethics, and DEI impacts, which dominated many discussions. Participants emphasize that policies must ensure safety and mitigate risks associated with mental health, bias, misinformation, and misuse of protected data. They also highlight the necessity of including all campus constituencies, especially students and staff, whose perspectives were noted as missing in many example policies. Negative (“bad”) themes center on fears that policies could become overly prohibitive, impractical, burdensome, or quickly outdated, or could privilege external (capitalist) interests rather than educational values. Concerns about environmental impact, workload, and accuracy of detecting AI use also emerged. In sum, the analysis illustrates a clear preference for pedagogically-informed, ethically grounded policies that enhance rather than restrict learning, while safeguarding confidentiality, fairness, and are guided by our institutional mission.

QUALITATIVE CODING OF TABLE DISCUSSIONS

AI Literacy, Education, and Training

Based on the strongest cross-table consensus, the institution should:

1. Establish mandatory baseline AI literacy modules for students, faculty, and staff, updated regularly (e.g., CSU Learn modules).
2. Provide ongoing training, including:
 - Case studies and examples of appropriate and inappropriate AI use
 - Discipline-specific guidance
 - Workshops and faculty development sessions
3. Ensure that students graduate with demonstrable competencies in:
 - Effective prompt writing
 - Understanding how AI systems work, their limitations, and associated risks
 - How to evaluate AI output accuracy
 - Ethical, transparent, and academic-integrity-aligned uses of AI
4. Provide learning opportunities rather than purely restrictive messaging.

Instruction and Assessment

To maintain academic quality and clarity:

1. Every course should include explicit expectations for AI use, specifying:
 - Prohibited uses
 - Permitted uses
 - Encouraged uses
 - Required uses, where relevant
2. Faculty must design assignments with AI in mind, recognizing that generative tools can meaningfully shape student work (particularly for exams, essays, writing tasks, and concept generation).
3. The policy should support faculty academic freedom to define AI use within their courses.
4. Provide templates and sample language for syllabi, assignment sheets, disclosures, and classroom guidance.

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Data Protection

The policy must contain clear rules prohibiting:

1. Uploading or entering confidential or protected information into generative AI tools, including:
 - FERPA-protected student information
 - HIPAA-regulated medical information
 - HR records or personnel data
 - IRB-related or unpublished research data
 - Copyrighted or proprietary materials
2. Use of AI systems without verifying compliance with university data security requirements.
3. Tools known to store, retain, or resell input data that may compromise confidentiality.

Provide campus-wide FAQs, decision trees, and definitions to support safe data handling.

Ethical Guardrails and Harm Prevention

Reflecting some of the most strongly weighted concerns:

1. The policy should explicitly address ethical clarity, outlining expectations for:
 - Bias mitigation
 - Nondiscrimination
 - Accessibility
 - Avoiding harm to mental health, well-being, and academic belonging
2. AI use must align with the campus mission and values, including:
 - Human dignity
 - Educational equity
 - Inclusive learning practices
3. Systems should undergo ethical review processes when proposed for campuswide implementation.

Disclosure and Transparency Requirements

Given consistent cross-table emphasis:

1. Students and faculty must disclose when and how AI tools were used in academic and scholarly work.
2. Disclosures should specify:
 - The tool used
 - The purpose of use
 - The nature and extent of AI-generated contributions
3. Attribution practices (including when AI qualifies as a “co-author”) should follow emerging scholarly norms.
4. Transparency is required in instructional, research, committee, and administrative contexts.

Research-Specific Requirements

The policy must include explicit guidance for:

1. AI use in research, including:
 - Data security
 - Analysis validity
 - Publication responsibilities
 - IRB considerations
2. Requirements for disclosing AI use in grant proposals, manuscripts, and presentations.
3. Maintaining confidentiality of participants, collaborators, and sensitive data.

Policy and Implementation

To ensure ongoing adaptability:

1. Establish a standing AI Policy Committee composed of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and technical experts.

