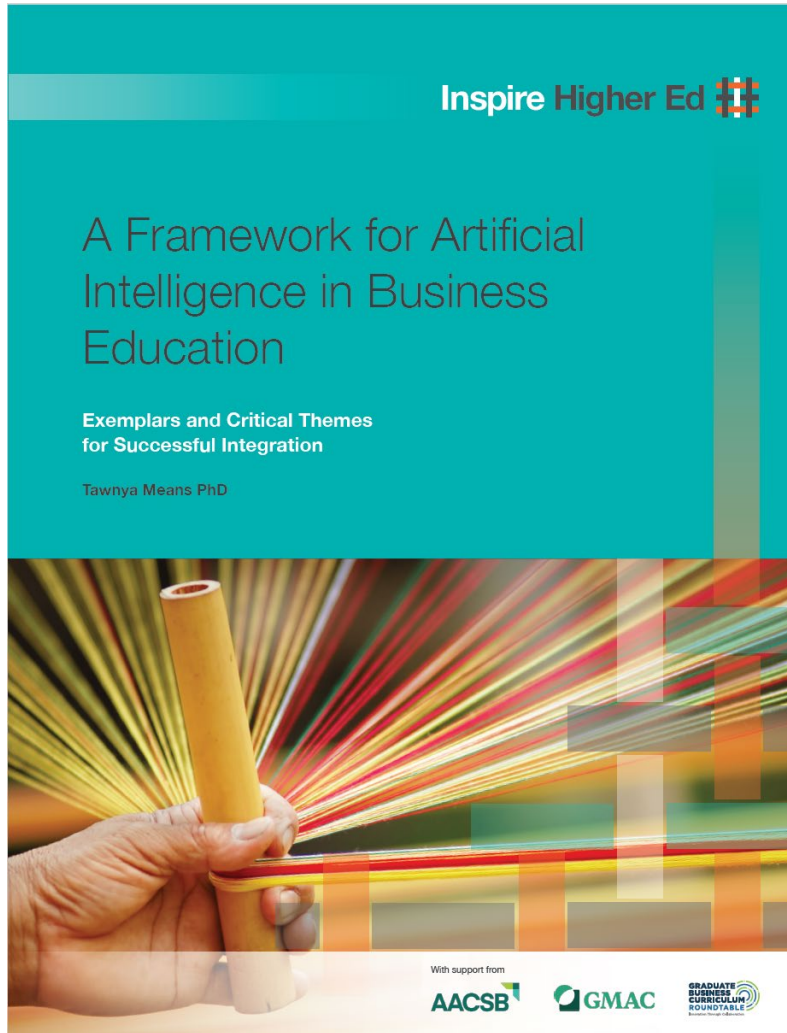


Navigating the AI Revolution in Business Education

Introducing a strategic guide for higher education leaders facing unprecedented transformation in business curricula and student expectations.



INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT



Download the report

January 2026





The Urgency of This Moment

50%

Student Demand

Prospective students say AI coursework is essential (up from 29% in 2022)

47%

Policy Adoption

Business schools have established formal AI/GenAI governance policies (AACSB 2025)

#1

Employer Priority

Global employers ranked AI tool skills as most important for hiring decisions

The gap between student expectations and institutional readiness has never been wider. This is more than technology—it's about relevance.

About the Report

Community of Practice

A snapshot of schools who voluntarily shared their approaches, documenting real approaches from practicing institutions, not prescribing theoretical answers or one-size-fits-all solutions

Rapid Evolution

Expanded from 26 schools (July 2025) to 48 schools (January 2026), reflecting accelerating adoption and innovation

Institutional Diversity

R1 research universities to regional comprehensives, public to private, domestic to international—diversity that validates findings

Diversity validates findings: When patterns emerge consistently across institutions with vastly different resources, missions, and contexts, those patterns represent genuine convergence rather than context-specific solutions. The themes documented here transcend institutional type.

