

Ithaca College Presidential Working Group on Artificial Intelligence

Summary of Recommendations and Endorsements

The full report can be found [here](#).

Introduction & Big Picture

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming higher education, workplaces, and society. At Ithaca College, we believe AI must be approached not simply to modernize, but to enrich what makes our institution unique: our human-centered community, collaborative spirit, and commitment to innovation with our principles and values at the center.

Scope of This Initiative: This Presidential Working Group focused primarily on enterprise-level AI integration; operational systems, administrative processes, and institutional services. Faculty retain autonomy over their pedagogical decisions and classroom practices.

Over the past year, a Presidential Working Group on AI, representing faculty, staff, and students from across the college, examined how AI can be integrated thoughtfully into operations, services, and the student experience. The group's work included campus-wide town halls, engagement with governance groups, and careful study of institutional values and best practices.

The President and Cabinet have formally endorsed the Guiding Principles for AI and a companion Governance Framework. Together, these provide a foundation for responsible, innovative, and human-centered AI integration at Ithaca College.

Guiding Principles for AI at Ithaca College

The Guiding Principles, drafted by the Working Group and endorsed by the Cabinet and President, are a touchstone for AI decisions moving forward. They affirm our commitment to using AI in ways that elevate human dignity, empower our community, and uphold the integrity of our educational mission.

The following guiding principles for the use of AI at Ithaca College were developed by the Presidential Working Group on AI and were informed by best practices; a thorough review of Ithaca College's vision, mission, and values; as well as feedback from faculty, staff, and student governance groups. These principles were formally endorsed by the President's cabinet.

Guiding Principles

At Ithaca College, integrating AI into our educational mission requires us to go beyond simply adopting new technologies. It calls for us to critically consider both the benefits and risks of AI tools within Ithaca College. In our commitment to a future where AI is a tool that serves the public good, we must intentionally craft policies and practices aligned with academic excellence, equity, inclusion, sustainability, transparency, and data security.

We commit to AI use that elevates human dignity, empowers our community, and upholds the integrity of our working and learning environment. As AI technology evolves, we pledge to continually review and align AI strategies with Ithaca College's mission, vision, and values (<https://www.ithaca.edu/about/vision-mission-values>).

Ithaca College is an institution dedicated to empowering people through theory, practice, and performance:

We center on people, not technology, ensuring that AI is used as a tool to enhance human skills and capabilities. We believe AI cannot replace the vital human relationships, creativity, and decision-making that define our educational experience. Rather, AI is one tool among many that allows our community to focus on innovation while maintaining human oversight and autonomy. **Faculty maintain full independence in their teaching methods, course content, and instructional choices. AI tools for academic use remain optional resources that individual faculty may choose to explore based on their professional judgment.**

We strive to promote digital inclusion, equity, access, personal data and intellectual property protection within our Ithaca College community. We are dedicated to promoting equitable access to AI technologies and the opportunities they provide students, faculty, and staff. By adopting AI with a growth mindset, we empower individuals to meaningfully contribute to their broader communities. Recognizing the potential for bias in AI systems, we actively identify and address technological barriers to equity and inclusion.

We affirm our dedication to lifelong learning, adaptability, and sustainability in our approach to using AI in our work, teaching, and learning. As AI continues to advance, continuous skill development and adaptability for our students, staff, and faculty remain essential.

- We will prepare our students for a future where AI is integrated into workplaces across industry, government, and nonprofit sectors. At Ithaca College, we believe that AI is set to transform the nature of and opportunities for employment and education. We are committed to integrating AI literacy into our curriculum and

programming, ensuring that our graduates are equipped with the knowledge, strategies, and skills needed to thrive in an AI-driven world.

- Beyond the classroom, AI will be utilized to enrich student experiences through personalized services and proactive support. We remain vigilant in safeguarding privacy and security as AI tools and resources become increasingly integrated into college operations. We will empower our staff by supporting their use of AI tools that handle routine tasks, thereby enabling them to focus on higher-value activities such as professional growth, innovation, and strategic thinking.
- We will maintain an awareness that quality and authenticity are sometimes more important than efficiency.
- We will uphold integrity and transparency in our use of AI, fostering AI literacy and awareness across the Ithaca College community.

