# Reducing Points of Friction With AI: Making Institutional Processes More Accessible, Equitable and Efficient

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# Webcast| Reducing Points of Friction With AI: Making Institutional Processes More Accessible, Equitable and Efficient

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**Colleen Flaherty,**
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## Panelists:

**Keosha Varela,**
Founder and Principal at Mission & Purpose Communications

**C. Edward Watson,**
Vice President, Digital Innovation at AAC&U

**Ravi Pendse,**
Vice President, IT, and CIO at the University of Michigan

**Inside Higher Ed**

# About Our Deep Dive Report

**Scope:**
- Investigate how colleges and universities are leveraging AI, including to demystify and enhance student-facing processes
- Look at how leading institutions are approaching AI from an enterprise perspective
- Consider best practices for incorporating AI into institutional processes, especially with respect to access and equity

**Sponsor:**
AWS

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Keosha Varela

**Reducing Points of Friction With AI:** Making Institutional Processes More Accessible, Equitable and Efficient

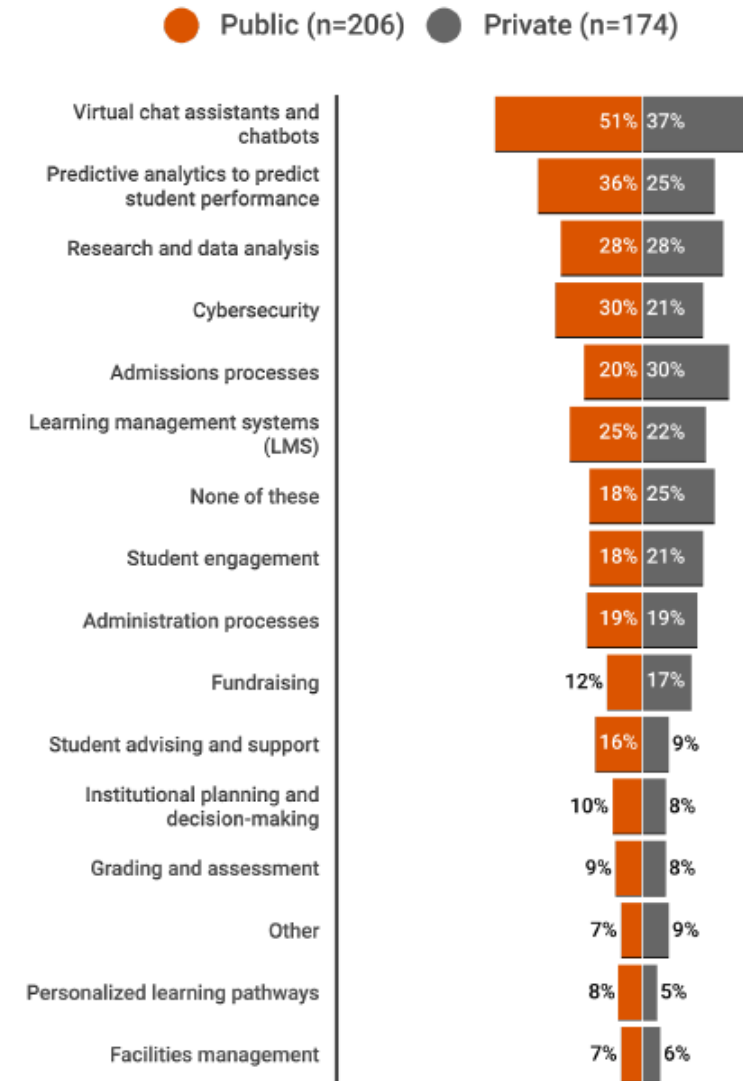*By Keosha Varela*

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# How AI Is Transforming the Higher Ed Landscape

"**The difference between 2023 and 2024 is moving from a year of experiment to a year of design.**"

—Trey Conatser, director of the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching at the University of Kentucky

**Presidents on How Their Institutions Are Using AI**

🔴 Public (n=206)  ⚫ Private (n=174)

| Category | Public | Private |
|---|---|---|
| Virtual chat assistants and chatbots | 51% | 37% |
| Predictive analytics to predict student performance | 36% | 25% |
| Research and data analysis | 28% | 28% |
| Cybersecurity | 30% | 21% |
| Admissions processes | 20% | 30% |
| Learning management systems (LMS) | 25% | 22% |
| None of these | 18% | 25% |
| Student engagement | 18% | 21% |
| Administration processes | 19% | 19% |
| Fundraising | 12% | 17% |
| Student advising and support | 16% | 9% |
| Institutional planning and decision-making | 10% | 8% |
| Grading and assessment | 9% | 8% |
| Other | 7% | 9% |
| Personalized learning pathways | 8% | 5% |
| Facilities management | 7% | 6% |

Source: 2024 Survey of College and University Presidents, *Inside Higher Ed* and Hanover Research

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# Optimizing Student Processes to Boost Success



Pounce at Georgia State University, a chatbot named after the institution's beloved mascot, seen above, reduced summer melt by helping incoming students navigate enrollment at all hours of the day or night. It's since been deployed in other contexts, including the classroom.

