DAY ONE - PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS

# Growing a community of educators passionate about ALife

– Slides and Survey by Jason Yoder

We believe there are special challenges and opportunities that ALife presents. We are largely fragmented and wish to create a supportive community to share and develop the best pedagogical practices.

# What we want from this workshop?

Gaining Knowledge and Resources: Respondents seek to learn more about Artificial Life (ALife) concepts, including how to explain them to beginners, collect ideas for lessons, topics, and projects used in teaching, and gain knowledge about teaching ALife using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) or active learning techniques.

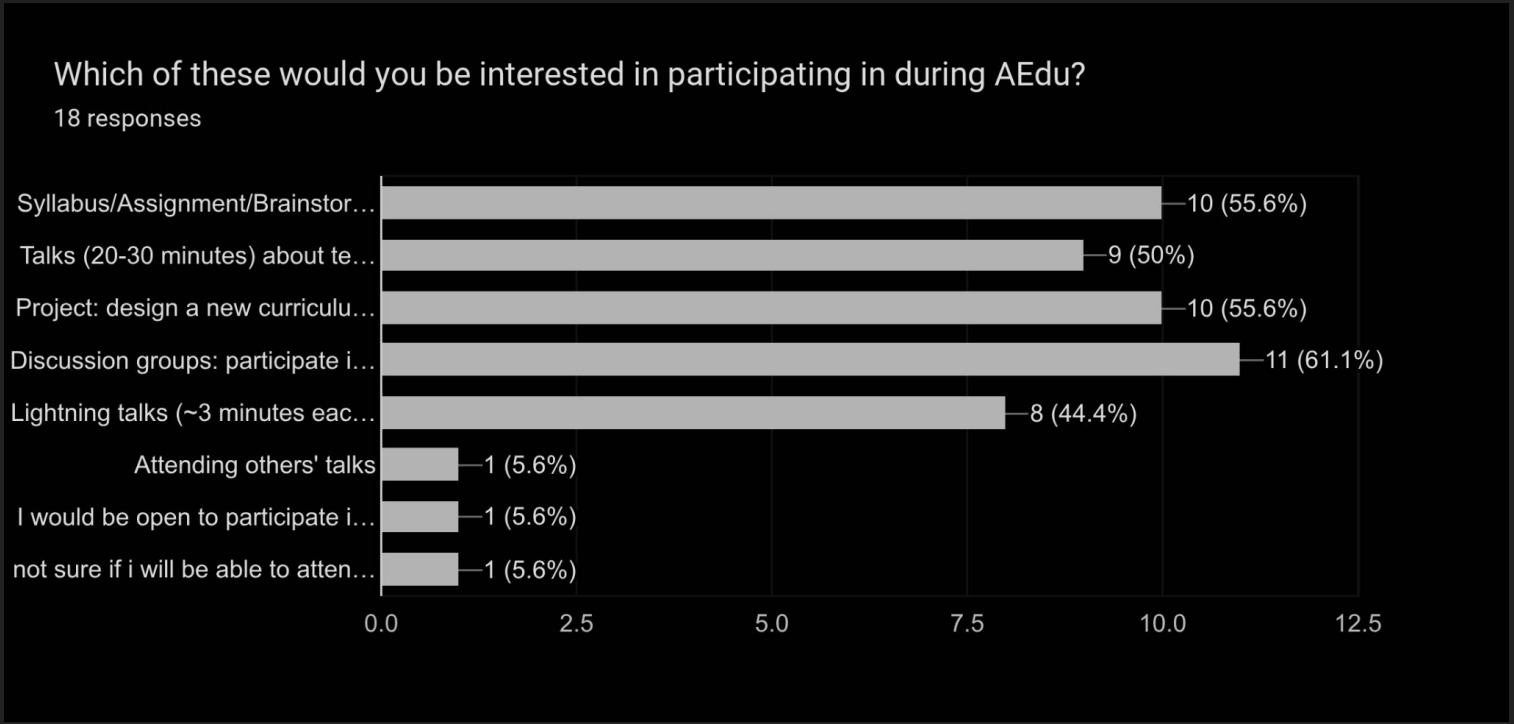
Curriculum and Course Structure: Interest exists in gaining insight into how educators structure ALife-related courses within traditional programs (e.g., Biology, Computer Science) and designing an ALife-oriented course on "mathematical modeling and simulations of life processes" for health sciences education.

Community and Coordination: Participants want to connect with and contribute to the ALife community, be part of a community that is teaching ALife, and coordinate resources.