Themes and Insights

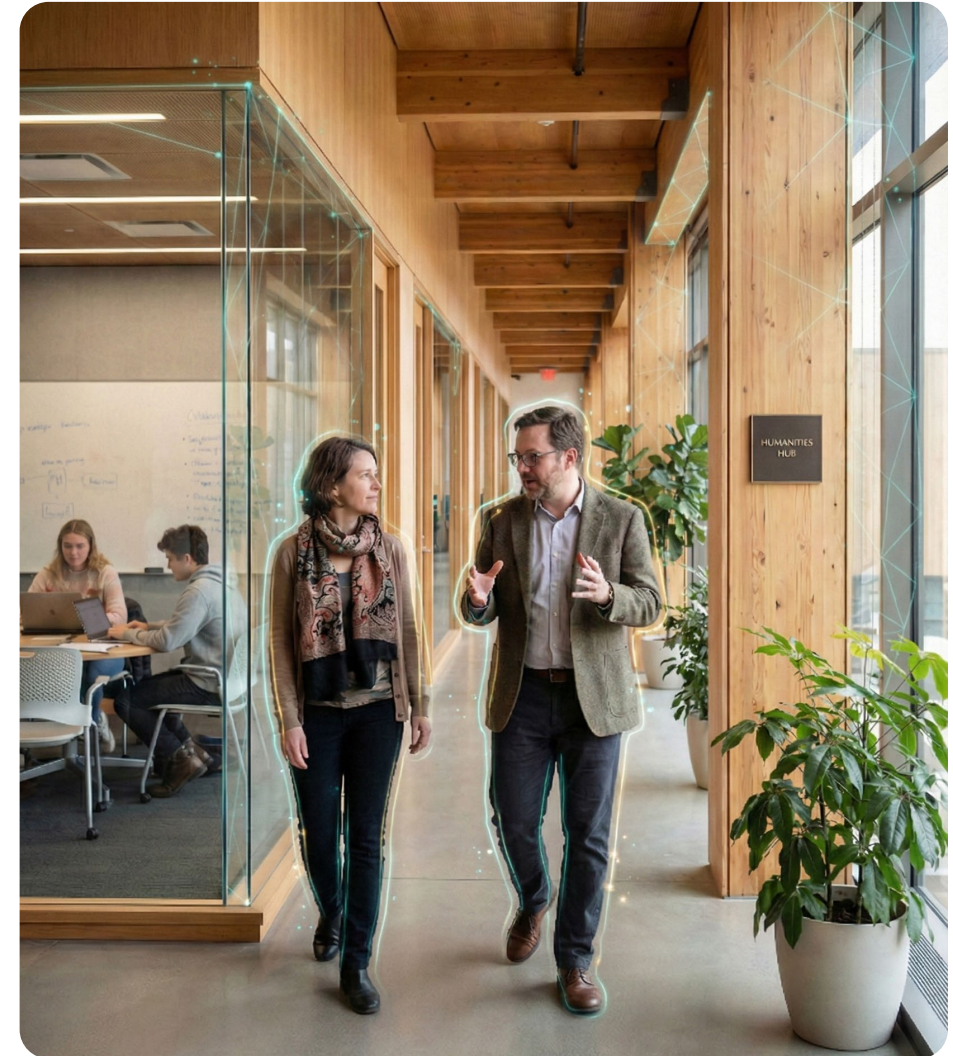
1: Comprehensive AI Ecosystems & Infrastructure

Why It Matters: Infrastructure is the invisible foundation enabling every other initiative. Without it, AI integration remains fragmented, unsustainable, and dependent on individual heroics.

Convergence on Practice

- Dedicated centers, appointed coordinators, and cross-functional committees provide coordination and accountability
- Evolution from generic commercial tools to educational platforms designed for learning outcomes
- Leverage capabilities across department, college, campus, and system levels
- Many have established AI and/or Generative AI policies providing clarity and reducing risk

Leadership Implication: Infrastructure is strategy made visible. Don't delegate this to IT alone—it requires strategic leadership defining how AI serves your institutional mission.



2: Democratization of AI Education

Why It Matters: AI literacy is shifting from a specialized track for technology majors to a universal competency expected of all business graduates.

Convergence on Practice

- Move from optional electives to required AI exposure across all programs
- Extend learning beyond enrolled students to alumni, working professionals, and community stakeholders
- Establish formal, measurable AI learning objectives with assessment mechanisms
- Scale systematically using frameworks and templates rather than custom one-offs

Leadership Implication: Democratization is no longer aspirational—it's a competitive necessity. Institutions that maintain AI as optional or specialized will face talent recruitment and employer partnership challenges.



3: Domain-Specific AI Applications

Why It Matters: Generic AI courses are insufficient. Students need to understand how AI transforms their specific disciplines—marketing, finance, accounting, operations—not just AI in the abstract.