Credit: Georgia State University

**Examples of how AI is being deployed to improve student-facing processes:**

- Aiding enrollment at Georgia State University
- Improving speed and transparency around financial aid at Arizona State University and Highline College
- Supplementing the work of advisers at Southern New Hampshire University
- Supporting adult learners

# Safeguarding Equity: Combating AI Bias in Higher Ed

"The best technologies will expand opportunities for more people to learn about AI, will give more power to students who are already disadvantaged within the education system, and will be audited."

—Randi Williams, a member MIT's Responsible AI for Social Empowerment (RAISE) team and program manager at the Algorithmic Justice League

Experts urge careful consideration of new AI tools and applications, including through:

- Broad stakeholder engagement/diversity of voices and perspectives
- Third-party audits

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# Case Studies in Enterprise AI

### The University of Michigan's
### 3 Core AI Platforms:



**U-M GPT**

Provides free access to GPT-4 Turbo, DALL-E 3, and other popular large language models.

**U-M Maizey**

Upload a custom dataset to create a personalized GPT experience you can keep private or share with others.

**U-M GPT Toolkit**

Designed for those who require full control over their AI environments and models.
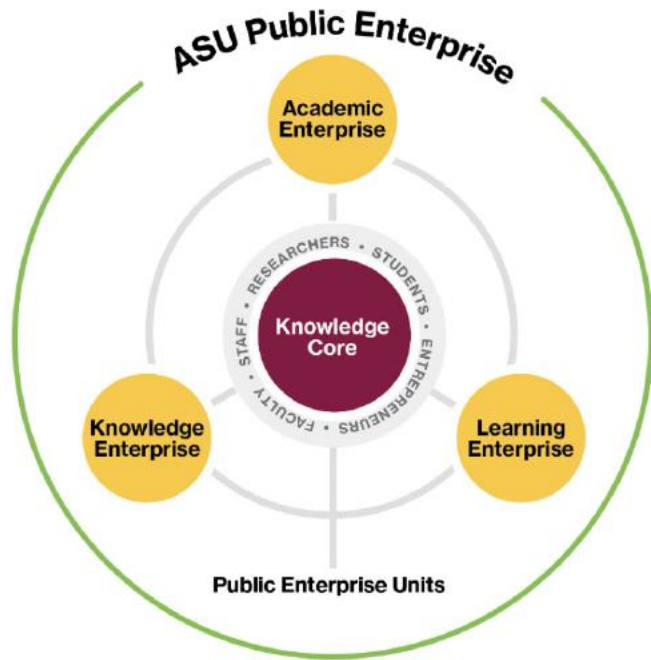
Source: The University of Michigan

**U Michigan's
AI architecture is:**

- Flexible
- Private
- Customizable
- Designed with faculty, staff, students (and the general public) in mind

*U-M Maizey tool has a featured "verify" button to promote fact-checking

# Case Studies in Enterprise AI (Cont.)



ASU says its public enterprise approach to AI harnesses the power of the university's knowledge core to drive cutting-edge and innovative solutions. The university says its AI Innovation Challenge, meanwhile, puts faculty and staff at the forefront of discovery and implementation.

Source: Arizona State University

"It does behoove universities who are going to differentiate themselves at this moment in time by actually having a comprehensive vision for the end way in which AI can be an important catalyst—and certainly an important enabler—of the mission or the vision of the institution."

—Lev Gonick, enterprise chief information officer at Arizona State University

# Final Thoughts: Responsible AI Adoption

**Considerations for scaling AI:**

- Promote leadership buy-in

- Leverage partners to address funding concerns

- Assess readiness

**Considerations for equity, access and student success:**

- Shape future-ready graduates (and thinkers)

- Mind the growing AI divide within higher ed

- Use AI to supplement, not replace, the human element in higher ed

**"Maybe six state schools can work together. And if each were to give a developer, that would be six developers. That's what Michigan had—we had six full-stack developers who helped build this … I encourage people to say, 'Focus on the art of possible.'"**

—Ravi Pendse, vice president for information technology and chief information officer at the University of Michigan

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# Panel Discussion

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# Sponsor Chat

**Kristi Wellington-Baker,**

Higher Education Student Experience Strategy Lead,

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**Sara Custer,**

Editor-in-Chief,

*Inside Higher Ed*

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# Audience Q & A

# Thank you!

Download "Reducing Points of Friction With AI: Making Institutional Processes More Accessible, Equitable and Efficient," for free here.