



# AUIX NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025



## Innovator Development Course

AUIX, in partnership with the Eaker Center's Leadership & Innovation Institute, recently wrapped up the third iteration of the Innovator Development Course (IDC). This four-day event brought together a diverse group of innovation leaders and Spark Cell representatives from AFRS/A5/8/9, AFWERX, and installations including Westover, Eglin, Travis, Yokota, Robins, and Maxwell Air Force Bases. A new addition to the IDC was the introduction of a capstone briefing, giving participants the chance to apply the tools, frameworks, and systems covered during the course to actual challenges being experienced in their home units.

Topics ranged widely, covering everything from chaplain retention and SNCO leadership development to advances in online learning and mission readiness in the INDOPACOM region. The interactive, hands-on format and the range of perspectives shared throughout the course were well received and many participants suggested adding more opportunities for in-depth discussions with speakers in future sessions. Planning is already in motion for the fourth IDC, currently slated for late 2025.





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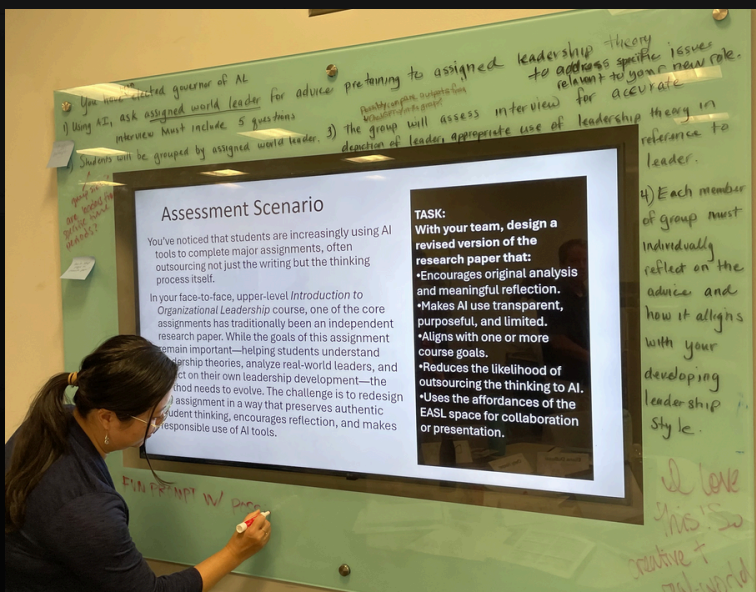
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## Course ReDesign

Jeremy VanEgmond, Director of the Eagle Institute at AUIX, recently took part in a five-day Course (Re)-Design workshop hosted by Auburn University's Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. This engaging and intensive workshop brought together educators and curriculum designers from various institutions to explore innovative approaches to course design.

The workshop was grounded in evidence-based practices, combining the structured creativity of the "Design Process" with the thoughtful, learner-centered approach outlined in Dr. L. Dee Fink's *Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning*. These frameworks, along with other tools explored, focused on helping participants rethink how learning experiences can be structured, delivered, and assessed in ways that promote deeper engagement from learners. This collaboration with Auburn reflects AUIX's ongoing commitment to staying at the forefront of instructional design. Insights will spark future conversations with the CAO/Provost, HQ AU A-Staff, MSFRIC, and School/Center leadership teams to explore innovative teaching practices across all of AU.







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## SOS 3D Printing

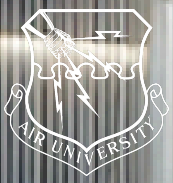
In a fast-moving collaboration with Maj Hitzfeld at SOS, AUIX helped bring his prototype wargame to life using 3D printing. Shortly after meeting with Maj Hitzfeld, where he shared the concept of his wargame and his thoughts for game piece design, printing was underway. The quick turnaround illustrates how quickly ideas can move from concept to reality when the right tools and teamwork come together. This group effort is a great example of how 3D printing can support rapid prototyping and spark innovation in educational settings.



## GUILD Beta

Maj Angela Ferreira recently traveled to Eglin Air Force Base to participate in AFWERX's third BETA test of the GUILD program. The GUILD program is an emerging initiative aimed at boosting combat effectiveness through innovation and adaptability.

Designed to prepare Airmen for complex, contested environments, GUILD offers a hands-on curriculum focused on combat innovation, prototype development, and business case planning to help move ideas from concept to capability more efficiently. This event also marked A39/AUIX's growing partnership with AFWERX and the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) in strengthening innovation pipelines to ensure Airmen are equipped with the tools and mindset to meet the demands of the modern battlespace.



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## **AUIX and *War On The Rocks***

War on the Rocks recently published an essay from AUIX titled “Crucibles, Not Comfort, Shape Future Military Leaders,” which makes the case that it’s adversity, not ease, that truly shapes strategic leadership. Drawing on both historical examples and firsthand experience, the piece advocates for intentionally building challenge and complexity into military education.

To take the conversation further, AUIX also sat down with WOTR for a follow-up podcast, diving deeper into the article’s key ideas and what they mean for the future of leadership development across the force. You can read the full article [here](#).

## **Reimagining the Classroom**

In response to Dr. Yolanda Williams’ Praxeum 1.5 – Classroom of the Future initiative, Jeremy VanEgmond, an experienced educator and the Chief of AUIX’s Education Lab, is developing an expanded white paper on modern classroom design.

The paper explores how flexible layouts, cognitive ergonomics, and biophilic design (incorporating elements of nature into living and work spaces) can enhance both learning and engagement across Air University’s educational environments. It’s all part of an ongoing effort to create spaces that better support how today’s learners think, interact, and develop.