We will uphold and promote responsible AI research and use. As a community of scholars and innovators, we conduct AI research with rigorous ethical standards by considering these technologies' benefits, risks, and potential impacts. Our commitment to responsible AI use ensures that we contribute positively to societal progress while upholding the values that define Ithaca College regarding academic excellence, individual ideas, and personal data. We ensure data security and proactive risk management through rigorous practices and regular evaluations involving campus stakeholders.

We actively seek to minimize negative environmental impacts by adopting AI tools that prioritize sustainability and environmental stewardship. Recognizing the urgent need for climate action, we prioritize partnerships with AI vendors who adhere to environmentally responsible practices. By continually assessing the role of AI in our work to support energy efficiency, water conservation, and responsible resource management, we will align AI initiatives with our commitment to sustainability.

We engage in continuous evaluation and communication. Regular reviews, transparent communication, and opportunities for community feedback will ensure our AI initiatives remain aligned with institutional values and community expectations.

AI Governance & Oversight

Our governance ensures AI initiatives align with IC's mission, values, equity, sustainability, and security standards, while giving faculty, staff, and students a clear path to explore AI confidently.

What requires review

- **Enterprise AI:** pilots, tool adoptions, integrations, research or administrative use.
- **Any use with sensitive data:** PII, FERPA-protected records, financial, HR, health/counseling, or any data classified confidential/restricted.

Pathways

1. **Academic AI** → Existing academic channels and committees.
2. **Non-Academic AI** → Standard technology intake and contract/data-security review.

Escalation rule: If a proposal is high-impact or high-risk, it moves to the Principles & Values Committee (PVC) for a values/impact review. The PVC (one faculty, one staff, one student) applies the Guiding Principles and provides a recommendation to the Provost and CIO, who make the final decision.

Proposal contents (for pilots and adoptions)

- **Needs Statement** (problem, users, intended outcomes)
- **Feasibility Report** (technical, financial, ethical, environmental)

Pilot-first. Start with pilots to assess value and risk; high-risk pilots require both documents.

Submission Quick Guide

- **AI research and teaching involving human participants** → Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- **AI teaching, learning, and research technologies (no human participants)** → Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC)
- **AI initiatives impacting academic assessment, policy, and curriculum** → Assessment, Policy, and Curriculum Committee (APC)
- **Non-academic AI tools or initiatives** → IT&A Technology Purchase or Project Request
- **Integration of third-party applications into existing campus systems** → Third-party application review

Strategic Priorities for AI (Next 12–36 Months)

The Working Group identified key initiatives, organized into three priority buckets that align with Ithaca College's goals, to be implemented as resources allow:

People & Literacy

AI literacy training for students, faculty, and staff within existing professional development frameworks; ethics and responsible AI usage; support to leverage AI for growth; mini grants for exploration.

Student Experience & Success

Personalized support, advising, and wellness; accessibility and inclusion; AI-enhanced recruitment and enrollment tools; data analysis for student success and retention.

Operational Effectiveness & Sustainability

Efficiency and task automation to free time for high-value work; process improvement and decision-making support; sustainability and resource optimization; integration of AI into data governance practices.

Policy Updates

The Working Group recommended that 40% of existing college policies be reviewed for AI-related updates, with particular focus on privacy, data governance, and student safety. General Counsel is working with policy stewards to integrate these reviews into our standard policy review cycles to ensure policies remain current and reflect the evolving AI landscape.

Workplace Transformation

AI adoption will only succeed if employees are empowered, supported, and prepared. IC's workplace strategy emphasizes:

- **Clear Guidance:** Responsible-use guidelines for supervisors and staff.
- **Training & Skill Development:** AI literacy initiatives developed within existing professional development frameworks, tailored to roles.
- **Task Automation:** Automating routine work while preserving human oversight.
- **Professional Growth:** Supporting faculty and staff in leveraging AI for professional development, with attention to career growth.
- **Data Stewardship:** Improving accuracy and accountability of data to support ethical AI use.

Conclusion

The Presidential Working Group on AI has laid the foundation for Ithaca College to become a leader in responsible, values-driven AI integration. With Guiding Principles endorsed by the President and Cabinet, a central review process through the Principles & Values Committee with faculty, staff, and student representation, and clear strategic priorities, IC is well-positioned to use AI in ways that empower people, enrich the student experience, and enhance operational effectiveness.

This work reflects the contributions of faculty, staff, and students across the College, including feedback from governance groups and two open town halls. It underscores a commitment to transparency, accountability, and community engagement as AI becomes part of our shared future, while respecting faculty autonomy in academic matters and working within existing resource frameworks.