

Large Language Models at Small Liberal Arts Colleges: Teaching, Learning, and Researching in the Liberal Arts in the Age of ChatGPT*

Organizers:

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The proposed workshop, "Liberal Arts in the Age of ChatGPT," aims to facilitate discussions and collaborations among academics from small liberal arts colleges (SLACs) to consider both the transformative potential of Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT on our teaching and scholarship, and the distinct value of liberal arts education in light of this emerging technology. As LLMs continue to revolutionize various domains, they present challenges and opportunities to how we teach and research.

Although the advent of LLMs will impact research and teaching across all institutions of higher education, we propose that SLACs, with their emphasis on close faculty-student interactions and the interdisciplinary inquiry of the liberal arts, are uniquely positioned to respond to these challenges and develop effective, pedagogically sound approaches to teaching in the age of AI. We think too that the heightened opportunities for close collaboration among colleagues in the sciences, humanities, and social sciences make liberal arts colleges distinctly positioned to contribute to critical inquiry and engagement with this new technology.

A central goal of this workshop is to bring scholars from across our institutions – in the humanities, arts, social, natural, mathematical and computer sciences – to explore together how liberal arts settings can meet the challenges that LLM's produce. Topics might include, but are not limited to:

1. How do LLMs like ChatGPT actually work?
2. History, politics, and ethics of AI.
3. AI in the classroom. Adapting pedagogical approaches to ensure critical thinking and student engagement in an AI-driven world.

Intended Audience:

The target audience for this workshop includes faculty members from AALAC institutions who are interested in thinking about how to adapt their teaching and

research to the evolving AI landscape, and about how their research (and teaching) might intervene into or, at least, shed critical light upon that landscape.

Schedule and Format:

The workshop will take place over three days in Summer 2024 on the Reed College campus. The event will feature a combination of keynote talks, panel discussions, hands-on workshops, and breakout sessions, which will allow participants to engage with experts, share their experiences, and develop strategies for teaching and evaluating in the context of LLMs like ChatGPT.

Goals and Intended Impact:

The workshop aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Develop best practices and strategies for teaching, training teachers, and implementing policies on SLAC campuses in the age of AI.
2. Foster a network of faculty and experts who can collaborate on research pathways and share resources related to AI in education.
3. Identify potential pitfalls and ethical concerns related to AI usage in the classroom and develop guidance on responsible AI adoption.
4. Produce a report summarizing the findings, recommendations, and best practices that emerge from the workshop.
5. Attendees will collaborate with centers for teaching and learning on their home campus to share the insights produced at the workshop.

Follow-up Activities: Workshop participants will be encouraged to stay connected through an online platform or forum, facilitating ongoing discussions and sharing of resources. Additionally, attendees will be encouraged to submit papers or presentations based on their experiences and findings to relevant conferences and journals. The organizing committee will also explore the possibility of hosting a follow-up conference or workshop to assess the progress and impact of the strategies developed during this initial event.

*Generated with help from ChatGPT 4.0.