Convergence on Practice

- **Marketing & Analytics:** AI-powered customer segmentation, predictive analytics, and personalization at scale embedded in marketing courses
- **Finance & Accounting:** Algorithmic trading, fraud detection, automated reporting, and risk modeling integrated into finance and accounting curricula
- **Operations & Supply Chain:** Demand forecasting, optimization algorithms, and autonomous systems within operations management

Leadership Implication: Faculty champions within each discipline accelerate relevance. Identify and empower these early adopters to lead domain-specific integration.



4. Faculty Development as Critical Success Factor

Why It Matters: Faculty capability determines integration success or failure. Without confident, competent faculty, even the best infrastructure and curriculum design will falter.

Convergence on Practice

- Move beyond one-time workshops to ongoing development programs with regular touchpoints and skill-building
- Build champion networks where faculty learn from and support each other through shared challenges
- Address faculty anxiety openly, creating environments where experimentation and learning from failure are valued
- Recognize this as the highest-leverage investment—capable faculty create exponential impact across students and courses

Leadership Implication: Faculty development must precede curriculum change. Invest here first, generously and patiently. Without faculty readiness, curriculum redesign is just documentation.



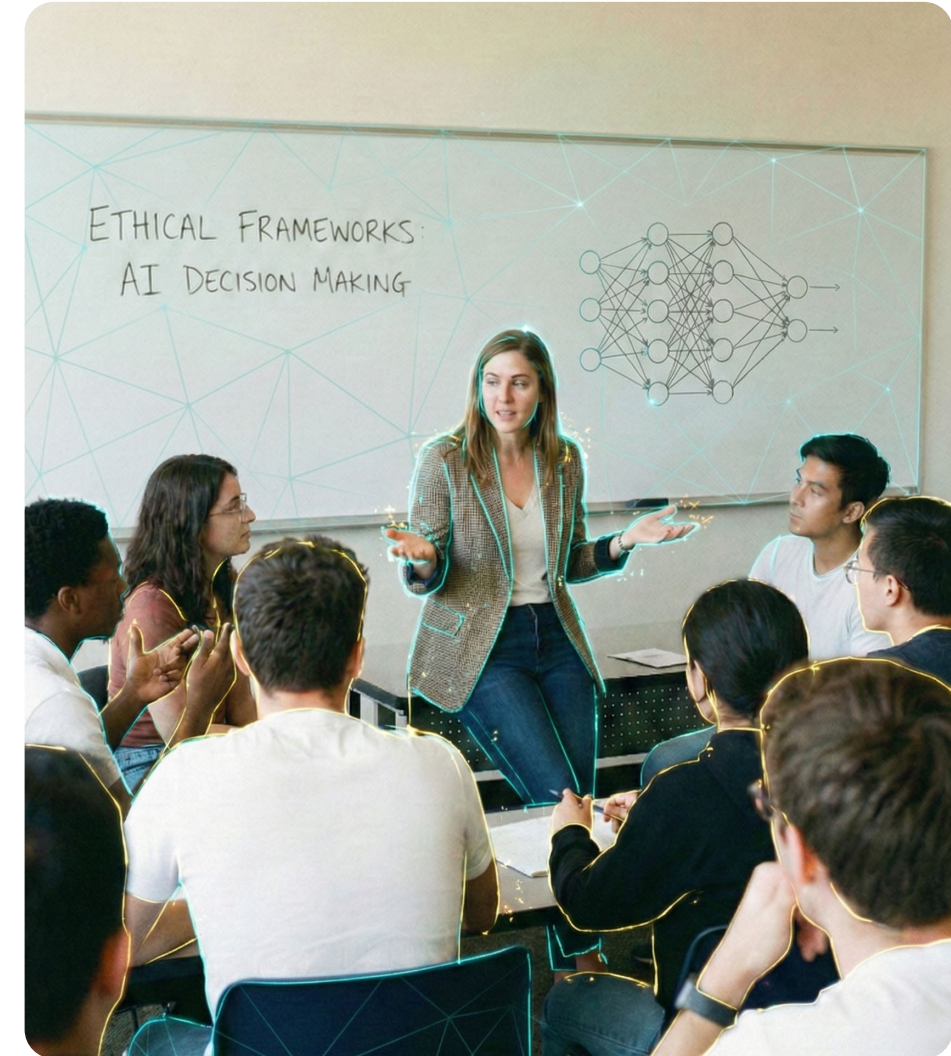
5. Responsible AI and Ethics Integration

Why It Matters: Today's business students will shape how AI affects workers, customers, and communities. They need values-based frameworks, not just technical fluency.

