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Machine Learning for Everyone: May the Fourth 2026

by Mark A. Tschopp

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DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory

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14. ABSTRACT
This technical note documents the 2026 “Machine Learning for Everyone” (ML4E) course, the sixth and final edition of a workforce development initiative designed to build foundational AI and ML literacy across the Army and DoW workforce. The course was delivered virtually over 5 days (April 29–May 5, 2026), with 374 registered participants and 296 live attendees who collectively logged approximately 3,000 h of participation. Post-course survey ratings averaged 4.63 out of 5.0 across eight items, with the instructor item at 4.95. Pre/post-knowledge assessments showed a mean score improvement from 53.6 to 76.5 on a 100-point scale where 50 represents random-chance performance. The course used a glass-box approach to ML instruction, demonstrating algorithms from first principles in Microsoft Excel so that participants could see how the math behind AI works rather than treating models as opaque tools. Across all six editions (2021–2026), the series engaged more than 3,375 registered participants from 327+ unique organizations, including over 2,300 Army participants across all 17 Army commands, with a measured 138% improvement in ML knowledge above random-chance performance.

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I extend my gratitude to DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory for supporting this initiative and providing the opportunity to deliver AI and ML education to the broader workforce across 6 consecutive years.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of those who played key roles in the 2026 course:

- Mr. Dietrich Wiegmann, ARL Information, Autonomy, and Teaming Sciences Division (IATSD) Chief, for delivering the opening kickoff and setting the tone for the 2-day main event.
- The Light Side Panel (May 4): four DEVCOM ARL researchers demonstrating how ML is being applied to problems directly relevant to the Army. Dr. Brian C. Barnes, Dr. Sungmin Eum, Dr. Stephanie M. Lukin, and Dr. James R. Uplinger II each presented active research spanning autonomous systems, human-robot interaction, machine unlearning, and reinforcement learning.
- The Dark Side Panel (May 5): Dr. Dean R. Culver, Mr. John S. Hyatt, and Mr. Robert A. St. Amant (all DEVCOM), for presenting AI limitations, failure modes, and the risks of over-relying on systems we do not fully understand.

I am also grateful to Dr. Reggie Hobbs, Chief of ARL's Content Understanding Branch, whose sustained support has been instrumental throughout this effort and who helped carry this material forward into the "AI for Soldiers" course.

Finally, I want to thank all participants in the 2026 course. Your questions, enthusiasm, and honest feedback have been the most rewarding part of this work.

Summary

The 2026 “Machine Learning for Everyone” course was the sixth and final edition of a workforce development initiative that began as a 1-day seminar in 2021 and grew into one of the most broadly attended Army-focused ML education efforts on record. This technical note documents the 2026 course; the complete 5-year series is reported separately.[1]

The 2026 course ran over 5 days (April 29–May 5) with 374 registered participants and 296 live attendees, logging approximately 3,000 h of participation. Post-course ratings averaged 4.63 out of 5.0 across eight survey items (4.95 for the instructor item). Pre/post-knowledge scores rose from 53.6 (near the 50-point random baseline) to 76.5, and item-level analysis showed the course corrected specific misconceptions about core ML concepts, not merely raised satisfaction.

Across all six editions combined:

- **Reach:** More than 3,375 registered participants from 327+ unique organizations, including over 2,300 from the Army across all 17 Army commands and 173+ suborganizations.
- **Learning impact:** A 138% improvement in knowledge above random-chance performance.[1]
- **Satisfaction:** Post-course ratings of 4.3–4.8 out of 5.0 across all six iterations.
- **Legacy:** The course directly inspired the “AI for Soldiers” strategic broadening seminar, which achieved 100% “Excellent” ratings in its most recent iteration.[2]

The course worked because it turned the ML “black box” into a “glass box.” By walking through algorithms step by step in Microsoft Excel, participants learned how machine learning actually works, not just what it produces. ML is not magic; it is math. The 2026 edition closed the series, but its approach and the community it built continue to drive AI and ML readiness across the force.

[1] Tschopp MA. Machine Learning for Everyone: empowering the force with AI/ML (2021–2025). DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory (US); 2026. Report No.: ARL-SR-0519.

[2] Tschopp MA, Hobbs RL, Work M. Artificial Intelligence for Soldiers 2025: enhancing AI readiness for the U.S. Army. DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory (US); 2025 June. Report No.: ARL-SR-0506.

1. Introduction

AI and ML are central to future military capability. These technologies influence operational decision-making, drive transformation, and support the development of next-generation systems across the U.S. Army and the Department of War (DoW). Beyond their technical promise, senior leaders have emphasized that the successful adoption of AI depends not only on advanced algorithms and infrastructure, but also on a workforce that knows how to use AI technologies on a daily basis.[1] Brigadier General Stephanie Ahern emphasized the direct connection between training and mission effectiveness, stating that developing AI literacy is essential for future operations and that the ability to collaborate with AI experts and apply AI concepts operationally is "extremely essential to the Army mission."[2] DoW guidance has further reinforced that AI should not be viewed as a specialized or occasional tool but as a normal part of everyone's job: "AI should be in your battle rhythm every single day; it should be your teammate."[3] The Department's January 2026 AI strategy escalates this further: the Secretary of War has directed the force to become an "AI-first" warfighting organization. This means not merely integrating AI into existing workflows, but re-imagining how processes, tactics, techniques, and procedures would be designed if current AI technology had existed from the start.[4] The message is clear: new AI tools are useless if people do not know how to use them.