2. Support decentralized interpretation of the policy across colleges while maintaining consistent university-wide principles.
3. Provide committees and working groups with structured support for using AI in administrative tasks.
4. Regularly update the policy in response to technological change and campus feedback.

Student and Staff Inclusion

Because many tables noted missing perspectives:

1. Incorporate student representation in AI policy development, assessment, and revision.
2. Develop staff-specific guidelines, recognizing their central role in operations, advising, and service delivery.

Communication and Accessibility

The university should ensure:

1. All policy documents are clear, concise, plainly written, and highly accessible to students and employees.
2. FAQs, case studies, and examples are widely available.
3. Guidance is disseminated through multiple channels (orientation, LMS, CSU Learn, workshops).

MOST COMMON TERMS (USEFUL, BAD, OVERALL)

MOST COMMON “USEFUL” TERMS (frequency by asterisk weighting)

1. AI literacy / training / modules
2. Guidelines / rules / expectations
3. Disclosure / attribution / transparency
4. Privacy / confidential data / FERPA / HIPAA
5. Ethics / harm / guardrails / DEI
6. Assignment design / permitted–prohibited
7. Adaptability / principles / decentralized
8. Case studies / examples / FAQ

MOST COMMON “BAD” TERMS

1. Negative / restrictive / prohibitive policy framing
2. Impractical procedures
3. Capitalism-centered data weighting
4. Workload burdens
5. Environmental concerns
6. Unreliable definitions
7. Lack of clear guidelines

MOST COMMON TERMS OVERALL (combining all tables)

1. AI literacy / training (very high: >30 asterisk equivalents)

2. Ethics / harm reduction / DEI (very high)
3. Privacy / confidentiality / protected data
4. Assignment expectations
5. Guiding principles / adaptable frameworks
6. Disclosure requirements
7. Committee coordination / governance
8. Student learning opportunities

FREQUENCY TABLE OF THEMES (weighted by total asterisks)

Theme	Weighted Frequency Estimate
Ethics, Harm, Privacy, Confidentiality	~50–55
AI Literacy, Training, Instruction	~45–50
Assignment Expectations & Classroom Integration	~20–25
Disclosure & Transparency	~15–20
Policy Architecture & Adaptability	~15–20
Use Cases, Guardrails, Prohibited Uses	~15
Missing Elements (student voice, staff needs, research policy)	~10–15
Bad Themes (regulatory burden, impracticality)	~10

THEMATIC CATEGORIES (Grounded Theory Coding)

Weighted by number of asterisks; items with many * dominate categories.

THEME A — Foundational Policy Architecture

(High-frequency, heavily weighted)

Includes:

- Clear guidelines, definitions, purpose, prohibited uses, permitted uses
- Decentralized, adaptable, principles-based frameworks
- Different policies for different campus audiences (students, faculty, staff, HR, research)
- Disclosure requirements
- Consistency with CSU mission/values
- Clarity, accessibility, and FAQ resources

High-weight items:

- Expectations in assignments (*****)
- Avoid harm, ethics, DEI, well-being *****
- Confidentiality/privacy of student, research, HR data *****
- University-wide adaptable guiding principles *****
- Rules prohibiting uploading copyrighted or protected data *****
- AI policy must cover faculty & staff *****
- AI literacy needed *****

THEME B — Ethics, Safety, and Privacy

Includes:

- Protecting confidential/regulated data (FERPA, HIPAA)
- Avoiding harm: mental health, safety, DEI, ethics
- Environmental impact
- Accountability, transparency

High-weight examples:

- Avoid harm, articulate guardrails *****
- Confidentiality/privacy (student, IRB, HR) *****
- Environmental impact concerns ** / Table 3 “bad”
- Prohibited materials (FERPA/HIPAA) **

THEME C — Teaching, Learning, and AI Literacy

Includes:

