



# Generative AI as intellectual augmentation for learning to engage with the polycrisis (metacrisis?)

**Simon Buckingham Shum**

Connected Intelligence Centre,  
University of Technology Sydney, AUS

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12:45 – 14:00

Room 408 - 410, Meng Wah Complex, HKU

*Chair: Professor Nancy Law*

**Registration:**

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## Abstract:

The global “polycrisis” has been defined as “the causal entanglement of crises in multiple global systems in ways that significantly degrade humanity’s prospects”. Exacerbating the polycrisis is the mainstream arrival of generative AI, which has enchanted and dismayed in equal measure. While the complexity threatens to overwhelm our sensemaking capacity, we can look to a long tradition of computational tools that “augment human intellect” (Douglas Engelbart), of which GenAI is just the latest development. So even as GenAI profoundly unsettles education, education – and lifelong learning – surely have a pivotal role to play in equipping citizens for the future. As we identify those roles, it becomes clearer where GenAI can be harnessed as a tool. Furthermore, diagnoses of the underlying drivers of the polycrisis (sometimes termed “the metacrisis”) point to additional uses for dialogic AI. I welcome the opportunity to share this preliminary set of arguments and engage in dialogue with the diverse expert of colleagues.

## About the speaker:

Simon Buckingham Shum is Professor of Learning Informatics at the University of Technology Sydney where he serves as inaugural director of the Connected Intelligence Centre (CIC). CIC is a transdisciplinary R&D centre inventing, evaluating and scaling personalised feedback to students through human-centred design of analytics and AI. Prior to UTS, he was a founding member of the UK Open University’s Knowledge Media Institute. Simon’s career-long fascination with software’s ability to make thinking visible has seen him active in communities including Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), Hypertext, Computational Argumentation, Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Educational Technology. He has worked over the last decade to help establish the field of Learning Analytics. Simon’s HCI background always draws his attention to the human factors that determine the effective adoption of new tools for thinking, and the kinds of futures they might create at scale. <https://Simon.BuckinghamShum.net>



~ All are welcome ~

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