While senior leaders have articulated the strategic importance of AI and ML, accessible pathways for Soldiers and Army civilians to build foundational skills have lagged behind. At the enterprise level, the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office[*] has built substantial AI literacy programs, tools, and platforms spanning the Joint Force, with an organizational scale and resources that far exceed what any single laboratory initiative can match. What was needed was Army-specific instruction on how ML algorithms actually work, delivered directly to analysts, engineers, and decision-makers. This gap was particularly evident during the early COVID period, when digital transformation accelerated across research, engineering, and operational communities. Despite surging interest, structured, Army-accessible ML education remained limited. To address this unmet demand, an initiative emerged at the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) Army Research Laboratory (ARL) to provide introductory ML training tailored specifically to the Army and DoW workforce. The approach emphasized transparency:

[*] cdao.mil

ML algorithms were demonstrated using Microsoft Excel, allowing participants to follow the step-by-step development of models within a familiar environment. Neural networks, deep learning, and more advanced architectures were presented not as opaque black boxes, but as logical extensions of simple mathematics. This glass-box pedagogy turned intimidating models into something participants could see, question, and apply.

The "Machine Learning for Everyone" (ML4E) course—also known informally as ML 101—first ran in May 2021, coinciding with Star Wars Day (May 4).[5] Over the subsequent 5 years, it grew through continuous feedback and iterative refinement, expanding from a 1-day introduction to a multi-day format, adding advanced topics such as recurrent neural networks, transformers, and natural language processing following the release of ChatGPT in late 2022, and incorporating structured expert panels that brought active ARL researchers and critical perspectives on AI risk directly into the course. By the close of the fifth edition in 2025, the course had reached more than 3,000 participants.[6] The 2026 edition documented in this report was the sixth and final iteration, with 374 registered participants attending the May 4–5 main event. Across all six editions combined, the course engaged more than 3,375 registered participants from over 327 unique organizations spanning the Army, DoW, government, academia, and industry. The cumulative impact of this series places it among the most broadly attended Army-focused ML education initiatives on record: more than 2,300 of those participants came from the Army, spanning all 17 Army commands and over 173 suborganizations, and pre/post-knowledge assessments across the series measured a 138% improvement in understanding above random-chance performance on fundamental ML concepts.[6] The course's success directly inspired the "AI for Soldiers" strategic broadening seminar, which has since achieved 100% "Excellent" participant ratings in its most recent iteration.[7,8]

This technical note documents the 2026 instantiation specifically: its design, participants, and measured impact. The broader series context is provided here as background; the detailed 5-year record is reported separately.[6]

2. Course Design and Delivery

The 2026 ML4E course comprised three optional pre-course sessions (April 29–May 1) followed by a 2-day main event timed to May the Fourth (May 4–5). The pre-course sessions established foundational vocabulary and Excel-based intuition; the 2-day event covered the full ML architecture progression and featured two expert panels. Table 1 lists all 16 sessions across the 5-day program.

Table 1. 2026 ML4E session schedule (16 total). Three optional pre-course sessions prepared participants before the intensive 2-day main event. Each row is a distinct session, talk, or panel.

Day	Session / Episode
APR 29	AI 101 Seminar
APR 30	Excel for ML, Session 1
MAY 1	Excel for ML, Session 2
MAY 4 (Day 1)	*Kickoff*: Mr. Dietrich Wiegmann, ARL IATSD Division Chief
	ML Primer
	ML Basics — Supervised & Unsupervised Learning
	Light Side Panel: ARL Research (Barnes, Eum, Lukin, Uplinger)
	ML Basics (cont'd) — Regression, Classification & Evaluation
	Neural Network Basics
MAY 5 (Day 2)	Convolutional Neural Networks & Reinforcement Learning
	Autoencoders & Generative Adversarial Networks
	Real-World Examples & AI Failures
	Dark Side Panel: AI Failures (Culver, Hyatt, St. Amant)
	Sequence Models: RNN, GRU, LSTM
	Natural Language Processing
	Transformers & Attention

The course is built around a glass-box approach to ML and a single guiding principle: it is not magic, it is math. Rather than treating models as opaque tools, the course builds each concept from first principles using Microsoft Excel. Gradient descent, matrix multiplication for neural network layers, convolutional filter operations, and long/short-term memory cell state updates are all demonstrated in Excel before any model library is introduced. This is deliberate. Excel is universally available, requires no installation or IT approval, and forces every computation to be visible. Participants understand what is happening before they encounter code. The approach trades depth of implementation for depth of understanding, which suits the target audience of Army analysts, engineers, and decision-makers who will consume ML outputs rather than write models.

The two expert panels serve distinct functions in the course. The Light Side Panel (May 4) brings active ARL researchers to the floor to demonstrate how ML is being applied now, in domains directly relevant to the Army: autonomous ground systems, human-robot interaction, machine unlearning, and reinforcement learning. The panel serves two purposes: participants see real work from scientists doing

Army research, and for many attendees who have never interacted directly with ARL, it introduces them to the people and portfolio behind Army AI research. The Dark Side Panel (May 5) takes the opposite angle: three researchers present a structured critique of AI, covering hallucinations, adversarial robustness, bias, over-reliance, and the limits of trusting a system you cannot fully inspect. Placing the Dark Side Panel at the end of the course is intentional. Participants leave with capability and caution in the same frame, rather than receiving warnings before they have enough context to evaluate them.