- AI literacy modules (students, faculty, staff)
- Training, case studies, examples
- Skill development and efficiency
- Learning opportunities
- Designing assignments with AI in mind
- Student understanding of prompting, citation, appropriate use

High-weight items:

- AI training modules (CSU Learn) *****
- AI literacy needed *****
- Instruction for students ***
- Design assignments with AI in mind *****
- Teach students how to use AI efficiently
- Understanding how chatbots/note-taking tools work **
- Students graduating with appropriate AI skillsets

THEME D — Disclosure, Transparency, and Attribution

Includes:

- Disclosing when AI is used
- Attribution norms
- Faculty and student responsibilities for transparency
- Policies for co-authorship with AI

High-weight items:

- Student AI use attribution ***
- Faculty disclosure of AI use ****
- Disclosure policy (AI as co-author) **
- Requirement of disclosure *

THEME E — Governance and Institutional Processes

Includes:

- Committee work

- Campus-wide coordination
- Adapting policy over time
- Inclusion of missing voices (students, staff)
- Research protections
- HR-specific AI policies
- Workload concerns
- Tensions between academic freedom and regulation

High-weight examples:

- Good for committee work *****
- Student voice missing in policy ****
- Faculty guidelines on research, RTP missing ****
- HR policy on AI ****

THEME F — Use Cases, Guardrails, and Limitations

Includes:

- What is allowed, prohibited, encouraged, required
- Case examples, FAQs
- Limits on confidential data
- Concerns about capitalism-centric policy framing
- Need for adaptable definitions due to rapidly changing AI tech

High-weight examples:

- Clear prohibited/permitted/required assignment guidance
- Case examples ***
- Acknowledge limitations of AI **
- Bad: impractical procedures
- Bad: specific definitions quickly outdated
- Bad: over-regulation / negative-only policy

SUMMARY OF “USEFUL” AND “BAD” CATEGORIES

Weighted by asterisks; repeated terms grouped.

USEFUL Themes (Aggregated, Most Weighted First)

Theme	Dominant Terms	Weight Indicators
AI Literacy & Training	training modules, case studies, instruction, examples	***** ; ***
Clear Rules & Guardrails	rules for students/faculty, prohibited uses, confidentiality, copyright	***** ; **
Disclosure & Transparency	disclosure policy, attribution, co-author rules	**** ; *** ; **
Privacy & Confidential Data Protection	FERPA, HIPAA, IRB, research data	***** ; **

Theme	Dominant Terms	Weight Indicators
Adaptive, Principles-Based Policy	short statements, flexible, audience-specific	*****
Assignment Expectations	prohibited/permitted/required	*****
AI Literacy for campus	AI literacy needed	*****
Resources & Support	FAQs, definitions, examples, decentralized policy, links to guidelines	* to ***

“BAD” Themes (Aggregated)

Category	Common Terms	Weight Indicators
Negative, Prohibitive Policies	“all do-nots,” overly negative student guidelines	*
Impractical or Rigid Procedures	impractical steps, specific definitions that will become obsolete	*
Capitalist Weighting of Data	capitalism vs. education framing	*
Regulatory Overload & Workload Burden	regulatory framing, workload strain, consequences focus	*
Environmental Impact	included as a “bad” concern in Table 3	*
Lack of Clarity (Classroom, Guidelines)	limited guidance for classroom instruction	*
Accuracy Checking Burden	expectation that faculty verify AI outputs	*

RAW DATA

Table 1

Good for committee work *****

Guidelines for students on non-academic work *

Guidelines/suggestions for how to present Chancellor Office policies *

Guidelines/suggestions for what skills are needed, how to use *

Guidelines/suggestions for how to get AI for learning versus AI for chatting ***

Teach students how to use AI more efficiently

Guidelines include impact on the environment ***

Table 2

Useful: rules for students and faculty such as not uploading copyrighted material to a generative AI tool *****

