



For Immediate Release

June 25, 2024

Contact: Mike Keckler
208-332-1591 (office)
208-866-5734 (cell)
mkeckler@edu.idaho.gov

STATE BOARD AWARDS FELLOWSHIPS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF GENERATIVE AI IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Two Idaho higher education professors are the first recipients of a new fellowship program initiated by the Idaho State Board of Education. The fellowship aims to foster collaboration and improved understanding of how generative artificial intelligence (AI) can be applied in higher education.

The Board's new Generative AI in Higher Education program awards \$15,000 stipends to each of the professors, empowering them to provide statewide leadership on generative AI during the upcoming academic year. The fellows will attend relevant conferences, conduct research to learn more about generative AI and in turn, offer statewide professional development to colleagues from all eight of Idaho's public institutions. They will also work with Board staff to grow Statewide Generative AI Alliance, a higher education network initiated last year by the Office of the State Board of Education.

“We hear so much about generative AI and how it can be used to create various forms of content both authentic and fake,” Board President Dr. Linda Clark said. “It’s hard to imagine how this technology will affect higher education now and in

future years. The Generative AI in Higher Education fellowships are intended to help create better understanding and eventual Board policies to ensure the technology is used in productive and ethical ways on Idaho’s college and university campuses.”

This forward-thinking initiative positions Idaho at the forefront of exploring and harnessing the potential of generative AI in higher education, while addressing real data privacy concerns, student and instructor access considerations and practical applications.

The 2024/25 Generative AI in Higher Education fellows are:

Liza Long is a professor of English at the College of Western Idaho. She is a leading voice on generative AI in higher education, both in Idaho and nationally. She brings expertise in general education, faculty development, and in teaching and writing.

Jason Blomquist is a clinical assistant professor of nursing at Boise State University. He has offered professional development on generative AI in Nursing and will broaden that work to help support nursing educators across the state.

Over 35 Idaho higher education professionals applied for the fellowships, representing all eight of Idaho’s public institutions.

For more information about the Generative AI in Higher Education fellowship or the Statewide Generative AI Alliance, contact:

Dr. Heidi Estrem
Associate Academic Officer
Idaho State Board of Education
hestrem@edu.idaho.gov
208-488-7585

#####