

The Campus Tech Team's Views on AI



Enrollment
Management

Financial Aid

Student Services

Academic Affairs

e &
stration

Research &
Innovation

IT & Data
Governance

Advancement &
Communications

Athletics

One AI orchestration layer across all your departments

We deploy AI agents to power university operations.



www.collegevine.com

The Campus Tech Team's Views on AI

By Alina Tugend

4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

5 INTRODUCTION

8 BEYOND THE HYPE: THE PROMISE OF GENERATIVE AI

13 PROCEED WITH CAUTION: THE RISKS

21 ADOPTING GEN AI: "MOVING AT THE RIGHT SPEED?"

26 CONCLUSION

27 METHODOLOGY

Contact CI@chronicle.com with questions or comments.

The Campus Tech Team's Views on AI was written by Alina Tugend and underwritten by CollegeVine. The Chronicle is responsible for all content. ©2025 by The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be reproduced without prior written permission of The Chronicle. For permission requests, contact us at copyright@chronicle.com.

Cover image: iStock



Adapting to new technology has always been part of the job for chief information and chief technology officers and their teams. But the pace at which generative artificial intelligence is evolving is almost unparalleled.

Over the past several years, such leaders have had to respond to ongoing trepidation about the potential impact of the technology on teaching and learning, on privacy and the protection of data, and on job security.

At the same time, tech officials and their institution's leadership often see generative AI opening up significant opportunities in many of these same areas.

To better understand technology leaders' perspectives on the new environment, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* surveyed 93

technology leaders at two- and four-year colleges in the United States this past August. In addition, *The Chronicle* conducted more than a dozen interviews for this report.

Technology leaders face a fundamental tension: balancing the need to adopt tools that can best assist faculty and staff members in a timely fashion while ensuring that those tools are carefully vetted and appropriately implemented.

"There are people who are gung ho, 'we're going to go forward, and we're doing this, and we got to build infrastructure,'" says Michael Zastrocky, executive director of the Leadership Board for CIO's in higher education. "And you have others who are saying, 'hey, wait a minute. How does this fit into the mission of our institutions? And where are we going to get the money and the time to do the things that people are talking about?'"



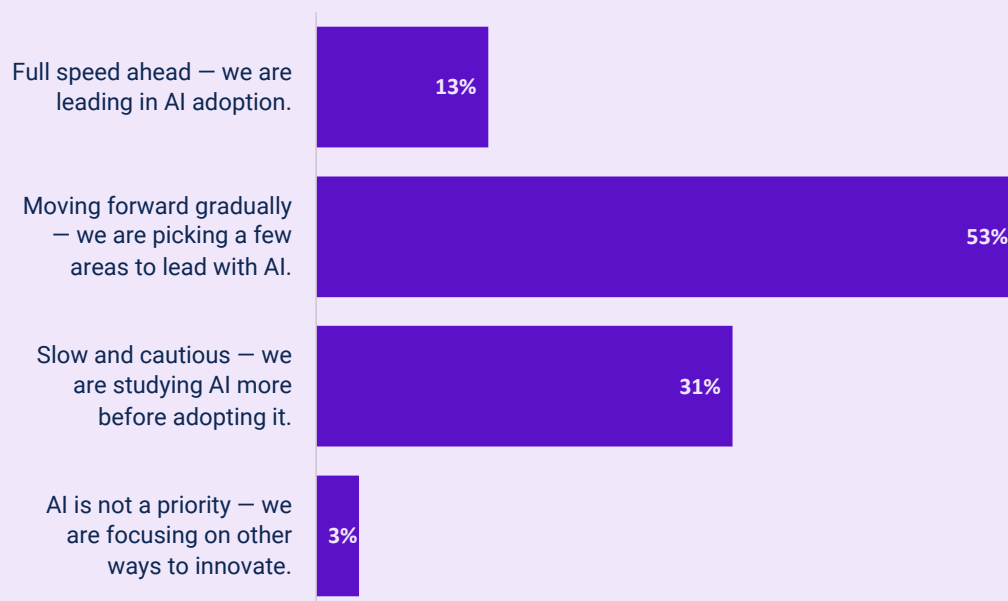
To be a higher-education technology leader in the era of generative artificial intelligence is to run a marathon at sprint pace.

“Our feet were on the pedal coming out of Covid, and gen AI has not let us off the gas,” says Stan Wadell, vice president for information technology and chief information officer at Carnegie Mellon University.

Tech teams — usually without an increase in staff size — have to understand both how

to harness AI’s capabilities while guarding against its dangers. For the most part, chief information and chief technology officers are still proceeding with prudence. Thirteen percent of respondents to *The Chronicle’s* survey said their institution is moving “full speed ahead” in its approach to generative AI, while in comparison, 53 percent said they are moving gradually by picking a few areas to lead with AI, and a third answered that they are “slow and cautious — we are studying AI before adopting it.” (See chart, p. 6) While classroom engagement initially was the main focus of how

Which of the following best describes how your institution is approaching generative AI today? (Select one.)



Source: Chronicle survey of 93 campus tech leaders

generative AI would affect higher-education institutions — and teaching and learning remain paramount — attention is expanding to include the use of AI for more mundane tasks: procurement, financial reporting, screening job applicants, editing emails, and scheduling meetings, among other bureaucratic necessities.

