ISSN 2522-6398 Vol. 8, Issue 1: 13-17, DOI: 10.25236/FER.2025.080103

Enhancing Sensor Principles Education with Artificial Intelligence: Curriculum Integration and Pedagogical Innovations

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Abstract: *This paper examines the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) within the sensor principles curriculum and its implications for teaching methodologies in electrical engineering education. The study underscores the significance of aligning academic instruction with industry demands, focusing on the enhancement of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in sensor technology. It delineates the objectives of updating teaching models, enriching curriculum content, and reforming pedagogical approaches to foster students' innovative abilities and problem-solving skills. The paper presents a systematic approach to AI integration, detailing the design and implementation of teaching objectives for undergraduate electrical engineering programs. Emphasizing the importance of hands-on learning and interdisciplinary knowledge, the course aims to prepare students for the challenges of the AI era by cultivating their practical competencies and innovative thinking. The effectiveness of these reforms is analyzed through student feedback and learning outcomes, offering insights into the broader context of professional course reform within electrical engineering disciplines.*

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Sensor Technology, Curriculum Reform, Engineering Education*

1. Introduction

In the Information Age, the imperative to guide students towards an in-depth exploration of their academic disciplines, aligning with industry demands, and enhancing the deficient teacher-student interaction, has emerged as a pivotal issue in educational reform [1]. Particularly within the realm of electrical engineering, the course on sensor principles, as a foundational subject, bears the significant responsibility of nurturing students' theoretical knowledge and practical skills [2]. The pedagogical approach to this course demands a systematic, comprehensive, and efficacious methodology to cultivate students' innovative competencies and problem-solving proficiencies in tackling intricate engineering challenges [3]. Sensor technology, a linchpin of modern information technology in the 21st century, has become a foundational course across various disciplines within higher education [4]. It encompasses a broad spectrum of knowledge and necessitates robust practical application, thereby imposing heightened demands on teaching efficacy. The experimental pedagogy of the Principles and Applications of Sensors course is crucial for students to grasp sensor characteristics and their real-world applications, thus becoming a focal point for pedagogical innovation.

With the relentless evolution of technologies such as cloud computing, big data, and deep learning, artificial intelligence (AI) has been pervasively integrated into a multitude of sectors and is recognized as one of the three major avant-garde technologies globally. Machine perception, a fundamental issue in AI, is intricately linked to the Sensors and Testing Technology course. This course encompasses sensor technology, detection methodologies, electrical and electronic engineering, control engineering, and mechatronics, playing a significant role in honing the professional competencies of engineers specializing in AI technology. The integration of AI with sensor technology in education is a burgeoning field that promises to revolutionize the way we approach teaching and learning. Smart classrooms, defined as technology-assisted environments that enhance the teaching and learning experience, are gradually becoming an integral part of modern education. The presence of sensors in these classrooms provides a means to naturally collect learning data during the learning process, forming the data foundation of intelligent systems, and offering educators unprecedented opportunities to deepen students' learning experiences and improve teaching efficiency.

AI-based sensors are characterized by onboard intelligence and the ability to communicate collaboratively or through the Internet, which is essential for achieving the high level of automation required in today's smart IoT applications. These sensors, when integrated into educational settings, can promote product innovation, improve operational levels, and open up novel business models by leveraging knowledge from complex sensor datasets. The potential of AI to accelerate the transformation of education systems towards inclusive learning that will prepare young people to thrive and shape a better future is immense. Teachers can use these technologies to enhance their teaching practice and professional experience, focusing on developing the ability to curate, guide, critically assess learning, and help students gain skills that are more important than memorizing information.

Therefore, this paper, grounded in the actual context of the Principles of Sensors course, delves into the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology into sensor principle instruction and formulates teaching objectives and plans for undergraduate electrical engineering curricula. The objective is to revamp the teaching paradigm, enrich the curriculum content, reform pedagogical strategies, establish resource platforms, and offer technical support services through educational reform to bolster student learning outcomes. Through this integrated teaching approach, the aim is to foster students' practical competencies and innovative thinking while enhancing their overall proficiencies, thereby preparing them for the advent of the AI era.