Useful: a disclosure policy such as including AI as a co-author **

Useful: regular trainings with concrete examples and case studies

Missing: Guidelines for assessment considering different disciplines, practical suggestions *

Bad: Weight given to the data and information in policies focused on capitalism versus education *

Table 3

Useful: AI instruction for students ***

Useful: Prohibited use list such as HIPPA and FERPA information **

Useful: value statement *

Useful: privacy, security, accountability, transparency

Useful: targeting various audiences such as student, faculty, staff, administration, with individual use and limits

Useful: Principles more likely to keep pace with dynamic landscape – start short with adaptable statements

Bad: regulatory framing versus student focused

Bad: workload

Bad: environmental impact of AI

Guiding principles university wide that are adaptable at college,, department levels which allows responsivity to curricular needs *****

Policy on use in human resources *****

Confidentiality of data or privacy such as student data, IRB, or research data *****

Table 4

Academic freedom for faculty while maintaining student privacy *

Give students a learning opportunity ***

Have explicit rulings not a complete prohibition **

Faculty disclosure for AI use *****

Give proper AI training to both students and faculty *****

Table 5

Requirement of Disclosure – when they use AI and how *

Clear guidance for usage for faculty such as prohibited, permitted, encouraged, required for each assignment

Design assignments with AI in mind, such as exams, essays *****

Awareness on how to use it efficiently or beneficially *

MISSING: frustration between time taken to grade versus time to create if using AI

Making sure graduates still competitive and valuable post graduation with appropriate skillset

Research policy for students and faculty

Table 6

Useful: confidential information
Useful: Case examples ***
Useful: FAQ *
Useful: Definitions
Useful: Policies generate by various group such as councils and committees on campus
Useful: pros and cons of AI
Useful: Provide links to campus guidelines such as IE, thesis office, RTP, teaching, grading, students. *
Useful: Very clear purpose *
Useful: AI policy decentralized like RTP policy
Useful: Acknowledge attributes and limitations **
Useful: Disclose use of generative AI ****
Useful: Coverage of personal information, confidential, and what not to input

BAD: Guidance to cite AI tools
BAD: How to check accuracy of AI outputs
BAD: Consequences for not following policies
BAD: AI literacy, AI instruction for employees and students
BAD: Student guidelines extremely limited and negative
BAD: Lack of clear guidelines for classroom instructions

MISSING: Student voice was missing in policy ****
MISSING: Staff guidelines are missing
MISSING: Faculty guidelines on research, publications, rtp ****
MISSING: FAQ

Table 7

Intellectual property/integrity policy *
All faculty should have an AI policy
Provide recommendations at different levels
Zero tolerance to faculty allowed and need institution to support enforcing policies *

BAD: Specific AI definition problematic if AI technology changes

Table 8

Expectations in assignments such as prohibited, permitted, encouraged, required

AI literacy for faculty students *
Require attribution and transparency in student AI use ***

BAD: policy procedures impractical *
BAD: Fairness and nondiscrimination and how to mitigate

USEFUL: AI training modules CSU Learn updated regularly *****

Table 9

Avoid harm and articulate guardrails for safety, mental health, well being, ethics, diversity, equity, inclusion *****

Policy should have ethical clarity and align with CSULB mission and values *****

Micro/macro discernment per content area *

Course modules on AI campus wide *

Table 10

Cover faculty and staff *****

Student ad hoc committee *****

Get people from workforce to submit to college information

FAQ on policy *

Plainly written and straight-forward to faculty and student, inclusive **

AI policy – students take something with shared learning outcomes that student have to graduate including how to use promptly, how to write prompt, how to cite and disclose use *****

Understand AI chatbox and note taking factors and how they work **

Is it our responsibility to teach them how to use AI *

Philosophy of how this affects student knowledge, reflection of the process **

AI literacy is needed *****

BAD: very negative policy with all do nots *