

WU TECHDAY CONFERENCE

2025

HOSTED BY:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER



WITS

MARCH 5TH, 2025 • 8:30AM - 3:00PM
UNIVERSITY CENTER SALEM - GOOGLE MEET -
STREAMED TO PNCA MEDIATHEQUE




WU Tech Day 2025


Exploring AI & Everyday Tech


March 5th, 2025 • 8:30 - 3:30 • University Center, Salem Campus - Virtual Via Google Meet - Streamed at the PNCA Mediatheque


Back by popular demand, **WU Tech Day 2025** promises to be a dynamic, fun-filled day packed with **AI exploration**, practical tech insights, and institution-wide collaboration! This **no-cost event** is designed for **Willamette faculty and staff** to explore how technology shapes the way we work, teach, and support our students.


What's in Store?


 **AI in Action:** Practical Perspectives from Willamette Faculty Panel – Hear real examples from faculty across disciplines, facilitated by Justus Eaglesmith, a Willamette double alum and member of Oregon's AI Task Force.

 **Ellucian senior leaders** Christi Segal and David Denig will deliver the keynote, exploring how institutions are adapting to a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

 **Lunch & Conversation with Ellucian** – A lively discussion on technology, leadership, and career growth in higher ed, provided by our lunch sponsor, Ellucian.

 **Tech Sessions** from Apple, Presidio, Palo Alto, and more! Dive into Willamette employee delivered presentations focused on practical uses of technology in instruction, colleague, MyWillamette, and Google.

 **AI Challenge** – Get creative with our AI Challenge! Craft an AI-generated slogan for next year's Tech Day or create an outlandish Bearcat image using AI. Selected entries will win a \$100 TechHeads gift card!

 **Vendor Discussion & Prizes** – Chat with vendors like Apple, Palo Alto Networks, and Presidio, and stick around for door prizes, including an AI best seller **AI Leadership** donated by the author Geoff Woods specifically for our event.

Join us for a day of fun, learning, and connection as we explore AI and the everyday tools that keep our institution running smoothly. Let's dive in together—no overhyped promises, just practical tech knowledge you can use!

Program

**Program Subject
to Change**
Check WU
TechDay Site for
Updated Details



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Networking and Opening Remarks - Cat Cavern

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Kick off the morning with refreshments and networking. Connect with colleagues, talk with vendors, and get ready for a day of discovery and insight.

Opening Remarks: Jeremy Lovato - Vice President of IT and CIO, Willamette University

Kickstarting WU Tech Day 2025, Jeremy Lovato will welcome attendees and set the stage for a day of technology exploration, insightful discussions, and practical learning. This introduction will highlight the event's purpose, the importance of AI and emerging tech in our work, and the opportunities ahead. Attendees will gain an overview of what to expect throughout the day and how these sessions can support their roles and goals at Willamette.

Opening Session - Cat Cavern

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

AI in Action: Practical Perspectives from Willamette Faculty

AI is making its way into classrooms, research, and administrative workflows, but what does that actually look like? This faculty-led panel will explore real-world AI applications across disciplines, highlighting practical use cases, challenges, and opportunities. Facilitated by Justus Eaglesmith, double Alum (MBA and Data Science) and member of Oregon's AI Task Force, this session will help create a shared understanding of how AI is being explored at Willamette and provide insights for those looking to integrate AI into their teaching and work.

- **Brandi Row Lazzarini - College of Arts and Sciences - [Bio](#)**
- **Peter Wogan - College of Arts and Sciences - [Bio](#)**
- **Kate McCallum - Pacific Northwest College of Art - [Bio](#)**
- **Stephanie Davidson - School of Law - [Bio](#)**
- **Lucas Cordova - School of Computing and Information Sciences - [Bio](#)**
- **Robert Walker - Atkinson Graduate School of Management - [Bio](#)**

Program

Program Subject
to Change
Check WU
TechDay Site for
Updated Details



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Session 1 Workshops

10:20 AM - 11:10 AM

Beyond Automation: Practical AI Solutions in Higher Ed - Cat Cavern

Presenter: Pablo Omenaca - Chief Operating Officer, Stack AI

AI is already transforming teaching, research, and operations at institutions like Harvard and MIT—but what does that actually look like in practice? Join Stack AI Leadership, to explore how their no-code AI platform is enabling universities to build custom AI tools that enhance learning, streamline workflows, and improve engagement.

