

Artificial intelligence topic of SACPA discussion

BY LETHBRIDGE HERALD ON APRIL 11, 2024.

LETHBRIDGE HERALD

The subject of artificial intelligence is on the agenda at today's Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs session at the Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization.

The session runs from noon until 1 p.m. in the LSCO dining room.

The topic "artificial intelligence – bane or boon to humanity?" will be discussed by Dr. Sidney Shapiro, an assistant professor of Business Analytics at the University of Lethbridge's Dhillon School of Business.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is currently a hot topic — some people tout it as the next best thing for increasing productivity and reducing costs while others are concerned robots will be replacing workers. Every day brings a new headline, and the average person may be left to wonder whether AI is a good or bad thing.

Spairo will argue that AI is in the midst of a big transition. Companies are looking at how to innovate and deliver more value for shareholders, that is, make more money by automating everything.

But that can backfire, as has happened with self-checkouts. Overall, AI is just a tool with benefits and drawbacks and the legal system hasn't caught up with the implications of AI, so it's unlikely it'll take over the world anytime soon. A house builder, for example, may find some AI tools helpful with certain aspects of the work, but humans are still needed to build the home.

Until computers get much more powerful, it's going to be difficult to have AI analyze what people want and possibly transform our lives. Reality is, there's a lot of hype in AI right now and that hype probably overestimates what we can do with it. AI can certainly be a useful tool, but it doesn't replace what we can do as people, which is to come up with original ideas. The speaker will elaborate.

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Yes

No

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With a decade of experience in data science, Shapiro specializes in integrating business intelligence, data engineering and machine learning. Shapiro's academic focus includes teaching data analytics courses and conducting research in AI applications in business.

Prior to his current role, he led data science teams and contributed to academia as a program coordinator and educator.

Shapiro holds a PhD in Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies from Laurentian University focused on social network analytics. He is dedicated to equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary for the evolving field of data analytics.

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