

Sociology of Education Webinar Series presents AI Perspectives & Insights

(CASE-ACSE/CSA-SoE)

Thursday, January 22
12:00 PM – 1:15 PM EST

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What does it mean to be AI literate? Skills and perspectives among CEGEP teachers in Quebec

SPEAKERS : **LISA GIANCHINI** PHD, PROFESSOR, AND **FLORENCE BELAIR**, CÉGEP ÉDOUARD-MONTPETIT

In Québec the Professional Competency Framework for the teaching profession is currently being revised to address the profound transformations in the educational landscape, particularly the emergence of artificial intelligence in pedagogical and administrative practices. Indeed, the current framework does not fully reflect the skills needed to teach in a world where AI is transforming knowledge, tools and human interactions. To offer useful insights, in this time of transformation, the present study provides a picture of the literacy level of CEGEP teachers in Québec and of their expectations and needs regarding AI training. Data have been collected through an online questionnaire (352 respondents in 27 cégeps) and focused interviews (27 interviewed teachers in 10 cégeps). Quantitative analysis was performed using JASP and was based on the 3 components - technical understanding, critical analysis and practical applications - Likert scale of Laupicher et al. (2023). Qualitative analyses were performed following a mixed approach: guided thematic analysis enriched inductively by insights from the data. Results show that technical understanding is the weakest component. However, very few teachers seem interested in learning more about it. Result also reveal that AI literacy level is gender and discipline dependent. By identifying skills and perspectives of teachers, we present concrete paths and recommendations to address the challenges of integrating the AI into teaching – opening the floor for reflection, dialogue and shared insights.

HOST : **BEYHAN FARHADI**, PHD, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Insights from Secondary School Leaders

SPEAKER : **NANCY HSIUNG**, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

With the rise of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), there has been limited research on this technology in the context of Ontario secondary school leadership. This study aims to fill this gap by utilizing a basic qualitative research design, where twenty secondary school leaders from various locations in Ontario engaged in semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed utilizing reflexive thematic analysis and e-leadership, pedagogical beliefs, and educational change as the conceptual framework. The GenAI technologies used and approved across Ontario secondary schools and parental and community perspectives were reported by school leaders. Overall, five themes emerged in which Ontario secondary school leaders expressed a range of perspectives—both for and against the integration of GenAI—grounding their views in their professional responsibilities and the needs of their students. School leaders indicated several opportunities and challenges of integrating this technology, including varying equity perspectives and different supports in their schools and the system. School leaders propose several recommendations regarding GenAI in Ontario secondary schools. Implications of this exploratory study are discussed. This study's most unique contribution is its examination of how Ontario secondary school leaders frame GenAI as not a simple technology to be adopted, but rather an ethical and pedagogical critical point that requires school leaders to grapple with whether they view this integration as beneficial or a hindrance to students and educators.

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Speakers



Lisa Giachi

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Teacher and researcher at Cégep Édouard-Montpetit, holds a Ph.D. in Physics of the University of Bologna and a Graduate Microprogram in Postsecondary Education (University of Montreal). Her research activities span both the fundamental sciences and the humanities. She is currently the principal investigator on a research project funded by the Ministry of superior education, as part of the Program for Research Support in Postsecondary Teaching and Learning (PAREA). This project aims to develop a portrait of typical perspectives on generative AI in education and to understand the existing interrelations between these perspectives and the pedagogical approaches of college faculty in Quebec. She is member of the International Observatory on the Societal Impacts of AI and Digital Technology (OBVIA).



Florece Belair

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Recipient of the Governor General's Academic Medal in 2024, is pursuing her college studies in Natural Sciences at Cégep Édouard-Montpetit. She is a recipient of the Research Initiation Scholarship for Emerging College Scholars (BIRC) offered by the Quebec Research Fund – Society and Culture (FRQSC) to pursue a research internship on artificial intelligence literacy, and a recipient of the Nova-Sciences Research Initiation Project Scholarship from the Government of Quebec. She is also in progress of completing research internship in composite material chemistry.



Nancy Hsiung

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A first-year PhD student in the Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP) program at OISE/University of Toronto, specializing in Comparative, International, and Development Education. Her research interests are at the intersection of generative AI, school leadership, mental health and well-being, and education policies. She previously earned an MA in ELP and an Honours BSc in Psychology with a minor in Education and Society, both from UofT. Beyond academia, Nancy has worked at UNESCO and the Ontario Ministry of Education. She has also volunteered as a math and English tutor with various non-profit organizations in Toronto.

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