

SDSU

San Diego State University

James Frazee, Ed.D.
San Diego State University

David Goldberg, Ph.D.
San Diego State University

Sean Hauze, Ph.D.
San Diego State University

Elisa Sobo, Ph.D.
San Diego State University

Amir Dabirian, Ph.D.
California State University, Fullerton

Helen Heinrich, Ed.D.
California State University, Northridge

Sukhwa Hong, Ph.D.
University of Hawaii at Hilo

Kate Miffitt, M.A.
California State University

Andrew Roderick, M.A.
San Francisco State University

Monique Sendze, Ed.D.
Chico State University

What Can Students Teach Us About AI in Higher Education?

Lessons from a Multi-Site Survey

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an inescapable element in the dynamic landscape of higher education. Yet, as educators embrace the potential of AI to revolutionize teaching and learning, we must confront the stark reality of inequitable access and the need for ethical considerations surrounding its implementation. San Diego State University (SDSU) has collaborated with colleagues from across the California State University and University of Hawaii systems to address these challenges. Through a comprehensive AI survey, this collaboration has shed light on the urgent need for data-driven strategies to ensure equitable access, foster responsible use, and empower faculty, staff, and students in navigating the AI landscape.

To date, the AI survey has been replicated at 20 institutions across three continents. Survey data ($n = 18,278$) from the following institutions were compiled and analyzed for this poster.



Cal State Fullerton



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AI SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument asks students for basic demographic and educational background data, such as age, residency status, college, and years of study in their current program. Five Likert-style sections examine students' perceptions of AI along several dimensions: awareness and understanding of AI; experience and usage of AI; perceptions and attitudes towards AI; skills, education, and training in AI; and future expectations of AI.

Furthermore, an optional open-ended section provides students with the opportunity to share qualitative insights regarding the impact of AI on their education, their perception of AI's future role in their lives, and the specific AI tools they use.

Download the SDSU AI Student Survey Instrument on ScholarWorks

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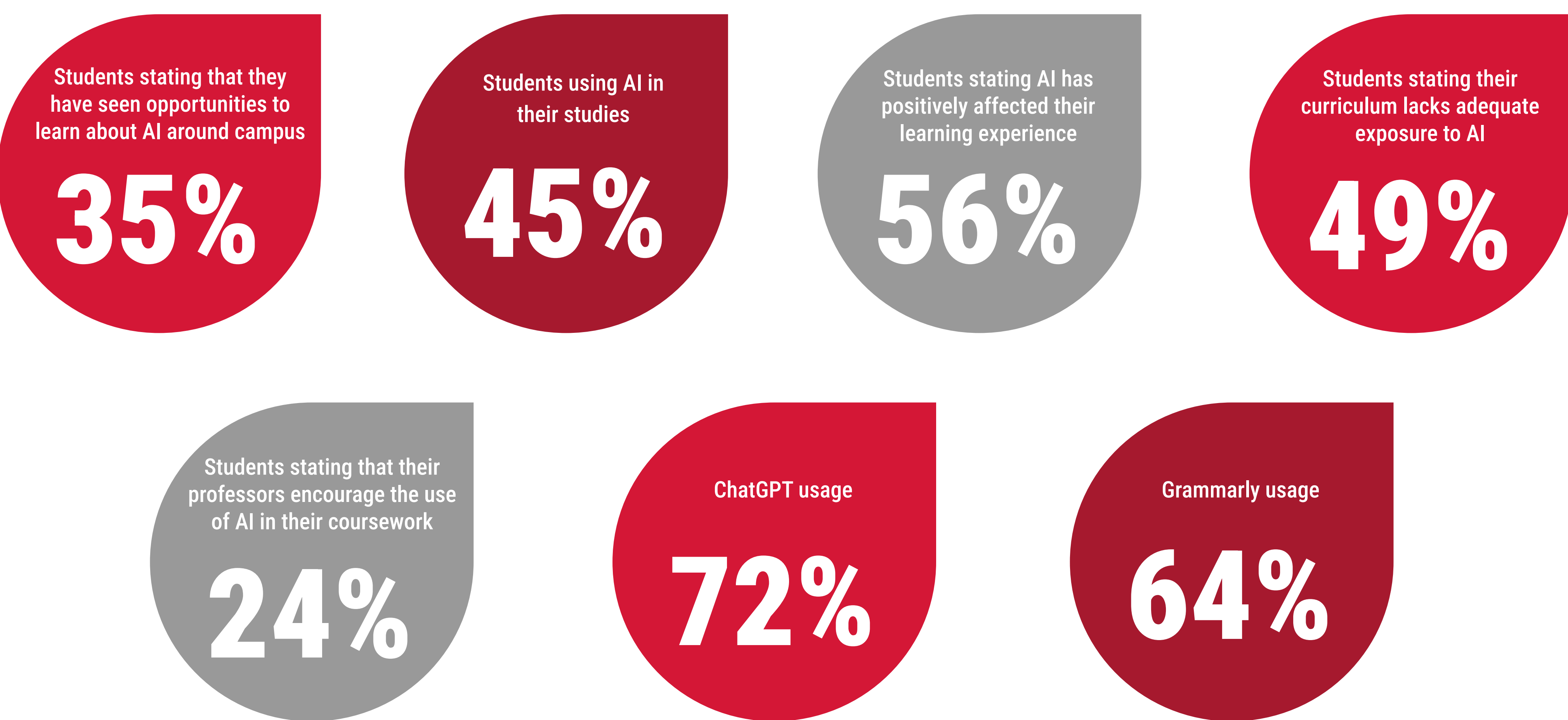
SDSU Information Technology Division

