

# The AI Diary: Active Use, Beliefs, and Casual Encounters

Deirdre Adams, Zoe Cotterell, Ja'launa Reynolds  
 Dr. Vanessa Dennen

## Introduction

With the development of artificial intelligence and the normalization of its use among students, it is becoming increasingly important to understand what shapes the guidelines for this use. Existing studies explore what/ how AI is used in an educational context but fail to address how conflicting messages regarding AI use impact the choices students make when using AI.

This study explores how college students experience and interpret misalignments in expectations about AI use across key social and academic contexts.

**Research Question:** How do college students experience and interpret misalignments in expectations about AI use across their key social and academic contexts, including instructors, peers, institutional policies, and career/ professional norms?

## Methods

**Participants:** College students

**Instruments:** Online survey

- Likert-Scale
- AI Self-Efficacy Scale (Wang & Chuang, 2024)
- AI Anxiety Scale (Wang & Wang, 2022)
- Free Response

**Theoretical Framework:** Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Figure 2)

- Microsystem - Instructor/Course Context, Peer Context
- Mesosystem - Instructor-Peer Misalignment, Instructor-Institutional Misalignment, Academic-Career Misalignment, Institutional-Societal Misalignment, Overall Misalignment
- Exosystem -Institutional Policy
- Macrosystem -Career/Professional Context, Societal/Cultural Messages
- Chronosystem -This layer adds the dimension of time, how life events and changes influence development over time. (will be focused on in future interviews)

**Data Analysis:** Descriptive statistics

By conducting a survey among FSU students, we will be able to gauge how AI usage is influenced by the systems that they encounter on our own campus and their spheres of influence beyond that. Moreover, this method allowed for us to see trends among majors, GPA, gender, and academic year.

