Pedagogy Day

March 12, 2026

FDIC@EIU
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

Schedule At A Glance

Morning Plenary - Recital Hall, Doudna

9:00a - 9:10a: Welcome Overview

9:10a - 10:10a: Keynote Address, Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

10:10a - 10:15a: Break

10:15a - 10:25a: Exploring the Tensions Around AI in the Classroom Sandbox
Dr. Terri Fredrick, EIU, and Daniel Bobie, EIU

10:30a- 10:40a: Teaching with AI Agents: How AI and Real-World Simulations are Transforming Marketing, Sales Training, and Product Development
Evan Kubicek, EIU

10:45a - 10:55a: Durable Skills by Design: Teaching Transferable Competencies Without Adding More Content
Dr. Gabe Grant, EIU

11:00a - 11:10a: Partnering with AI to Foster Classroom Assessment
Dr. Jeffrey Stowell, EIU

11:15a - 11:25a Active Learning Through the Center for Student Innovation (CSI)
Dr. Devansh Saini, EIU

11:25a- 11:30a: Morning Wrap-up and Afternoon Preview

11:30a- 12:45p: Lunch Break at South Quad Dining

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions - MLK University Union

12:45p - 1:30p: Concurrent Session 1:

Charleston/ Mattoon

Paper Session:
Leveraging Generative AI for Assessment: Opportunities and Challenges in Automated Essay Question Creation and Grading
Dr. Jerry Zhu, EIU, and Dr. Jeffrey Stowell, EIU

The Faculty Reset
Dr. Misty Rhoads, EIU, Emma Noble, EIU, Logan Lehmann, EIU, Dr. Amanda Harvey, EIU, Dr. Cassondra Strawser, EIU, Kim Ervin, EIU, Dr. Aimee Janssen-Robinson, EIU, and Dr. Andrew Kerins, EIU

Arcola/ Tuscola

Design Your Own Tutor
Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

Schedule At A Glance (Cont.)

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions - MLK University Union

1:35p - 2:20p: Concurrent Session 2:

Charleston/ Mattoon

Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Opportunities, Challenges, and Practical Integration
Dr. Alexis Jones, Dr. Ngozi Onuora, Dr. Stephen Lucas, Dr. Andrew Kerins, Dr. Michael Gillespie, Lexie Coartney

Arcola/ Tuscola

Do Research with AI Right
Dr. Kevin Hallinan University of Dayton

2:25p - 3:10p: Concurrent Session 3:

Charleston/ Mattoon

Paper Session:
Meeting Student Research Needs: Information Literacy Through the Lens of Maslow's Hierarchy
Dr. Michael Gillespie, Brian Keith, Michele McDaniel, Amy Odwarka

Arcola/ Tuscola

Design Your Own Mentor
Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

Conference Information

Doudna Fine Arts Center

MLK University Union

Location and Accessibility:

Registration on the morning of the conference will be in the concourse of the **Doudna Fine Arts Center**.

The conference **keynote address** and **morning plenary** sessions are in the **Recital Hall**, Doudna Fine Arts Center. This is the main level of the building, accessibile by way of all building entrances.

The **afternoon concurrent sessions** will take place in the **Charleston/Mattoon and Tuscola/Arcola rooms** on the **3rd floor of the MLK University Union**. There are central stairs and an elevator in the Union.

Restrooms:

Restrooms in **Doudna** are available on the main level concourse. All-gender restrooms are located on the second floor.

Restrooms in the **MLK Union** are centrally located on each floor, including on the 3rd floor where the afternoon sessions will be held. The all-gender restroom is located in the Vending Lounge on the first floor near the elevator.

Lunch: South Quad Dining, Taylor Hall

Free lunch is available at the **South Quad Dining Center**, located in Taylor Hall on the south end of campus. It is approximately a 6 minute walk from the Doudna Fine Arts Center.

Please refer to this campus map if necessary:
https://www.eiu.edu/map/eiumap.pdf

You must present your Pedagogy Day name tag to check in to the dining facility.

Accessible and gender inclusive restrooms are available in the Taylor Hall lobby.

Other lunch options not included with the conference include the MLK Union Food Court on campus or a host of local restaurants near campus.