The Star Wars theming on May 4–5 is functional, not decoration. The course runs virtually; virtual delivery flattens engagement. Star Wars memes, AI-generated podcasts, parody music, and shared references like "the Force" and "the Dark Side" give participants a reason to be present and attentive rather than multitasking in a Teams window. The sustained engagement visible in the chat log (spontaneous peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, in-session polling, and unsolicited post-course outreach) reflects an environment where social interaction was built into the format rather than hoped for.

3. Course Participants

A total of 374 personnel registered for the 2026 ML4E course; 296 attended at least one live session. Participants collectively logged approximately 3,000 h of participation. Figure 1 summarizes all course roles and the full attendee cohort.

All 374 registrants self-reported their familiarity with ML during registration. As shown in Figure 2, the plurality described themselves as "Slightly Familiar" (40%), followed by "Somewhat Familiar" (35%). Together these groups account for 75% of respondents—consistent with the course's intended audience of people who have encountered ML but lack a working understanding of the methods. "Not at all familiar" participants (14%) represent a meaningful beginner segment; feedback from this group is discussed in Section 4.

Organizational affiliation was captured via free-text entry and normalized for analysis. Figure 3 shows the 11 most-represented organizations by name; the remaining 109 organizations contributed between one and six participants each. ARL led as the organizing entity. Beyond the core research community, registrations spanned the DEVCOM science and technology centers—Ground Vehicle Systems

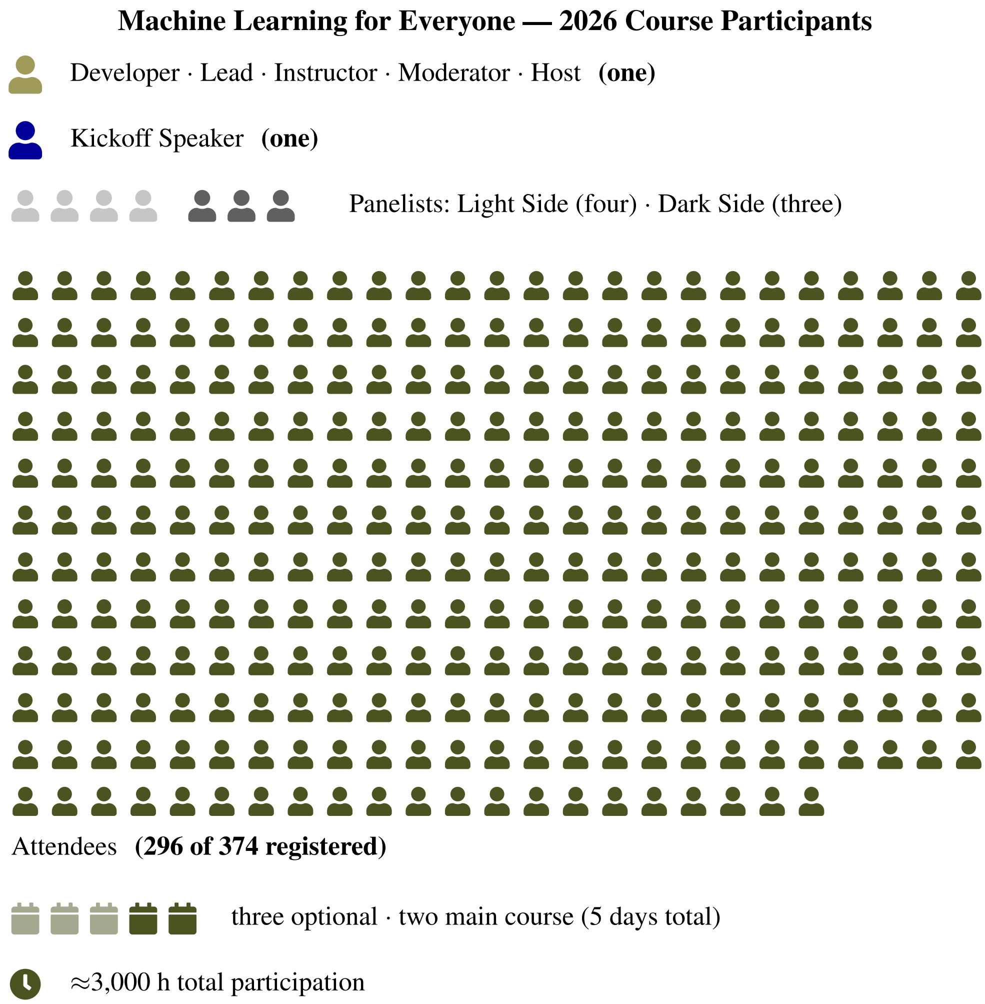

Figure 1. Course roles and attendee headcount for the 2026 ML4E course. Icon colors denote role category: course lead (gold), kickoff speaker (blue), Light Side panelists (light gray), Dark Side panelists (dark gray), and registered attendees (green). Calendar shading distinguishes the three optional pre-course sessions from the 2 main-event days. Each icon represents one person.

