AI TASK FORCE REPORT

Spring 2026

Salisbury UNIVERSITY

AI Task Force Final Report: Operations & Administration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across administrative units at Salisbury University, AI utilization remains minimal at this stage, and no formal policies governing AI use in administrative contexts are currently in place. Limited AI-adjacent functionality exists in Admissions/Recruitment through the Slate CRM platform and in some public-facing website capabilities, but intentional, policy-guided deployment has not yet occurred.

Significant opportunity exists to leverage AI features already embedded in existing vendor systems — with potential gains in process automation, predictive analytics for decision-making, and cybersecurity. The most meaningful immediate steps involve building AI literacy across the campus community, establishing an SU-level AI use policy, and conducting a systematic evaluation of vendor AI features to assess benefit and risk.

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Member	Title / Role	Department / School
Casey Stratton	Member	Communications
Chrys Egan	Member	Liberal Arts / CAFE
Cinzia Lombardo	Member	Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution
Earnest Gould	Member	Digital Strategy
Ken Kundell	Chair / AVP & CIO	Information Technology
Melissa Thomas	Member	Instructional Design and Delivery
Nancy Holton	Member	University Writing Center
Steve Blankenship	Member	Information Technology
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Summary of Recommendations

- Immediate (0–6 months): Formulate an SU AI Acceptable Use Policy; launch AI literacy training.
- Short-term (6–12 months): Fund and conduct pilot evaluations of vendor-provided AI enhancements in existing systems.
- Long-term (1–2 years): Deploy additional AI solutions that deliver meaningful campus benefit, including AI-powered chatbots, predictive analytics, and natural language interfaces.

CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

The Salisbury University AI Task Force supports the core mission of the university, which states that “Our highest purpose is to empower our students with the knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to active citizenship, gainful employment, and life-long learning in a democratic society and interdependent world.” Toward that mission, the task force advises the campus on the development and implementation of a strategy to

responsibly integrate artificial intelligence across teaching and learning, research and scholarship, student success, and operations and administration.

KEY FINDINGS

Existing Practices

Canvas / MyClasses

Discussion Summary features are available for faculty but disabled by default at the course level. These features have not yet been communicated to faculty; a pilot test is currently underway in a section of COMM 100.

Workday HR / Finance

Workday has introduced several AI features focused on automation, efficiency, and improved decision-making. These features have not been enabled pending evaluation. USM has recently released draft guidance policy that will shape SU's usage policies. Some Workday HR features fall into a "high risk" category and will require thorough review before any consideration of deployment.

Oracle PeopleSoft Campus Solutions

Campus Solutions does not include native AI features. Third-party integrations exist but have not been pursued given the anticipated replacement of the student information system.

EAB Navigate

Navigate uses student data points for predictive modeling — an AI-adjacent capability — which informs academic advising delivered to students.

Slate CRM

Slate includes AI chatbot features, natural language queries, and AI agents. Usage is currently very limited.

Cybersecurity

Palo Alto Networks next-generation firewalls use AI and machine learning to analyze network traffic and identify potential threats in real time.

Campus Website

AI-powered chatbots have not been enabled. Research and quality testing are needed before deployment.

Individual User Tools

Copilot is available through the Microsoft Office license. Some staff have access to free personal AI accounts.

Identified Gaps

- USM-level draft policy is not yet finalized, leaving SU without authoritative guidance.
- No AI policies exist for employees across administrative units, including Human Resources.
- AI feature evaluation has not been systematically prioritized.
- No evaluation rubric or risk assessment process is in place.
- No dedicated funds exist for AI productivity tools or training.

Opportunities

- 24/7 self-service interfaces: chatbots trained on university content; voice interfaces for departmental phone lines.
- Extended cybersecurity capability through AI-powered threat analysis.
- Predictive analytics for budgeting, enrollment planning, and operational decision-making.

- Natural language interfaces that simplify complex system interactions for staff and students.

Risks and Challenges

- Establishing clear risk criteria — specifically distinguishing between "AI decides" and "AI assists in deciding" — is essential before deployment.
- Human resources to evaluate vendor options are currently insufficient.
- Funding to pilot, evaluate, and eventually sustain AI features is not yet allocated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PRIORITY 1 — IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (0–6 MONTHS)

Recommendation 1: Formulate an SU AI Acceptable Use Policy

Draft and formalize an SU-level AI policy to guide all campus exploration and evaluation of AI tools and capabilities.

Rationale:

An Acceptable Use policy enables administration to strategically and responsibly explore AI, providing the foundation for training decisions and technology rollout.

Resources Required:

IT Department to draft policy for review.

Policy Implications:

New policy required.

Implementation Steps:

Identify the chain of approvals needed for formalizing an SU AI Policy; IT Department drafts policy and submits to appropriate office for review.

Recommendation 2: AI Literacy Training

Identify and provide AI literacy training covering: types of AI, how AI works, use considerations, and how to use tools effectively.

Rationale:

Training equips SU employees to use AI tools both ethically and effectively.

Resources Required:

Identify baseline AI skills; allocate funds for training materials and delivery.

Policy Implications:

Updated IT training policy or catalog for employees.