We'll hear how Stack AI has collaborated with institutions like Harvard, MIT, and others to implement AI-powered chatbots, interactive course assistants, and workflow automation, helping institutions solve real challenges in education and administration.

A Google Workspace Odyssey - Autzen Lounge

Presenters: Sarah Andyshak - Director of the Digital Learning Studio, Tiara Johnson - Associate Director of User Services, Monika Major - Instructional Designer

Sarah will discuss possible uses for Google Sites in and out of the classroom. Explore the world of customizable, easy-to-build, code-free website creation.

Tiara will introduce Google Appointment Scheduling in Google Calendar. Learn how to create booking sites utilizing your Google Calendar or a Shared Calendar.

Monika will discuss Google integrations in Canvas: Google Collaborations in Docs, Slides, Forms, and Sites, She will also cover Google assignments, and embedding content from Google Drive into Canvas Modules.

Navigating Colleague Finance: Tips and Tricks for Budgeting and Efficiency - Alumni Lounge

Presenter: Lynn Farias Assistant Controller & Laura Taylor AVP for Budget and Planning

Building on last year's insightful session, this workshop explores key strategies for optimizing budgeting and financial workflows in Colleague Finance. Designed for both administrative and academic users, this session will highlight practical tips and best practices for streamlining budget planning and financial processes.

Whether you're a seasoned user or new to Colleague Finance, this session will provide valuable insights to help you manage budgets and financial tasks more effectively. Bring your questions and get ready to unlock new levels of efficiency.

Program

**Program Subject
to Change**
Visit WU TechDay
Site for Up to Date
Information



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Session 1 Workshops - Continued

10:20 AM - 11:10 AM

AI in Cybersecurity: Navigating the New Frontier of Cyber Defense - Harrison Conference Room
Presenter: Devin Johnstone - Security Operations Domain Consultant, Palo Alto Networks

In an era where cyber threats are becoming increasingly sophisticated, traditional security measures are often insufficient. Devin Johnstone, Security Operations Consultant at Palo Alto Networks with vast experience in network security, threat intelligence, and cloud security will delve into the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in modern cybersecurity. Attendees will gain insights into how AI enhances threat detection, enables proactive defense strategies, and addresses the evolving landscape of cyber threats. The discussion will also cover the benefits and challenges associated with integrating AI into cybersecurity frameworks, providing a comprehensive overview of how AI is shaping the future of cyber defense.

Presidential Greeting - Cat Cavern

11:15 AM - 11:25 AM

Steve Thorsett - President, Willamette University

President Thorsett will share his insight for AI and technology's role in supporting our university's mission and fostering a collaborative, innovative campus environment.

Keynote - Cat Cavern

11:30 AM - 12:15 PM

Keynote: The Shifting Sands

Presenter: Ms. Christi Segal - Vice President , Business Development and Executive Engagement & David Denig, Senior Vice President of Sales, Ellucian

Higher education stands at a pivotal crossroads in 2025, shaped by technological disruption, shifting student expectations, economic pressures, and broader societal changes. Join Ellucian leaders to explore key trends and challenges facing institutions, faculty, and students in this rapidly evolving landscape and how Ellucian's vision for transformation is now a reality



Program

**Program Subject
to Change**
Visit WU TechDay
Site for Up to Date
Information



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Lunch

12:20 PM - 1:20 PM

Lunch & Conversation: Perspectives on Technology, Leadership, and Growth
Presenters: Emma X Marshall, Amanda Bieganski, and Christi Segal, Ellucian

Enjoy a complimentary lunch, generously provided by Ellucian as we hear from technology leaders sharing their personal stories, insights on navigating the intersection of technology and education, and reflections on the challenges and opportunities that come with driving innovation in a rapidly evolving landscape.

This conversation will offer valuable advice for professionals at all stages of their careers, while highlighting the importance of Woman in Technology, diverse voices, resilience, and forward-thinking leadership in shaping the future of technology and higher education.