Center (GVSC), Chemical Biological Center (CBC), and Aviation and Missile Center (AvMC)—along with the Army Research Office (ARO), the Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC), the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the Transformation Decision Analysis Center (TDAC), and the National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC). This spread across research, test and evaluation, analysis, training, and intelligence functions confirms the course reached the breadth of the Army enterprise, not just its laboratories.

Participant status data reflects the breadth of workforce types engaged. Of the 374 registrants, 237 were federal civilians and 47 were contractors. A third population

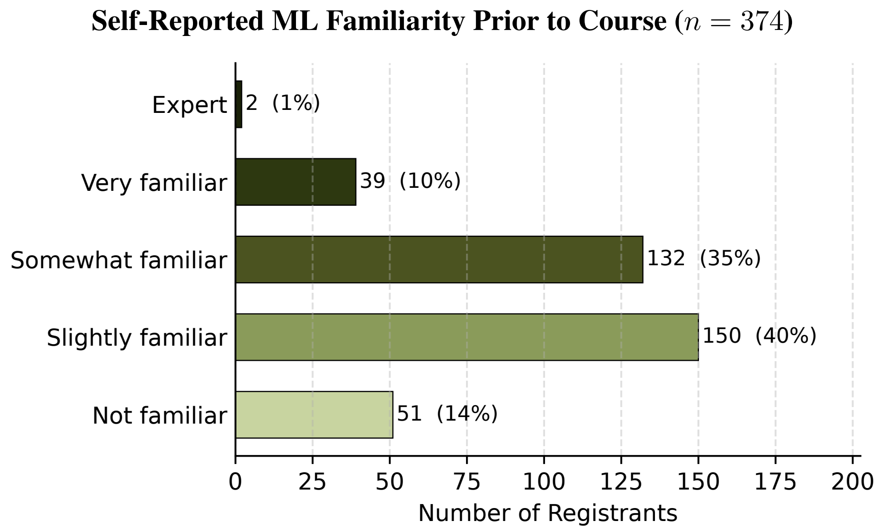

Figure 2. Self-reported ML familiarity prior to the 2026 course ($n = 374$ registrants). The distribution confirms the course reached its intended audience: participants with limited prior exposure who are not yet confident in their understanding.

deserves specific attention: 90 military personnel registered for the course. Military schedules are less accommodating than those of civilian or contractor counterparts, and a portion of those registrants was ultimately unable to attend the live sessions; the enrollment numbers themselves signal genuine intent. The mid-career to senior representation within this group was notable: 17 Majors, 12 Lieutenant Colonels, 4 Colonels, and 17 Chief Warrant Officers (CW2–CW5) account for the field-grade officer and warrant officer core, with 5 Staff Sergeants, 5 Sergeants First Class, and 2 Master Sergeants among the senior non-commissioned officer (NCO) contingent. Field-grade officers and senior NCOs registering for a foundational ML course reflects AI literacy interest that extends beyond the analyst and engineer populations that workforce development programs typically reach.

4. Course Impact

The 2026 ML4E course generated measurable impact across three dimensions: a pre/post-knowledge quiz, quantitative post-course survey scores, and qualitative feedback collected via email and Microsoft Teams chat. Attendance and participation data are summarized in Section 3.

