

Graduate Research Design: Exploring Uses for AI in Psychology Research

Discipline: Psychology

Focus: Graduate, Research design, Co-created norms

Overview

Students led discussions and built consensus about how AI should be used at each stage of the research process. The project expanded to gather student and faculty input on guidelines for AI use in graduate milestones.

Course sequence

1. **Pre-course meeting:** how students currently use AI and what questions they want to explore.
2. **CELT Student AI Use Scale:** reach consensus on appropriate AI use at different research stages.
3. **Research ethics:** review literature and guidance on ethical AI use in the field.
4. **Research questions and hypotheses:** how AI can be used, its benefits, limitations, and biases in the information it includes.
5. **Literature review and writing:** what AI does well, what it does less well, and how you can tell.
6. **Design choices and data analytic plan:** how AI can inform design decisions.

Tools

CELT Student AI Use Scale, Generative AI chatbots

What the instructor observed

Students were more critical of AI than expected.

Advice for colleagues

Use structured exploration assignments that let students compare AI-generated and non-AI work.

Adapting it

Walking the AI use scale through each stage of a major project (thesis, capstone, design project) lets students help set the rules for each stage.

From the 2025–26 Teaching Innovation Institute (TII) cohort, University of Kentucky. Sources: 2025 TII Showcase posters (December 3, 2025) and the 2025–26 TII Project Takeaways survey.