Keynote Address

"Equity in AI"

Dr. Hallinan speaks to his work at Synota.io, explaining how advanced investment in solar micro-grids/coupled with AI facilitated education enables the productive use of energy in unpowered communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since leaving his role as an educator at UD, Dr. Hallinan's focus has been equity in AI. Moreover, his recent teaching emphasized big data, machine learning and natural language processing; and when ChatGPT hit the pavement, he was off and running with experiments to test its place in education.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Kevin Hallinan, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, University of Dayton, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; and Director of Impact Mining, Saynota.io.

Dr. Hallinan's work at Synota.io is on advancing investment in solar micro-grids/coupled with AI facilitated education to enable productive use of energy in unpowered communities in sub-Saharan Africa. His background is eclectic, despite serving as professor at different levels for 36 years. In his early career, he did research for NASA which culminated in an experiment that was conducted on the Space Shuttle in 1996. He then led the development of the New Engineer Program at UD, which emphasized engineering for social impact. A core feature of this is the UD Ethos program, which for 20+ years has provided students at UD an opportunity to do real engineering in support of non-profits in Latin and South America, Africa and Asia. He also was the founding director of the UD Renewable and Clean Energy Program in 2010.

Morning Plenaries

Doudna Recital Hall

Lightning Talk: Exploring the Tensions Around AI in the Classroom Sandbox Sandbox

Dr. Terri Fredrick, Professor of English, and Daniel Bobie, MA Student in English, Eastern Illinois University

Abstract: When it comes to AI use in the classroom, instructors in many disciplines may feel competing pressures: on the one hand, to encourage the thoughtful use of AI in order to prepare students for its use in their careers, and on the other, to discourage AI use due to its potential for overreach and potential negative impacts on students' long-term thinking and communication skills. Rather than asking instructors to choose a position regarding AI for their classes, we advocate for making the tensions around AI an object of collective exploration for both students and instructor. This lightning talk will describe a classroom sandbox approach to AI use in a senior/graduate level professional editing course. During this presentation, Terri will briefly share her rationale for taking this approach to AI usage along with a list of the AI activities students completed, and Daniel will share an abstract of the individual AI position he developed as a result of his work in the course.

Doudna Recital Hall

Lightning Talk: Teaching with AI Agents: How AI and Real-World Simulations are Transforming Marketing, Sales Training, and Product Development

Evan M. Kubicek, MBA, Senior Instructor of Entrepreneurship & Marketing, Lumpkin College of Business & Technology, Eastern Illinois University

Abstract: Over the last year, I designed and deployed custom AI agents, including a Virtual Marketing Assistant, a Product Development Teaching Assistant, and an Entrepreneurship Coach. It helped me extend my teaching presence beyond the classroom. This presentation shares a multi-course pedagogical model that integrates custom AI agents, Google AI Studio tools, and simulation-based learning to strengthen student engagement and improve real-world skill development across Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and Product Development courses at Eastern Illinois University. These workflows increase access, confidence, and equity, especially for students with uneven prior experience in marketing, business communication, or technology.

Morning Plenaries, continued

Doudna Recital Hall

Lightning Talk: Durable Skills by Design: Teaching Transferable Competencies Without Adding More Content

Dr. Gabe Grant, Associate Professor of Digital Media Technology in the School of Technology, Eastern Illinois University

Abstract: This lightning talk shares a lightweight strategy that embeds durable skills into existing coursework by attaching a process grade to an assignment using a brief Time Management & Process Improvement rubric. Rather than grading participation or effort, the rubric evaluates observable behaviors tied to student success, such as starting promptly, sustaining productive work time, meeting progress checkpoints, and improving workflow during the work session (e.g., revising a plan after encountering a bottleneck, seeking feedback earlier, or correcting recurring errors). This approach makes time management teachable and measurable while keeping standards high and expectations transparent.