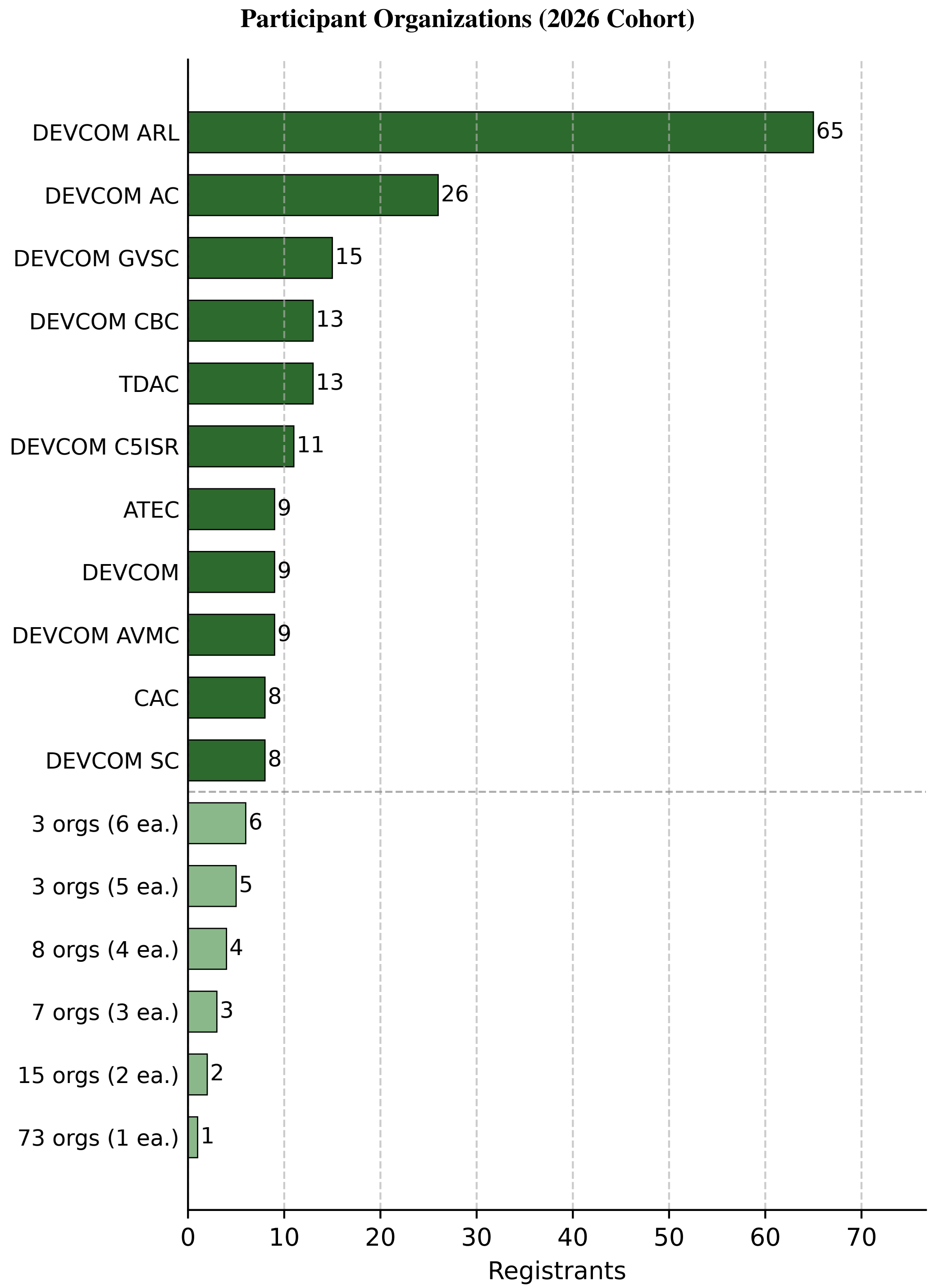

Figure 3. Participant organizations, 2026 cohort ($n = 374$ registrants). The 11 most-represented organizations are named individually; remaining organizations (109 total) are grouped by participant count. Organization names normalized from free-text registration entries.

4.1 Quantitative Feedback

Post-course surveys used a 5-point rating scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Twenty-one participants completed the survey ($n = 21$). Figure 4 presents the distribution of responses and mean scores for all eight items.

Mean scores ranged from 4.14 to 4.95 across all items. The instructor enthusiasm and knowledge item was essentially unanimous ($\bar{x} = 4.95$), and seven of eight items scored 4.50 or above. The "Builds confidence for advanced learning" item ($\bar{x} = 4.14$) is the most informative—it scored lower not because of dissatisfaction, but because several participants noted honestly that the course introduced them to a broad landscape and that follow-on study would be required to develop working competence. This is consistent with the course's design intent.

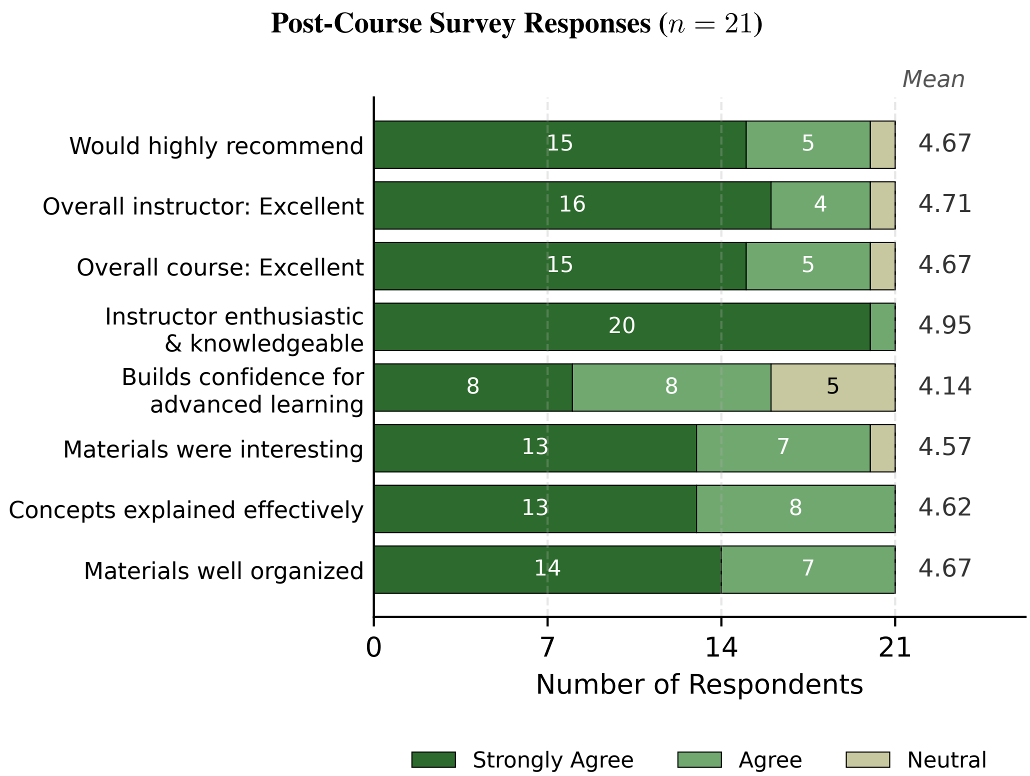

Figure 4. Post-course survey results for the 2026 ML4E course ($n = 21$). Responses on a 5-point scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree); mean scores annotated on each bar. The instructor item received the highest mean (4.95); "Builds confidence for advanced learning" the lowest (4.14), reflecting honest recognition that follow-on study is needed prior to application.

