Artificial Intelligence Symposium 2024: AI For All: Embracing AI in Higher Education Across the MENA Region
20 June 2024
20 June 2024, Virtual Delivery

Session abstracts

Session 1, 7:15-7:55 (UTC)

**Session 1.2a**
Rethinking Creativity: New Taxonomies for the AI Writing Classroom
Sam Meekings, Northwestern University Qatar
Oral presentation
Sam Meekings will examine the role of AI in higher education Creative Writing in the MENA region: both the potential ramifications for how students generate material and for necessary new conceptions of what we mean by 'stories' and what makes them 'authentic', 'credible', and 'diverse'. He will explore how AI can be used to help us redefine writing (in terms of both practices and processes) and originality. In particular, in light of the specific challenges faced by local L2 students, he will discuss his approaches to utilizing AI's generative and editorial capabilities in his writing classrooms in Qatar.

**Session 1.2b**
Artificially Original. Chat GPT Prompting Power & Its Unseen Ingenuity
Alessio Faccia, University of Birmingham
Oral presentation
In 'Artificially Original', (from the title of my bestseller book) I explore the connection between AI's transformative potential and its inherent challenges within specific MENA settings. Emphasising the synergy between human creativity and AI, I advocate for strategic, iterative collaboration with AI tools like Chat GPT to foster innovation while addressing ethical considerations. Highlighting practical strategies for enhancing AI's performance—such as custom fine-tuning and managing biases—'Artificially Original' offers a roadmap for harmonising AI's benefits with its risks. The work underscores the importance of ethical AI development, personalised AI experiences, and the cultivation of a responsible AI-augmented future, tailored to unique regional needs and cultural contexts.

Session 2, 08:00-08:35 (UTC)

**Session 2.1**
Harnessing AI for Enhanced Creativity: A Case Study from "Artificially Original"
Alessio Faccia, University of Birmingham
Workshop
Explore the dynamic intersection of AI and creativity with insights from "Artificially Original." (Author's Bestseller Book). This workshop focuses on integrating AI, specifically ChatGPT, into creative educational practices within the MENA region. Participants will learn to use AI
Responsibly and innovatively, enhancing teaching methodologies and student engagement. The session offers hands-on experiences, demonstrating how AI can align with and advance the core educational values and objectives in diverse cultural settings. This workshop will help to discover how AI can transform creativity in education, fostering an inclusive and forward-thinking learning environment.

Session 3, 09:05-09:45 (UTC)
Session 3.1
Integrating AI in Higher Education: Principles and Practices for Academic Excellence
Vic Stephenson, Senior Consultant, Education, Advance HE
Interactive Workshop

In this interactive workshop, academics will explore the fundamental principles of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their teaching practices. Designed specifically for educators in the Middle East, this session will cover practical strategies for enhancing student engagement, personalising learning experiences, and improving educational outcomes through AI. Participants will gain insights into the ethical considerations, potential challenges, and innovative applications of AI in higher education, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to effectively incorporate AI technologies into their curriculum. Join us to discover how AI can transform your teaching methods and elevate the learning experience for your students.

Session 3.2
AI in Higher Education: Practical Applications and Integration Strategies
Charles Knight, Assistant Director, Knowledge and Innovation, Advance HE
Interactive Workshop

Join us for a dynamic 45-minute workshop designed to explore the practical applications of AI in higher education. Based on the innovative "AI Garage" project, which highlights 50 case studies from universities worldwide, this session will offer participants the opportunity to delve into real-world examples of AI integration.

In this workshop, you will:

- Examine diverse AI applications in teaching, learning, and administrative processes.
- Discuss how to leverage AI tools to enhance student engagement, personalize learning experiences, and improve operational efficiency.
- Analyze case studies to identify best practices and potential challenges in AI implementation.
- Engage in collaborative discussions to brainstorm ideas on incorporating AI into your own academic practice.

By the end of this workshop, you will have a clearer understanding of how AI can be effectively embedded into various aspects of university operations and be equipped with actionable insights to drive innovation in your institution. This session is ideal for academics and educational leaders eager to harness the power of AI to enhance their educational practices.
Session 4.1a
The Efficiency of an LMS AI Knowledge-Based Program in Improving Faculty and Students Quality of Service in UAE Higher Education Institutions
Mouza Almehrzi, British University in Dubai (BUiD)
Oral presentation

In the ever-evolving landscape of modern education, the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) stands as a transformative force, reshaping conventional paradigms and fostering innovative approaches to support learning. This research endeavors to comprehensively explore the impact of AI-powered chatbots within Learning Management System (LMS) support structures across diverse educational institutions. The study commences by investigating the awareness and perceptions of AI among students, educators, and administrators, establishing a contextual understanding of AI integration. Demographic data provides insights into the varied technological landscapes of institutions, facilitating nuanced analyses across different settings. The experiences of participants with AI-powered chatbots in LMS support are scrutinized to assess user satisfaction, efficiency gains, and the effectiveness of problem resolution. The survey delves into the personalization strategies employed by chatbots, evaluating their impact on adaptive learning paths and tailored interactions based on user preferences. Efficiency metrics, such as response times, task automation, and resource allocation, are examined to gauge the tangible benefits of AI integration in LMS support structures. The study also explores potential adoption barriers and assesses the success of strategically integrating AI-powered chatbots into existing support frameworks. Going beyond quantitative assessments, the research incorporates qualitative elements through open-ended questions, providing participants the opportunity to share detailed insights, concerns, and recommendations regarding their experiences with AI-powered chatbots in educational support.

The anticipated findings of this research aim to make a significant contribution to academic discourse, offering actionable insights for institutions seeking to optimize LMS support structures through the strategic integration of AI technologies. By uncovering the intricacies of user experiences, efficiency gains, and challenges associated with AI-powered chatbots, this study aims to inform educational leaders, policymakers, and practitioners on best practices for enhancing support services in the digital era. The research seeks to empower educational institutions with evidence-based knowledge for informed decision-making and to positively impact the evolving landscape of digital learning environments.

Session 4.1b
Enhancing Interview Prep with GPT: Responsible AI in Saudi Management Education
Najia Nazir, Yanbu Industrial College
Oral presentation

The session, "Harnessing GPT for Enhanced Interview Preparation: Integrating Responsible AI Use in Management Education at a Saudi University," will showcase a project where a customized GPT model is deployed to assist Saudi female undergraduates in mastering job interview techniques. An AI model was trained to keep nuances and cultural concerns in Saudi Arabian recruitment in consideration. Tailoring AI to local linguistic and cultural contexts, can significantly enhance learning outcomes. The project not only emphasizes the responsible use of AI but also demonstrates practical applications in preparing students for the competitive job market in both local and international arenas.