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Meet The AI Professor: Coming To A Higher Education Campus Near You

By [Nick Ladany](#), Contributor. © Nick Ladany writes about reimagining higher education.

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he ethical and practical implications of a "closed system" for AI professor



What can an AI professor do that a human professor can't, and vice versa?

APPLE IMAGE PLAYGROUND

A dirty little secret in higher education is that professors are [not trained in how to teach](#). There are virtually no industries that hire a primary workforce without clear, and often degree-based, training in their most significant work function

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AI professors, in many ways, will be the best versions of the best professors students can have. AI professors will be realistic avatars that go far beyond the simple tutor model based on large language models, and will likely be here before anyone sees it coming. AI professors will: be available 24 hours, 7 days a week; have an exceedingly large bank of knowledge and experience that they can draw from to illustrate concepts; be complex responders to students' learning styles and neurodivergence thereby providing truly personalized education with evidenced-based effective pedagogy; have the ability to assess and bring students along on any topic about which students desire to learn, thereby increasing access; teach content areas as well as durable skills such as critical thinking; and have updates in real time that fit the expectations and needs of the current workforce. A reasonable concern that has been raised is how to prevent AI professors from *hallucinating* or providing inaccurate information. One mechanism to guard against this is to ensure that the course and teaching that occur are within a closed system of content and have oversight by human professors. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that human professors are not immune to hallucinating or making up answers to questions. They just do it without oversight.

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with many students (once university structures permit this). The responsibilities will include building relationships with students, facilitating the building of community among students, helping students network with other students and people in industries and careers in which students are interested. Another key function will be to teach and assist students with using AI to answer research and work-related questions in a multidisciplinary fashion. Presently, most college courses exist within disciplinary silos, which means that the most pressing questions are incompletely answered. For example, how to counter problematic climate change can likely be answered only via multiple disciplines (e.g., environmental science, political science, psychology, sociology, biology, etc.) rather than via an overly simplified singular approach. AI professors will be able to teach the multidisciplinary content, and human professors will be able to more readily bring the humanity that answers the ultimate why question (why it's important to address the question to begin with, based on the personal and collective experiences of students). Of course, all of these new roles will come with expectations regarding professor training beyond content of their discipline, along with evaluation of their performance based on student success. Their onsite expectations will go from a few days a week for selective hours, with no teaching responsibilities in the summer, to five days a week for full days, year-round, with classroom and outside-the-classroom experiences with students. They will become the best coaches and teachers for students and play arguably the most critical role in student development.

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Similar to AI convergence in the [medical profession](#), the marriage between AI professors and human professors, a type of [centaur](#) model, will likely be a bumpy one. It will require the courage to look upon the current state of academia with the scientific prowess used to advance research, that is, objectively, using evidence to support contentions (e.g., link effective teaching with student learning). It will require professors to consider academic freedom as consisting of rights for professors *and* [students](#), not primarily faculty. Historically, universities have not been bastions of meaningful, rapid change, particularly among the professorate. However, it has always been the case that the best professors responded to updates in technology in ways that integrated the new technology with their meaningful and effective manner of interacting with students. Those with an [innovative mindset](#) with student success at the center of outcome expectations tend to be the professors that students look back upon fondly. Universities that [embrace this emerging approach](#) will more likely succeed in the long-run and those that don't are likely [headed toward demise](#). The quicker universities understand it's a "when" question rather than an "if" question about AI professors, the better chance they have to exist.

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Navigating Transformation Amidst Trade Shifts And Economic Headwinds

By [Ira Kalish](#), Brand Contributor.
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Retail is one of the most tightly linked industries to global economic cycles and is, therefore, one of the industries most intrinsically reshaped by global uncertainty. Retail has undergone frequent and radical changes to its business model, from the emergence of e-commerce to the need for socially-distanced shopping and beyond.

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consumer spending remained solid thanks to rising wages and strong employment. Of note, spending on goods increased [by 0.5% in July](#), with June's numbers also revised upwards – a sign that consumers are continuing to spend despite ongoing economic and geopolitical uncertainty. In tandem, concerns over rising credit card delinquencies and policy uncertainty cast shadows over the remainder of 2025. Meanwhile, in Europe, weak productivity persists despite easing inflation and interest rates, with Germany facing particular industrial headwinds due to high energy costs and declining Chinese demand.

As retailers navigate this environment, they're simultaneously dealing with declining consumer sentiment and demand. According to [Deloitte Global's Global Powers of Retailing 2025](#) report, global growth forecasts for retail sales remain historically low, with a five-year outlook averaging just 3.1% -- the weakest in decades. Profitability among retailers is improving, albeit unevenly; consumers, still fiscally cautious after years of an inflationary environment and price shocks, are curtailing discretionary spending. Retailers, in turn, are moderating their expectations: 74% of the Top 250 global retailers reported positive retail revenue growth in FY2023. However, overall revenue growth saw a significant drop from previous years when post-COVID-19 pandemic rebounds and inflation-driven price hikes temporarily spurred higher sales. This deceleration suggests that the era of pent-up consumer demand is fading, giving way to a more cautious environment marked by shifting consumer priorities, margin pressure, and restrained discretionary spending.

The imperative for retailers: agility, again

Against this backdrop of uncertainty, retailers should look to reinvent themselves by employing new ways to counter cooling consumer sentiment and further bolster their business in the current economic environment.

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In fact, many are already embracing tools that make them more agile, including doubling down on automation and AI to help offset economic strain and labor scarcity. Automation in global retail is projected to reach US\$33 billion by 2030, with nearly 70% of routine store tasks expected to be automated by 2025.

Technologies like Generative AI (GenAI) are being deployed to help manage inventory, personalize marketing, and even assist in physical store interactions—from smart carts to AI-powered receipts and product suggestions.

These investments are not abstract tech bets but rather performance imperatives. Retailers using AI saw sales and profit growth of 250% in 2023, according to IHL Group findings included in [Deloitte Global's report](#). Moreover, 98% of retailers are slated to invest in GenAI by the second half of 2025, with nearly three-fourths of those currently using GenAI reporting both cost reductions and revenue increases. The AI wave isn't just augmenting back-end processes, but experiential retail, too. Brands now employ augmented and virtual reality for digital try-ons, immersive displays, and even shoppable windows – with the goal of reducing returns and deepening customer engagement.

To further protect themselves and their profit against unpredictability, retailers are exploring revenue diversification through retail media networks and capability-as-a-service platforms—both tech-enabled avenues that generate high-margin, data-driven income. As adoption of these innovations becomes more widespread, retailers must keep pace or risk being left behind.

Safeguarding supply chains

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Meanwhile, the concept of Supply Chain as a Service (SCaaS) is gaining traction, enabling retailers to outsource logistics, warehousing, and even planogramming. By leveraging third-party expertise and proprietary technology, retailers are balancing cost control with agility.

Amid these structural shifts, one constant remains: the primacy of the consumer. A new generation of shoppers is rewriting the rules, demanding transparency, personalization, and seamless omnichannel experiences. As the global economy remains uneven, the retail sector's success will depend on its ability to adapt to economic conditions and consumer needs. From trade strategies to tech transformation, success in this new era will be for companies who understand that resilience is no longer just about enduring shocks but about building systems,

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