4.2 Pre/Post-Knowledge Assessment

A 40-item True/False quiz was administered via Microsoft Forms before and after the course as a voluntary knowledge check. The quiz was designed with an equal number of True and False statements, making a score of 50 equivalent to random chance. Responses were scored on a 100-point scale: correct answers received 2.5 points, unanswered items received 1.25 points (neutral relative to guessing), and incorrect answers received 0 points.

Thirty-seven participants completed the quiz with a recorded submission time: 32 before the course began and 5 after. Figure 5 shows the distribution of individual scores for both groups.

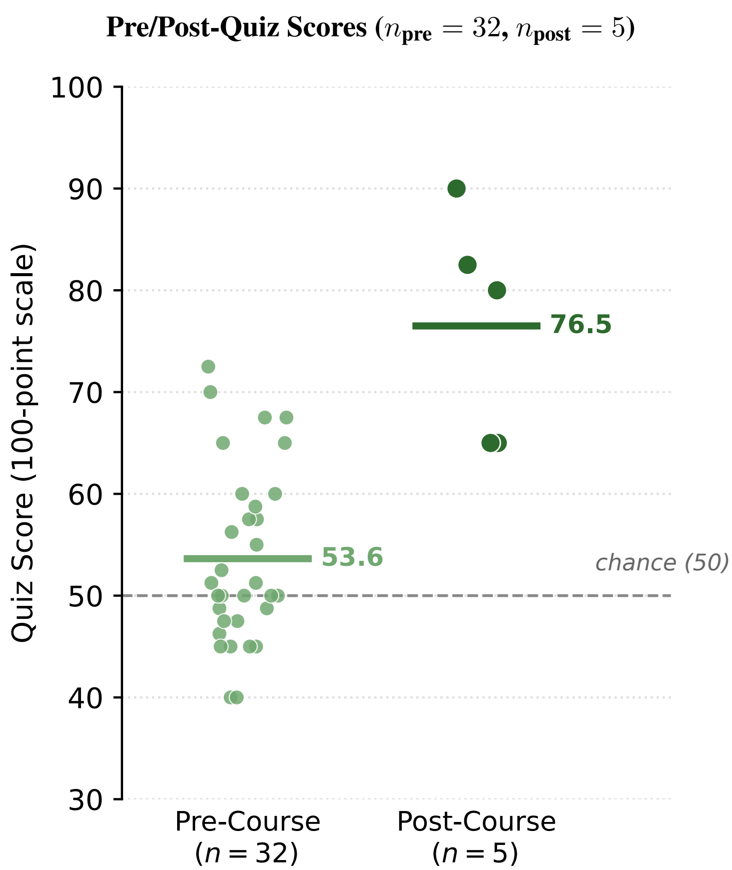

Figure 5. Individual quiz scores on a 100-point scale where 50 represents random-chance performance. Pre-course scores ($n = 32$) cluster just above the random baseline (mean 53.6), consistent with limited prior exposure. Post-course scores ($n = 5$) range from 65 to 90 (mean 76.5). Horizontal bars indicate group means. The small post-course sample precludes statistical inference; the directional improvement is noted as a preliminary signal.

Pre-course scores averaged 53.6 out of 100 ($\sigma = 8.5$), just above the 50-point random baseline. Eleven pre-course respondents scored *below* 50, suggesting that plausible-sounding but incorrect statements led some participants to select wrong answers rather than skip them. Post-course scores averaged 76.5 (individual scores: 90, 82.5, 80, 65, 65), a 23-point improvement over the pre-course mean. The post-course sample ($n = 5$) is too small for statistical inference, but the direction and magnitude of the shift are consistent with meaningful knowledge gain.

Item-level analysis of pre-course responses revealed a broad pattern of misconceptions: across multiple categories, fewer than half of participants answered correctly. The most striking cases were four items below a 30% correct rate, centered on the bias-variance tradeoff and model evaluation: most participants did not recognize that increasing model complexity reduces bias, conflated a low-bias model with a better model without accounting for overfitting, incorrectly agreed that a model should be evaluated on its training data, and misidentified logistic regression as a form of regularization. Several additional items fell near the 40% correct rate, reflecting confusion about where softmax activation is applied (output layer, not hidden nodes), whether neural network weights are hyperparameters (they are not; weights are learned during training), which loss function is appropriate for classification versus regression, the relationship between leave-one-out and k-fold cross-validation, and the appropriate activation function for a regression output node. Taken together, these and other low-scoring items confirm that pre-course participants held genuine misconceptions about core ML concepts—not merely gaps in advanced knowledge—and identify specific areas where the course instruction had the most ground to cover.

