AI for Higher Education Educators

Imagine It, Then Do It

Learner Reference

Practical Innovations Academy

This document is what you take from the course, not a substitute for it. Open it months from now, when you are designing an assignment, writing a syllabus statement, or about to hand a task to an AI tool, and use it to recover the habits the course built. Tool names, prices, and features change often. Check current details with each vendor and with your institution.

Course Synthesis

A large language model is a prediction engine. It produces fluent text by predicting what should come next, which makes it powerful for drafting, explaining, summarizing, and reorganizing, and unreliable for facts it has not been given. Every other idea in this course follows from that one: match the tool to the task, brief it the way you would brief a capable assistant, ground it in real sources when accuracy matters, and verify what it produces.

The tools now act as well as write. A browser agent can build a rubric or a course shell inside a signed-in learning management system, and an application builder can turn a five-sentence description into a working learning tool. That power raises the stakes for judgment. Student records stay out of tools your institution has not approved. Detector scores are not proof. Decisions that affect a student's standing stay with a human being.

Students have these tools too. The durable response is clear expectations on every assignment, assessment that makes thinking visible, and deliberate teaching of AI fluency. None of it holds without your own continued practice. Proficiency comes from use: fifteen minutes a day on real work.

Which Tool for Which Task

Task	Start with	Then try
Drafting and editing prose, feedback language, syllabi	Claude	ChatGPT
Long documents such as standards or a dissertation chapter	Claude	Gemini
Current events and literature scouting with sources	Perplexity	Gemini
A fixed set of sources with exact citations	Gemini Notebook	Claude
Lecture recordings, video, and audio as input	Gemini	
Images and diagrams	ChatGPT	Gemini
Spreadsheets and Google Workspace	Gemini	ChatGPT
Microsoft 365 documents and email	Microsoft Copilot	
Acting inside a signed-in website	Claude in Chrome	
Building a website or small application	v0	Claude
Music and mnemonic songs	Suno	

Before features, ask: which tool am I permitted to use with this data? Rankings shift with every release. Run the same real task through two or three tools and trust your own evidence.

Prompting: Brief It Like a Teaching Assistant

Part	Question it answers	Example
Role	Who should the AI be?	Act as an assessment specialist in health professions education.
Goal	What do I want?	Build an analytic rubric for a ten-minute oral case presentation.
Context	What does it need to know?	Students are in the second year and have completed anatomy.
Format	What should the result look like?	Four criteria, four levels worth 4, 3, 2, and 1 points.
Constraints	What should it avoid?	No vague words such as good or adequate.
Examples	What does good look like?	Paste a model and say: match this style.

The Prompting Ladder

1 Zero-shot just ask > **2** One-shot one example > **3** Few-shot several examples > **4** Chain of thought show the steps > **5** Agentic plan, draft, check, revise

The DRAG Rule

Drafting, **R**esearch, **A**nalysis, and **G**runt work can go to AI. High-stakes judgment stays with you.

Five Habits That Beat Any Template

1. Have a conversation. The first answer is a draft.
2. Ask it to interview you before it starts.
3. Ask for options at different levels or tones.
4. Ask for a critique: what is weak, what did I miss?
5. Start a fresh conversation when it drifts.

The Four Competencies of AI Fluency

Competency	What it means
Delegation	Deciding what to hand to AI and what to keep.
Description	Communicating clearly what you want. This is prompting.
Discernment	Evaluating what comes back.
Diligence	Taking responsibility for how the result is used.

Gemini Notebook (formerly NotebookLM)

A notebook answers only from the sources you add and cites every answer with a link to the exact passage.

- **Good notebooks:** a course unit, accreditation standards with your self-study, a literature set, institutional policy, your own manuscripts and reviews.
- **Good questions:** Which learning outcome is least supported by these readings? Where do these sources disagree?
- **Always:** click the citation for anything that matters. Grounded does not mean infallible.
- **Never without approval:** student work, grades, or identifiable student information. Check licensing before uploading library content.

Claude in Chrome: A Browser Agent in Your Learning Management System

The Four-Part Instruction



Model instruction: I am on the Rubrics page of my Canvas course. Create a new rubric titled Case Presentation Rubric with these four criteria and four ratings worth 4, 3, 2, and 1 points. Save it as a draft. Do not attach it to any assignment and do not publish anything. Stop and show me the result when you are done.

