COURSE SYLLABUS

AI Agents for Government Workflows Course

Learn how agentic AI tools work, evaluate whether they belong in your workflows, and govern them responsibly.

> Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/ai-agents-for-government-workflows



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Course Outline

Module 1: Understanding AI Agents

- What AI agents are and how they differ from automation, chatbots, and decision-support tools
- Core characteristics of AI agents: goal-driven behavior, multi-step execution, autonomy, and context-awareness
- The agentic AI landscape today: desktop agent tools, enterprise agent platforms, developer tools, and AI assistants with tool access
- How agentic tools work under the hood: the AI model, planning loop, tool access, and containment boundary
- Live demonstration of an agentic tool performing a multi-step government workflow task
- Human oversight roles: human-in-the-loop, human-on-the-loop, and human-in-command
- Common misconceptions and key risks, including prompt injection
- Current federal AI policy direction and its implications for government agencies

Module 2: Evaluating Agentic Tools for Government Work

- The evaluation mindset: understanding the workflow before evaluating the tool
- Identifying agent roles in a workflow: intake, analysis, recommendation, and escalation
- The Agent Evaluation Blueprint: goal, trigger, inputs, actions, boundaries, and oversight
- Permission models and data access: folder-level vs. organization-wide, network access, and least privilege
- Prompt injection: what it is, how it works, and why agentic tools are uniquely vulnerable
- Questions to ask before saying yes: a practical pre-approval checklist
- Hands-on activity: evaluate a realistic agentic tool proposal for a government workflow

Module 3: Where Agentic Tools Fit — and Where They Don't

- Appropriate use cases: case triage and routing, document analysis and extraction, internal coordination, and monitoring and alerts
- High-risk or inappropriate uses of agentic tools in government
- Operational risks: over-automation, over-reliance, and rubber-stamping
- Drift: data drift, concept drift, and objective drift — and how to detect them
- Early operational warning signs that an agentic tool may be failing

- Hands-on activity: red team a deployed agentic tool scenario to identify risks and recommend action

Module 4: Governing Agentic Tools in Your Organization

- Why governance is essential — and why no centralized federal AI regulator is coming
- Governance vs. technical controls: policies, oversight bodies, and accountability structures
- Legal, ethical, and procurement considerations: FedRAMP, ATO, vendor data handling, and records retention
- Security for agentic tools: access controls, prompt injection defenses, anomaly monitoring, and incident response
- Lifecycle management: design, pilot, deploy, monitor, update or retire — including regulatory sandbox alignment
- Performance monitoring and metrics: accuracy, override rates, equity indicators, and user satisfaction
- Workforce readiness and change management: role clarity, training on tool limitations, and avoiding fear and over-trust
- Deployment readiness checklist: a practical gate review before any agentic tool goes live
- Hands-on activity: conduct a readiness gate review for a proposed agentic tool deployment