Whether you use AI or not, we want to hear from you – and we have 200 gift cards and two iPads to give out in return.

This survey instrument provides a detailed summary of students' engagement with AI, offering a valuable resource for understanding their perspectives, knowledge, and expectations on AI in both educational and broader contexts. Survey results can illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of current programs, equity gaps, and areas of emphasis for both educators and administrators.

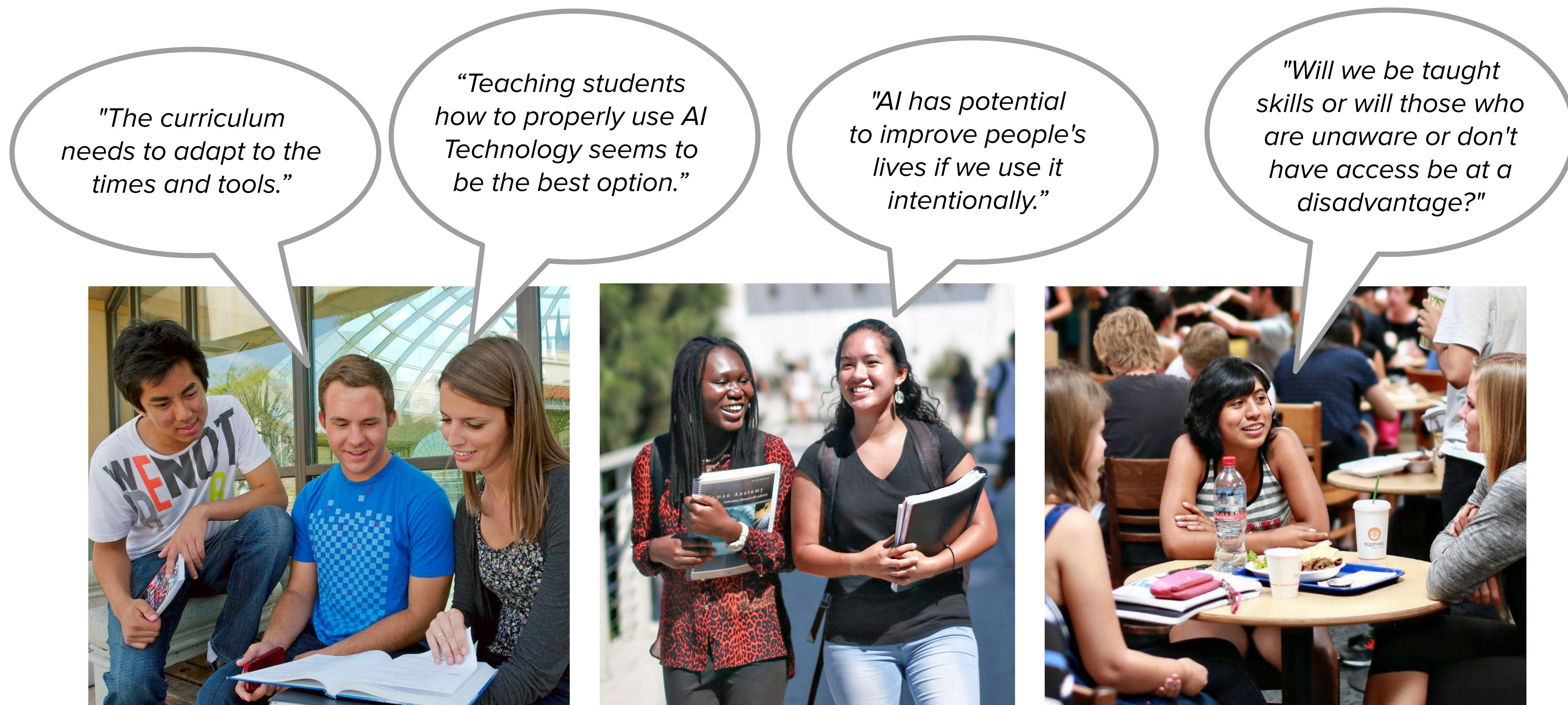
AI SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the survey highlight key gaps in AI integration in education. While 56% of students report that AI positively impacts their learning, only 24% feel their professors encourage its use, revealing a disconnect between the benefits of AI and faculty support. Additionally, just 35% of students see opportunities to learn about AI on campus, and 49% feel their curriculum lacks adequate exposure, indicating a need for better AI-focused educational offerings. Meanwhile, tools like ChatGPT (72% usage) and Grammarly (64% usage) are widely adopted by students, but this growth underscores potential digital divides, as not all students have equal access to these AI resources.



QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

Results from the open-ended responses indicate that students are eager for training and AI literacy embedded in the curriculum, recognizing its broad relevance across disciplines. AI is praised for improving grammar and writing, though some fear professors' heightened focus on cheating. Ethical concerns and potential misuse are also noted, though many emphasize AI's positive impact on personalized learning and productivity.

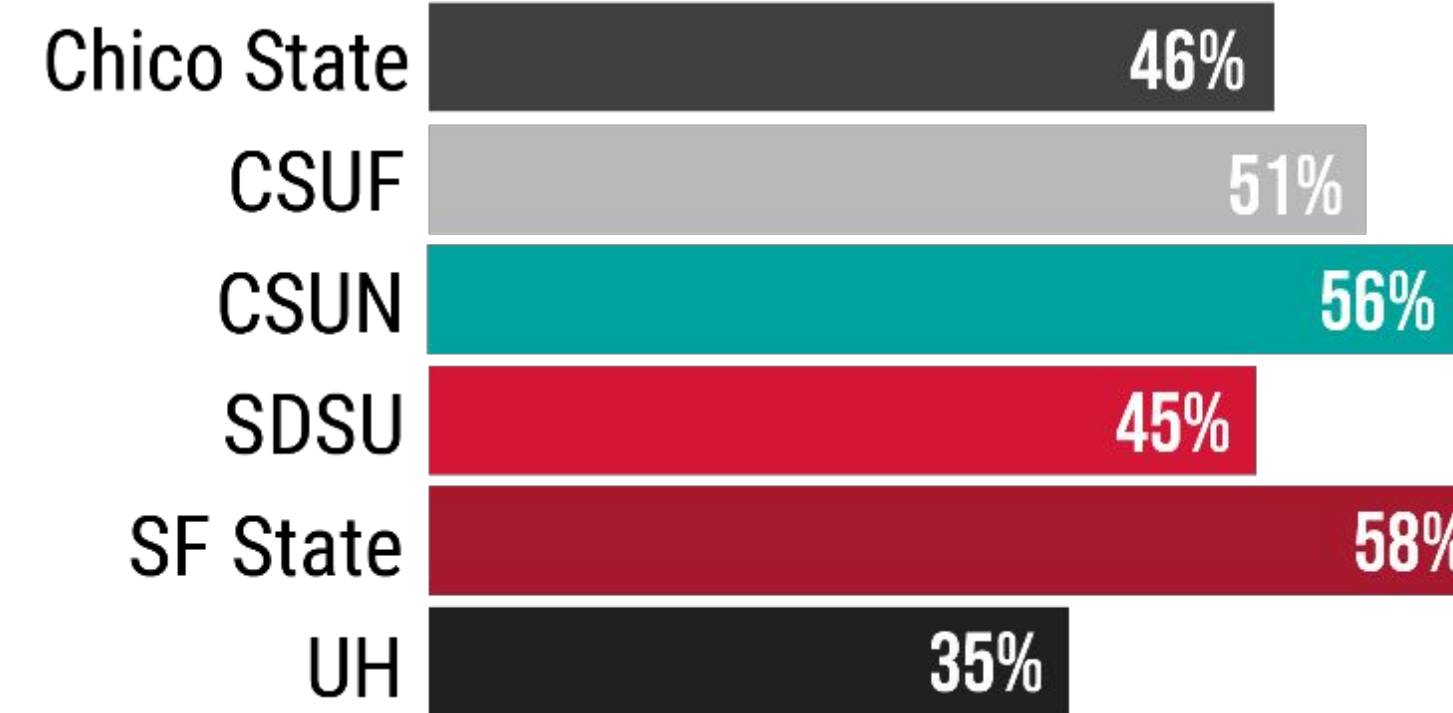