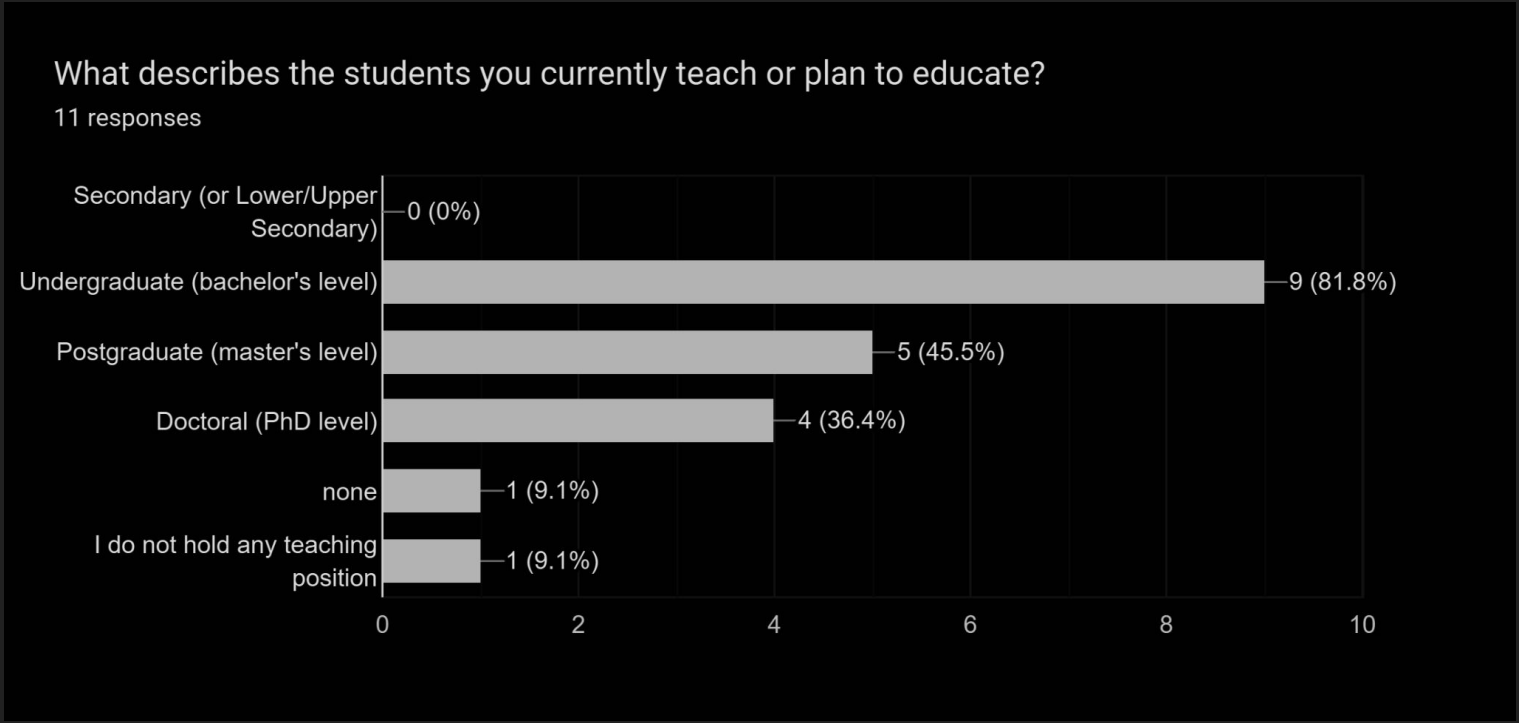
Effective Teaching Methods: Respondents are interested in understanding what actually works in a classroom and why, and gaining insight into what makes something "click" for students.

Specific Examples and Applications: Goals include gaining inspiration, seeing more examples of ALife (such as active matter and novel simulations), and understanding the role of AI for teaching and education.