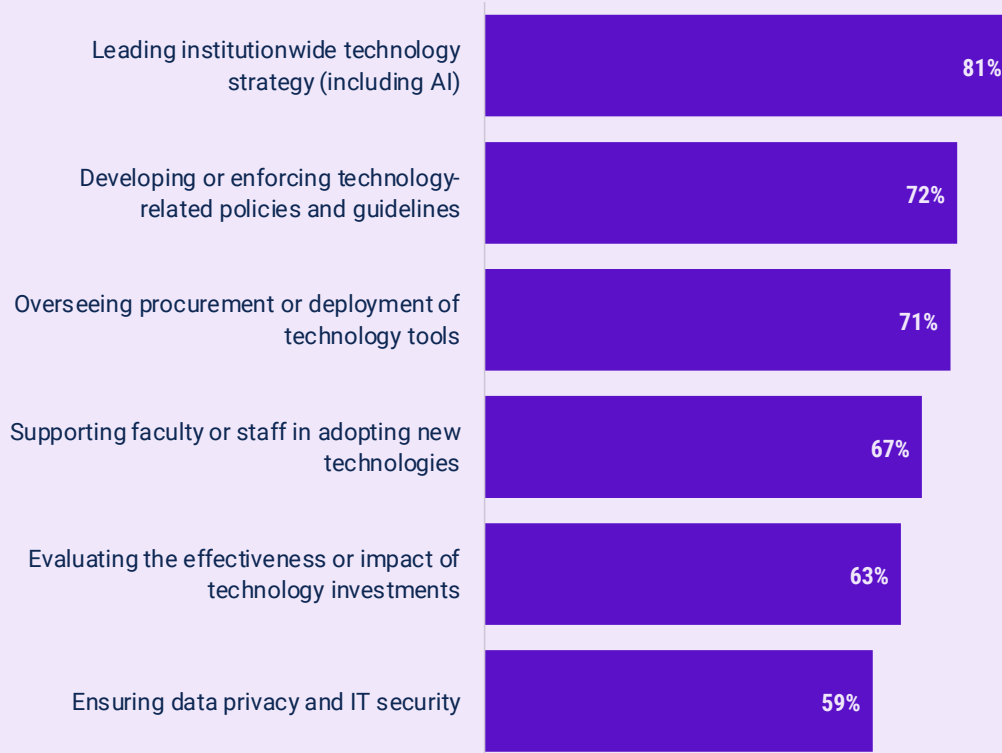
Cybersecurity is an overarching concern; many institutions have already been the victims or near-victims of fraud perpetrated by scammers using generative AI. Ensuring that their college is using the right vendors and tools poses another difficult challenge.

Generative AI has clearly affected the role of technology leaders. In *The Chronicle* survey, the majority of respondents said they are doing all of the following: leading institutionwide technology strategy, including AI; developing or enforcing technology-related policies; overseeing procurement or deployment of technology tools; supporting faculty and staff in adopting the new technologies; evaluating the effectiveness and impact of those technologies, and ensuring cybersecurity. One respondent echoed the sentiments of many of those surveyed by *The Chronicle*: “It feels like I’ll be part educator, part policymaker, and still part tech guy.”

How much do you agree with the following statement?

Which of the following responsibilities do you currently have when it comes to technology strategy, adoption, or implementation at your institution?

(Select all that apply.)



Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders



Beyond the Hype: The Promise of Generative AI

In the three years since generative artificial-intelligence tools debuted, the hype — and the alarm around the hype — has been unrelenting.

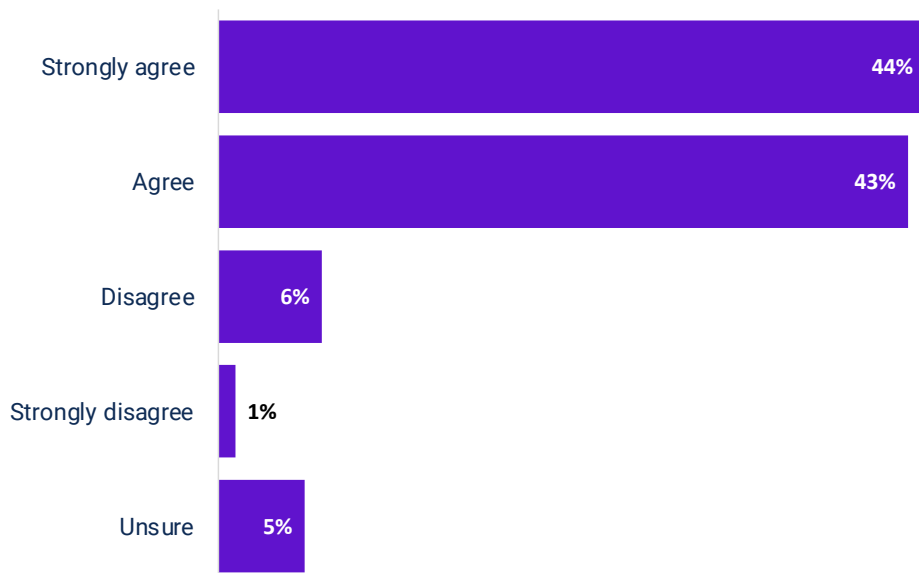
In higher education, campus technology leaders are at the center of this storm of excitement and fear. Chief technology officers and chief information officers have had to not only grapple with how this fast-moving technology works, but the effect it will have on every corner of their campus.

“This is a pivotal and momentous shift in our world,” says Keith W. McIntosh, vice president and chief information officer at the University of Richmond.

There are fears and concerns, but also optimism. A strong majority — 87 percent — of respondents to *The Chronicle* survey agreed that generative-AI tools “offer an opportunity for higher education to improve how it educates, operates, and conducts research.”

How much do you agree with the following statement?

“Generative artificial-intelligence tools offer an opportunity for higher education to improve how it educates, operates, and conducts research.”



Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders

Note: Due to rounding, figures do not total 100 percent.

Even though it may feel like AI has been talked about endlessly, the reality is that it is still new, says Zastrocky, of the Leadership Board for CIO's in higher education. According to [Gartner's five stages of the technology-hype cycle](#), he adds, AI is still in the first stage, the “innovation trigger,” which Gartner describes as “a potential technology breakthrough kicks things off. Early proof-of-concept stories and media interest trigger significant publicity. Often no usable products exist, and commercial viability is unproven.”

AI is now moving from the first stage to the second, called “peak of inflated expectations,” Zastrocky says.

