Skill Development in the AI Era

Connecting Learning with People, Process, and Technology innovation

Webinar Topic	**AI Skilling - Enabling Students to Apply Their AI, ML, and GenAI Learning in Campus Jobs**
Fireside Conversation	**Brandon Mitchell, WriteSea** and **Meenakshi Baker, New York University**

June 18, 2026

The growing demand for students to gain hands-on AI

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Content Created on: **June 17, 2026**

Higher Education Is Facing a Converging Workforce and Revenue Challenge

STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY PRESSURE

Students **increasingly** seek:

I. **Workplace-ready** technical and business professional work experience

II. **Portfolio-based** learning

III. **Faster** entry into **targeted** employment

A **significant execution gap** exists between **learning** content and **validating use** of the content, in an appropriate **consistent** professional employment structure for a **significant** number of students to make a difference

Challenges for Students

Knowledge of AI tools mostly through **personal** usage 1

EXISTING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Demand is rising for:

I. AI Literacy and enablement

II. Digital modernization

III. Data availability and optimization for AI use

Mapping of use cases to **quality working prototypes** with ability to **scale** and **fit** for operationalization using **AI ready data** is limited due to **skill gap**, development bandwidth, and **limited resources** outside operational budgets.

Lack of specific domain knowledge makes it difficult to land business facing AI jobs 2

Lack of **operational** AI design and development experience makes it difficult to land **targeted** AI design and development jobs 3

ENROLLMENT / ROI [Return on Investment]

I. Enrollment growth is **flattening**

II. Students and their families are:
a) currently focusing more on **employability of degrees**

b) while deciding where to apply for **generational** education for their families.

Students having **continuous** opportunity for **hands-on professional** AI skill development increases **favorability for enrollment**.

Concern for Parents

Generational education in the same school is **strongly** supported by parents when their oldest child successfully gains **targeted** employment close to graduation.

INDUSTRY DEMAND FOR AI

I. Industry increasingly demands **pre-skilled** talent with **real delivery** experience in a professional work environment

II. Most students are trying to enter the workforce with **degree-only** and **generic** campus employment

III. Some students may have single-use capstone, and some learning opportunities outside academics like general cyber security training

Sustained and continuous upskilling programs increase reliable quality and productivity which can translate into increased employability specifically in emerging technologies. 3

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Emerging opportunities for applying AI, ML, and GenAI skills through student employment

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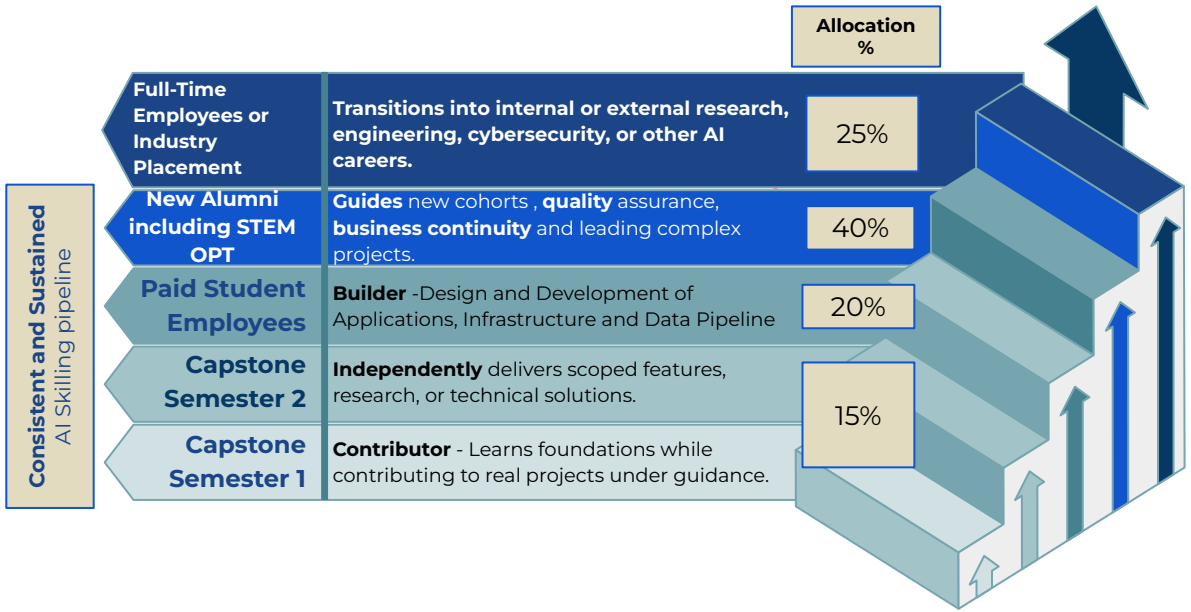
Emerging opportunities for applying AI, ML, and GenAI skills through student employment

Current Capstone Experience

1. Students find projects **independently** in an administrative area
2. **Variable** project scope and quality with **Limited** faculty visibility
3. Single-semester engagement with **limited continuity** and feedback

AI Skilling Capstone Experience

1. **AI Skilling focused institutional projects**
2. **Structured** mentoring, milestone reviews, and stakeholder engagement
3. **Multi-semester** progression
4. Learning + institutional impact



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Practical ways to start conversations and build support across campus

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How to **start** the Conversation?

This works best as a **sequence** , not a **campaign** .
Small , **credible steps** build the case faster than a campus-wide proposal ever will.

1	**Find the willing, not the whole campus** *Start with one supervisor or one department that's already curious. A single believer is worth more than a mandate nobody asked for.*
2	**Name one obvious win** *Point to a specific task that's slow, repetitive, or backlogged, something where AI help is easy to see, not abstract.*
3	**Use familiar language** *Frame it as "skill-building" and "career readiness," not "automation." The second word makes people defensive; the first gets them curious.*
4	**Loop in the right offices early** *Student Career services, IT, Finance, HR, and academic and student affairs each have a stake. Bringing them in at the start enables collaboration and avoids rework and resistance later.*
5	**Pilot small, document everything** *One team, one semester, written notes on what worked and what didn't. That record is what makes the next conversation easier.*

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Practical ways to start conversations and build support across campus

	Research & Faculty	Administration	Teaching & Learning
Need	• New research capabilities • Pilot projects and innovation • Funding opportunities [Internal and External] • Specialized solutions	• Reduce pain and noise • New business or service delivery • Process improvements • Reduce technical debt • New Technology solutions	• AI-enabled learning experiences • Source-grounded systems • Meaningful , Measurable , and Ethical AI
How we help	• Define requirements • Develop proof of concepts • **Support grant and funding proposal submissions**	• Assess current workflows • Decipher undocumented systems • Clarify requirements • Identify build, buy, or modernize options • Evaluate vendor solutions • Scope custom solutions when needed	• Pilot new approaches • Provide institution-operational solutions • Validate instructional use cases

MODERNIZE BUY BUILD

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Questions???

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Thank You!!!!

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