

The AI Mind and Meaning Making

Imagining
THE
Digital
Future
CENTER

Lee Rainie
Montclair State
4.15.25

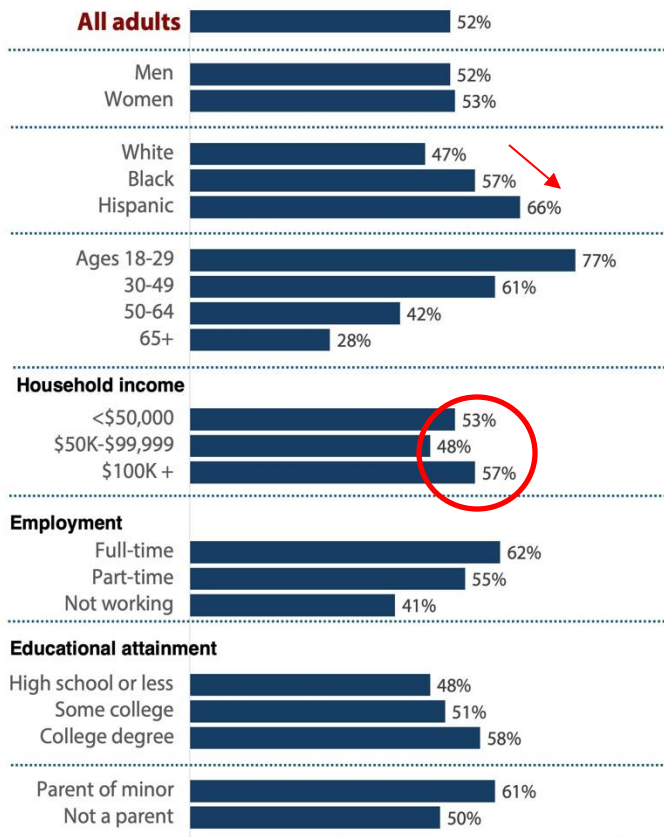




<https://imaginingthedigitalfuture.org/reports-and-publications/close-encounters-of-the-ai-kind/>

Half of American adults use AI large language models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot or Claude

% of U.S. adults who ever use (AI) large language models



65% of users have had **spoken conversations** involving back-and-forth interactions with an LLM, including **34%** who regularly do this at least several times a week

49% of LLM users think the models they use **are smarter than they are**

76% of LLM users are satisfied with the performance of LLMs, including **25%** who are very satisfied

54% say their use of LLMs has improved their **productivity** a lot/somewhat; **42%** say their use has improved their **creativity**

Human-like traits

- **39%** say the main LLM they use shows the capacity **to think and reason** at least some of the time.
- **32%** say it seems to have a **sense of humor**.
- **25%** say it acts like it **makes moral judgments** about right and wrong.
- **24%** say it seems like it expresses **hope**.
- **17%** say it seems to respond **sarcastically**.
- **11%** say it seems to express **sadness**.

Darker impacts

- **50%** of LLM users say they have felt **lazy** when they use LLMs.
- **35%** have felt they were **cheating**.
- **35%** have felt frustrated or **confused**.
- **33%** have felt they were becoming **too dependent** on LLMs for answers rather than thinking through things themselves.
- **23%** say they made a **significant mistake or bad decision** by relying on information generated by LLMs.
- **21%** have felt **manipulated** by the model.

This evolution is challenging



**There will be an ever-shifting
boundary between what's
human intelligence and what's
machine intelligence**

This evolution challenges us all to reimagine

...



Who we are: What happens when superior intelligence is all around us?