AI SURVEY RESULTS BY INSTITUTION

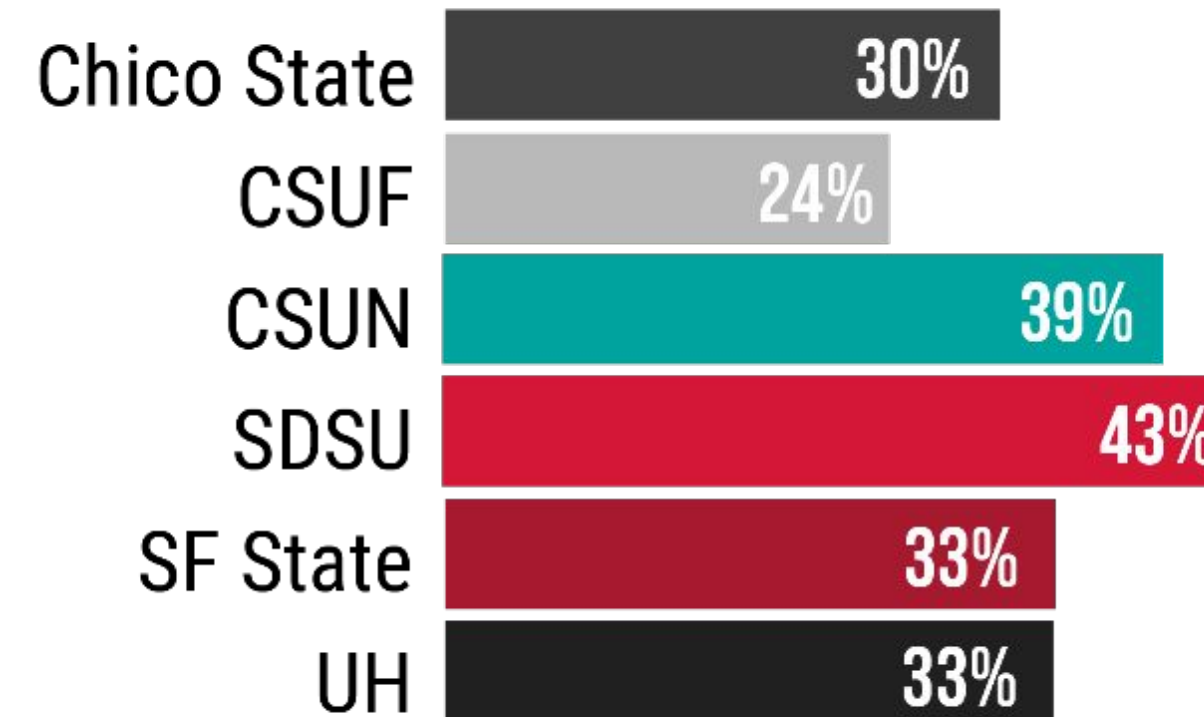
Data were compared across the following six institutions:

- California State University, Chico (Chico State) $n=618$ -SP24
- California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) $n=5,804$ -SP24
- California State University, Northridge (CSUN) $n=2,027$ -SP24
- San Diego State University (SDSU) $n=9,305$ -FA24
- San Francisco State University (SF State) $n=359$ -SP24
- University of Hawaii (UH) $n=165$ -SP24