“People are beginning to question and challenge, and some people are saying, ‘wait a minute, let’s stop and let’s really evaluate what it can be used

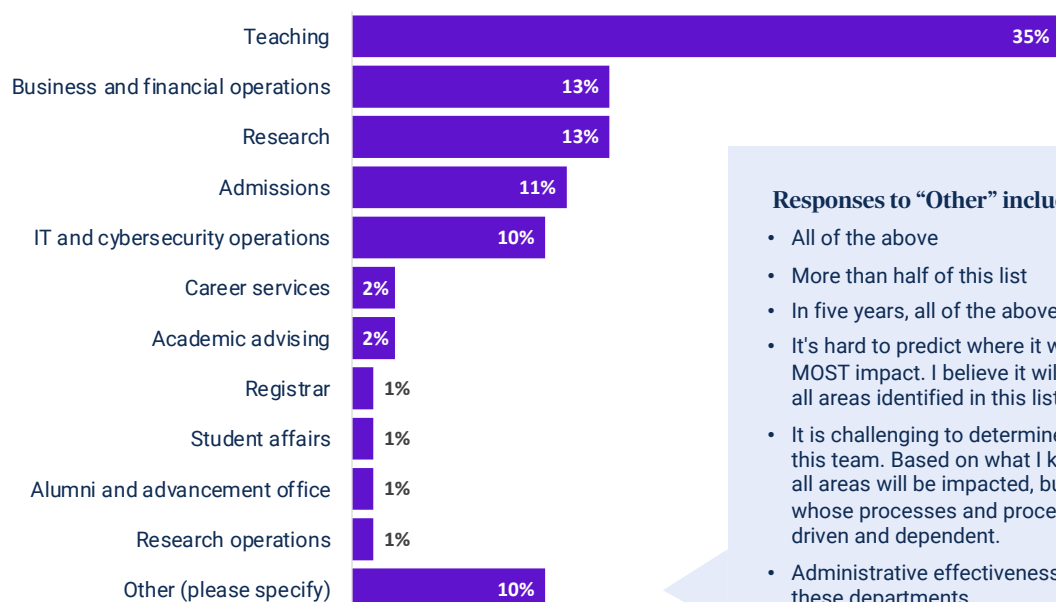
for, what it should be used for, what it should not be used for.’ And I think that’s healthy in any discussion of technology,” he says.

Reimagining the Classroom

When ChatGPT first emerged, there was an intense focus on how it would affect teaching and learning. It would make cheating so much easier! It would kill writing! It would force educators to completely change their teaching methods!

Those issues are still very much part of the AI conversation. When *The Chronicle* surveyed technology leaders about which area of college operations AI will have the most impact in the next five years, teaching, chosen by 35 percent of the respondents, was the clear winner. Business and financial operations and research tied for second place, at 13 percent each.

Which part of college operations will AI tools have the most impact in the next five years?



Responses to “Other” include:

- All of the above
- More than half of this list
- In five years, all of the above and more
- It’s hard to predict where it will have the MOST impact. I believe it will greatly impact all areas identified in this list.
- It is challenging to determine just one area at this team. Based on what I know and believe, all areas will be impacted, but those areas whose processes and procedures are data-driven and dependent.
- Administrative effectiveness across all of these departments
- Retention

Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders

“Ultimately, it will affect all of the listed areas, but it has already impacted teaching for two years now, and that’s the area where I’m seeing the most sophisticated approaches to its use,” said one survey respondent.

Some faculty members are eager adopters and have already figured out numerous ways to include AI in their teaching, while others are more hesitant. Ithaca College is working to tackle the needs of both groups through a multilevel approach.

This fall, the college’s Center for Instructional Design and Educational Technology and its Center for Faculty Excellence created an AI digital-literacy program. It involves a four-tier approach to help faculty improve their AI knowledge, says Jenna Linskens, the first center’s director of learning and innovative technologies. She reports directly to the college’s chief information officer.

At tier one, faculty members can participate in the Council of Independent Colleges’ [AI Ready program](#), attend faculty-led webinars, in-person workshops, and share information. They are also reading a book, [Teaching With AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning](#). The events are held about monthly throughout the year, and anywhere from five to 15 people might show up, Linskens says.

Tier two offers five [mini-grants](#) in the fall and spring semesters of \$500 each to faculty members who are looking to make small changes to their teaching with AI. Twelve such grants were given in the previous academic year; one recipient, a professor of physical therapy, used AI-assisted tools for movement analysis, Linskens says. All the projects are posted on the university’s [website](#).

The greatest opportunity is “streamlining administration and operations.”

Tier three is an [AI Digital Literacy Institute](#), which provides faculty members with an in-depth look at AI, including practical application in instruction, ethical use, and a critical analysis of AI tools. About 20 faculty members applied for and were accepted to the institute, and they also received a \$500 stipend.

Tier four will begin in January 2026 and will be open to those who have completed the previous tiers, and who want to take a deeper dive into how to make course changes for the 2026-27 academic year. Faculty members can apply for one of 10 stipends of \$10,000 each and receive in-depth consulting services.

The institute has received \$40,000 in funding from a generous alumnus, which will help pay for the grants, Linskens says.

Reducing the Bureaucratic Burden

Technology leaders are also widening their focus beyond teaching, learning, and research to consider how gen AI tools can be used for campus operations. The greatest opportunity is “streamlining administration and operations,” says Vince Kellen, former chief information officer at the University of California at San Diego. “That’s a safe, nice opportunity. Nobody disagrees with it.

Waddell, of Carnegie Mellon, agrees, saying the “biggest single impact” that organizations are seeing with generative AI are individual time savings in areas such as writing emails, polishing reports, and providing insights based on data or ideas that can be turned into formal reports. He himself has seen about eight hours in weekly productivity gains from using generative AI, and says that others he has talked to have gotten similar results — “a little bit more or less — but I’ve not talked to anyone that said, ‘I use these tools, and they make my work longer.’”

A Deloitte study, “[How Higher Education Can Realize the Potential of Generative AI](#),” includes three major areas that can be streamlined with generative and traditional AI. In administration, it can automate document processing in expense reporting and procurement administration; in human resources, it can conduct initial job-applicant screening and assist with onboarding. In finance, it can generate financial reports and verify compliance with financial policy.

More than 70 percent of 788 higher-education leadership, staff, and faculty members surveyed for an Educause survey on AI, “[Into the Digital Divide](#),” said they used AI tools to summarize content and brainstorm about work challenges. About half used it to create slides, meeting notes, and write emails.

The University of San Francisco has set up a number of pilot programs to see how generative AI can be used to help cut down on repetitive work. One platform summarizes student

“We have to get through this hype cycle by very methodical approaches to what we think we want to accomplish.”

information for counselors so they are better prepared to meet with students.

