Position Statement: The Alberta Government's Panel on Generative AI

Context and Overview

As faculty members, we recognize that generative artificial intelligence is creating and will continue to create fundamental changes to the post-secondary sector. However, the Alberta Government's recently convened Panel on Generative AI presents serious structural, pedagogical, and ethical deficiencies. As it stands, the panel is positioned to dictate curriculum and funnel public funds into the private tech sector without sufficient input from the educators and students who will bear the consequences.

1. Structural Bias and Exclusion of Expertise

The composition of this panel reveals a profound bias toward AI commercialization, industry adoption, and entrepreneurship.

- **Missing Voices:** There is a glaring absence of representatives from teaching and learning centers, educational psychology, faculty associations , student unions, or independent labor market economists.
- **Privacy Concerns:** Notably, there is no dedicated privacy expert on the panel—a severe oversight given the data-harvesting nature of generative AI platforms.
- **Flawed Timeline:** The mandated nine-month timeline to deliver "concrete recommendations" suggests a rushed process meant to produce near-term outcomes rather than genuine, consultative analysis.

2. Curricular Overreach and Bicameral Governance

The government must not dictate curricular decisions to post-secondary institutions.

- **Industry-Serving Mandate:** The panel's framing around "competency alignment" is designed to serve industry needs. It presupposes that the private market, rather than the university, defines what graduates should know—a highly contestable value proposition.
- **Protecting Bicameral Governance:** If AI literacy is to be integrated into the degree credential framework as a learning outcome, it must be subject to rigorous bicameral governance and academic curriculum review. It cannot be bypassed by executive government mandate.

3. Commodification, Policy Capture, and Sustainability

The panel's heavy reliance on private sector and industry experts risks turning educational policy into a procurement pipeline.

- **Policy Capture:** Panels structured this way frequently produce recommendations that create institutional demand for the exact tools and platforms represented by the panelists' employers or clients.This is especially troubling in the AI context given the omission of a privacy expert on the panel.

- **Ignoring Local Impacts:** The current focus is strictly on revenue generation and efficiencies, completely ignoring the environmental sustainability and local community impacts of the massive data centers required to power these AI systems.

4. Strategic Response and Next Steps

To protect pedagogical integrity and institutional autonomy, CAFA and MRU faculty must take unified action:

- **Shadow Panel & Whitepaper:** We fully support CAFA's initiative to develop an independent whitepaper and to convene a "shadow panel." This will provide the rigorous, pedagogically sound, and independent analysis the government's panel lacks.
- **Alternative Frameworks:** We must look to established, peer-reviewed models for AI integration, such as the Trent University model document and the FINEC Resources developed in Quebec (see Appendix).
- **Firm Lobbying Stance:** Lobbying the government will only be effective if we pair collaborative, forward-thinking solutions with a demonstration of our collective leverage. We must clearly outline how the current panel's trajectory will fail, present our alternative pedagogical framework, and be prepared to threaten job action should the government attempt to override academic freedom and dictate curriculum.

Appendix: Quebec Principles on AI Use in Education

The following is an English translation of the "Énoncé de principes sur l'utilisation responsable de l'intelligence artificielle générative dans les activités de formation et de recherche" (Statement of Principles on the Responsible Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Training and Research Activities), presented at the Université du Québec on May 28, 2025.

Definitions

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** A field of computer science that aims to create systems or machines capable of simulating behaviors and intellectual capacities normally associated with human intelligence.
- **Generative AI:** A set of artificial intelligence techniques used to produce content by means of algorithms and big data, generally in the form of text, sound, video, or image files.
- **Academics:** Any person directly involved in a learning process, the design of educational materials, teaching, or research.
- **Work:** A productive or creative activity necessary for the accomplishment of a task ; the set of activities carried out to achieve a result.

Principles

- **Human Responsibility:** When using generative artificial intelligence in the context of training or research, the academic remains responsible for the quality of their work and accountable for the consequences of their actions. If generative AI is used as a tool to support and improve educational practices or to facilitate research work, it must never replace human judgment and responsibility. To assume full responsibility for the results produced using these technologies, academics must ensure that the use of generative AI respects the values, ethical standards, and academic rules of their institution, and, regarding students, the directives of the instructor. They must also verify the veracity, coherence, and axiological orientation of the generated content and correct it if necessary.
- **Transparency:** Like any other source, it is essential that academics clearly indicate to the recipients of their work the nature of the generative AI's contribution. Any significant use of generative AI must be explicitly mentioned, specifying how and to what extent it was used. This transparency maintains trust in academic integrity by ensuring that recipients understand the role of generative AI in the creation process.
- **Integrity:** Academics must demonstrate intellectual probity in the use of generative AI. When part of a training process, the use of generative AI must contribute to achieving its objectives, which requires carefully considered pedagogical alignment as well as critical and proportionate use. When supporting a research process, the use of generative AI must respect applicable ethical standards. Integrity thus implies not relying exclusively on generative AI, but combining one's own skills and knowledge with generative AI tools to produce an authentic, original, and rigorous result.

- **Informed Use:** The use of generative AI in university training and research activities must be based on an adequate understanding of its general operating principles. An informed use also presupposes knowledge of the issues related to the use of generative AI, particularly regarding copyright, discriminatory biases, and the environmental impacts of generative AI. This implies that academics must inform and train themselves on the uses of generative AI in their practices and the challenges it poses. By adopting this principle, users ensure they take advantage of the benefits of generative AI while being aware of its limits and associated ethical responsibilities.
- **Security and Confidentiality of Information:** The use of generative artificial intelligence involves risks related to data security and information confidentiality. Therefore, recourse to generative AI in training and research activities must be carried out in compliance with the normative framework in force (laws, regulations, and institutional policies) regarding information security. Unless explicitly authorized by competent authorities, queries made to a public generative AI system must not include confidential information or personal data that is not publicly accessible.