

GC mixed on AI in classrooms.
By Lily Mahaffey

Georgia College & State University students and faculty have mixed reactions to the growing use of artificial intelligence in classrooms, specifically robots serving as teachers.

“A classroom needs real human interaction,” Ava Hackney, a junior education major, said. “The emotional connection between teacher and students cannot be replicated by technology.”

On March 25, U.S. First Lady Melania Trump introduced the AI robot, “Figure 03,” at the Fostering the Future Together international summit to promote education, world collaboration, and technology.

During the televised event, Trump proposed that AI robots could be classroom teachers.

“We are obligated to ensure that our children become the most technologically fluent... generation,” Trump said during the event.

While being optimistic, Trump also spoke with caution.

“We must ensure that artificial intelligence is implemented responsibly and with careful consideration for its impact on future generations,” she said.

Following the international discussion, and Trump’s remarks, GC community members seemed to have mixed reactions to the idea AI could replace traditional teaching roles and how it may impact student learning.

Among GC education majors, several students said they were hesitant about the idea of AI replacing teachers entirely.

Hackney said teachers not only deliver information to students, but they play a significant role in students’ human relationship that make them feel seen, heard and comforted. She said the presence and attitude a human teacher can deliver in a classroom can make a big difference to a child’s learning experience.

For Ashleigh Holton, another junior education major, one cause of concern is an AI robot’s ability to be adaptable.

“I want to teach elementary students in the future, and they can get out of hand at times. Will a robot know how to react to those certain situations?” Holton said.

She added certain classroom situations require patience, guiding and empathy.

Abby Morris had similar thoughts.

“I don't think the younger generation of students will be able to adapt to this change seriously,” Morris, a sophomore education major, said. “If I was an 8-year-old child and they decided now in my life to replace an instructor with a robot. It would be too much of a distraction.”

Morris said students, especially younger students, rely on structure and familiarity to stay engaged in the classroom. Distractions, she said, can be disruptive to learning.

Kynlie Wilson, a junior education major, said she thought AI could be useful, but it should not take over the role of a teacher entirely.

“I see AI as being a helpful tool to teachers – whether that's building lesson plans, rubric, or syllabuses,” Wilson said. “The tool shouldn't question the hard work that teachers put into creating a lasting impression on a student's perspective of school.”

Opinions on AI in the classroom are not reserved just for education majors. As veteran college professor, Brandy Kennedy said true connections and support to students help them succeed for the future.

“An overreliance on artificial intelligence may create gaps in communication and individualized support, particularly for students who require more direct engagement,” Kennedy, who teaches American government classes, said.

Tabitha Humphry, a GC Spanish professor, said she thinks there is a place for AI in education, but it must be used with caution.

While AI can be helpful in some aspects, the most rewarding feeling as a teacher is seeing someone thrive in their environment because they now know they've done their job right

Humphry, who has been teaching for 8 years, said, “While artificial intelligence can enhance certain aspects of instruction, its implementation should be approached carefully to ensure it supports, rather than diminishes, meaningful educational experiences.”

As AI continues to develop, its place in the classroom remains uncertain. While some see it as a useful tool, others emphasize the importance of maintaining human connection, leaving the future of education still open for discussion.