# What we want to participate in?



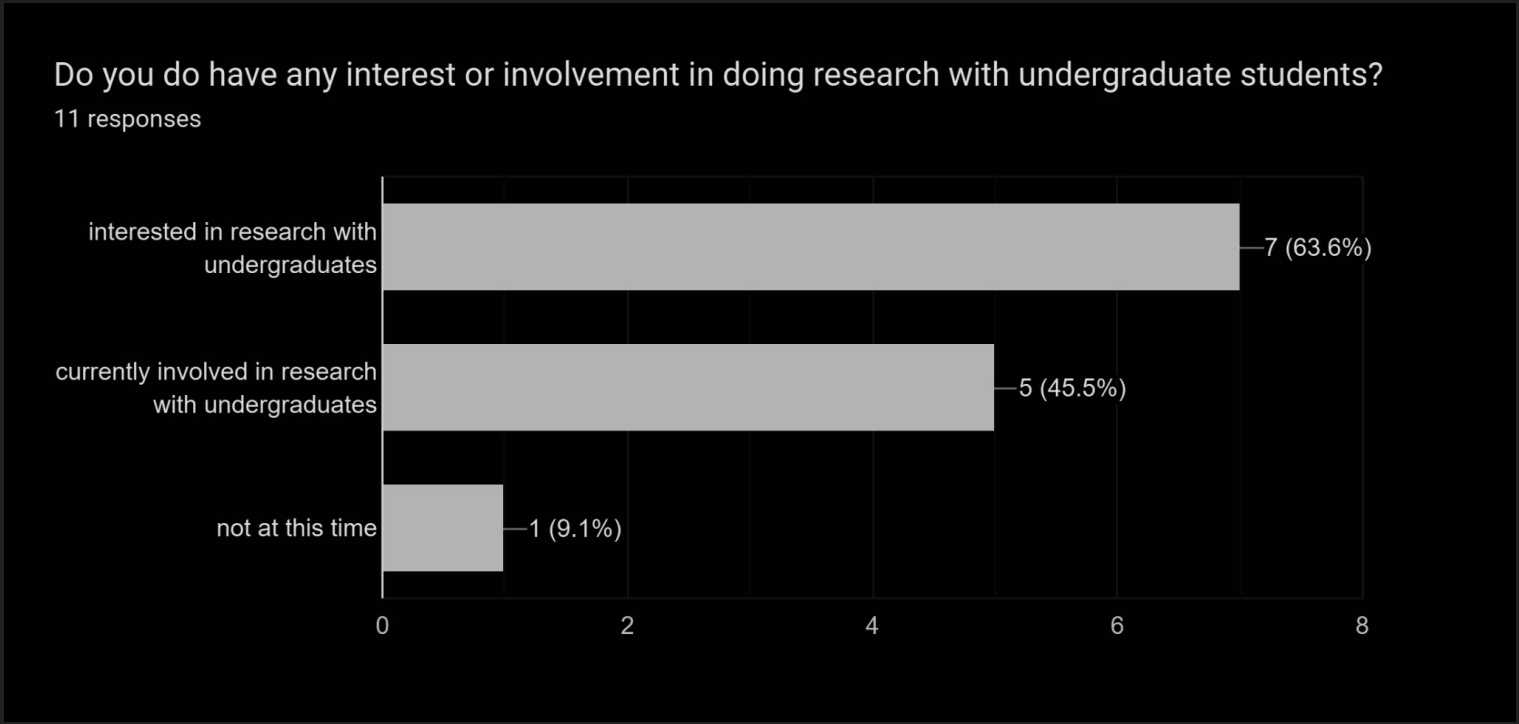
# Types of students we teach



# Types of students we teach

**AEdu-East respondents predominantly work with undergraduates (with or without prior programming experience).**

# Undergraduate Research Interest



# Challenges we face?

- Overcoming university mindset around disciplinary boundaries (i.e. a CS department should only teach CS-specific topics)
- The number one thing is always educating people on the difference between artificial life and artificial intelligence. So first and foremost, just communicating "what is ALife" in a way that people can understand.
- Neither UK or Spain (my comfort zone) has specific programs or even consider this an speciality.
- The high weight "AI" is taking in the popular media
- Building interest!

1. **Communicating the Field**
2. **Institutional & Resource Constraints**
3. **Pedagogical Complexity**
4. **Learning & Engagement**

- Only time: there are not enough hours in a day to get everything done.
- **Finding an effective way to convey with breadth of the field without overwhelming students with content**
- I think the biggest challenge is in how many possibilities exist for what topics to teach, what learning outcomes can be, how to teach those topics, and lack of widespread/established examples to take inspiration from.
- For me, it's funding.
- How to give an authentic alife experience in a short amount of time
- Speaking from the learning end: the multidisciplinary knowledge one needs. That's also its attraction, though.
- **[Due to low mainstream interest] Artificial life isn't a particularly accessible field at the moment**.

# Challenges we face? (Continued)

- A relatively low amount of interest, attention, and recognition; overall low visibility compared to other subjects.

# AEdu - East, West, and Everywhere

- AEdu-West took place May 18 and 19 (2026) with participants from Europe and North America

- AEdu was conceived in conversations following the ALife 2025 conference in Kyoto City, Japan.

# Questions?

## Type into the chat

We may call on you to explain your question if we think it would help