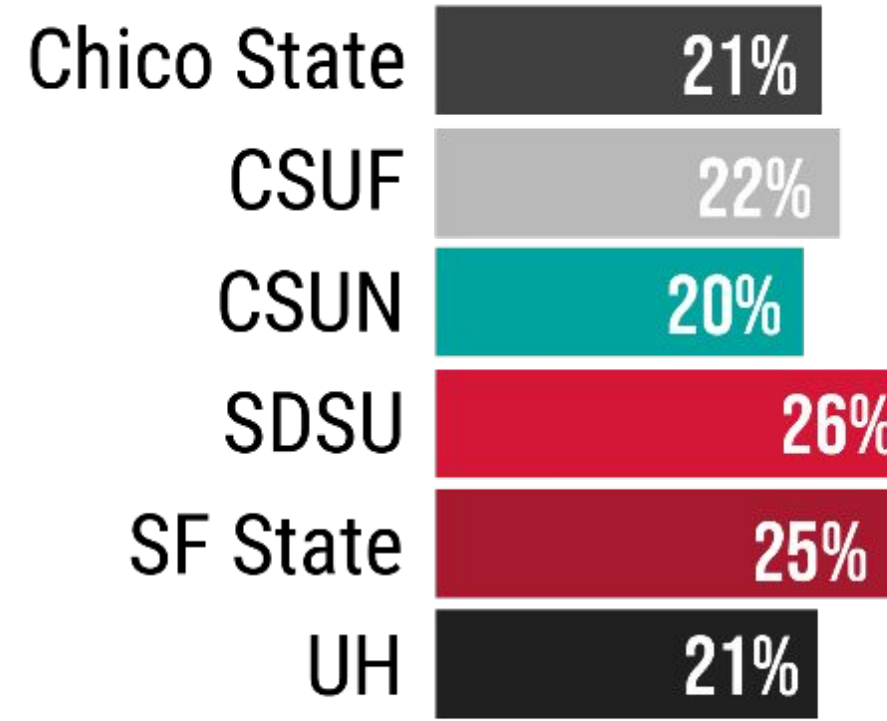
Students stating their curriculum lacks adequate exposure to AI



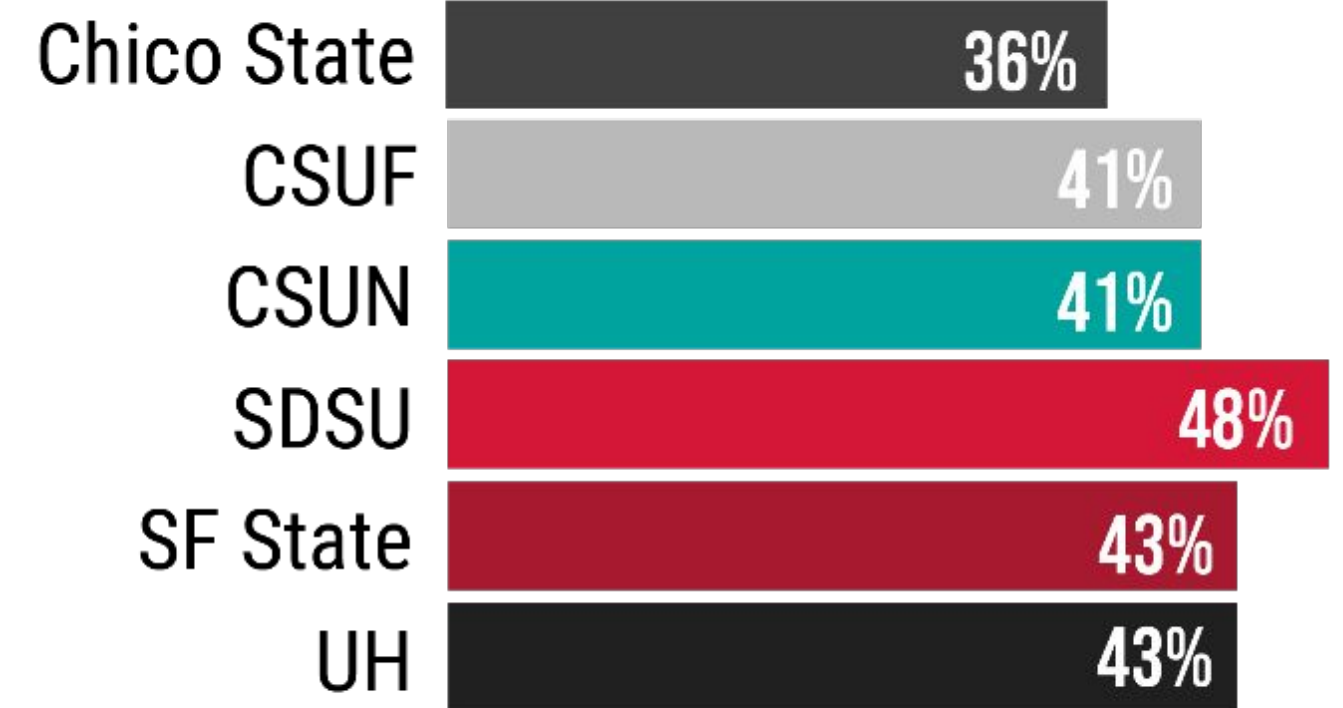
Students stating that they have seen opportunities to learn about AI around campus



