

# President Crow urges ASU community to be fearless in embracing AI

## New OpenAI expansion will allow everyone at ASU to access free ChatGPT license

By Mary Beth Faller, ASU News  
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AI can be a great equalizer, making information and education available to millions of people and creating new kinds of universities — if we don't fear it, says Arizona State University President Michael Crow.

Crow addressed hundreds of people Monday during AI Day at ASU, a daylong event sponsored by [ASU Enterprise Technology](#) that included breakout sessions, hands-on workshops, gaming, demonstrations and an expo.

"I'm hopeful that at this institution we can figure out how to use this to enhance learning, enhance outcomes, enhance scale, enhance speed," Crow said. "But more than anything, think about all the people not in this room, all over the planet. Think about all the people waiting for someone to figure out some new way to enhance learning."

ASU became the first university to collaborate with OpenAI, in January 2024, resulting in more than 500 [AI-powered projects](#) across the university.

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### Getting started

ChatGPT licenses will be available beginning Oct. 1.

ASU community members can request ChatGPT Edu and other AI tools at [ai.asu.edu/ai-tools](https://ai.asu.edu/ai-tools).

ASU's agreement ensures data privacy: Conversations and files

Now, [a new expansion](#) will allow everyone in the ASU community to acquire a free ChatGPT license starting Oct. 1. Every student, faculty member, researcher and staff member can request access to GPT-5, the newest version, to boost student success, accelerate research and enhance collaboration.

remain separate and are not used to train OpenAI models.

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In his talk during AI Day, Crow said that the new technology is being disparaged much the same way that writing and printing presses were seen as evil hundreds of years ago.

Crow described how even the great philosopher Plato was opposed to the written word, preferring to keep education among the elite. Hundreds of years later, there was enormous opposition to printing presses.

“And now we have people looking at this computational moment with the kinds of tools that we now have and they're saying the exact same things as the fools that were against writing as a technology and the fools that were against books as a technology,” he said.

AI is a tool, Crow said.

“It has no soul. It has no identity. It has no political this, or political that. It is nothing but a calculator, calculating things that we can't calculate, calculating things that we can't understand,” he said.

And it can make the sum of human knowledge available to everyone.

“It has taken us hundreds and hundreds of years to get to that point. And then we get this new technology that will allow us to accelerate all of this.”

Crow warned that it will take work to make AI a positive force.

“Do we need to be cautious? We need to be cautious with all of our technologies,” he said, adding that AI platforms need to pay attention to social implications.

He compared AI to democracy in that it is disruptive in seeking to redistribute resources to everyone.

“We come from a species that has lived under authoritarian rule from day one. In almost every culture, democracy is subversive.

“Subversiveness is to break Plato's control. Everyone deserves to have the ability to learn. Everybody has the right to move forward.”

*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



ASU President Michael Crow delivers the opening keynote address during AI Day at ASU, held on Monday, Sept. 15, at the Memorial Union on the Tempe campus. More than 350 ASU faculty, staff and students came together to explore cutting-edge innovations, promote collaboration across disciplines and discover how artificial intelligence innovations are shaping education, research and the workforce. Photo by Charlie Leight/ASU News

## Gallery



Alyssa Pereira, assistant director of communications in the W. P. Carey School of Business, participates in a dice game that explores the framework of Principled Innovation during AI Day at ASU on Monday. The game helped participants reflect on decisions through values-based prompts.





Jonathan McMichael, AI learning solutions specialist for The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, speaks at a breakout session on higher education during AI at ASU Day on Monday at the Memorial Union on the Tempe campus.



Savinay Nangalia, director of engineering for ASU Learning Enterprise, speaks with an attendee at the AI at ASU Day expo.



Omkar Shelar, a graduate student in computer science and a full stack developer assistant in the Learning Engineering Institute, shows a participant his work during the AI at ASU Day expo.





Matthew Mikaelian, AI integration coordinator for Business and Finance and a graduate student studying AI in business, offers his insight during the Principled Innovation dice game.





ASU President Michael Crow interacts with an AI chatbot on his phone during a talk he gave at AI at ASU Day. Crow asked the chatbot to come up with ways that AI can help higher education.