

Distinguished Lectures

Fall 2023



Dr. Bill Hart-Davidson

Professor

Dept. Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures
Michigan State University

ISTeC Distinguished Lecture

When Robots Learn to Write, What Happens to Learning?

Four Proposals for AI Tools in Teaching & Learning

Monday Oct. 2, 2023

Reception with refreshments: 10:30 a.m.

Lecture: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

LSC Ballroom A

Special Seminar

Genre Signaling: Lessons Learned from Teaching Robots (and People) to Communicate Science

Monday, Oct. 2, 2023

Lecture: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

TILT 221

Sponsored by

Information Science and Technology Center (ISTeC) and

The Institute of Teaching and Learning (TILT)

In conjunction with the Department of English,

Department of Computer Science and

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Seminar Series

Special Workshop

Generative AI in the Loop: New Practices, Policies and Ethical Considerations

Tuesday Oct. 3, 2023

9:00-10:30 a.m.

LSC 378

Sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and the Department of English

Abstracts

When Robots Learn to Write, What Happens to Learning? Four Proposals for AI Tools in Teaching & Learning

The availability of AI and Large-Language Models in particular has rapidly become a disruptive force in education over the last few months. What happened recently to make these models more powerful and more widely accessible? What are the capabilities of these models and how can they change teaching and learning?

In this session, I'll offer some responses to these questions from my point of view as a researcher and maker of writing technologies, and as a teacher and administrator. I will also offer four proposed changes for educators to consider at the pedagogy, curriculum, policy and ethics levels as we imagine our writing lives, together, with non-human agents.

Each of these areas will be the basis for discussion and some hands-on creative work applicable to our contemporary classrooms and students in the workshop to follow.

Genre Signaling: Lessons Learned from Teaching Robots (and People) to Communicate Science

This seminar will reflect on an emergent concept - genre signaling - that grew from several experiments to train machine learning classifiers to recognize scientific information. Genre signaling describes the communicative behaviors that help both humans and machines evaluate written discourse as being more or less accurate, reliable, and trustworthy to the degree it can be recognized as being, or perhaps more accurately, as *doing science*.

In this talk, I'll focus on a few insights that my colleagues & I learned that may be useful for scientists who want to communicate with a broader audience about their own work or about scientific knowledge that is in the public interest. One example is the importance of "hedging" - a move to match the strength of a claim to the strength of available evidence that is essential in science but which can complicate messages intended for a broader public audience.

Speaker Biography

Bill Hart-Davidson, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, a Senior Researcher in the Writing, Information and Digital Experience (WIDE) Research Center and Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Education in the College of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University. He has published over 100 articles and book chapters and is co-inventor of Eli Review, a software service that supports peer learning in writing, feedback, and revision. Bill's research and teaching focus on writing and feedback in both school and professional settings.

To arrange a meeting with the speaker, please contact Prof. Timothy Amidon {Tim.Amidon@Colostate.edu}.