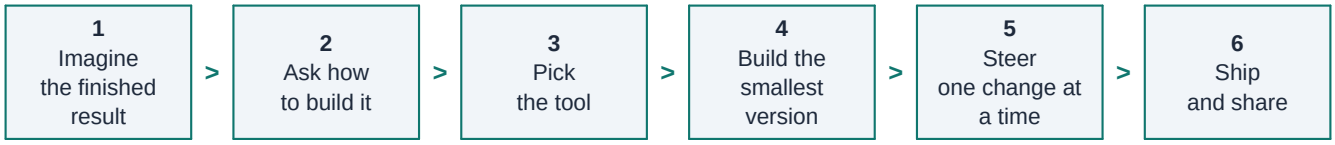
Go or No-Go Before Any Agent Task

Question	If the answer is no
Has my institution permitted browser agents on this system?	Stop. Ask information technology or the center for teaching.
Is every page I will use free of student names, grades, submissions, and messages?	Stop. Use a sandbox or unpublished course.
Is the permission mode set to Manually approve?	Change it before starting.
Does my instruction contain all four parts?	Rewrite it.
Will I review the result line by line myself?	Do not delegate the task.

Suitable for an agent	Keep the agent out
Building rubrics, module shells, and page structure	Gradebook and grading view
Auditing for unpublished items, missing dates, broken links	Student submissions and discussion posts
Proposing date changes for your approval	Class roster and message inbox
Accessibility checks that report and change nothing	Grading decisions and feedback on identifiable work
Drafting announcements left unsent	Any message sent without your review

Stop immediately if the agent discusses unrelated topics, visits unexpected sites, or asks for sensitive information. These can be signs of prompt injection. You remain responsible for everything published, sent, or changed under your sign-in.

The Imagine and Do It Model



- **v0 and Vercel:** v0 builds the website or application from your description. Vercel hosts it. Publish puts it online.
- **Suno:** describe genre, mood, tempo, voice and instruments, and subject. Write and fact-check lyrics in a chatbot first. Check your plan's usage rights.
- **Before students see anything:** check accuracy, privacy, accessibility, and whether it actually helps learning.

Four Duties of the AI-Using Educator

Duty	In practice
Protect student privacy	No identifiable student information in any tool your institution has not approved for it. De-identify when you can.
Treat students fairly	A detector score is never a verdict. Weigh drafts, version history, and discussion. Begin with a conversation. Ensure equal access to permitted tools.
Be transparent	Disclose your own use. State expectations on every assignment. Follow journal and funder rules in scholarship.
Keep human judgment in charge	Final grades, misconduct findings, admissions, progression, and recommendations are decided by people.

When a Detector Flags a Paper

1 Treat the score as a question > **2** Gather process evidence > **3** Talk with the student > **4** Decide on the whole record > **5** Redesign the assignment

Why caution is warranted: in one study, seven detectors wrongly flagged an average of 61 percent of essays by non-native English writers. A claimed 1 percent false positive rate across 75,000 papers means about 750 wrongly flagged.

Thirty-Second Check Before Using Any AI Output

- Did I read all of it?
- Did I verify the facts and citations that matter?
- Does it contain or rely on student or patient information that should not have been shared?
- Would I put my name on it?
- Have I disclosed the assistance where disclosure is expected?

Assessment and Course Policy

Three Levels for Every Assignment

Level	Sample wording
No AI	This reflection builds your own reasoning. Using AI would remove the practice you are here to get.
AI permitted with disclosure	You may use AI to brainstorm and check grammar. Add a note listing the tool and what you used it for.
AI expected	Generate a first draft with an AI tool, then critique and correct it. You are graded on the critique.

A Syllabus Statement Needs Five Things

1. Your stance and the reasoning behind it
2. The three levels and where to find the level for each assignment
3. How to disclose
4. Which tools the institution provides
5. What happens when there is a concern, beginning with a conversation

Making Thinking Visible

- Assess the process: proposal, outline, draft, revision memo.
- Add a short spoken component.
- Tie tasks to local, personal, or in-class context.
- Move key performances into the room.
- Bring the AI into the assignment: critique, verify, and improve its output.
- Ask of each assessment: does this still measure what I intend when AI is in the student's pocket?

Thirty-Day Practice Plan

When	What
Daily, fifteen minutes	Use AI on one real task. Note what worked and what failed.
Weekly	Run one task through two tools and compare.
Week 1	Add an AI statement to every assignment in one course.
Week 2	Build one notebook for a course or research project.
Week 3	Redesign one assessment so thinking is visible.
Week 4	Build one small learning tool, or complete one supervised agent task in an unpublished course.
Monthly	Trade lessons with two colleagues. Recheck institutional tools and policies.