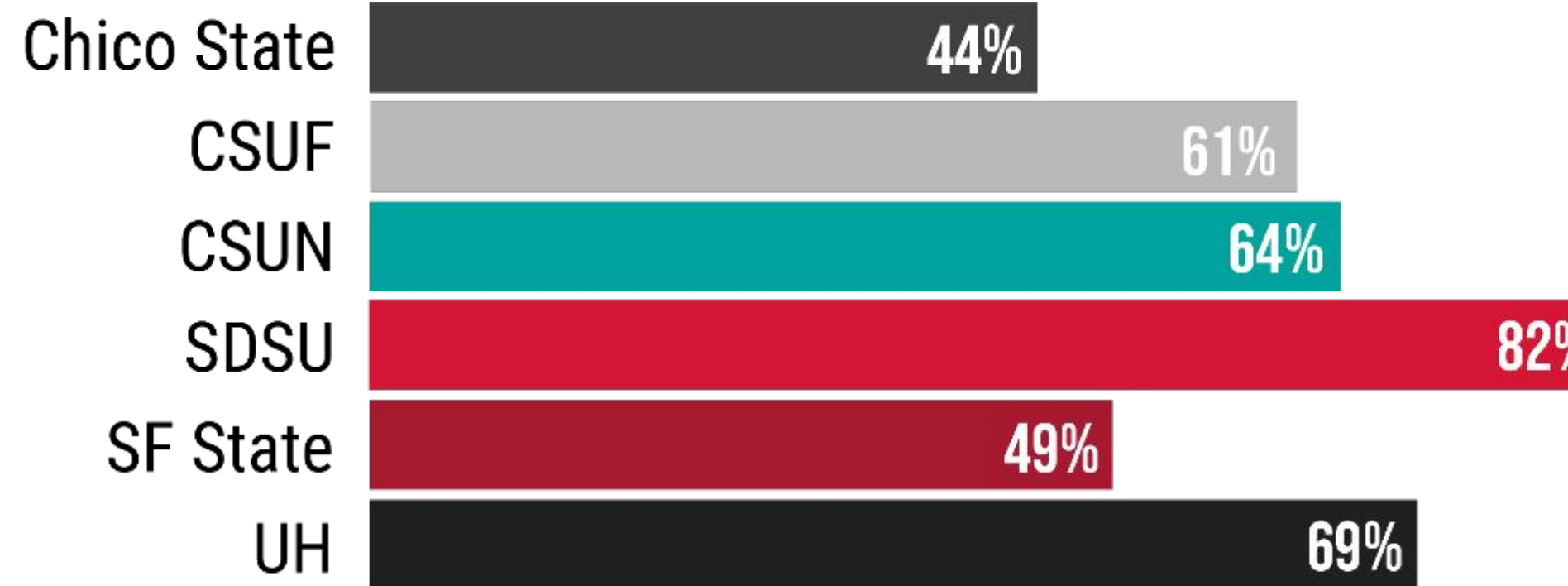
Students stating that their professors encourage the use of AI in their coursework



