University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees

UNC & Generative AI

Board of Trustees Meeting

December 12, 2025

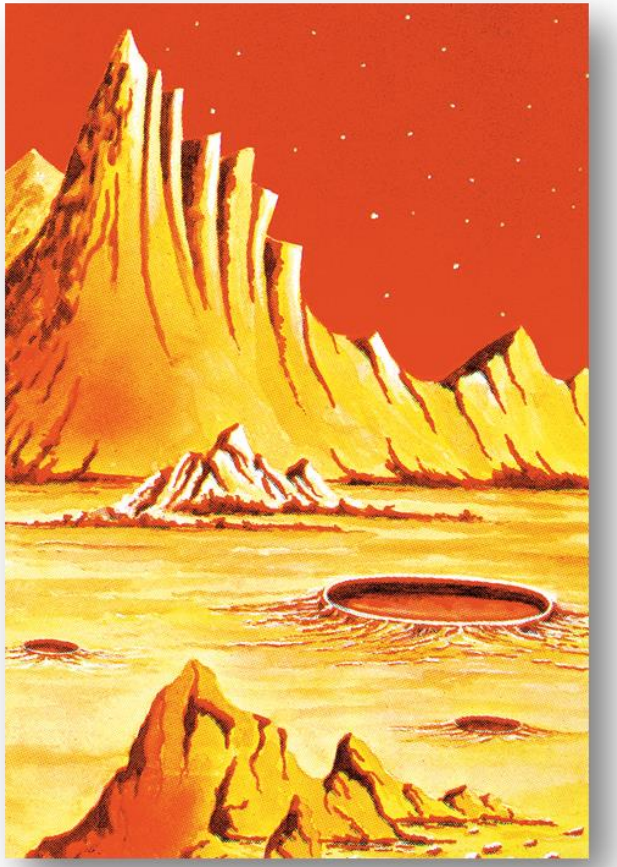
UNC & Generative AI: Board Report

Presentation Structure

- Institutional update
  - Current status
  - FY26 priorities
  - Looking ahead
- Case Study – College of Natural and Health Sciences College Priority

Changing Competitive Landscape

- Increasing demand for GenAI skills
- Evolving external funding priorities
- Industry partnerships & higher education consortia