4.3 Qualitative Feedback

Qualitative feedback was collected via a post-course open-response survey, direct email to the instructor, and Microsoft Teams chat during and after the sessions. The following entries represent a curated selection spanning the range of participant roles, organizational backgrounds, and feedback themes:

- "Your enthusiasm for the subject matter really came through, and it did a great job of demystifying a lot of the black box properties. The insights gave me a lot to think about not only with regards to how they operate, but also how that operation and execution affect other areas of our business."
  Enthusiasm **Demystification** **Security Implications**

- “I want to especially call out your careful attention to detail going from $y = mx + b$ through matrices, nonlinear activation functions, NNs, etc. That kind of fundamental understanding is key for people to build intuition and understanding about these things.”
  Pedagogy **First Principles** **Foundational Understanding**

- “This training is accidentally helping me solve a non-AI problem by reinforcing how computers compute.”
  Engagement **Unexpected Application**

- “Having the Excel exercises in advance to work through really helped me get more out of the course than I would have without it. I was absolutely brand new to everything from AI/ML concepts to Excel programming so I needed to take my time working through those Excel sheets so I could follow you during the course lessons.”
  Excel Exercises **Accessibility** **Pre-Work Design**

- “Really outstanding. Prior to the first class, I was very skeptical when I read that the ML component would be taught using Excel, initially thinking, “how will that work?” Reflecting upon the course and my learning outcomes, I’m convinced that utilizing Excel was very innovative and an excellent way to visually teach how the algorithms function—it was fundamental to building the foundation for the course.”
  Excel Exercises **Enthusiasm** **Glass-Box Approach**

- “I was pleasantly surprised by the entertainment during the breaks and the community interaction in the chat. I did not expect to feel “social” during this course, and yet I came away after two days not at all feeling lonely from being secluded in my office with my door shut.”
  Community **Engagement** **Virtual Delivery**

- “The USAEUR-AF Theater ACE will be applying those lessons across the formation. Let us know if you ever want to schedule a visit for you or your team to come out here to Wiesbaden.”
  Applied Intent **Army Application** **Follow-On Interest**

- “I think it could very well be expanded to turn it into a live, instructor-led, full-week course with hands-on labs.”
  Content Quality **Expansion Interest**

- “Truly, one of the best courses I’ve taken... Very entertaining, engaging, educational and excellent, the four E’s.”
  Enthusiasm **Overall Quality**

- “Fantastic course! Easily one of the most enjoyable I’ve ever had the privilege of taking! Highly entertaining and engaging and the references were fantastic. It was the perfect balance of a light-hearted atmosphere to offset the heavy subject matter at hand.”
  Enthusiasm **Overall Quality** **Virtual Engagement**

- “I’m amazed how you made this arcane subject so approachable!”
  Demystification **Enthusiasm**

- “Outstanding class. Thank you for teaching it both at my current level and well above it so that I can at least appreciate it and understand its application!”
  Multi-Level Teaching **Enthusiasm**

A subset of constructive feedback noted that the mathematical depth exceeded participant expectations—particularly the treatment of linear algebra, matrix operations, and activation function mechanics. This was not a consensus view: a comparable body of feedback praised the rigor and urged retaining it, and satisfaction with depth rarely surfaces as explicit feedback the way difficulty does. The course serves a genuinely diverse audience; as shown in Figure 3, the most-represented organizations are science and technology commands where mathematical fluency is common, but 73 organizations had exactly one participant—a cross-section that extends well beyond the S&T workforce. Calibrating mathematical depth for that range is an inherent challenge. Prerequisite warnings were included in pre-course materials and repeated in the opening slides, but feedback indicates these were frequently discounted before enrollment—the “for Everyone” framing and Star Wars theme signal broad accessibility, which can undercut technical prerequisite language for participants who self-select without fully weighing it.

Several secondary impact signals emerged from the 2026 cohort that extended beyond the course’s direct instructional outcomes. The qualitative feedback above already notes one: a United States Army Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF) Theater Accelerated Capability Events (ACE) representative extended an invitation for follow-on engagement in Wiesbaden, Germany. Others followed a similar pattern.

Scientists contacted ARO program managers after the Dark Side panel to learn more about relevant funding programs. A senior military leader at the Office of the Under Secretary of War for Research and Engineering (OUSW R&E), who attended the Light Side panel, reached out to two ARL scientists about expanding AI research engagement through DEVCOM. And the Microsoft Teams chat went well beyond routine questions and kudos: panelists answered follow-up questions in real time, shared references and code guidance, and connected participants with resources the formal panel structure alone could not accommodate—a lively, substantive exchange that has been a consistent feature of the course. One participant even suggested the course could be commercialized on platforms such as Pluralsight or Udemy, an unprompted sign that the content was seen as applicable well outside the DoW context. Whether any specific downstream outcome can be attributed to the course is not established here—the counterfactual is not observable—so these are noted as indicators of reach and intent, not as verified operational results.

5. Conclusion

The 2026 "Machine Learning for Everyone" course delivered measurable results consistent with, and in several respects exceeding, prior iterations. Of 374 registered participants, 296 attended at least one live session, collectively logging approximately 3,000 h of participation across the 5-day program. Post-course survey ratings averaged 4.63 out of 5.0 across all eight items, with the instructor item at 4.95 and seven of eight items scoring 4.50 or above. Pre/post-knowledge quiz scores showed a directional improvement from a pre-course mean of 53.6 (just above the 50-point random baseline) to a post-course mean of 76.5, consistent with meaningful knowledge gain. Item-level analysis made that gain concrete: many participants arrived believing a model should be evaluated on the same data used to train it, or that adding model complexity cannot reduce bias—misconceptions about core ML concepts that the course was built to correct. Qualitative feedback confirmed the engagement patterns evident across all six editions—participants valued the demystification of ML, the Excel-based transparency, and the virtual community created during delivery.

Figure 6 captures the 6-year footprint and the instructional approach at a glance.