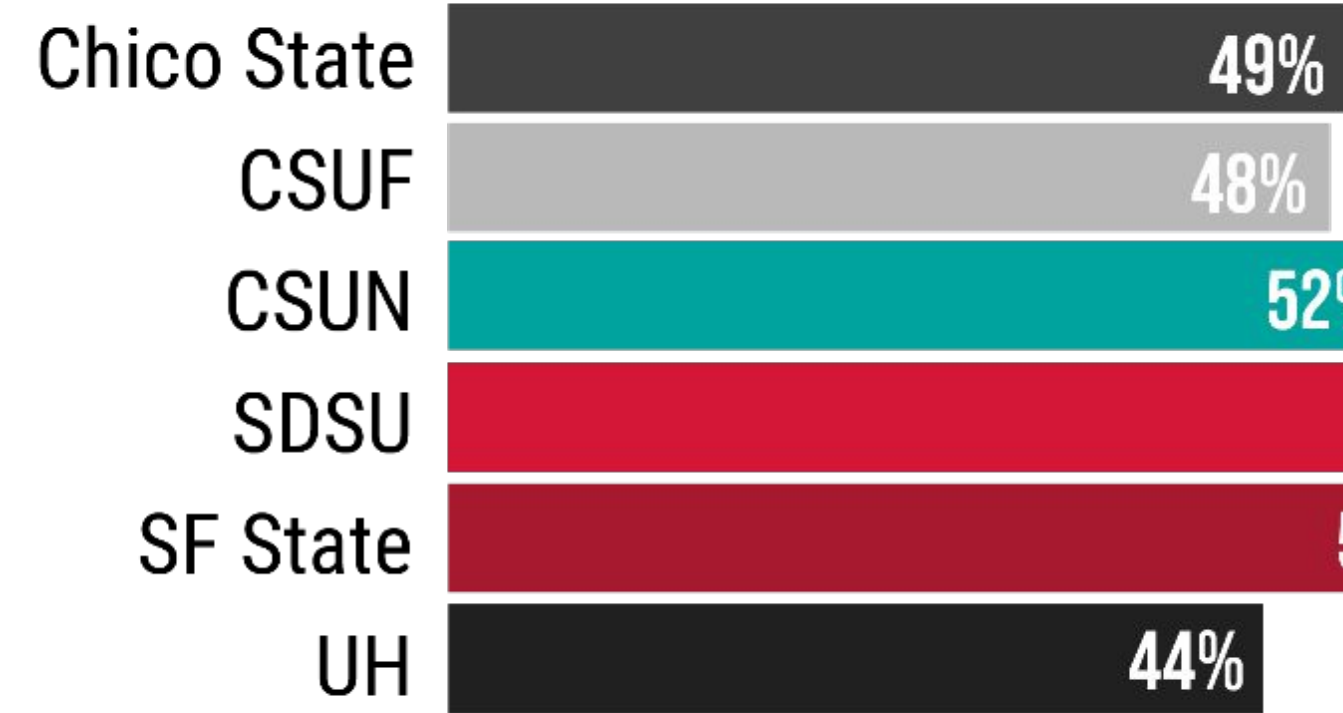
Students using AI in their studies



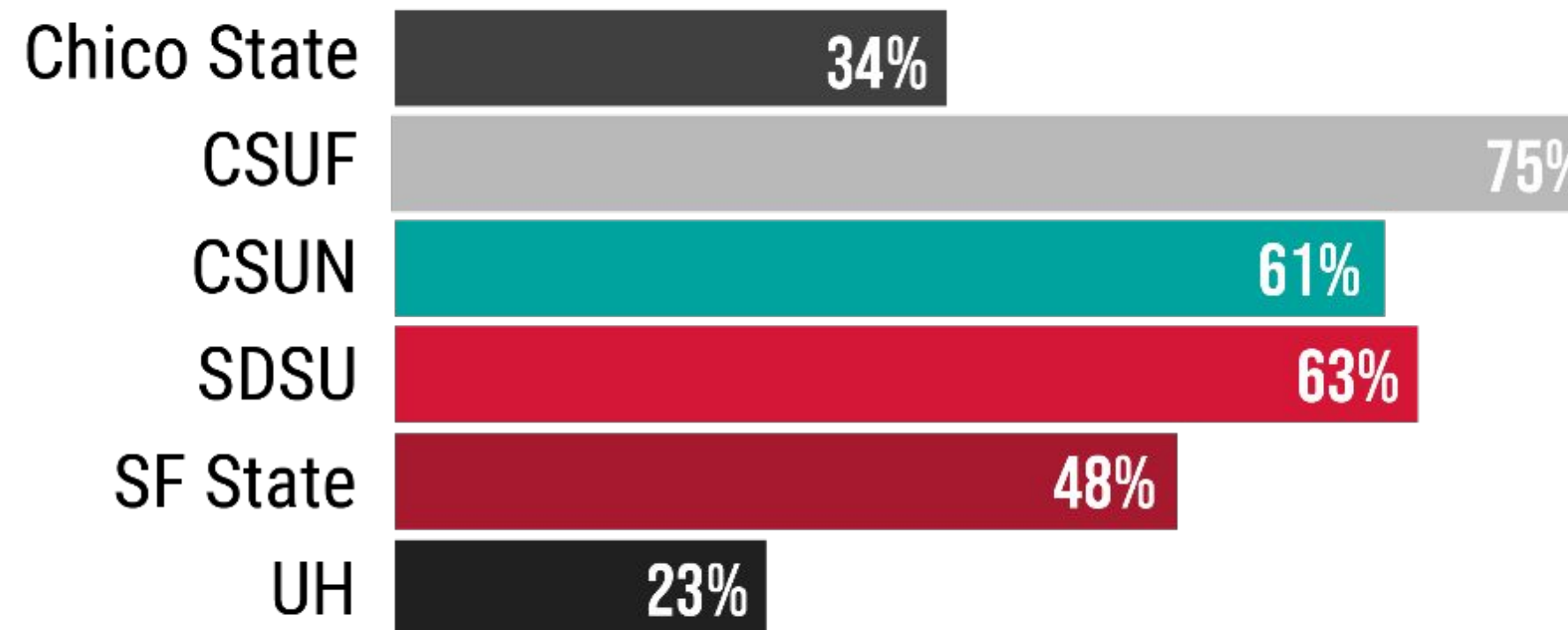
ChatGPT usage



Students stating AI has positively affected their learning experience



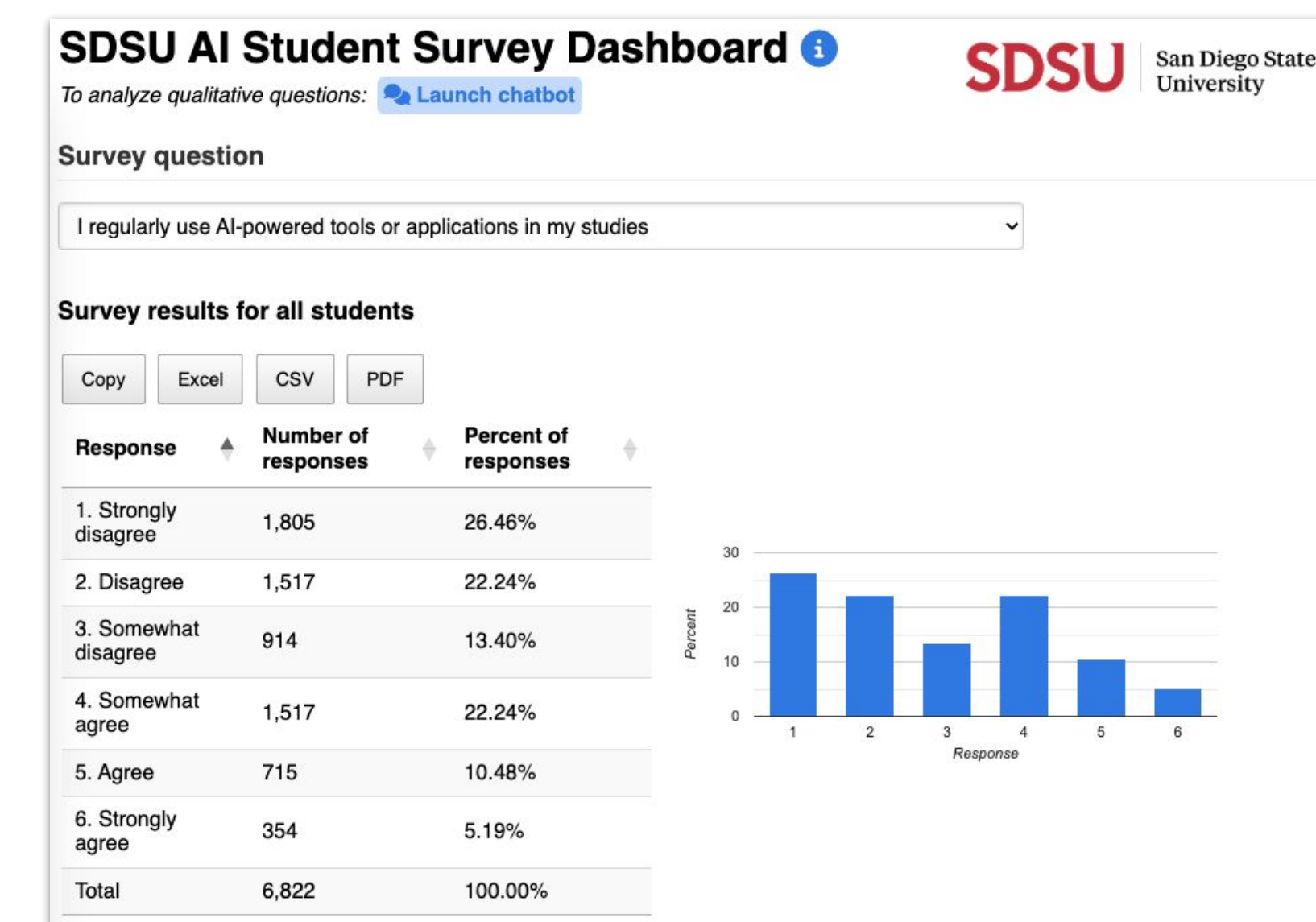
Grammarly usage



AI SURVEY DATA DASHBOARD

You can access the AI survey data dashboard at: aisurvey.sdsu.edu

This interactive dashboard provides access to quantitative (Likert) survey data, including filters for educational status and background, as well as an interactive chatbot that provides access to qualitative (open response) survey data, including filters for educational status and background.



aisurvey.sdsu.edu