Doudna Recital Hall

Lightning Talk: Partnering with AI to Foster Classroom Assessment

Dr. Jeffrey Stowell, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychology, Eastern Illinois University

Abstract: Many faculty are aware of the benefits of active learning on student engagement in the classroom. One active learning strategy, think-pair-share, involves posing content-related questions to students who think about their individual responses, pair up with a nearby student, and share the reasoning for their answers. This type of collaborative learning has shown to significantly improve student learning. One major barrier to implementation of technology-supported classroom polling is the effort required to create suitable questions of appropriate difficulty. The time and effort required for assessment preparation can be drastically reduced with assistance from AI. This brief presentation will demonstrate the use of AI to create questions for classroom polling as well as other types of assessments.

Morning Plenaries

Doudna Recital Hall

Lightning Talk: Active Learning Through the Center for Student Innovation (CSI)

Dr. Devansh Saini, Assistant Professor, School of Technology

Abstract: In a typical 16-week course, oftentimes the instruction of content gets mundane. That is the perfect time to break through the monotonous routine of delivering lectures in the same classroom using regular technology. This is where a space such as an Active Learning Classroom (ALC) can shine. Faculty report that such multimodal assignments increase student participation, particularly among learners who may be less inclined to speak in large lecture settings. This approach also produces reusable digital artifacts that students can reflect on and refine over time, aligning course objectives with real-world communication practices and digital scholarship. Finally, through this model, students demonstrate learning outcomes related to disciplinary understanding, collaborative problem-solving, and digital communication, while faculty gain a scalable, support-driven approach to active learning that has shown increased participation and engagement across disciplines.

Afternoon Concurrent Session 1

12:45p - 1:30p

Charleston / Mattoon Room

Paper Session:

Leveraging Generative AI for Assessment: Opportunities and Challenges in Automated Essay Question Creation and Grading

Dr. Jerry Zhu and Dr. Jeffrey Stowell, Eastern Illinois University

Abstract: The rapid integration of generative AI in higher education presents a significant opportunity to address a perennial challenge: providing timely, personalized feedback on writing-intensive assessments. In upper-division courses, the grading load often limits the frequency of essay-based evaluations. While AI tools like ChatGPT offer a scalable solution for grading, their effectiveness depends not only on technical accuracy but also on student acceptance and perceived fairness. We presented preliminary data at Pedagogy Day 2024 and have since published the final results of the completed project, which will be shared in this year's presentation.

The Faculty Reset

Dr. Misty Rhoads, Eastern Illinois University, Dr. Misty Rhoads, EIU, Emma Noble, EIU, Logan Lehmann, EIU, Dr. Amanda Harvey, EIU, Dr. Cassondra Strawser, EIU, Kim Ervin, EIU, Dr. Aimee Janssen-Robinson, EIU, and Dr. Andrew Kerins, EIU

Abstract: Faculty are being asked to do more than ever: teach, mentor, support students in distress, and remain grounded in the midst of constant change. This panel introduces a campus-wide Mindfulness Initiative created in partnership with the FDIC that centers nervous system awareness, embodiment, and sustainable well-being for faculty. The initiative includes a Mindfulness Educator Program, faculty practice groups, and an evolving mindfulness website with podcasts and resources designed for real life (not perfection). During this session, faculty who have completed the educator program and continued into practice groups will share how mindfulness has shifted their relationship to stress, teaching, and connection. Together, we'll explore how embodied mindfulness helps build resilience, deepen community, and create a shared culture of support, starting with ourselves.

Afternoon Concurrent Session 1, continued

12:15p - 1:30p

Arcola / Tuscola

Active Learning Session: Design Your Own Tutor

Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

Abstract: Walk away with a functioning AI tutor built around your course — usable immediately by students. Embed Bloom's taxonomy and cognitive guardrails directly into AI, reduce repetitive student questions, increase higher-order thinking and learning confidence, and support lower-performing and first-generation students more effectively

Afternoon Concurrent Session 2

1:35p - 2:20p

Charleston / Mattoon Room

Facilitated Roundtable Discussion: Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Opportunities, Challenges, and Practical Integration

Dr. Alexis Jones, Associate Professor, Teaching, Learning, and Foundations (panel facilitator), EIU
Dr. Ngozi Onuora, Department Chair, Teaching, Learning, and Foundations (panel facilitator), EIU
Dr. Stephen Lucas, Professor, Teaching, Learning, and Foundations, EIU
Dr. Andrew Kerins, Director of FDIC, EIU
Dr. Michael Gillespie, Dean of Student Success, EIU
Lexie Coartney, Grad Student, EIU

Abstract: This panel discussion will explore the rapidly evolving role of artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching, learning, and academic work. Panelists representing diverse professional roles and perspectives will discuss how AI tools are reshaping course design, assessment practices, student learning experiences, academic integrity, and faculty workload. The session will highlight both the promise and the complexity of AI adoption—including ethical considerations, equity implications, accessibility, and discipline-specific applications.

