

Introductory remarks on UFF-USF proposed MOU on GAI

UFF-USF and USF-BOT Bargaining session

May 10, 2024

Artificial intelligence, especially in its new, generative forms such as Chat GPT, is already revolutionizing several aspects of the higher education landscape and is developing at lightning speed. This technology is both promising and threatening, and avoiding the threats is at least as important as taking advantage of the promise.

Among the promises are that Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) can save faculty from the burden of tedious and unrewarding grunt work that can be done just as well or better and more quickly by GAI, with no loss of value to faculty, students, or to the quality of resulting educational experience, research, and other work. Among the threats are that GAI will be deployed to do traditional and current faculty work more quickly and inexpensively than faculty can perform it, but *with* substantial loss of value to faculty, students, and the quality of resulting educational experience, research, and other work. We are justifiably concerned that the prospect of cost and time savings will too readily lure decision makers into devaluing the contribution live faculty deploying actual intelligence, genuine experience, and practiced judgment bring to the university's educational and research missions, and to the attendant managerial activities (including assessment of students, faculty, staff, and administrators) required to sustain them. We believe it is literally of vital importance to ensure that the distinctive and essential contributions to the educational and research mission of the university made by highly skilled, trained, experienced, live, face-to-face, eye-contact enabled, collaborative, interactive, deliberative, and contemplative human beings be preserved and protected.

It is clear that decisions around the use and management of GAI can make substantial difference to practically every aspect of our in-unit faculty members' working lives, including but not limited to assignments, rights to own and control work product, instructional methods

(including the right and ability to use or refrain from using instructional technology), modes and methods of evaluation, and more.

In the light of these facts, UFF-USF chapter seeks to reach an understanding with the University to establish a trilateral committee, with a membership composed of appointees of the university administration, Faculty Senate, and UFF-USF chapter, to formulate recommendations concerning the use of GAI at the university and to report those recommendation to the presidents of those bodies. We are aware that there are entities at the university that are already charged in one way or another with developing practices and policies involving GAI. These include the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning and the Faculty Senate Council on Technology for Research and Instruction; we expect considerable further influence on these matters to emanate from the proposed new College of Artificial Intelligence and Cyber-Security. However, the existing bodies operate in relative isolation from one another, and none is specifically devoted to the task of ensuring that the use of GAI at the university is consistent with the interests of both the university's mission and the faculty specifically as employees with collective bargaining rights, represented by the UFF-USF chapter, with rights and duties established and protected by the CBA. Our aim is to make sure that the perspective of faculty as employees with mandatory bargaining rights be represented in the process by which policy at USF concerning GAI is developed.

The Memorandum of Understanding we hereby present provides a brief rationale for its proposals, offers a definition of Generative Artificial Intelligence, provides for the establishment of a GAI Policy Committee, and articulates the considerations that committee is to address, the committee's relations with other bodies formally responsible for GAI policy, and its meeting and reporting duties. It further establishes university commitments concerning continuous learning and development for faculty in GAI technologies and related matters, as well as a right collaboratively to audit GAI systems at the university for compliance with agreed-upon standards and practices and a right to bring alleged violations of the Memorandum to the GAI Policy Committee for expedited resolution.

We are certain the USF-BOT recognizes the importance of exercising the highest care in exploiting and deploying this volatile and potent technology, and we hope that, in recognition of our mutual commitment to shared governance, you will find this Memorandum of Understanding to be agreeable.