

Faculty Senate Meeting, April 22, 2024
Informal Statement from Susan Sterrett

Four weeks ago, I presented concerns about the Privacy Policies of Anthology, the company that owns Blackboard, and their new AI Framework that came out in January of this year. Basically, their policy says that they do share the information they collect. I have since learned that they collect communications between instructors and students on Blackboard, grading activity, and many other things.¹

I feel that the Senate minutes and the Sunflower's story on my presentation to the Faculty Senate four weeks ago did not quite capture the concerns - I have some sympathy; I talked pretty fast — so I would ask anyone to consult my slides² rather than rely on those summaries.

I also expressed a wish for interpretation of these policies so faculty know how to be responsible in using Blackboard and Microsoft (MS) products. Although John Jones did fill in some interesting details about MS AI tools, he did not talk about Anthology or its Privacy Policy at all (he said he wasn't going to). So I feel my concerns are still live concerns, and that this is going to be a tough job.

I am very happy to see that there are now, in the last few weeks, faculty guides³ that do recognize that there are risks using AI, they give some guidance to faculty, and recognize that the guidance to faculty is in the process of development. I feel faculty are going to have to be alert, especially regarding FERPA.

¹ That Anthology may collect this information is stated at <https://www.anthology.com/trust-center/privacy-statement>. Under the heading “End user of an institution that uses our products”, it is stated that “*Content and activity*: We collect data about your responses to quizzes, your assignments and other course work, and files you submit or upload as well as your activity and actions within our products and services. In some products, you can also provide comments in discussion forums and chats and send messages to your peers and instructors. If you are an instructor, we also collect information about your grading, feedback and assessments, and similar actions within our products. *Audio and video recordings*. Some of our products allow you (as a student or instructor) to submit audio and video feedback, and we collect the related information, including metadata.” An institution's privacy policy can override this, if there are such provisions in it — but I am unaware that there is an overriding provision in our university's privacy policy regarding the information that Anthology collects.

² The slides are posted on the Faculty Senate website under Documents and Reports, currently https://www.wichita.edu/academics/facultysenate/documents/ay24/SLIDES_25March2024_WSUsRelationshipWithTechCompanies.pdf

³ <https://wichitaedu.sharepoint.com/sites/WSUGenerativeAI/SitePages/Home.aspx> is the current URL for what I am referring to. This is not an endorsement of all advice on that site, however.