2. Overview of the Principles of Sensors Course

The Principles of Sensors course is a pivotal foundational subject within electrical engineering disciplines such as electronic information engineering and automation, playing a crucial role in the knowledge framework of electrical engineering. This course amalgamates theories and technologies from multiple disciplines, including physics, chemistry, and biology, with the aim of equipping students with a comprehensive grasp of the operational principles and application technologies of sensors.

The curriculum encompasses key topics such as the fundamental theory of sensors, analytical methodologies, mathematical modeling, and sensor simulation design. Through this course, students will attain a profound understanding of the foundational concepts and analytical methodologies of sensor technology. They will also learn to construct mathematical models for sensors and interpret and analyze experimental results in terms of their physical significance. Adhering to the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach, the course primarily employs in-person instruction, complemented by lectures, post-class Q&A sessions, self-study guidance, and the "Principles of Sensors Laboratory" practical course. The goal is to reinforce students' comprehension of sensor theory and augment their practical competencies. The course emphasizes theoretical knowledge, formula derivation, and complex calculations. Students are expected to master the static and dynamic characteristic analysis of sensors, select appropriate sensor types, perform signal processing and system design, and achieve precise calibration and measurement.

To adapt to the evolution of artificial intelligence technology, the course has introduced new content, including AI and sensor data fusion, intelligent sensor system design, the application of AI in sensor networks, the automation of experimental and practical components, interdisciplinary projects, AI ethics and regulations, as well as the latest developments in AI technology. Through studying these topics, students will be able to independently select sensors, apply them, and conduct experimental research. They will also be capable of integrating AI technology into the design and optimization of sensor systems, laying a solid foundation for future engineering practice and technological innovation. For second-year undergraduate students, this represents both a challenge and a valuable learning opportunity.

3. Course Teaching Design

3.1 Course Teaching Objectives

The next-generation intelligent manufacturing technology is a vital component of the nation's strategic emerging industries. It plays a crucial role in facilitating the deep integration of industrial automation, informatization, and intelligence, and directly impacts the competitiveness and future developmental trajectory of the national manufacturing industry.

This course is designed to cultivate intelligent manufacturing talent with an international perspective, innovative capabilities, and practical skills. It is committed to igniting students' passion for learning and instilling a sense of professional mission. The curriculum is dedicated to the holistic education of

ISSN 2522-6398 Vol. 8, Issue 1: 13-17, DOI: 10.25236/FER.2025.080103

individuals, encompassing every stage of the learning journey and addressing all dimensions of personal growth and development. By incorporating AI elements into the teaching design, the course contrasts with traditional models, organically combining AI technology with professional education.

The course aims to provide students with a deep understanding of intelligent manufacturing theories and the practical skills necessary to excel in a dynamic industry. It fosters critical thinking, innovation, and the application of knowledge to real-world challenges, preparing students to become future leaders in their field. The integration of AI into the curriculum is not an add-on but a core component, allowing students to explore the latest technologies and their implications for the future of manufacturing. The course also highlights the ethical considerations and societal impacts of AI, equipping students to navigate the complex issues that arise from the deployment of intelligent systems. Through a blend of theoretical instruction and practical application, students are encouraged to think critically about the role of AI in society and to develop solutions that are both technologically advanced and socially responsible. This holistic approach ensures that students graduate with the skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the modern manufacturing industry, poised to lead and innovate in the global marketplace.

Objective 1: Development of Fundamental Knowledge and Application Skills

Through this course, students will acquire fundamental knowledge and core concepts of sensors, becoming familiar with the design methods of various types of sensors. They will be able to integrate and apply sensor-related expertise to carry out innovative designs. Additionally, students will learn how to apply AI technologies in sensor data analysis, enhancing their ability to solve complex engineering problems in the field of electronic information.