“Rather than a counselor logging in to half a dozen systems to look at student information, can we summarize that information for a counselor in a concise way so it’s meaningful and helpful, and they don’t have to shift through data to find the students’ information,” said Opinder Bawa, vice president for information technology and chief innovation officer at the University of San Francisco.

Carefully selecting which programs to pilot and closely analyzing the results in terms of time and money saved is crucial, Bawa says. He points to a [report](#) by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that examined gen AI pilot programs in a number of industries. It found that only five percent deliver a return on investment.

That is a warning to higher education, Bawa says. “We have to get through this hype cycle by very methodical approaches to what we think we want to accomplish.”



Proceed With Caution: The Risks

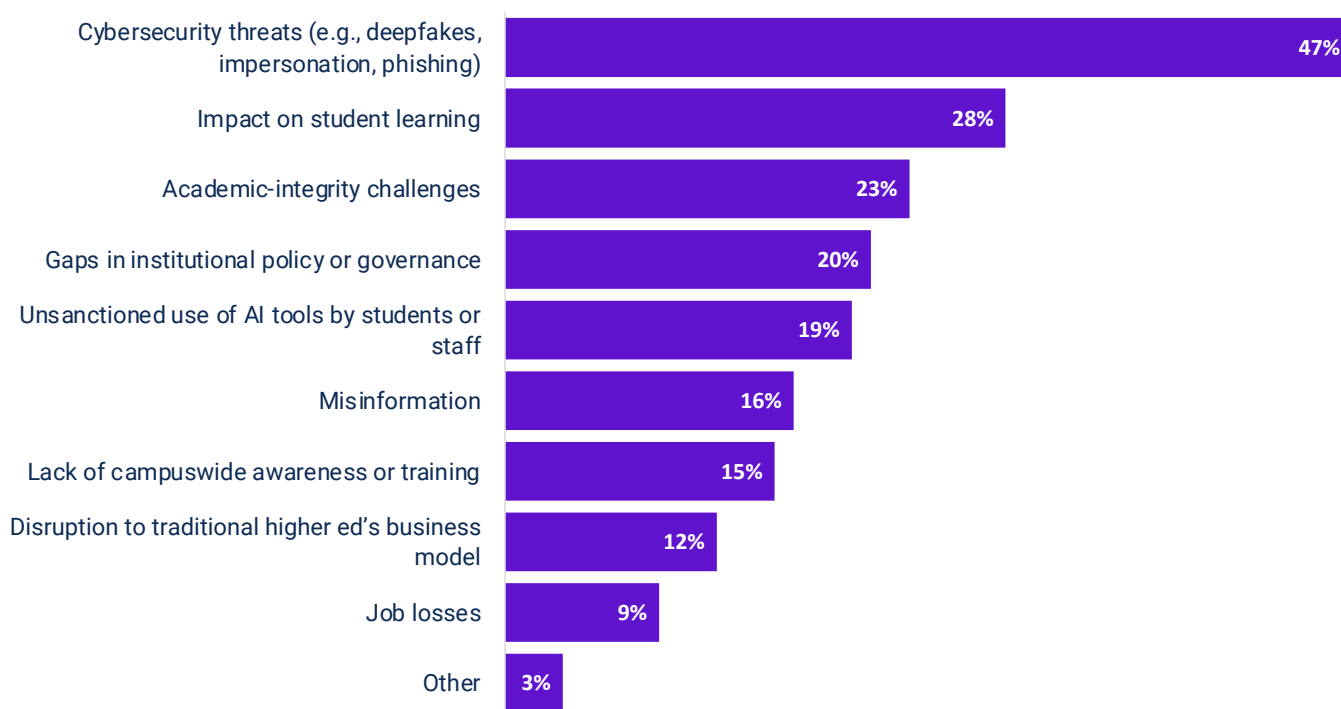
Like many of his colleagues, Kellen, the former chief information officer at the University of California at San Diego (he is now senior vice president for enterprise AI strategy at LSI Consulting), has never been worried about or afraid of technology. He's an early adopter and an advocate. But "I'm getting a little nervous," he says. "It's hard to get a handle on everything that could happen, and it's all

happening across the globe so fast. It's hard to know what other people are doing."

Clearly, there are risks to the technology, although notably, job losses ranked lowest on the list of concerns posed in the survey. The biggest worries were cybersecurity threats (47 percent), the impact on student learning (28 percent), and academic-integrity challenges (23 percent).

What concerns you most about the risks generative AI poses to your institution?

(Select up to two.)