Program

Program Subject
to Change
Visit WU TechDay
Site for Up to Date
Information



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Session 2 Workshops

1:25 PM - 2:15 PM

Building AI-Ready Institutions: Infrastructure, Strategy, and Real-World Solutions - Autzen

Presenter: Eric Bursley - Senior Solutions Architect, Presidio

Eric Bursley brings over 30 years of IT experience with a strong focus on AI solutions and infrastructure readiness. As an Nvidia AI Advisor and U.S. Army Combat Veteran, Eric combines deep technical expertise with strategic leadership. His work helps institutions navigate the complexities of AI adoption, from identifying business objectives to building and hosting AI applications in private and hybrid cloud environments.

Coursedog in Action: Practical Insights on Scheduling & Curriculum - Alumni Lounge

Presenter: Mary Collins - Associate Registrar, Willamette University

As Willamette continues implementing Coursedog, this session will provide a practical look at where we are and what's next. Mary Collins will walk through the current scheduling tools, introduce Coursedog's predictive scheduling features, and share insights on curriculum management. While the system is still evolving, this session will set realistic expectations for its capabilities and what users can expect moving forward. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how to engage with Coursedog now and how it may support scheduling and curriculum workflows in the future.

Maximizing MyWillamette: Content, Engagement, and Best Practices - Harrison Conference Room

Presenter: Laura Levin Frontend Web Developer and Web Accessibility Specialist & Abby Mudd SEO Specialist

MyWillamette is more than just a portal—it's a community-centric intranet, a communication hub, and a content publishing platform designed to help departments, offices, and organizations create a well-structured, engaging digital presence. As we continue to roll out and refine this tool, this session will offer practical guidance on how to best leverage its features.

This discussion will be particularly relevant for those involved in managing sites for their areas, with a focus on how moderators can structure content, making their office, department, or organization stand out, and collaborate effectively to create a dynamic, well-organized digital space.

Program

Program Subject
to Change
Visit WU TechDay
Site for Up to Date
Information



<https://go.willamette.edu/wu-tech-day>

Session 2 Workshops - Continued

1:25 PM - 2:15 PM

Advancing Education and Administration with Apple - Cat Cavern

Presenter: Apple Representative

We are excited to welcome Apple back to WU Tech Day as they fine-tune their session to showcase how their products are advancing institutions in both instruction and administration. This session will explore how Apple's innovative technologies and AI capabilities are delivered through their platforms to enhance productivity, creativity, and efficiency across the institution.

Closing Remarks - Cat Cavern

2:20 PM - 2:40 PM

Closing Remarks: Demystifying AI and the Nature of Intelligence

Presenter: Jameson Watts, Ph.D. - Dean SCIS, Willamette University

To close out WU Tech Day, Jameson Watts, Ph.D., will take a practical look at AI and the nature of intelligence—what it is, what it isn't, and how it continues to evolve. With expertise in AI, computing, and information sciences, Dean Watts will explore how intelligence is defined, the role of experience in learning, and the frontiers of AI research.

Join us for an engaging and thoughtful discussion as we wrap up the day and consider what AI's progress means for education, work, and our understanding of technology.

AI Challenge Winners & Final Door Prizes - Cat Cavern

2:40 PM - 3:00 PM

WU Tech Day AI Challenge - Receive \$100 Gift Card Provided by TechHeads

Jump into the fun with the WU Tech Day AI Challenge, designed to spark creativity and give you a chance to play with generative AI in a lighthearted way!

Challenge Options:

- **Slogan Challenge:** Use your initials to generate a catchy slogan for **WU Tech Day 2026**. For example, using JAL could inspire "Jumpstarting AI Learning!" - now it's your turn to create something clever and fun!
- **Visual Challenge:** Use AI to create an outlandish image of Bearcats in imaginative situations - from Bearcats exploring Mars to leading a tech revolution - let your creativity run wild!

Submit your entry through the AI Challenge Submission Form on the **WU TechDay** page in **MyWillamette**. One entry per participant. Selected entries will receive a \$100 gift card provided by **TechHeads** during the Closing Session - we can't wait to see your creations!