The 2026 edition was the sixth and final iteration of ML for Everyone. Across all six editions, the course grew from a small in-person seminar into one of the most

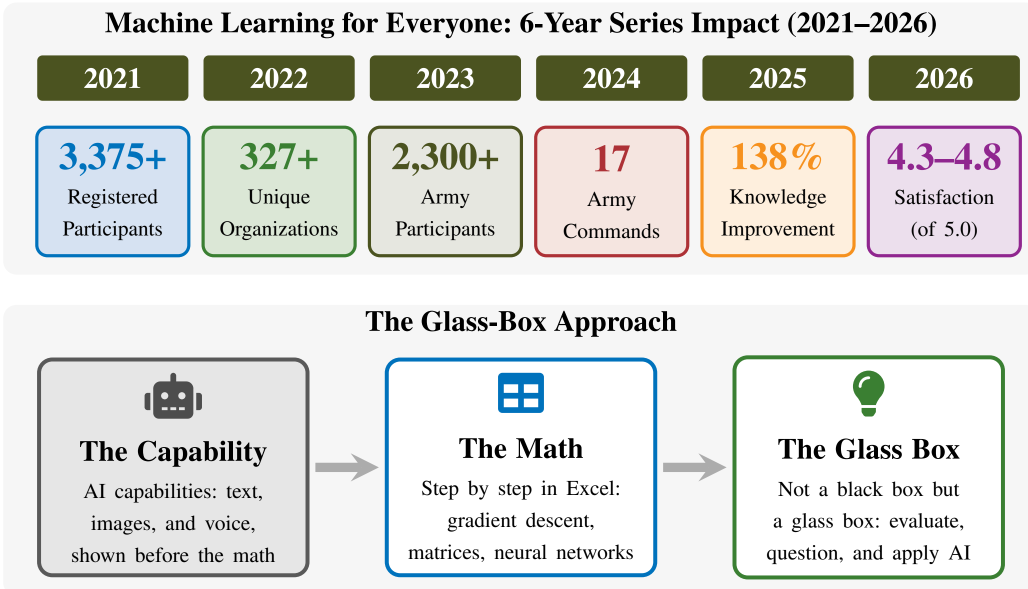

Figure 6. Six-year series impact and instructional approach for the ML for Everyone course series (2021–2026). *Top*: cumulative statistics across all six editions. *Bottom*: the glass-box instructional sequence, beginning with generative AI capability demonstrations to motivate participants, progressing to algorithm-level instruction in Microsoft Excel, and culminating in genuine understanding of how ML systems work rather than familiarity with what they produce.

broadly attended Army-focused ML education initiatives on record. The cumulative results are summarized below:

- **Total reach:** More than 3,375 registered participants across six editions (2021–2026), from 327+ unique organizations; over 2,300 Army participants.
- **Army-wide representation:** All 17 Army commands; participants from DEVCOM, ATEC, FORSCOM, TRADOC, HQDA, CAC, and operational units spanning CONUS and OCONUS.
- **Learning impact:** A 138% improvement in knowledge above random-chance performance on fundamental ML concepts, as measured by pre/post True/False assessments across the series.[6]
- **Satisfaction:** Consistently high survey ratings of 4.3–4.8 out of 5.0 across all evaluation metrics and all iterations.
- **Secondary impact:** Press coverage in *Jane's International Defence Review*[9]; expressed intent to apply course content by participants from operational units; senior leader engagement and follow-on research connections associated with course attendance.

- **Legacy:** The course directly inspired the "AI for Soldiers" strategic broadening seminar, which achieved 100% "Excellent" participant ratings in its most recent iteration.[8]

The course succeeded because it was different by design. By turning the ML "black box" into a "glass box" using Excel and an accessible instructional approach, it demonstrated that rigorous technical content can be taught broadly without sacrificing depth. Participants did not merely learn what ML does—they learned how it works, giving them the confidence to evaluate AI tools, collaborate with technical experts, and apply ML concepts to their own work.

The end of ML for Everyone on May 5, 2026, is not a conclusion but a transition. Its approach, participant community, and organizational relationships have been carried forward into subsequent educational initiatives. At a time when Army senior leaders are calling for AI to be embedded in every Soldier's battle rhythm, this course demonstrated at scale that the workforce is ready to engage—provided the education is accessible, honest about the mathematics, and delivered with the commitment to make it real.

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List of Symbols, Abbreviations, and Acronyms

AC	Armaments Center
ACE	Accelerated Capability Events
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ARL	Army Research Laboratory
ARO	Army Research Office
ATEC	Army Test and Evaluation Command
AvMC	Aviation & Missile Center
C5ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Cyber, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CBC	Chemical Biological Center
CONUS	Continental United States
DEVCOM	U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command
DoW	Department of War
FORSCOM	Army Forces Command
GRU	Gated Recurrent Unit
GVSC	Ground Vehicle Systems Center
IATSD	Information, Autonomy & Teaming Sciences Division
LSTM	Long Short-Term Memory
ML	Machine Learning
ML4E	Machine Learning for Everyone
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer

NGIC	National Ground Intelligence Center
NN	Neural Network
OCONUS	Outside the Continental United States
RNN	Recurrent Neural Network
S&T	Science and Technology
SC	Soldier Center
TDAC	Transformation Decision Analysis Center
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
USAREUR-AF	U.S. Army Europe and Africa

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