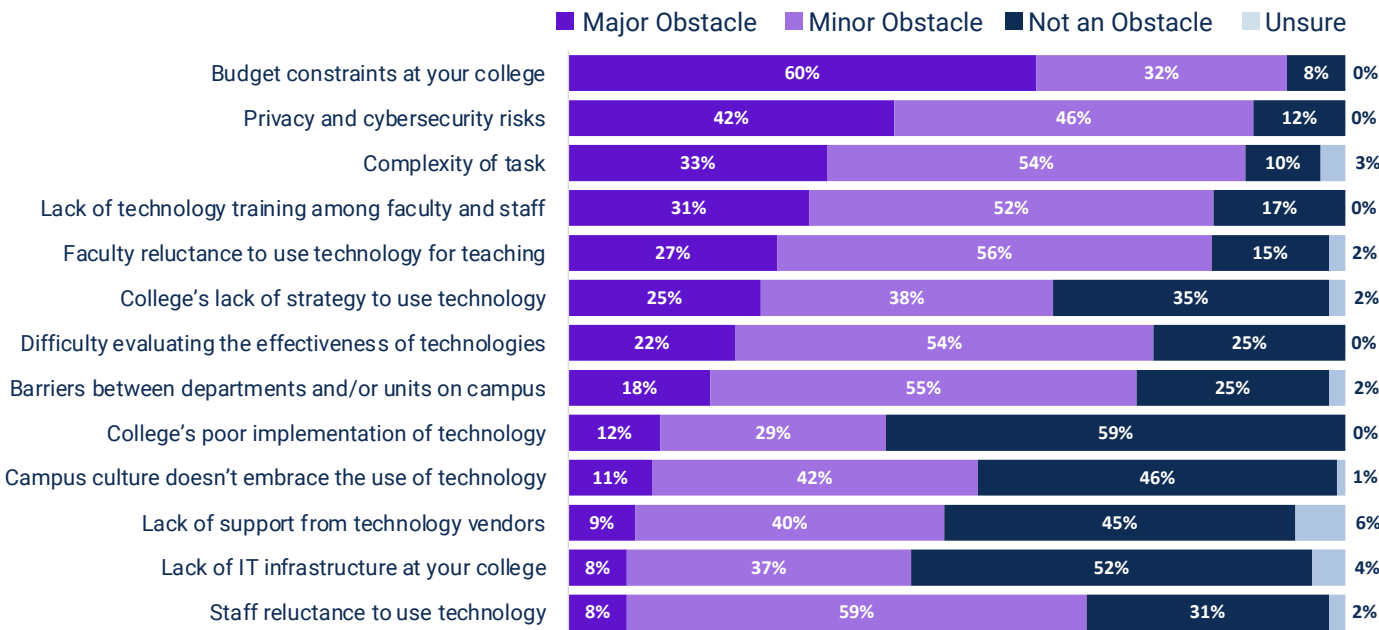


Source: Chronicle survey of 93 campus tech leaders

Many other technology leaders echo Kellen’s concerns about how fast the technology is evolving and how hard it is to keep up. For many, insufficient staff and funding are among the biggest barriers in efforts to deploy generative AI safely and effectively.

More than half — 60 percent — of respondents to *The Chronicle* survey named budget constraints as the major obstacle in using generative AI in education, operations, and research. That far outstripped the second major obstacle, privacy and cybersecurity risks, at 42 percent.

To what extent do you find each of the following to be obstacles in using generative artificial-intelligence tools to improve how it educates, operates, and conducts research?



Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders
Note: Figures might not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Patricia Clay, associate vice president and chief information officer for Hudson County Community College, in New Jersey, knows the impact of financial limitations.

“We can’t afford to provide each gen-AI tool, nor could we properly govern their usage,” she says. “We have to do everything we’ve always

been doing and then try to implement gen AI reasonably and responsibly. If budget was not a constraint, that could be possible, but our budget is as constrained as ever.”

Resources range wildly. Clay has 24 people on her team, while Waddell has more than 10 times as many, with 270. While most of those

interviewed by *The Chronicle* say their staff hasn't shrunk, it also hasn't grown to meet the additional needs of generative AI. Rather, the functions are being absorbed by existing staff. "It's more let's upskill, reskill the people we have, and add on as an area of focus and responsibility," says Mark McCormack, senior director of research and insights at Educause. "Technology leaders are telling us that they are overwhelmed. They have too much to do with fewer resources."

One way to tackle some of these issues is to focus on small and immediate jobs generative AI can help with, Kellen says. If people are having a hard time writing job descriptions, create a job-description helper, he says. If you have instructors who want to experiment with creating assessments with AI, focus on that. And he says, look at who will actually benefit in the short term and who is going to be willing to

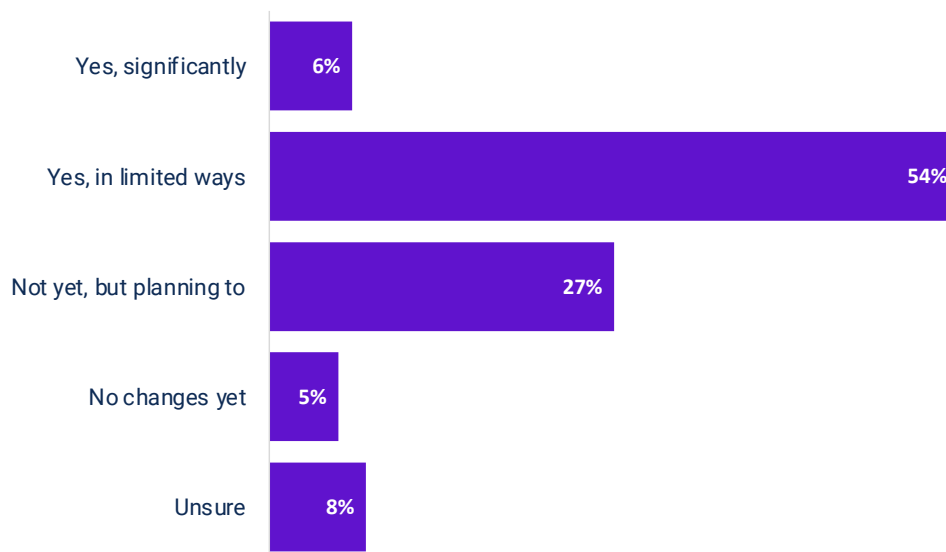
provide data on how they use it — so those in the technology departments can understand the impacts.

"Start with the mundane things that can really help save people some time or make their life easier," he says. "Don't go for the big and glorious right away."

Cybersecurity

Of the multiple roles technology leaders now have, protecting against fraud and misuse is one of their major worries. A recent [report](#) by the Digital Education Council found that the top concern about generative AI among university leaders is cybersecurity threats. But *The Chronicle* survey found that only 6 percent of respondents felt their institution has significantly updated its cybersecurity protocols or risk models in response to generative AI.

Has your institution updated its cybersecurity protocols or risk models in response to generative AI?



