

“The Role of Catholic Social Teaching and Ethics in Franciscan University’s AI implementation”

Opening Statement:¹

James Cameron, in a FOX NEWS article, says the ‘fundamental issue’ with putting guardrails on AI is that humans can’t agree on morals.²

“Once a critic, Cameron’s stance on AI has evolved over the years ... ‘Avatar’ director James Cameron argued that the ‘fundamental issue’ in creating guardrails for artificial intelligence is that humans can’t agree on morals, noting that finding a universal moral code is nearly impossible. ...

Cameron argued that morality is subjective, pointing out that religions and political systems adhere to different moral frameworks, making consensus difficult to achieve. ... The issue with creating these guardrails, according to Cameron, is that ‘everybody’s morality is different,’ which inevitably leads to disagreement over which moral framework would be best suited to keep AI in line.

Pope Francis warns: “Faced with the marvels of machines ... decision- making ... must always be left to the human person. We would condemn humanity to a future without hope if we took away people’s ability to make decisions about themselves and their lives.”³

Franciscan University of Steubenville is not simply participating in the AI conversation — we are positioned in the vanguard to lead it. And we do so from a place few institutions can claim: where business excellence is inseparable from theological, philosophical, and ethical clarity.

In a marketplace racing to adopt AI, most are asking what technology can do. Franciscan is asking the more consequential question: what *should* it do — and who should we become in the process?

Because we unite business with theology, philosophy, and catechetics, we approach AI not just as a productivity engine, but as a force shaping human identity, responsibility, and the common good. That is not just a philosophical distinction — it is a strategic one.

Franciscan University can lead by fostering interdisciplinary curricula blending business, humanities, science, and technology, ensuring ‘no one left behind.’⁴

- ✧ Catholic universities must act as “laboratories of hope,” engaging AI research with wisdom to promote ethical applications and societal cohesion.⁵
- ✧ Emphasize ... standards prioritizing community good over personal gain.⁶

- ✧ “Integrate AI across departments — rooted in a moral framework based in Catholic Social Teachings (CST) and the cultivation of virtues — to fill the moral vacuum our students inherit.
- ✧ We form graduates who wield technology ethically, augmenting human potential with prudence, justice, and charity.”⁷

Our graduates will be fluent in both innovation and business ethics — leaders who bring clarity of purpose, sound judgment, and a deep commitment to human dignity and service.

In an age of artificial intelligence, Franciscan University forms leaders of real wisdom — men and women who will not only advance technology, but guide it in service of the human person, so that what we create always reflects who we are called to be in the *imago dei* — likeness of God.



References:

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<https://www.foxnews.com/media/james-cameron-says-fundamental-issue-putting-guardrails-ai-humans-cant-agree-morals>.
3. Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith & Dicastery for Culture and Education, *Antiqua et Nova*, “Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence,” Footnote 94,
https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_ddd_doc_20250128_antiqua-et-nova_en.html.
4. RenAIssance Foundation, *Rome Call for AI Ethics*, Introduction,” 2/28/2020,
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5. Ibid., §83, V. “Specific Questions - AI and Education.”
6. Op. Cit., *Rome Call for AI Ethics*, Introduction.”
7. MagisteriumAI, “Sample Expanded Opening Snippet,”
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