UPCEA AI HUB

RESOURCES. INSIGHTS. COMMUNITY.

CASE STUDY

UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN

BUILDING PUBLIC AI LITERACY THROUGH THE AI SKILLS ACCESS PASSPORT

The Universities of Wisconsin developed the AI Skills Access Passport, or ASAP, as a free seven-part video series designed to build practical AI literacy for a broad public audience. The series introduces AI concepts, use cases, and safety considerations through short, accessible videos that focus on helping viewers understand, use, and protect themselves around AI.

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

UWs saw an opportunity to help the public make sense of AI at a time when many people were encountering new tools, media stories, workplace expectations, and safety concerns without a shared foundation for understanding them. The goal was to create a resource that would be short, engaging, and useful for viewers with varying levels of comfort with technology. Rather than producing an academic training program or a tool-specific tutorial, UWs aimed to create an approachable AI literacy resource for adults who may have heard about AI but were unsure how it works, how to use it, or how to evaluate its risks.

www.wisconsin.edu/uw-leads-ai/ai-skills-access-passport/

AT A GLANCE

Institution:
Universities of Wisconsin Office of Online Learning and Professional Resources (OPLR)

Unit/Department:
Online learning/instructional design/media production

Use Case Category:
Policy, governance, or AI literacy; faculty or staff development; workforce/public education

Stage of Implementation:
Mature/publicly available resource

Primary AI Tool(s):
Claude for script development; ChatGPT and other generative AI tools for internal exploration and development

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THE AI USE CASE

ASAP: AI Skills Access Passport is a free series of seven videos, each approximately two to three minutes long. The videos use animations and graphics to keep the content engaging and reinforce key learning points.

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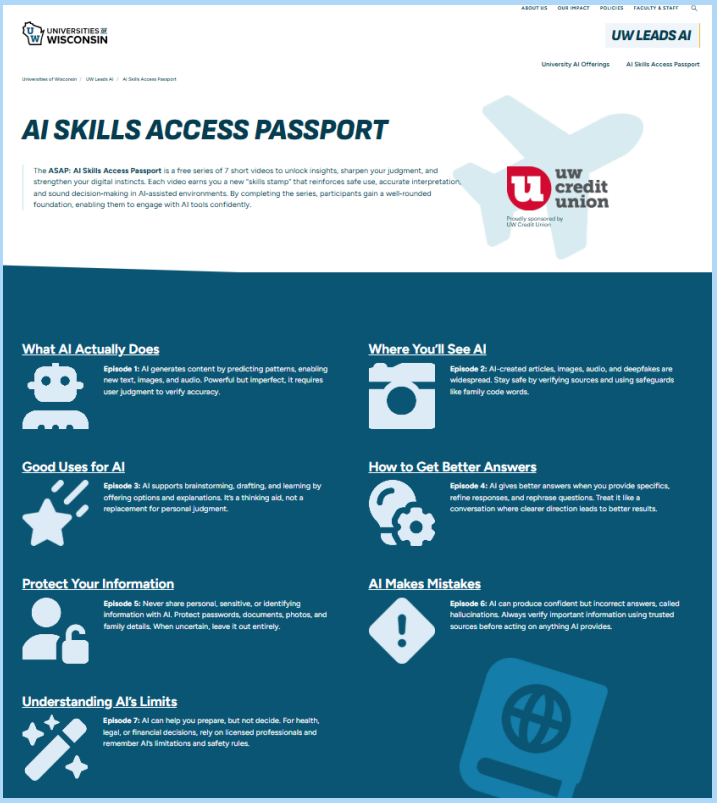

The series is organized around three connected themes.

The first two videos focus on foundational understanding, including what AI is, where people encounter it, and how to recognize AI-generated content.

Episodes three and four move into practical applications, including what AI tools do well and how users can prompt them more effectively.

The final three episodes focus on protection and responsible use, including what information users should avoid sharing with AI tools, why AI outputs should be verified, and when people should consult professionals rather than relying on AI-generated answers.

The series was intentionally designed to be evergreen. Rather than centering on a specific tool or platform, and the videos focus on durable AI literacy concepts, such as skepticism, verification, personal data protection, and safe use.

The ASAP series generated substantial external visibility, including an estimated $650,000 in free media coverage and mentions in outlets such as Forbes and Yahoo.

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IMPLEMENTATION SNAPSHOT

The project originated through an initiative connected to former Universities of Wisconsin President Jay Rothman and was sponsored by UW Credit Union. The intended audience was broad, including adults ages 20 to 50 with varying levels of technology comfort.

Nathan Ewings, Senior Instructional Designer, Universities of Wisconsin, used Claude to help shape the categories and narrative arc of the episodes and to draft initial scripts. The scripts were then refined and reviewed with Emily Laird, an AI subject matter expert from UW-Stout, to support accuracy and clarity. UWs' media team produced the final videos, using animation, graphics, and a disarming tone to make the content approachable. After production, the project was handed off to marketing for promotion and distribution.

RESULTS, BENEFITS, AND EARLY SIGNALS

The ASAP series generated substantial external visibility, including an estimated $650,000 in free media coverage and mentions in outlets such as Forbes and Yahoo. This visibility suggests that short, practical AI literacy resources can attract attention beyond the institution when they address a timely public need.

Direct usage metrics are not yet available to the case study team, since promotion and tracking were handled through marketing after production. However, the series has potential value across several audiences, including parents, adult learners, community members, and K–12 classrooms. The videos can help spark conversations about AI safety, responsible use, scams, verification, and the practical limits of AI-generated information.

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WHAT MADE IT WORK

Several design choices contributed to the strength of the project. The videos are short, visually engaging, and written for a general audience rather than for AI experts. The tone is intentionally non-alarmist, helping viewers build awareness without fear-mongering.

The evergreen strategy was also important. By avoiding detailed discussion of specific AI tools, UW created a resource that is less likely to become outdated quickly. The project also benefited from collaboration among instructional design, AI subject matter expertise, media production, sponsorship, and marketing.

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RISKS, GUARDRAILS, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because the series is focused on public AI literacy, risk and ethics are central to the content itself. The videos address responsible AI use by teaching viewers to verify AI outputs, protect personal information, recognize AI-generated content, and understand when human expertise is needed. Examples such as voice cloning and scams are used to encourage healthy skepticism without discouraging productive use.

The development process also included subject matter expert review to help ensure accuracy and reduce the risk of oversimplifying or misrepresenting AI concepts.

LESSONS LEARNED

One lesson from the ASAP series is that AI literacy resources should meet people where they are. Short, plain-language videos can make AI feel more understandable for audiences who may not seek out a longer course or formal training. Another lesson is that evergreen content requires discipline: focusing on core concepts rather than specific tools can extend the useful life of the resource.

The project also shows the importance of planning for metrics and distribution early. Because the videos were handed off to marketing after production, usage data was not immediately available to the instructional team.

Evergreen content requires discipline: focusing on core concepts rather than specific tools can extend the useful life of the resource.

TRANSFERABILITY FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS

This use case is highly transferable for institutions interested in AI literacy, public education, workforce readiness, or community engagement. It may be especially relevant for systems, extension programs, professional and continuing education divisions, and institutions seeking to support broad public understanding of AI.

To replicate the approach, another institution would need a clear audience, an AI literacy framework, scriptwriting and review capacity, subject matter expert input, and access to video or media production support. A sponsor or communications partner can strengthen reach, but the core model could also be adapted into webinars, short courses, social videos, or classroom discussion modules.

The OPLR team is happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact us at jessica.oneel@wisconsin.edu.

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