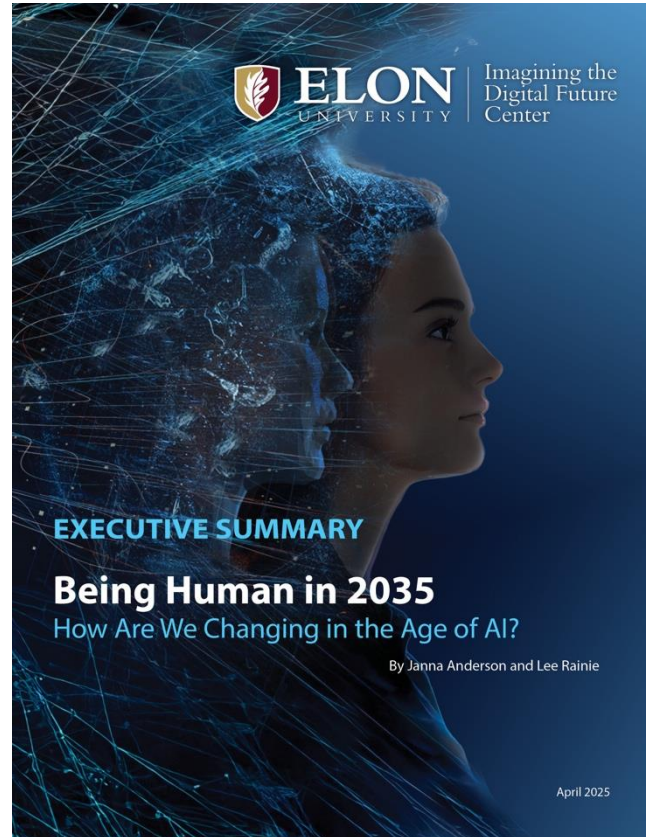
What we do: How do we change as GenAI agents help us and represent us?



How we connect: What becomes of trust as GenAI content becomes part of civic news and info ecology?



How we think: What shifts occur in our decision-making when augmented intelligence is everywhere?



<https://imaginingthedigitalfuture.org/reports-and-publications/being-human-in-2035/>

More negatively than positively

Capacity and willingness to think deeply about complex concepts

More **negative**
change than positive

More **positive** change
than negative

Fairly equal positive,
negative change

Little or no
change

50%

21%

21%

7%

Social and emotional intelligence

50%

14%

19%

14%

Confidence in their own native abilities

48%

16%

22%

7%

Trust in widely shared values and cultural norms

48%

10%

24%

11%

Mental well-being

45%

14%

28%

8%

Empathy and application of moral judgment

45%

12%

25%

12%

Individual agency, the ability to act independently in the world

44%

29%

16%

8%

Self-identity, meaning, and purpose in life

39%

18%

24%

14%

Metacognition, the ability to think analytically about thinking

36%

27%

20%

14%

More positively than negatively

Instrumental
External
Actionable

Curiosity and capacity to learn

29%

42%

23%

5%

Decision-making and problem-solving abilities

30%

40%

25%

3%

Innovative thinking and creativity

30%

39%

25%

3%

A photograph of four students in a classroom. Two students in the foreground are looking at a tablet together, smiling. In the background, two other students are working on a laptop. The scene is brightly lit and shows a modern educational environment.

Leading Through Disruption: Higher Education Executives Assess AI's Impacts on Teaching and Learning

**A survey of college and university leaders
provides a status report on the fast-moving
changes taking place on the nation's campuses**

BY **C. Edward Watson**, AAC&U

Lee Rainle, Elon University's
Imagining the Digital Future Center



Imagining the
Digital Future
Center

https://imaginingthedigitalfuture.org/collaborations/ai_higher_ed_survey_jan2025/



ELON
UNIVERSITY

Imagining the
Digital Future
Center



Generative AI and higher education survey

In the next five years, how much do you think Generative AI tools will affect the typical teaching model at your institution?



Note: Leaders of larger schools (>10,000 students) were far more likely to predict significant change than leaders of small or medium-sized schools.



