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DaVinci, The AI Tutor Developed by Lindenwood Student and Faculty

November 19, 2024

Lindenwood University's College of Arts and Humanities has announced a first of its kind AI tutor to give students an immersive learning experience inspired by the mind of one of history's most famous artists.

Called Da Vinci AI, this tool is the first AI-XR (Artificial Intelligence in Extended Reality) tutor specifically tailored for the humanities. Da Vinci AI was developed by Lindenwood's Department Head of Art History, AI, and Visual Culture, Dr. James Hutson and Tiffani Barner, a master's student in the college's game design program. The software is currently being used by over 500 students in the department with plans for increased access to additional users in the future.

When the application is loaded, the user will be met by an animated version of Leonardo Da Vinci. This AI avatar answers questions asked by the user and educates students on a wide range of art and history-based topics. In a demo, Da Vinci was asked about topics ranging from the Renaissance movement to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, providing artistic analyses and thought-provoking follow-up questions.

These follow-up questions are by design. Da Vinci was developed by Hutson and Banner to foster a Socratic dialogue by asking follow-up questions to the user. The Socratic method of dialogue creates the opportunity for students to critically examine evidence and come to their own conclusions rather than being simply told an answer.

Under the leadership of its dean, Dr. Kathi Vosevich, Lindenwood's College of Arts and Humanities pursues a forward-thinking approach that includes a strategic focus on integrating AI-driven educational tools across disciplines. Speaking on Da Vinci AI, Vosevich says, "by merging AI with XR, Dr. Hutson has set a new precedent for how students interact with complex humanities content, offering an opportunity to engage deeply with Renaissance art in an immersive virtual environment." Vosevich highlights the importance of "responsible AI," embracing the technology as an educational tool. [Vosevich and Hutson co-wrote a paper](#) in June that also stresses the importance of a "human touch" in generative AI.

This focus on AI-driven technology prepares Lindenwood students for the future as industries continue to integrate the technology into the workplace. Dr. W. Travis McMaken, associate dean for the College of Arts and Humanities, emphasizes that the launch of Da Vinci AI "builds on our college's proven track record of innovative and high-impact pedagogy. Projects like this show that Lindenwood University is a pioneer at the intersection of teaching and cutting-edge technology in higher education."

[Dr. James Hutson](#) can be contacted for more information about Da Vinci AI, its role within the program, and future developments.