

Experiments in Artificial Intelligence — Continuing, Winter 2026

Session 1 | February 11, 2026 | OLLI at Southern Oregon University

Session Summary

- AI's growing economic impact: real job displacement in coding and finance, with stock-market moves tied directly to AI capability announcements.
- Awareness of AI varies widely by age and exposure — the seminar's goal is to move participants from casual awareness toward confident, hands-on use.
- Reviewed foundational vocabulary for the course: NLP, multimodal AI, corpus, frontier models, bias, Theory of Mind, context window, and hyperscale computing.
- Explained coreference resolution — how humans resolve ambiguous pronouns ("it," "they") using lived experience, a task AI approaches through statistical inference rather than true understanding.
- Toured the major AI companies and products: ChatGPT (OpenAI), Gemini (Google), Copilot (Microsoft), Claude (Anthropic), Perplexity, DeepSeek and Qwen (China), Grok (xAI), Meta AI, Mistral (France), Cohere, Amazon Nova, Stability AI, and Apple Intelligence.
- Live demo of three ways to interact with AI — typing, voice dictation/transcription, and full voice conversation mode — including generating and saving an AI-created image.
- Demonstrated image and document analysis: interpreting an EKG image, and asking follow-up questions about a legal PDF comparing AI regulation in the U.S., India, and the E.U.
- Covered the core elements of a strong prompt (context, desired response, style/format, examples), with a live demo drafting and rewriting a sales-pitch email.
- Generated song lyrics in the style of a well-known artist, illustrating AI's ability to mimic creative style.
- Noted that the same AI (e.g., ChatGPT) looks and behaves differently across iPhone, iPad, the Mac app, and a browser, even though the underlying model is the same.
- Closed with a caution about "digital sycophancy" — AI systems are designed to keep users engaged, so it helps to explicitly ask for short, factual, bullet-point answers when that's what you want.

Prepared with AI assistance from a transcript of the recorded session.