

Q&A with Visiting Innovator Eric Hudson

What are you hearing from teachers in your work at BB&N about AI? What are their questions and feedback on what they are seeing in the classroom?

The major question is what are the applications of this technology that are good for learning, what are tools that are safe for students, and how *does* it change and how *doesn't* it change the core work at BB&N for teachers and for students.

How has being in the classroom yourself as a teacher helped in your work with AI classroom use?

I have a classroom teacher's desire for practical, meaningful applications of the technology. I think a lot about moving from theory to practice. I think a lot about what it would be like to be in the classroom right now. It's also made me very interested in the students' perspectives and it's made me ask for more opportunities to talk to students and to learn from their experiences.

What is the difference between generative and agentic AI?

The big high level concept here is that AI is a really broad, diverse, multifaceted technology. We've gotten used to AI as a large language model. In terms of when generative AI first came out, we could ask it to make text or images. The agentic capability is that AI will be able to perform tasks autonomously. The example I always give in my workshops is: if you're going on a trip, generative AI will write your itinerary. Agentic AI will book the flights, hotel, and rental car.

What excites you most about serving as BB&N's Visiting Innovator right now?

I love the way the program is designed because I get to engage with the school for a whole school year. I'm able to come multiple times, meet with different faculty and staff, go into the classroom, do one-to-one coaching, work with different divisions and campuses. It's a much deeper engagement than coming for a day to give a workshop.

We talk a lot about students using AI but how can teachers use AI positively in their work?

It varies by age level, but the most successful thing I'm seeing is teachers using AI for the sake of creating new or better kinds of learning: high-quality pedagogy and learning experiences.

How can AI support student thinking?

We need to teach students to prompt AI to help them do the job they want to do. A lot of it is knowing that you have to prompt it to assist you, because the default is to ask it to do things for you. Asking it to do the job reduces student thinking and filters out the benefit of human thought. We need to be able to give it a job where it *helps* you think.