Convergence on Practice

- Weave ethics into every course rather than isolating it as a separate add-on or single unit
- Collaborate with philosophy, law, and social science departments for deeper ethical grounding
- Develop values-based leadership capabilities alongside technical AI skills
- Make ethics prominent in institutional communications and branding

Leadership Implication: Ethics as competitive advantage. Companies increasingly seek graduates who can navigate complex regulatory environments and build public trust around AI deployment.



6. Strategic Partnerships Accelerating Capabilities

Why It Matters: No institution possesses all needed resources, expertise, or cutting-edge tools in-house. Strategic partnerships multiply capabilities without proportional cost increases.

Convergence on Practice

- Technology companies provide tools, content, authentic cases, and direct connections to employment pathways
- Peer institutions share learning, co-develop resources, and accelerate adoption through collective intelligence
- Move beyond simple procurement to strategic relationships with platform providers shaping product roadmaps
- Faculty research partnerships with AI companies generate funding, publications, and curricular insights

Leadership Implication: The strategic choice between building custom solutions versus leveraging partnerships carries long-term positioning implications. Partnerships accelerate capability development but require careful governance.



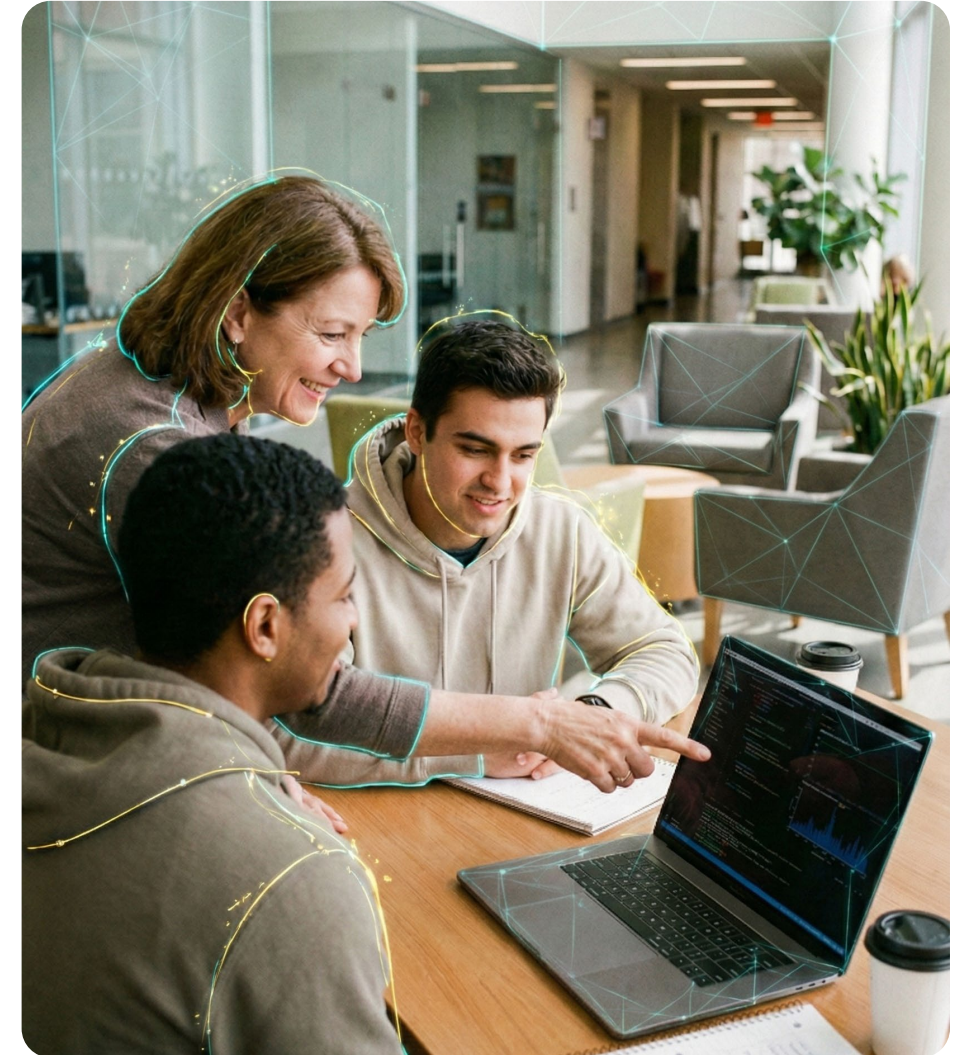
7. Evolution of AI-Enhanced Pedagogical Approaches

Why It Matters: AI transforms not just what we teach but how we teach. Pedagogical innovation unlocks AI's potential to address longstanding challenges in education.

