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for teaching and learning, academics say.

Jason Bramwell • Apr. 25, 2023



Academics from 187 universities wanted to know how an AI chatbot would do on accounting exams. Recently, Open AI's newest chatbot, GPT-4, which uses machine learning to generate natural language text, passed the bar exam with a score in the 90th percentile, passed 13 of 15 AP exams, and nearly got a perfect score on the GRE Verbal test, according to the folks at OpenAI.

So, in response to the ongoing debate about how AI chatbots should factor into education, David Wood, a professor of accounting at Brigham Young University, decided to recruit as many professors as possible to see how OpenAI's original

chatbot, ChatGPT, would fare against actual university accounting students on

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David A. Wood · 2nd

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Glenn D. Ardis Professor at Brigham
Young University
4mo ·

Are you an accounting academic who wants to coauthor on a crowd-sourced research project about AI and exam performance? We are conducting a study to see how well ChatGPT (<https://lnkd.in/gimRZCCE>) performs on accounting student exams. If you are willing to do some data entry of how your exams perform on ChatGPT (probably 1-2 hours, max), then you can coauthor with us. Email me and you can join the 60+ authors already helping. We want as many faculty from as diverse set of institutions as possible. Spread the word! You just need to have data from your students and a few hours to help. We want to finish data collection by the end of January, and the paper by the end of February. Email me at davidwood@byu.edu for further information. [#research](#) [#ai](#) [#accounting](#) [#crowdsourcing](#)



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He ended up getting a staggering 327 co-authors from 186 educational institutions in 14 countries participating in the research, contributing 25,181 classroom accounting exam questions. They also recruited undergrad BYU students—including Wood's daughter, Jessica—to feed another 2,268 textbook test bank questions to ChatGPT. The questions covered accounting information systems (AIS), auditing, financial accounting, managerial accounting and tax, and varied in difficulty and type, such as true or false, multiple choice, and short answer.

While ChatGPT's score was an impressive 47.4%, the students performed much better

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harder for ChatGPT to answer, and sometimes ChatGPT would provide authoritative written descriptions for incorrect answers or answer the same question different ways, according to the researchers.

The researchers also revealed other interesting trends through the study, including:

- ChatGPT doesn't always recognize when it is doing math and makes nonsensical errors, such as adding two numbers in a subtraction problem or dividing numbers incorrectly.
- ChatGPT often provides explanations for its answers, even if they are incorrect. Other times, ChatGPT's descriptions are accurate, but it will then proceed to select the wrong multiple-choice answer.
- ChatGPT sometimes makes up facts. For example, when providing a reference, it generates a real-looking reference that is completely fabricated. The work and sometimes the authors do not even exist.

"It's not perfect; you're not going to be using it for everything," said Jessica Wood, a freshman at BYU. "Trying to learn solely by using ChatGPT is a fool's errand."

However, the researchers expect the newer chatbot, GPT-4, to improve exponentially on the accounting questions posed in their study. What they find most promising is how the chatbot can help improve teaching and learning, including the ability to design and test assignments, or perhaps be used for drafting portions of a project.

"It's an opportunity to reflect on whether we are teaching value-added information or not," said Melissa Larson, a BYU accounting professor and study co-author. "This is a disruption, and we need to assess where we go from here. Of course, I'm still going to have teaching assistants, but this is going to force us to use them in different ways."

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