## Microsystem Beliefs

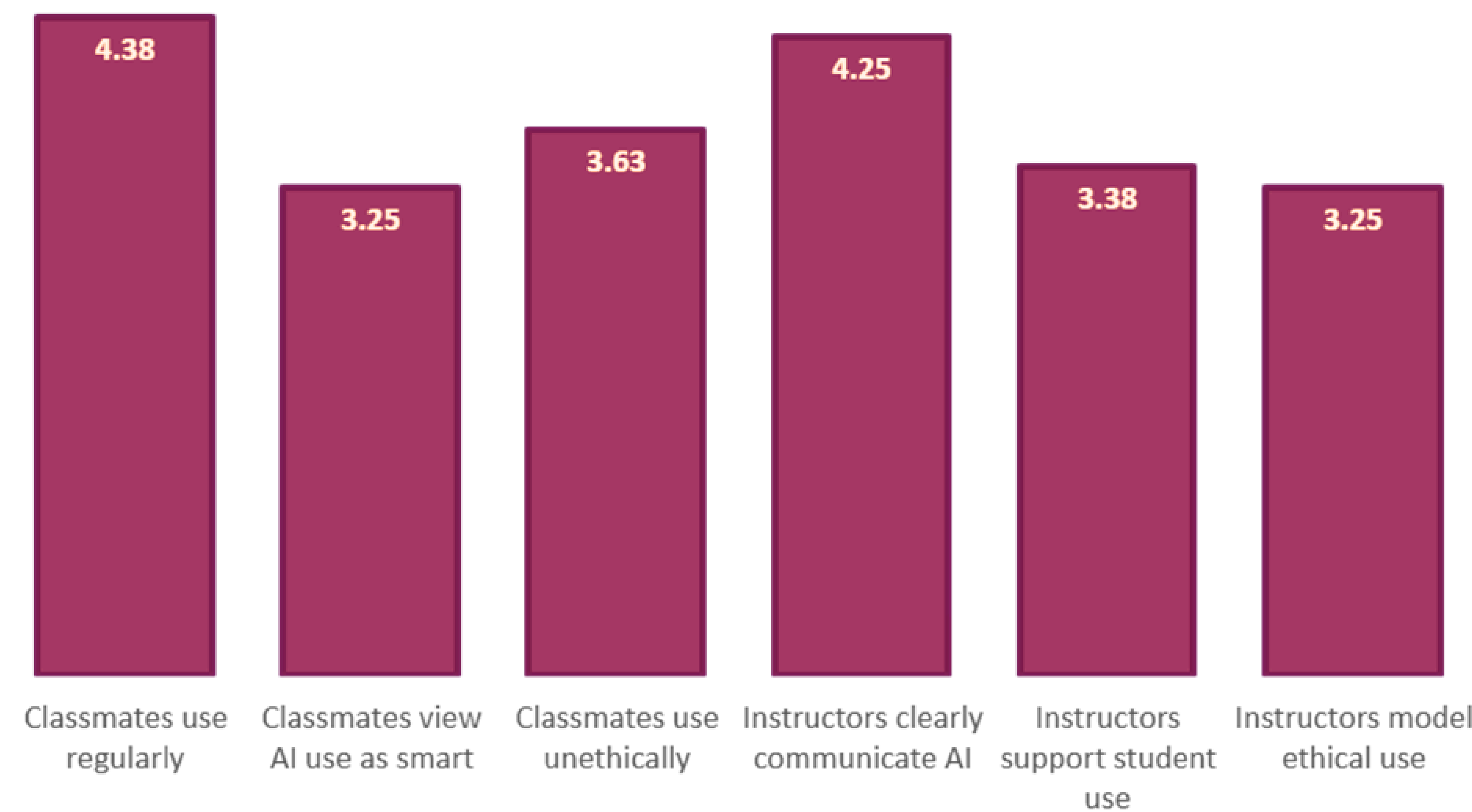


Figure 1. Student sentiments relating to the microsystem. Each value is measured out of 5.

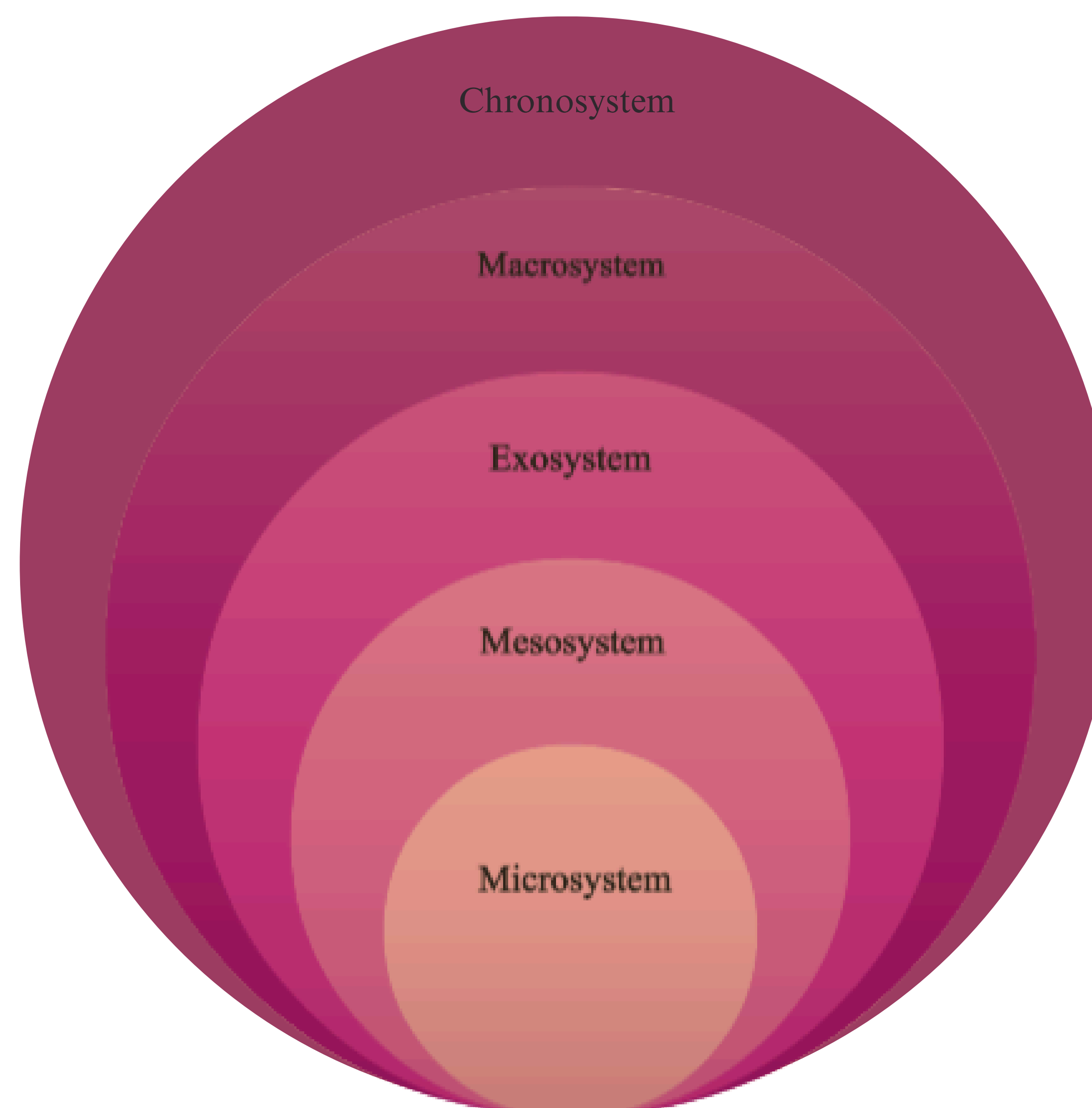


Figure 2. Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem illustrates how the individual is actively influenced by their direct encounters (the microsystem/mesosystem) and indirect encounters (exosystem/macrosystem)

## Results & Discussion

Research is currently ongoing. Data is being collected from the survey and participants for interviews are being recruited.