Convergence on Practice

- Case methods and simulations with dynamic data and adaptive scenarios
- Adaptive pathways and AI tutoring enabling true differentiation at scale
- Instant formative feedback freeing instructors for higher-value interactions
- Moving beyond AI-detection to fundamentally reimagined assessment

Leadership Implication: Pedagogical transformation requires both technological infrastructure and faculty development. Don't expect technology alone to drive change—people must lead the transformation.



8. Leadership in Times of Transformation

Why It Matters: Bold, visible leadership determines both the pace and sustainability of institutional transformation. Without it, initiatives remain fragmented and vulnerable.

Convergence on Practice

- Leaders who actively use AI themselves signal its importance and model learning mindsets
- Coordinated institutional strategies beat heroic individual efforts every time
- Build critical mass rather than waiting for unanimous buy-in that never comes
- Respond with empathy, support, and persistence—not dismissal or impatience

Leadership Implication: Choose your risk deliberately. Both aggressive action and cautious inaction carry genuine dangers. The question isn't whether to take risks—it's which risks align with your institutional mission and values.



Previewing the July 2026 Report

July 2026 Report Stats at a Glance

The field is maturing fast, and the data is deepening.

**~80
schools**

in the July sample,
roughly a two-thirds
increase

**12
countries**

across five continents
(North America,
Europe, Asia, and
South America, Africa)

**8
themes**

holding stead,
deepening rather than
shifting

**~1 in 4
schools**

describe students
building and directing
AI agents, a pattern
absent in January

From large research universities to regional, teaching-focused, and minority-serving schools, the strongest work spans every size and type.

The Gap

The January 2026 data tilts toward the best-resourced, a limitation, not a verdict.

The sample skews large and research-intensive.

Most profiled schools are major research universities with significant resources.

The real majority is underrepresented.

Regional, teaching-focused, and access-mission schools are thin in the data.

Strong work is not always expensive.

One school runs a full AI-governance class session on an open-source platform for under fifty dollars. Capacity here is about will, not budget.

One Center, Many Initiatives: How East Carolina Built the Connective Tissue

Comprehensive AI Ecosystems & Governance

East Carolina University, a regional public school, stood up a dedicated Center for AI in Business as the hub for everything else: coursework, an Innovation Council, an Innovation Fellows program pairing faculty as mentors and mentees, and industry-linked experiential projects.

Key takeaway: An ecosystem is a coordinating structure, not a budget line. A regional school built the connective tissue that turns scattered efforts into a strategy.



Beyond the Business Major: Fresno State Opens AI to Its Community

Democratization of AI Education

California State University, Fresno, a Hispanic-Serving Institution, opens its Certificate in AI in Business to any Fresno State student outside the major and to community members with an associate degree or higher, paired with a CSU-wide generative AI micro-credential covering ethics, privacy, and responsible use.

Key takeaway: Democratization means widening the door. Fresno State extended AI credentials beyond business majors to the surrounding community.



AI Where the Work Happens: Georgia Southern Embeds It Discipline by Discipline

Domain-Specific AI Applications

Georgia Southern University embedded AI into the actual work of each discipline: negotiation practice in supply chain, auditing in accounting, portfolio management in finance, and sales competitions in marketing, with enterprise tools provided to every student.

Key takeaway: AI lands when it lives inside the discipline, not in a standalone course. Students meet it where they already work.



People Before Platforms: How Hampton Turned Reluctance into Curiosity

Faculty Development as Critical Success Factor

Hampton University, an HBCU, leads with "people before platforms." Its faculty-student prompt competition, judged by a Hampton alumnus who is now a Google AI manager, showed that faculty with little AI experience could lead winning teams, turning reluctance into curiosity.

Key takeaway: The barrier is fear, not skill. Hampton reduced fear through structured, low-stakes engagement that put hesitant faculty in the winners' circle.



Governing AI as a Leadership Skill: Morgan State Trains the Decision-Makers

Responsible AI and Ethics Integrations

Morgan State University, an HBCU, built an "Ecosystem AI Governance" leadership framework aimed at community college presidents, deans, and trustees, embedding governance research directly into its doctoral and master's leadership curriculum.

Key takeaway: Responsible AI is a leadership competency. Morgan State trains the executives who will set institutional policy, not just the end users.