Panelists will share examples of how they are currently using AI or engaging students in conversations about its use. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, reflect on their own contexts, and consider practical ways AI can be leveraged to support student learning while maintaining academic standards and promoting responsible use. This session is designed for faculty at all levels of familiarity with AI—from curious and nervous beginners to experienced users.

Afternoon Concurrent Session 2, continued
1:35p - 2:20p

Arcola / Tuscola Room

Active Learning Session: Do Research with AI Right
Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

Abstract: Turn AI into a serious research accelerator for you and your students— not a shortcut that weakens scholarship. Learn how to conduct structured "deep research" workflows to speed up literature reviews without sacrificing rigor. Walk through how to build AI collaborators for writing, critique, and revision with led discovery on various ready-made AI agents for email, data analysis, slides, and more. The goal is to leave with workflows that reduce research time while improving depth and quality.

Afternoon Concurrent Session 3

2:25p - 3:10p

Charleston / Mattoon Room

Facilitated Workshop: Meeting Student Research Needs: Information Literacy Through the Lens of Maslow's Hierarchy

Dr. Michael Gillespie, Dean of Student Success, EIU
Dr. Brian Keith, Dean of Library Services, EIU
Michele McDaniel, Reference Librarian and Instructor at EIU's Booth Library
Amy Odwarka, Assistant Professor and First Year Experience/ Student Success librarian, EIU

Abstract: This facilitated roundtable discussion will explore an innovative conceptual framework for teaching research and communication skills as a developmental journey for learners, aligned with stages of student experience and growing ability. The new framework, modeled after Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, is comprised of progressive supports, abilities and outcomes related to intellectual freedom, information literacy, research practice, and scholarly and creative expression. The framework conceptualizes a progressive journey of student academic growth, evolving from basic participation in course work to advanced knowledge creation and intellectual independence. With this guide, teaching faculty and instructional librarians can tailor information literacy supports based on the progression of student’s unique needs at various stages of information literacy development. This new framework also provides a structured way to consider university-wide systems, like D2L, by identifying specific needs that must be met at each stage of a student's journey toward information literacy. By breaking down information literacy into these stages, we can evaluate whether the supports—through teaching, libraries, technology, and academic services—are addressing students' needs at each level, ultimately guiding them toward becoming confident, independent researchers and scholars.

Afternoon Concurrent Session 3, continued

2:25p - 3:10p

Arcola / Tuscola Room

Active Learning Session: Design Your Own Mentor

Dr. Kevin Hallinan, University of Dayton

Abstract: Design your own AI mentor to create scalable, discipline-specific AI mentors that reflect your voice and advising philosophy. AI mentors extend advising support beyond office hours while allowing you to maintain your academic standards and guardrails. Learn how utilizing AI mentors helps to improve student clarity around career pathways and empower students to make better decisions before meeting you.

Gratitude

Thanks and appreciation to everyone who participated in today's events including all of our esteemed presenters. Special thanks goes to the FDIC staff: Kim Ervin, David Smith, Keerthana Saraswathula, and Chris Cougill, and Graduate Assistants Kenneth Ingle and Erin Weller, who were instrumental in making today happen.

Today could not be possible without the support of President Jay Gatrell and Interim Provost Holly Farley, and Booth Library leadership and staff, especially Dean Brian Keith, Arlene Brown, and Diane Highland.

Many thanks to campus leaders from all corners of our community including Deans Barbara Bonnekessen (CLAS), Austin Cheney (LCBT), Richard England (Honors College), Angela Jacobs (Graduate College), and John Storsved (CHHS & COE). Thanks as well to Denise Adducci (Housing and Dining) as well as the staff in the South Quad Dining Center, and Dennis Malak and Conor Baltz (Doudna).

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