- Thus far, students have reported using AI at a higher rate than they did last year and having to adjust their methods of using AI in order to comply with University policies and expectations.
- Reported feeling that their peers use AI openly/often for assignments

### Implications:

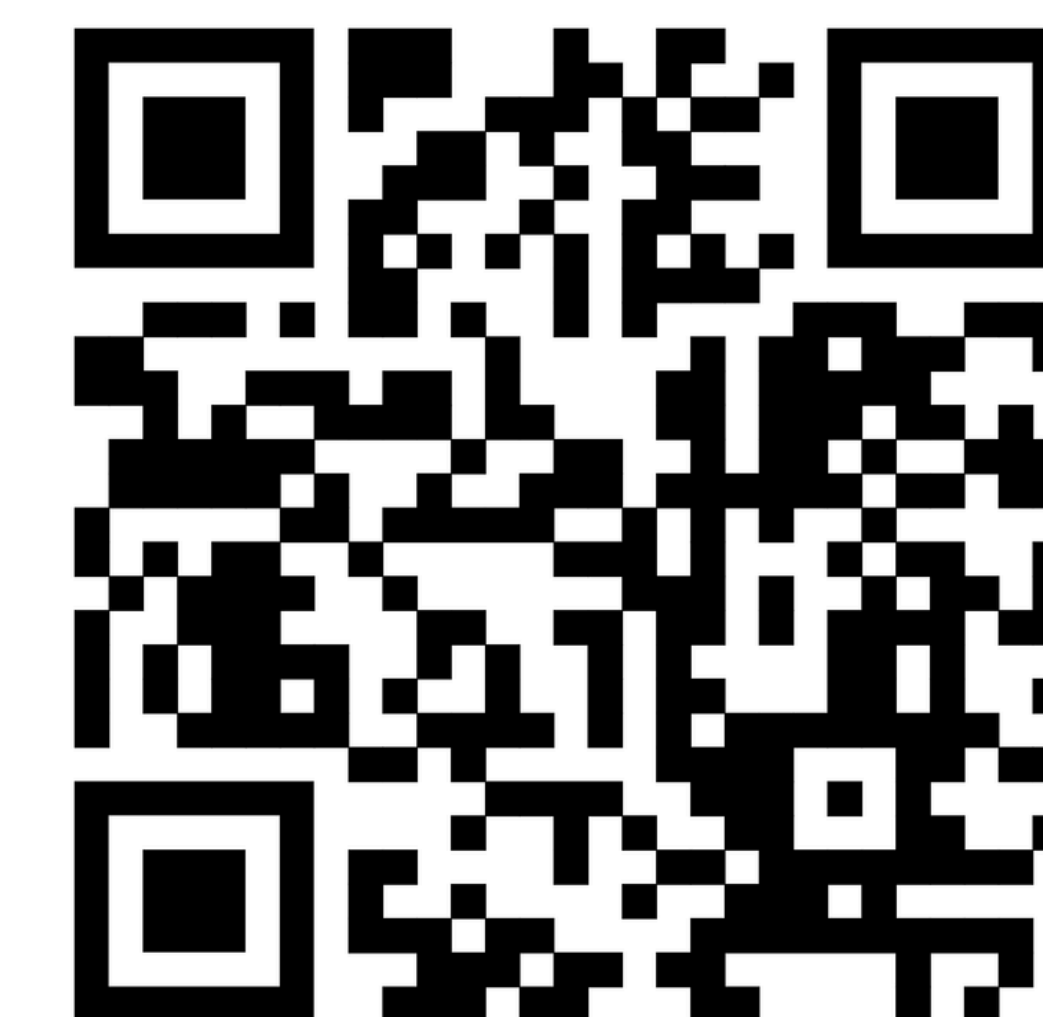
- Descriptive data will be generated from interviews and open-ended survey questions.
- Close-ended survey questions allow for generalizations and trends to be drawn.

### Limitations:

- Length of survey may deter respondents from completing it in entirety or seriously.
- Lack of incentive.

Future research will include interviewing participants. This will help contribute to developing academic conversations and policies concerning AI usage among students.

## References



## Acknowledgements

We would like to give a special thanks to our research mentor, Dr. Vanessa Dennen. Her knowledge and guidance have made this introduction to research an amazing experience.