Glossary

Term	Definition
AI detector	Software that estimates the probability that a text was machine-generated. Its output is a probability, not proof.
AI fluency	The ability to work with AI effectively, efficiently, ethically, and safely, including the judgment to decide when not to use it.
Assignment-level AI statement	A short statement on each assignment that says what AI use is permitted, what must be disclosed, and what is not allowed.
Audio Overview	A generated podcast-style conversation between two AI hosts that discusses your sources.
Authentic assessment	A task that mirrors real professional or civic work and depends on local, personal, or current context.
Browser agent	An AI system that can read web pages and take actions such as clicking, typing, navigating, and filling in forms.
Chain of thought	Asking the model to reason step by step and show its work before giving a final answer.
ChatGPT	The assistant made by OpenAI. A broad all-rounder with strong voice and image features.
Claude	The assistant made by Anthropic. Widely regarded as strong at natural writing, long documents, coding, and careful reasoning.
Claude in Chrome	Anthropic's browser extension for Google Chrome that lets Claude read, click, and navigate websites alongside you, using your existing sign-ins.
Context	Everything the model can see in the current conversation: your instructions, your files, and any search results.
Disclosure	Stating openly when and how AI was used in producing work, whether by a student or by a faculty member.
DRAG	A rule for delegation from the Practical Innovations blog: Drafting, Research, Analysis, and Grunt work go to AI. High-stakes judgment stays with you.
False positive	Human-written work wrongly flagged as AI-generated.
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	The United States federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.
Few-shot prompt	A request that includes several examples so the model learns the pattern you want.
Gemini	The assistant made by Google. Integrated with Gmail, Docs, Sheets, and Drive, and able to take video and audio as input.

Term	Definition
Gemini Notebook	Google's source-grounded research tool, known as NotebookLM until it was renamed in July 2026.
Grounding	Supplying the model with specific sources so its answer rests on documents you chose instead of on training patterns alone.
Hallucination	Output that is fluent and confident but false, such as an invented citation, statistic, or quotation.
Human-centred approach	The principle, advanced in UNESCO guidance, that AI in education should protect human agency and serve learners, teachers, and researchers.
Imagine and Do It model	A six-step approach: imagine the finished result, ask AI how to build it, pick the tool, build the smallest version, steer, then ship and share.
Inline citation	A numbered marker in an answer that links to the exact passage in the source.
Institutional license	An agreement between your institution and a vendor that sets data protections and approved uses. It determines what you may enter into the tool.
Large language model	A system trained on very large amounts of text that generates language by predicting what should come next.
Learning management system	The platform that hosts your course, such as Canvas, Blackboard, Brightspace, or Moodle.
Learning mode	A setting in some AI tools that guides students with questions instead of supplying answers.
Manually approve mode	A permission setting in which you review every action the agent proposes before it happens.
Microsoft Copilot	AI assistance built into Word, Excel, Outlook, and Teams for institutions that run Microsoft 365.
Model versus product	The model is the engine, such as Claude or Gemini. The product is the application built around it, with its own features, data terms, and price.
Perplexity	An answer engine that searches the web and cites a source for each claim.
Process evidence	Drafts, version history, notes, and a student's ability to discuss their work. Evidence of how the work was made.
Process-visible assessment	Assessment that captures how work was produced, through drafts, checkpoints, reflection, or oral explanation.
Prompt	The instructions and context you give an AI tool.
Prompt injection	Hidden instructions placed in a web page, email, or document that try to trick an AI agent into unintended actions.
Publish	The step in v0 that puts your creation on the internet at a web address you can share.

Term	Definition
Source	A document, web page, video link, audio file, or pasted text added to a notebook. The tool answers only from these.
Studio	The panel where a notebook turns sources into new formats such as study guides, briefing documents, timelines, and overviews.
Suno	An AI music generator that turns a written description or lyrics into a complete song.
The 4Ds	Four AI fluency competencies taught in Anthropic's AI Fluency course: Delegation, Description, Discernment, and Diligence.
v0	An AI application builder from Vercel. You describe a website or application in plain words and it generates working code with a live preview.
Vercel	The company behind v0 and the hosting service that puts the finished site on the internet.
Zero-shot prompt	A request with no examples.

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