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Saint Leo University to Offer Master's in Artificial Intelligence Degree

Building on its successful degree programs in computer science, cybersecurity, robotics and AI, the university will offer this new degree online, beginning in August 2024

ST. LEO, FL – Artificial intelligence is changing the world — in business, medicine, and so much more. Building on its current degree offerings in robotics and AI, computer science, and cybersecurity, Saint Leo University is introducing a Master of Science in artificial intelligence, which will be offered online in the fall.

The Master of Science degree in artificial intelligence will be offered as an online STEM-designated degree targeted to individuals currently working in the technology field or engineering in order to “upskill” and to those just coming out of a bachelor’s degree program, who need to build skills. Those earning the degree will graduate with a strong foundation in AI.

“This is the right time to prepare the workforce to embrace this technology,” said Dr. Vyas Krishnan, associate dean of Saint Leo’s College of Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Data Science (CARDS). “We are at the stage where AI is going to be transformative. The software and technical aspects of AI are going to impact most industries in significant ways. AI also is going to improve efficiency with the way we do things. We already see them [businesses and industries] using Chat GPT to improve writing and researching.”

Saint Leo University will be one of the few universities in the area offering a graduate program solely for artificial intelligence. The university is designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence (NCAE) in Cybersecurity by the National Security Agency (NSA) & Department of Homeland Security. This designation marks Saint Leo as a leader in technology, computer science, and cybersecurity education.

The new master’s in AI is designed as an online degree to reach a wide population of students, Krishnan said. The curriculum will require students to complete 30 credit hours of coursework.

“This degree is perfect for those who have finished a bachelor’s and want to enter the workforce with the best AI skills,” the associate dean said. “It proves to employers that you are trained and qualified to work in this evolving field.”

For those already working in IT and computer science-related fields, the degree will bring them up to speed in AI, and help meet the needs of employers. An advanced degree in AI can lead to career progression, promotions, and increased salaries.

“The degree is ideal for those with some background in AI, computer science, cybersecurity, and anything related to computer science,” Krishnan said. “They know how to navigate the hardware and software ecosystems.”

Saint Leo’s new master’s degree in AI coursework emphasizes experiential learning, covering subjects such as machine learning, deep learning, and analysis of algorithms. Students will engage in hands-on projects and stay ahead of industry trends through cutting-edge research in machine learning and natural language processing, Krishnan added. With a comprehensive curriculum, students will be equipped with advanced expertise in AI theory, algorithms, and applications.

Need for AI Professionals

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) includes artificial intelligence professionals in its categories of computer and information research scientists and data scientists and predicts that these occupations will increase 23% and 35%, respectively, through 2032. The BLS expects the addition of 411,000 job openings in the areas of computer and information technology and mathematics, which includes artificial intelligence, also by 2032.

Notable industries using AI include health care, finance, retail, manufacturing, automotive, transportation, and logistics.

“AI is so pervasive that a lot of people are not aware they are using AI,” Krishnan said. “They text, use a cell phone to take photos, and it uses face recognition. We use it for web searches. People don’t realize, but they use AI in a lot of day-to-day activities.”

As that use increases, there will be even more job opportunities. “We need to recognize ways to adopt AI in traditional areas,” Krishnan said. “There is a need to develop AI products and to look at how to use AI to improve and optimize work and products. As someone who is trained in AI, you can identify opportunities and improve something through the use of AI.”

Find Out More

The Master of Science in artificial intelligence will launch in the Fall 2024 Semester. Classes for the semester begin Monday, August 26.

For information about the degree program, contact Dr. Van Nguyen, chair/director of the departments of Computer Science and Project Management, at van.nguyen@saintleo.edu.

Information about admissions to the program is available by emailing admissions.grad@saintleo.edu or calling (888) 875-8265.

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Photo cutline/caption

Photo by Renee Gerstein, Saint Leo University

Saint Leo University's Robotics Lab is home to Furhat robots which are humanoid conversational robots who have life-like expressions generated through the latest advancements in artificial intelligence and robotics.

About Saint Leo University

Saint Leo University is a Catholic Benedictine university dedicated to helping learners of all backgrounds and ages gain the competence and courage to be more. Offering more than 60 degree programs to more than 14,190 students each year, the nonprofit university is known for providing a values-based education in the liberal arts tradition and a community of belonging for those who seek a greater purpose in life. Saint Leo is regionally accredited and offers a campus in the Tampa Bay area of Florida, regional education centers, and several online programs. The university is home to more than 104,000 alumni. Learn more at saintleo.edu.

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