Objective 2: Analytical Methods and Engineering Practice

Based on the learning from this course, students will be able to master the principles and applications of sensor analysis in the time domain, frequency domain, and S-domain. Additionally, they will integrate AI technologies, such as machine learning and deep learning, to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of sensor data analysis.

Objective 3: System Design and Problem Solving

Through this course, students will, based on their familiarity with common linear time-invariant systems, gain the ability to design and analyze general continuous systems. Students will be able to independently design, implement, and optimize sensor systems, and leverage AI technologies to solve real-world engineering problems. This will lay a solid foundation for future technological innovation and engineering practice.

3.2 Course Teaching Model

This course adopts a teaching model meticulously crafted to enhance student engagement and amplify the impact of practical learning, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Teaching Modules and Expected Learning Outcomes

Teaching Modules	Teaching Content	Expected Learning Outcomes for Students	Teaching Methods
1.Introduction	➢ Definition and Function of Sensors ➢ Composition and Classification of Sensors ➢ Development History of Sensor Technology	➢ Comprehend the fundamental definitions, functions, and classifications of sensors ➢ Analyze the historical development and current trends in sensor technology ➢ Evaluate the role of sensors in modern information technology	➢ Online: Utilize MOOC platforms for video lectures on sensor history and interactive Q&A sessions ➢ Offline: Initiate classroom discussions with case studies of sensor applications in various industries to foster a comprehensive understanding
2.Basic Characteristics of Sensors	➢ Static Characteristics of Sensors: Sensitivity, Hysteresis, Repeatability ➢ Dynamic Characteristics: Frequency Response, Transient Response ➢ Calibration and Standardization: Methods	➢ Analyze the static and dynamic characteristics of different sensors ➢ Design experiments to calibrate and standardize sensors using appropriate equipment ➢ Synthesize the impact of sensor characteristics on measurement accuracy and system performance	➢ Online: Virtual laboratory simulations for hands-on experience with sensor calibration ➢ Offline: Laboratory sessions focused on experimental design, data collection, and analysis to reinforce theoretical concepts