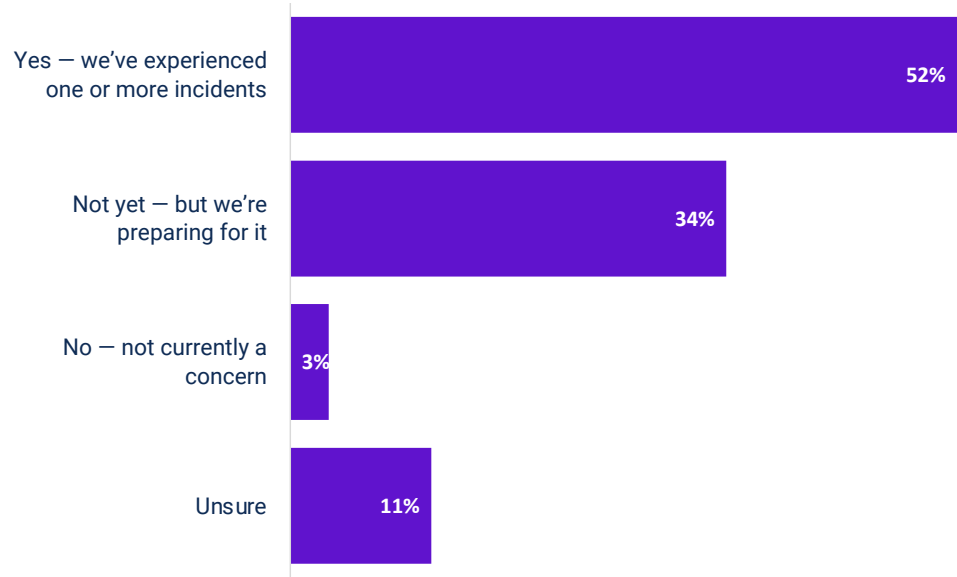
Source: Chronicle survey of 93 campus tech leaders

A little more than half — 54 percent — said the updates have happened in limited ways, and 27 percent said there were plans to do so.

The [Educause survey](#) had similar findings: Only nine percent of respondents reported that their institution’s cybersecurity and privacy policies

are adequate for addressing AI-related risks to the institution. And in *The Chronicle* survey, 52 percent responded that their institution has already experienced an AI-generated impersonation or phishing attack, and 34 percent of those responding said they had not yet experienced one but were preparing for it.

Are AI-generated impersonation or phishing attacks already affecting your campus?



Source: Chronicle survey of 93 campus tech leaders

Hudson County Community College is one of those that has already been targeted. The fraud involved a scammer impersonating a vendor the college uses, complete with faked documents, asking them to change banking information it used to pay the vendor. Fortunately the bank alerted the college of a possible fraud before the large payment went through. It is still under investigation, Clay says. And it happened despite the fact that her college has directed significant

resources toward cybersecurity, she says. “Our tools are much better. We’re catching many more things. We have much better controls. We’re blocking many more attacks than before, but the attacks that we receive are a lot more sophisticated.”

Those who haven’t been attacked yet count themselves lucky but know it probably is just a matter of time.

“We haven’t had anything that’s been driven by generative AI, but I do think that that is something that is up and coming,” says Waddell. “The bad guys are able to use generative AI to write much better phishing than they’ve been able to in the past, and I think that will continue to be the case.

“Hopefully the tools will get better on the security side,” he adds. “It’s still an arms race — the bad guys get better, and the good guys get better, too.”

All agree that staying ahead of bad actors is a difficult proposition. But there are things technology departments can do to try to minimize any breaches.

Cybersecurity is not one initiative, says Bawa of the University of San Francisco, but rather, “a series of things that you’ve got to do to make the entire environment robust.”

Educate, educate, educate everyone on campus about the dangers, such as clicking on an unknown link or downloading an AI tool without running it by the IT team first. Equip people to be “a smart, capable consumer in the technology marketplace,” Educause’s McCormack says. He recommends Educause’s [“Cybersecurity and Privacy Guide,”](#) which offers tips and use cases.

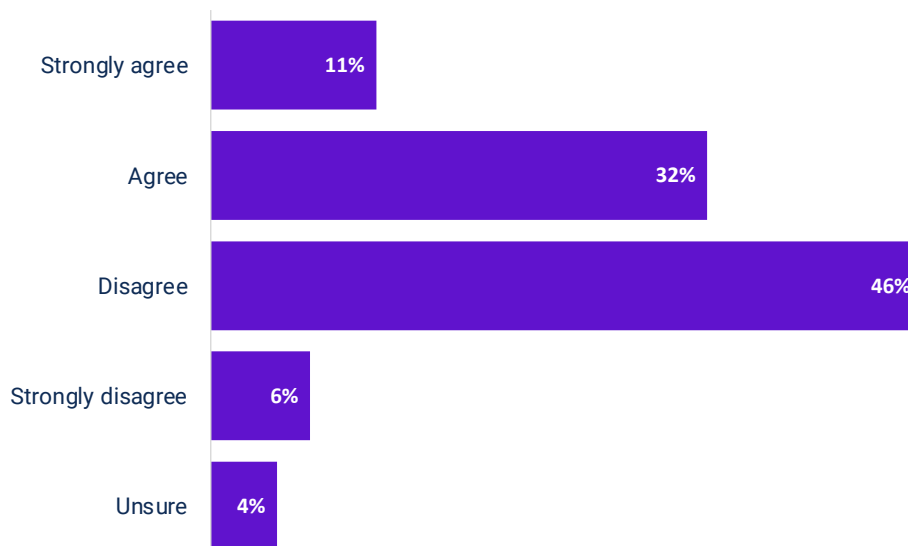
Working With Vendors

One of the biggest difficulties technology leaders face is the constant stream of vendor emails and calls promoting generative-AI tools while having limited ability to assess those tools.

The Chronicle survey bore this out. Slightly more than half of the respondents to the survey (52 percent) disagreed with this statement: “My institution has a good process to evaluate generative artificial-intelligence tools offered by technology companies.” Forty-three percent agreed, and the rest (4 percent) were unsure.

How much do you agree with the following statement?

“My institution has a good process to evaluate generative artificial-intelligence tools offered by technology companies.”



Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders

As one chief technology officer stated in *The Chronicle* survey, every technology company thinks it needs an AI offering, “most of which are expensive, don’t provide enough value, and compromise our ability to maintain a secure environment.”

Zastrocky, of the Leadership Board for CIO’s in higher education, says many of his members are at the point where they really don’t want to spend a lot of time with vendors, “because there’s so much push from vendors for them to invest in these things without knowing exactly where they’re heading. You could be going down a rabbit hole in some of these technologies, and they’re afraid of doing that.”

Institutions have various strategies to evaluate tools, once again often dependent on resources. The University of Texas at Austin uses an [adoption process](#) to evaluate learning technologies; there are different levels of inquiry, depending on the tool, that can range from conducting mini studies to yearlong pilot programs with user research by staff, faculty, and students.

In 2023 the university entered a [partnership with a company](#) to use that process to assess its generative-AI tools for teaching and learning.