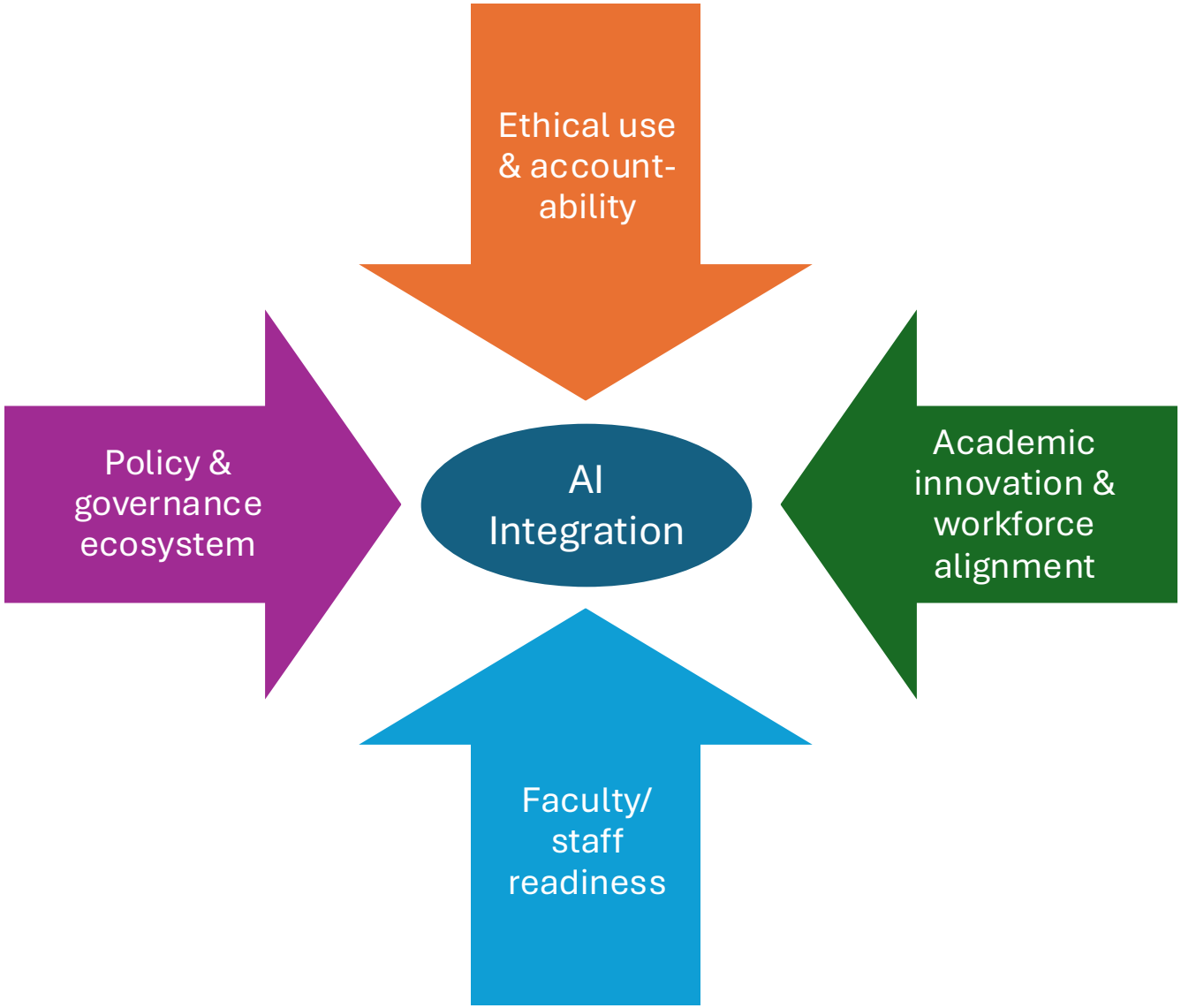
UNC's Current State

Task Force findings: ethical use, policy gaps, PD needs

High faculty/staff usage; mixed student perceptions

Readiness → Capacity-Building Pathway

Strategic Priorities



Looking Ahead

Coordinated institutional strategy

Low-cost/high-impact approach

Consistent student experience

Innovation Hub vision

AI Initiatives in the College of Natural & Health Sciences

Short Term Goals

- Increase student and faculty AI literacy
- Explore changes in teaching with the advent of discipline specific AI

AI Introduced as a College Priority

- Announced at the College Launch
- Established AI in teaching as a strategic focus for AY 25–26
- Appointed a Faculty Associate to the Dean (FAD) for AI

FAD Charge

- Facilitating unit discussions on AI aimed to produce position statement on assessment, pedagogy, and curriculum
- Exploring funding opportunities supporting the role of AI in instruction
- Generating a list of AI platforms, with commentary

Expert Discussions on AI

Opportunities

- Text, audio, video
- Discipline specific applications
- Prompt engineering and output analysis
- Higher level reasoning
- Tens of millions of jobs created
- Over $15T added to the global economy by 2030

Historical Parallels in Education & Technology

1. The Calculator (1970s–1980s)

Fear:

Worry that students would **lose basic arithmetic skills** and "never learn to think for themselves."

Reality:

Calculators **improved conceptual understanding** and allowed students to focus on **problem-solving and reasoning.**

Parallel to AI:

Similar arguments now claim AI will prevent students from thinking critically — but used correctly, AI can shift focus to higher-level reasoning.

2. The Word Processor (1980s–1990s)

Fear:

Educators believed students would **stop learning proper grammar and handwriting** and rely on autocorrect.

Reality:

Writing quality **improved**, since revising and reorganizing became easier.

Students spent more time refining ideas instead of recopying drafts.

Parallel to AI:

AI writing assistants raise the same concern, but they can help students learn revision, organization, and clarity if used ethically.

Historical Parallels in Education & Technology

3. The Internet (1990s–2000s)

Fear:

Teachers feared students would **copy-paste everything**, skip reading books, and depend on Google.

Reality:

The Internet democratized access to **global knowledge and open education**. Shift from information scarcity to **information literacy**—learning to judge credibility.

Parallel to AI:

AI now challenges us to teach **prompt literacy** and **critical evaluation of model outputs** rather than memorization.

4. Smartphones & Tablets (2010s)

Fear:

They'd cause distraction, destroy attention spans, and make handwriting obsolete.

Reality:

Mobile learning enabled **accessibility, real-time collaboration, and inclusivity**.

The key problem was **unstructured use**, not the devices themselves.

Parallel to AI:

AI can be equally powerful if integrated intentionally — it's the pedagogy, not the tool, that determines the outcome.

Historical Parallels in Education & Technology

Similar historical parallels for

- The Printing Press (15th century)
- The Industrial Revolution (18th–19th century)
- Electricity (late 1800s)
- The Telephone (1870s–1900s)
- Motion Pictures and Radio (early 1900s)
- Personal Computers and the Internet (1970s–1990s)
- Robotics and Automation (1950s–2000s)
- The Internet and Social Media (2000s–2010s)

Expert Discussions on AI

Misconceptions

The Pattern:

Each time society encountered a transformative technology:

Fear → Resistance → Adaptation → Integration.

The **nature of work shifted**, but employment and creativity often expanded.

Humans adapted by developing new **skills, ethics, and policies** around the new tools.

Expert Discussions on AI

Ethical Considerations

- Academic Dishonesty
- Equity and bias
- Environmental impact
- Intellectual property
- Aid to harm

Advisory Council

- **Advisory Council Engagement**
  - Updated community partners on college progress in AI, inquired about AI advances/usage in represented industries and sectors, and solicited feedback.
- **Advisory Council Feedback**
  - Awareness of AI assistance. Examples include imaging analysis, medical records, data analysis, and operational efficiencies
  - Prompt engineering
  - Critical analysis of output

College Next Steps

- **Discipline specific position statements** on assessment, pedagogy, and curriculum
- **AI Hub for Instruction – DOE grant** ($2.1M) submitted in December
  - **Grant Goals:** Build faculty capacity, strengthen AI literacy, and establish a regional model for evidence-based AI integration
  - **Grant Activities include:**
    - A 3-badge faculty micro-credential pathway
    - an AI community of practice and an AI Faculty Fellows Program
    - a student AI leader corps
    - regional outreach through summits and teaching institutes

Longterm Goals

- Responsible AI is embedded across the curriculum
- Students graduate AI-literate and workforce-ready
- UNC is recognized as a national leader in AI-embedded teaching

Thank You!