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	and Equipment		
3.Resistive Sensor	➢ Working Principle: Strain-Gauge Mechanics and Electrical Resistance Changes ➢ Measurement Circuit Design: Wheatstone Bridge and Signal Conditioning ➢ Applications: Load Cells and Pressure Sensors	➢ Derive the mathematical relationships governing resistive strain gauges ➢ Design measurement circuits using computer-aided design tools ➢ Apply resistive sensor principles to solve real-world measurement challenges	➢ Online: Interactive tutorials on circuit design and virtual simulations of Wheatstone bridge circuits ➢ Offline: Workshops on building and testing resistive sensors with an emphasis on practical troubleshooting
4.Capacitive Sensor	➢ Working Principle: Capacitance Variation with Dielectric Changes ➢ Measurement Circuit: Oscillator Circuits and Signal Processing ➢ Applications: Proximity Sensing and Liquid Level Detection	➢ Calculate capacitance changes in response to dielectric constants and geometrical alterations ➢ Develop signal processing algorithms for capacitive sensor data ➢ Integrate capacitive sensors into automated systems for precision measurements	➢ Online: Multimedia lessons on the physics of capacitive sensing and virtual circuit simulations ➢ Offline: Team-based design projects involving the creation of capacitive sensors for specific applications
5.Inductive Sensor	➢ Working Principle: Inductance Changes with Proximity ➢ Measurement Circuit: Coil Impedance and Frequency Shifts ➢ Applications: Metal Detection and Position Sensing	➢ Model inductive sensor behavior under varying proximity conditions ➢ Analyze coil impedance changes and their effects on measurement accuracy ➢ Design inductive sensor systems for industrial automation applications	➢ Online: Video demonstrations of inductive sensing principles and online discussions on coil design ➢ Offline: Practical sessions on assembling inductive sensors and testing their performance in various scenarios
6.Piezoelectric Sensor	➢ Physical Basis: Piezoelectric Effect and Charge Generation ➢ Measurement Circuit: Charge Amplifiers and Filtering ➢ Applications: Accelerometers and Vibration Sensors	➢ Explain the piezoelectric effect and its implications ➢ Configure charge amplifiers and filters for accurate signal measurement ➢ Implement piezoelectric sensors in safety and monitoring systems	➢ Online: Virtual labs for exploring the piezoelectric effect and designing measurement circuits ➢ Offline: Hands-on experiments with piezoelectric materials and the construction of simple sensors
7.Photoelectric Sensor	➢ Physical Basis: Photoelectric Effect and Light Detection ➢ Measurement Circuit: Photodiodes and Op-Amp Circuits ➢ Applications: Optical Encoders and Barcode Readers	➢ Understand the photoelectric effect and its application in light detection ➢ Design and optimize photoelectric measurement circuits for sensitivity and response time ➢ Integrate photoelectric sensors into automated identification systems.	➢ Online: Interactive modules on light-matter interactions and virtual design of photoelectric circuits ➢ Offline: Labs focused on building photoelectric sensors and testing their response to different light sources
8.Chemical and Biological Sensors	➢ Working Principle: Chemical Reactions and Biological Recognition ➢ Measurement Circuit: Transducers and Signal Conditioning ➢ Applications: Gas Detection and Medical Diagnostics	➢ Analyze chemical and biological interactions at the sensor surface ➢ Design transducer circuits to convert chemical/ biological signals into electrical signals ➢ Apply chemical/ biological sensors in environmental and medical monitoring systems	➢ Online: Webinars on the latest advancements in chemical/ biological sensing technologies ➢ Offline: Research-based projects on developing sensors for specific chemical/biological agents, with a focus on practical implementation

Table 1 offers a comprehensive summary of the course's teaching framework, delineating the core teaching modules, their content, the anticipated learning outcomes, and the pedagogical approaches for each. It underscores the course's commitment to Outcome-Based Education (OBE), where learning is centered around achieving specific educational outcomes. It reflects the integration of AI within the curriculum, contrasting traditional teaching with modern, technology-assisted strategies. The table encapsulates the course's vision to prepare students for the AI era by fostering their practical abilities, innovative thinking, and overall competencies, thus equipping them with the skills necessary to meet the demands of the modern manufacturing industry and to contribute to technological innovation.

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3.3 Implementation Effectiveness Analysis

The revamped course content, tightly integrating AI technology, has ignited students' interest and enthusiasm for learning. Innovative pedagogical strategies, such as project-based learning and case analysis, have bolstered students' practical skills and innovative thinking while fostering stronger teacher-student interactions. Enhanced experimental courses have permitted students to attain a profound understanding of sensor characteristics through hands-on practice, improving their signal processing and system design capabilities. The establishment of a teaching resource platform and provision of technical support services have amplified teaching efficiency and learning outcomes. According to student feedback from teaching surveys, the reforms have markedly improved learning effectiveness and nurtured comprehensive skills development. This initiative offers valuable insights for professional courses within the electrical engineering discipline.

4. Conclusions

The in-depth execution of teaching reforms in the sensor course has led to a significant enhancement of students' professional skills and innovative capabilities. This reform not only updates the teaching content to align with the latest advancements in AI technology but also employs innovative teaching methods and strengthened practical components to effectively boost students' learning enthusiasm and problem-solving abilities. By laying a solid foundation for nurturing intelligent manufacturing talents with international perspectives, innovation capabilities, and practical skills, these reforms demonstrate their value. We anticipate the continuous advancement of these initiatives, providing further valuable references and ideas for professional course reforms within the electrical engineering discipline.

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