“First, we’re looking at how effective the tool is, what is the user experience like?” says Julie Schell, director of the Office of Academic Technology. “Second, does it help advance the student-learning journey? And third, what’s the long-term viability of the tool on our campus? Because we don’t want to make these huge investments in our tools and then turn around the next year and it’s too expensive, or the vendor is not willing to work with us” — so the technology becomes out of date.

“Most of which are expensive, don’t provide enough value, and compromise our ability to maintain a secure environment.”

She also notes that early on, her university established a policy that any contract with an AI tool has to state that the third-party vendor will not save or train on any material that’s provided through a user who logs on with their university-email address.

As confusing as this area can be, a welcome advance, many say, is that there is more information-sharing within and across institutional boundaries — nationally and even internationally — about how best to use a particular application or technology.

Much of this occurs in online chats for members of organizations such as Educause’s [AI Community](#), [the National Association of College and University Business Officers](#) (NACUBO), and the [NorthEast Regional Computing Program](#) (NERCOMP).

But much more is needed. “We ask every institution to review their own tools and apps, which is the most inefficient way possible to do it,” says Richard Culatta, chief executive officer of the International Society for Technology in Education and the Association for Supervision

and Curriculum Development. “What we should do is have a group do it on behalf of all the thousands of institutions. The fact that we make every institution do that one-off is just a crazy waste of time.”

His organization started piloting such a [resource](#) in 2024; it is still a work in progress, Culatta says. The reviews are free to institutions, but reviewers can ask companies to pay them. To avoid pay for play, Culatta says, reviewers will have to show their process to ensure it’s valid, and many products will have multiple reviews. The resource is available now to institutions, he says, and his organization plans to move out of the pilot phase in the summer of 2026.

Educause also offers its [Higher Education Community Vendor Assessment Tool](#); colleges can ask companies to fill out an in-depth picture of their cybersecurity, privacy, IT accessibility, and compliance standards. According to Nicole Arbino, a senior program manager at the nonprofit, a new version of the tool has been her organization’s most popular product. It has been downloaded 30,000 times in February, compared to 17,000 downloads of the previous version over four years, she says.

But more collaboration about all aspects of AI would help, technology leaders say. “Can you imagine if everyone who bought a car had to do their own safety review of cars” Culatta says. “There’s a third party to do that. Some institutions, especially larger ones, really do have a team that knows what it’s looking for and can do this, but you have smaller institutions with a CTO and two support staff, and they have to do the same amount of review as every other institution. They often don’t have the bandwidth or the expertise to know what to even look for.”

“What we should do is have a group do it on behalf of all the thousands of institutions. The fact that we make every institution do that one-off is just a crazy waste of time.”

Adopting Gen AI: “Moving at the Right Speed?”

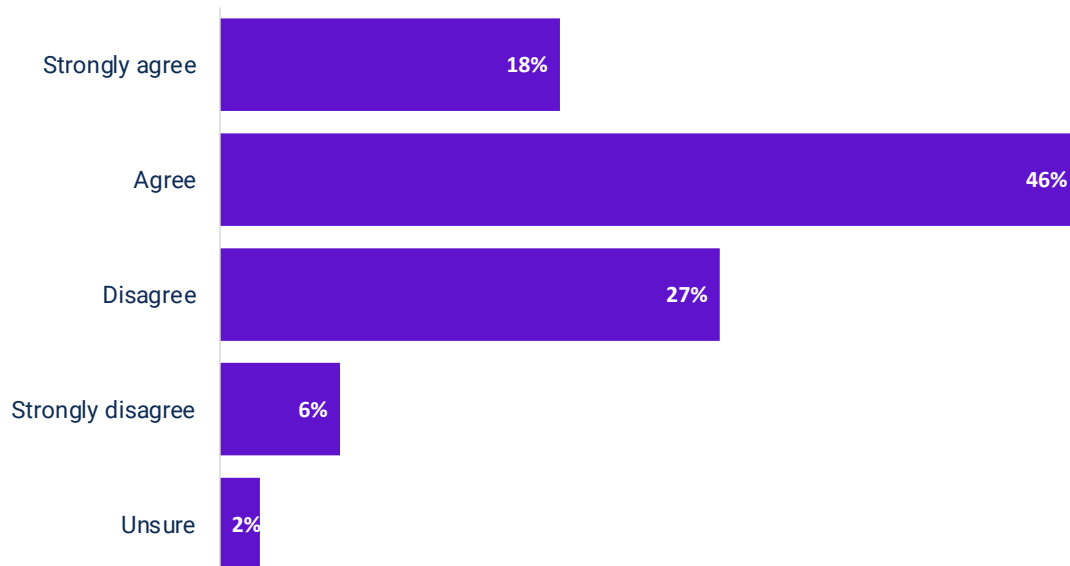


Like life, generative AI is a journey, not a destination. It is changing so rapidly and being used in so many different areas that no institution can claim to be completely prepared.

But some are in a state of readiness more than others. In *The Chronicle* survey, 64 percent of respondents agreed that their institution was moving at the “right speed to use generative artificial-intelligence tools to change how it educates, operates, and conducts research.” One third disagreed.

How much do you agree with the following statement?

“My institution is moving at the right speed to use generative artificial-intelligence tools to change how it educates, operates, and conducts research.”