Borrowed Capacity: Cal Poly Pomona Partners Its Way Forward

Strategic Partnerships Accelerating Capabilities

Cal Poly Pomona, a Hispanic-Serving Institution, paired with Microsoft and Apple to keep its new AI track current, won a CSU-wide faculty training grant, and earned an AI FAST faculty-readiness award, then opened it all up through a campus AI Fair and Hackathon.

Key takeaway: Partnerships substitute for in-house capacity. A teaching school used external alliances and grants to move faster than its own budget would allow.



Cal Poly
Pomona

One Assignment, Every Discipline: Lake Superior State Scales Good Pedagogy Cheaply

Evolution of AI-Enhanced Pedagogical Approaches

Lake Superior State University, a small school, built one standardized three-step assignment used across management, marketing, accounting, and finance: students solve the problem themselves first, then explore how AI assists, then critique the AI's output.

Key takeaway: Good pedagogy scales cheaply. One reusable assignment structure protected critical thinking across every discipline, no platform required.



LAKE SUPERIOR
STATE UNIVERSITY

First in the South: Auburn Montgomery Claims the AI Degree Frontier

Leadership in Times of Transformation

Auburn University at Montgomery, a regional school, launched the first and only Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence at any business college in Alabama or the South, and managed real enrollment growth in its first year.

Key takeaway: Bold leadership is not reserved for the well-funded. A regional public school claimed a first-mover position its larger neighbors had not.

The logo for Auburn University at Montgomery, featuring the letters 'AUM' in a large, bold, black font with a red outline.

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY
AT MONTGOMERY**

Add Your School: 10 Minutes Today

AI in Business Education

A framework across 48 schools, 8 countries, and 8 strategic themes. What would you like to do?

48

Schools profiled

8

Countries

8

Strategic themes

22

U.S. states

100%

AACSB accredited (US)



Leveraging the Report

Understanding the Landscape

Model	Example School	Key Takeaway
Experiential	Umass Lowell	Annual student AI venture competition; winning team built an AI medical-coding platform with an industry partner
Research-led	Tribhuvan University (Nepal)	Government-funded national study on adopting AI across higher education
Credentialing	Portland State	Stackable AI for Business micro-credential ending in a student research capstone
Integration	South Florida (Muma)	Redesigned a required course so every business major learns a five-step verify-the-AI workflow
Innovation	IESA (Venezuela)	Built an AI agent that role-plays a case protagonist so students rehearse leadership under pressure

Key message: No single model is "right"—but *waiting* is the riskiest choice.

Discussion: Where Do You Stand?

1. Looking at the eight themes, where is your school strongest today, and where is the most honest gap?
2. What is one move a school your size could make this year without new money or new hires?
3. What is the real barrier on your campus: faculty fear, leadership hesitation, infrastructure, or something else?
4. What will it take to get your faculty to own this, and what is that resistance costing you while you wait?

AI Convergence: A Leadership Community

The Challenge: Leaders facing unprecedented decisions shouldn't figure it out alone in isolation.

The Opportunity: A peer community wrestling together with shared questions, uncertainties, and possibilities.

You Are Not Behind

These are leadership questions, not technical questions. Your uncertainty is appropriate, not inadequate.

Figuring It Out Together

No one has certainty. The institutions that appear confident are learning through doing, just like you.

Leaders Transform First

Institutional transformation follows leadership transformation. Start with yourself and your team.

We're building something different—working convenings, leadership circles, and developmental standards designed specifically for higher education leaders navigating AI integration.

AI-Forward™ Campus Framework

The Challenge:

- Fragmented initiatives across disconnected silos
- IT recommendations without strategic translation
- Competing priorities and resource constraints
- Uncertainty about where to start and how to scale

The Opportunity:

- Discovery-driven framework tailored to your context
- Unified coordination across departments and units
- Scalable implementation with sustainable capacity
- Strategic advisors bridging technical and institutional

1) Activation & Enablement

Not dependency—build internal capacity that sustains beyond consulting engagement

2) Comprehensive Diagnostic

Assess current state, aspirations, and readiness across all dimensions

3) Unified Vision

Develop coherent strategy connecting initiatives to institutional mission

4) Prioritized Roadmap

Sequence implementation for quick wins and sustained momentum

Thank you!



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The institutions that recognize this moment and act decisively will shape the future of leadership and education. Those that wait will be shaped by it.

Tawnya is author of **The Collaboration Chronicle: Human+AI in Education:**

The Collaboration Chronicle: Human+AI in Education Q

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Documenting the transformation of education through thoughtful human+AI collaboration

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