Implementation Steps:

Identify AI literacy training priorities; evaluate vendor programs; acquire materials; deliver training; assess outcomes.

PRIORITY 2 — SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (6–12 MONTHS)

Recommendation 1: Pilot and Evaluation of Vendor AI Enhancements

Review AI enhancements offered by existing software vendors and implement those that provide demonstrable benefit.

Rationale:
Cost savings may be available by enabling AI features already included in existing system licenses or available at discounted rates.

Resources Required:
Budget if features are not already included in existing licenses.

Policy Implications:
Covered by updated AI/IT Policy.

Implementation Steps:
Identify available AI enhancements in existing systems; develop a review procedure; select a sample for piloting; train users; evaluate outcomes; proceed based on results.

PRIORITY 3 — LONG-TERM ACTIONS (1–2 YEARS)

Recommendation 1: Deploy High-Impact AI Solutions
As AI capabilities advance, establish a regular research and evaluation schedule for reviewing new AI solutions and deploying those that deliver significant campus benefit. Priority areas include:

- Predictive analytics: budgeting and spending trend analysis; semester seat and section count projections.
- Customer service chatbots and voice interfaces (Registrar, Admissions, Human Resources) available 24/7 with domain-specific data.
- Natural language command interfaces for complex administrative systems.
- AI-assisted general student guidance — routing students to the appropriate campus office for non-trivial questions or situations.

Rationale:
AI systems and capabilities are changing rapidly. Regular evaluation allows the campus to continue improving operations and service delivery.

Resources Required:
Budget for additional software and systems as needed.

Implementation Steps:
Establish a recurring schedule for researching and reviewing new AI solutions; implement, train, and assess as appropriate.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

New Policies Required
IT Department to draft an AI guidance policy in alignment with USM requirements.

Existing Policies to Update
IT training policy or catalog to be updated to incorporate AI literacy requirements.

Governance Structures

The draft USM AI Policy describes a review board to assess proposed AI projects by categorization and risk level. A corresponding SU-level review board will need to be established for this function.

Compliance and Legal Considerations

All evaluations, risk assessments, and pilot reviews should be documented with the assumption of future audit. FERPA visibility considerations in AI use must be clearly defined.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Technology Infrastructure

To be determined following evaluation of vendor AI features and identification of pilot candidates.

Budget Estimates

To be determined based on selected pilots and training program scope.

Professional Development

Define AI literacy requirements and provide ongoing, appropriate training to upskill the campus community. FERPA considerations for AI use must be incorporated into training content.

COLLABORATION AND DEPENDENCIES

Cross-Group Coordination

Employee policy and training specifics may shift as AI solutions are identified and recommended by other working groups. Close coordination with Teaching & Learning and Student Support working groups will be necessary to ensure consistent policy frameworks across the institution.

External Partnerships

Primary engagement will be with existing software vendors — Workday, Slate, EAB, Palo Alto, Canvas/Instructure — to evaluate and, where appropriate, enable AI features within current contracts.

Campus Stakeholder Engagement

Domain stakeholders whose data will be used in any AI application must be included in evaluation and governance conversations.

NEXT STEPS

Immediate Actions Required

- Identify AI literacy training vendors or develop in-house curriculum.
- IT Department to begin drafting SU AI Acceptable Use Policy.

Decision Points

- Leadership approval of the AI Acceptable Use Policy.
- Budget decisions for FY27 related to training and AI tool procurement.

Follow-up Timeline

- Reconvene on training opportunities no later than March 2026 to inform FY27 budget decisions.
- 0–6 months: Draft and finalize AI Acceptable Use Policy; launch literacy training.
- 6–12 months: Pilot vendor AI feature evaluations; report findings to leadership.
- 12–24 months: Deploy high-impact solutions; establish recurring AI review schedule.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research and Data Sources

To be compiled — surveys, interviews, and benchmarking data.

Appendix B: Best Practices Examples
To be compiled — case studies from peer institutions.

Appendix C: Draft Policy Language
To be developed by IT Department upon initiation of the policy drafting process.

Appendix D: Stakeholder Feedback
To be compiled.

CONCLUSION

Salisbury University's administrative operations are well-positioned to benefit from AI — not through dramatic reinvention, but through deliberate, phased activation of tools already embedded in systems the institution uses every day. Workday, Slate, EAB Navigate, Canvas, and the campus website all carry AI capabilities that have not yet been evaluated or enabled. Getting there starts with two foundational steps: an AI Acceptable Use Policy that gives the campus a clear framework for responsible exploration, and AI literacy training that equips staff to use these tools effectively and ethically.

The risk criteria framing this working group proposes — distinguishing between "AI decides" and "AI assists in deciding" — is a practical anchor for governance conversations. Not every AI feature carries the same weight; a chatbot on the Registrar's website is a different proposition than AI-assisted HR decisions, and policy must reflect that distinction. FERPA visibility must be defined and documented before any student-data-touching deployment proceeds.

With USM policy guidance still in draft form, now is the right time to build SU's internal readiness — so that when guidance is finalized, the institution is prepared to move with confidence rather than scrambling to catch up. Close coordination with Teaching & Learning, Student Support, and Research & Scholarship working groups will ensure that the policy and training frameworks developed here serve the whole campus, not just administrative functions.