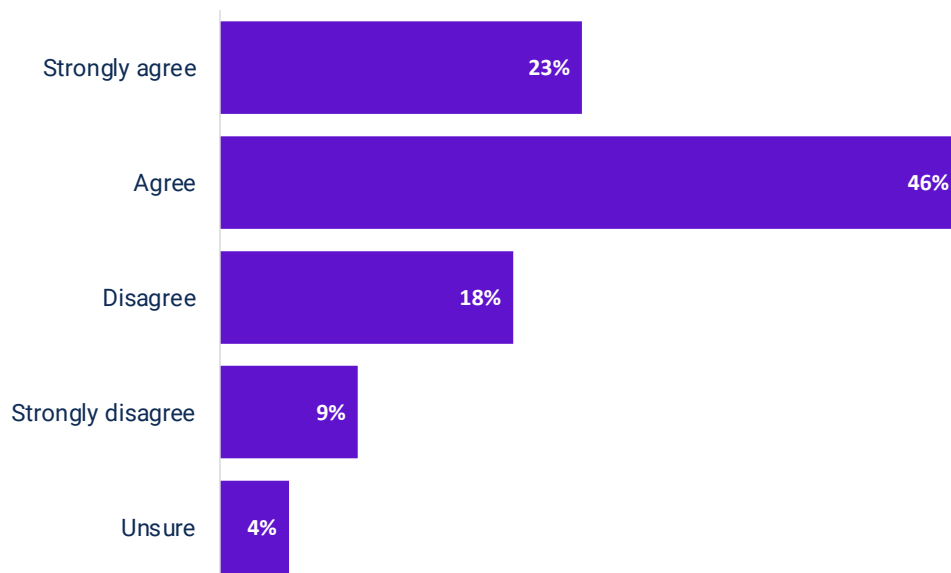


Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders

Note: Figures do not total 100 percent due to rounding.

How much do you agree with the following statement?

“My institution’s leadership works closely with the chief technology officer (or equivalent role) to make decisions about the use of generative artificial intelligence at the institution.”



Source: *Chronicle* survey of 93 campus tech leaders

“I think AI provides a lot of opportunities, but there’s a lot of risks, fears, and unknowns. I like to think we are cutting edge but not bleeding edge,” one survey respondent said.

Sixty-nine percent of respondents agreed that their institution’s leadership “works closely with the chief technology officer or equivalent role to make decisions about gen AI, while 27 percent disagreed.

Among those who disagreed was a director of information technology who said he fears campus leaders are not taking AI seriously. “The CIO says we are going to get in front of it, but it should

have happened already. We appear to have no direction on AI, yet quite a few are already using it. From my position in cybersecurity, this is very scary, and they just don’t get it.”

Perhaps one of the biggest immediate changes technology leaders have seen with the advent of generative AI is within their own roles.

Respondents to *The Chronicle* survey differed widely on how AI has and potentially will change their jobs. Some said it has made their work more valued and central to the needs of their institution. Others predict there is the potential it will dilute the importance of IT teams.

“It will democratize the use of technology, lessening the control the IT department has over technology projects,” said one respondent. “We will have to give up some control.”

Several said their roles have already altered because of the need to educate and provide guidance on AI across the campus, and they foresee that need continuing to grow, at least in the near future.

“It is going to increase the amount of time spent on having conversations with tech-adverse faculty, faculty training, development of resources, and the evaluation of software tools,” one survey respondent commented.

Gen AI “is transforming my role from managing IT systems to becoming a strategic adviser and change agent,” says McIntosh, of the University of Richmond. It can provide an opportunity, he says, “for all technology leaders to really flex their leadership.”

Not all embrace this expanded role; one respondent to *The Chronicle* survey noted: “Gen AI requires me to step into a broad transformation-leadership role when that is very uncomfortable and not otherwise desired by my campus.”

McIntosh, however, welcomes it. With a staff of 74, doing everything he wants can be a challenge, so his goal is to find “a coalition of the willing.” One way he has done that is having ongoing conversations with different members of his university’s leadership about where generative AI might help them. Not all the conversations bear fruit, he says, but some do.

Gen AI “is transforming my role from managing IT systems to becoming a strategic adviser and change agent.”

“A big piece of my conversation around AI leadership on our campus is change management, and change management at its core is understanding the different constituents you have,” McIntosh says. “What are their concerns? What are their fears? Because if we want to help move the needle, I can provide all the AI literacy I want, but if there’s fear or lack of trust, we’re not going to make any headway in what we’re trying to do.”

McIntosh discovered that even within his own IT team. When he surveyed it about AI, he was surprised to learn there were members who opposed moving toward more AI adoption.

It was a learning moment. He says he better understood that he could “be an evangelist for this, but it has to be tempered and measured,” and “not everybody’s going to be feeling the same.”

Many tech leaders say one way to alleviate some of their workload is to teach the early adopters and create a formal or informal system where they help educate and assist their colleagues.

Peer-to-peer support is particularly important in getting people to trust the technology, especially slow adopters, according to a report, “[Making AI Generative for Higher Education](#),” by the research company Ithaka S+R. As one health-science professor said in the report, “When one faculty member says, Oh, I’d use this in the classroom, or I’ve used this in research ... that kind of gives it a stamp of credibility where they’ve already done some of the legwork, and that makes me more likely to try it out.”

Peer-to-peer support is particularly important in getting people to trust the technology, especially slow adopters.

While the pace of generative AI's evolution is intense, technology leaders are by no means unanimous about its potential impact. But one thing everyone agrees on: At this point in time, the hype, fears, and promises around the technology have affected their roles.

For some it's an exciting time to be working in this field at a higher-education institution, as they have taken on more challenges and moved into greater leadership roles. Others feel overwhelmed by more pressure and little support.

For many chief information and chief technology officers, the best way to adopt this new technology is to strike a balance between moving too slowly and too rapidly, which isn't easy to find — especially if campus leadership is pulling in the opposite direction. But as the fanfare around AI fades and it becomes clearer how to separate razzmatazz from reality, that may become easier.

No one, however, expects too much of a slowdown. Artificial intelligence is constantly evolving, and “the institution itself has to constantly reevaluate where they are, where

The best way to adopt this new technology is to strike a balance between moving too slowly and too rapidly, which isn't easy to find — especially if campus leadership is pulling in the opposite direction.

the gaps are, how they need to adjust on an ongoing basis,” McCormack, at Educause, says. “I think that's just going to be our new reality. Technology leaders will always feel we're just not there yet because they see the need to adapt and adjust almost on a weekly basis.”

Ninety-three technology leaders responded to *The Chronicle's* online survey, which was conducted between August 5 and August 27, 2025. They hold the following responsibilities: Eighty-one percent are leading institutionwide technology strategy (including AI), 72 percent are developing or enforcing technology-related policies and guidelines, 71 percent are overseeing procurement or deployment of technology tools, 67 percent are supporting faculty or staff in adopting new technologies, 63 percent are evaluating the effectiveness of technology investments, and 59 percent are ensuring data privacy and IT security. (*See chart, p. 7*)