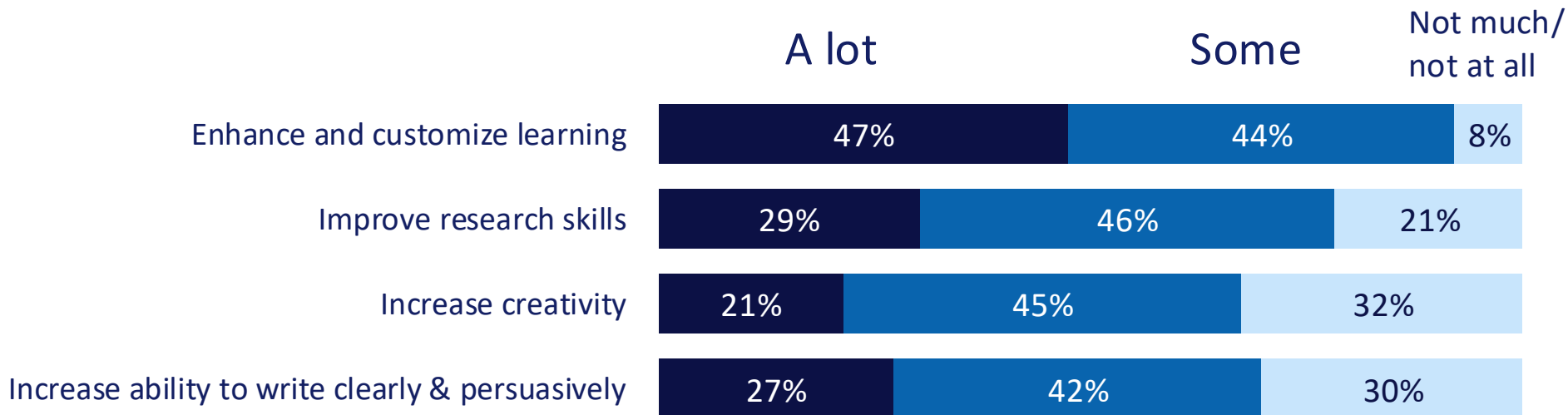
ELON
UNIVERSITY

Imagining the
Digital Future
Center



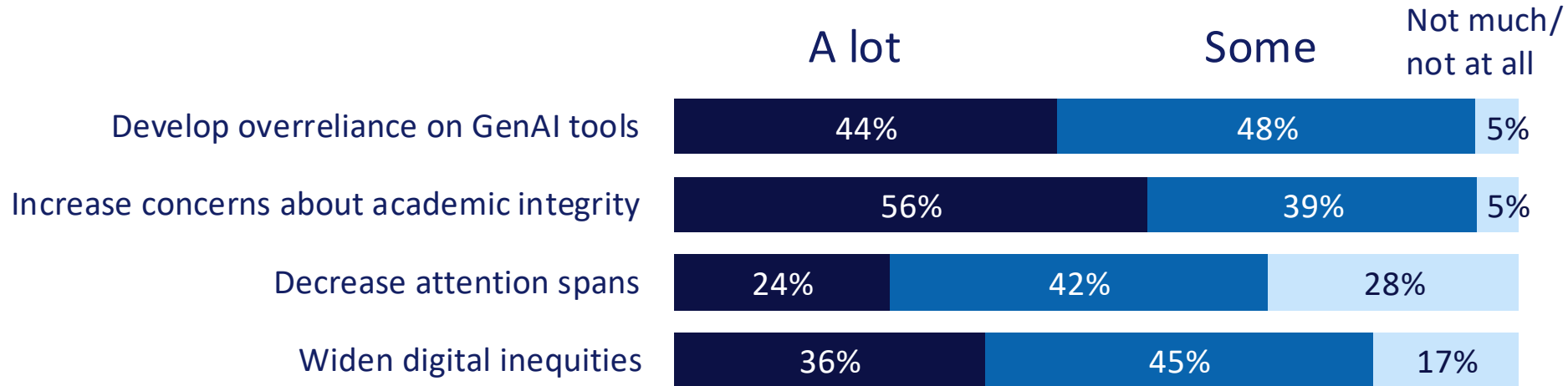
Generative AI and higher education survey

To what extent do you believe Generative AI tools may impact students in the future when it comes to these aspects of their academic lives?



Those who did not answer are not shown. Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Survey by AAC&U and Elon University, Nov. 4-Dec. 7, 2024

To what extent do you believe Generative AI tools may impact students in the future when it comes to these aspects of their academic lives?



Imagining THE Digital Future CENTER

Lee Rainie
Director ITDF
lrainie@elon.edu

 ELON UNIVERSITY