

AIF Category II B

*A Community of Practice Model for
Academic Innovation Prototypes.*

Academic *Innovation* Fund



May 2023 – March 2024

What is a Community of Practice Model?

A Community of Practice or CoP, has its origins in cognitive anthropologist Jean Lave's and educational theorist Etienne Wenger's 1991 book called "[Situated Learning](#)". The basic premise involves a group of people who "share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly". In this case, our shared passion would be the experimentation and testing out of innovative instructional concepts that leverage cognitive computing strategies and ensure academic integrity in a digitally disrupted age while providing students with personalized learning pathways online that train relevant skills for success.



Innovative Instructional Concepts

- ✓ Course content is organized into competency-based modules that students navigate based on their own pace of learning and choice in topic progression.
- ✓ Each module has experiential learning activities that ask students to connect information and ideas with their own real-world context.
- ✓ Each activity is then assessed on both content knowledge proficiency (e.g., course concepts and terminology), as well as essential skill acquisition (e.g., perspective taking, communication, and/or critical thinking).



Cognitive Computing Strategies

- ✓ Leverage innovative course templates within our learning management system (Moodle)
- ✓ Integrate artificial intelligence structures into the learning experience (Savvy, ADA, AL)
- ✓ Produce dynamic, engaging learning environments that use technology as a way to enhance pedagogical intentions like self-paced learning or increased learner access.

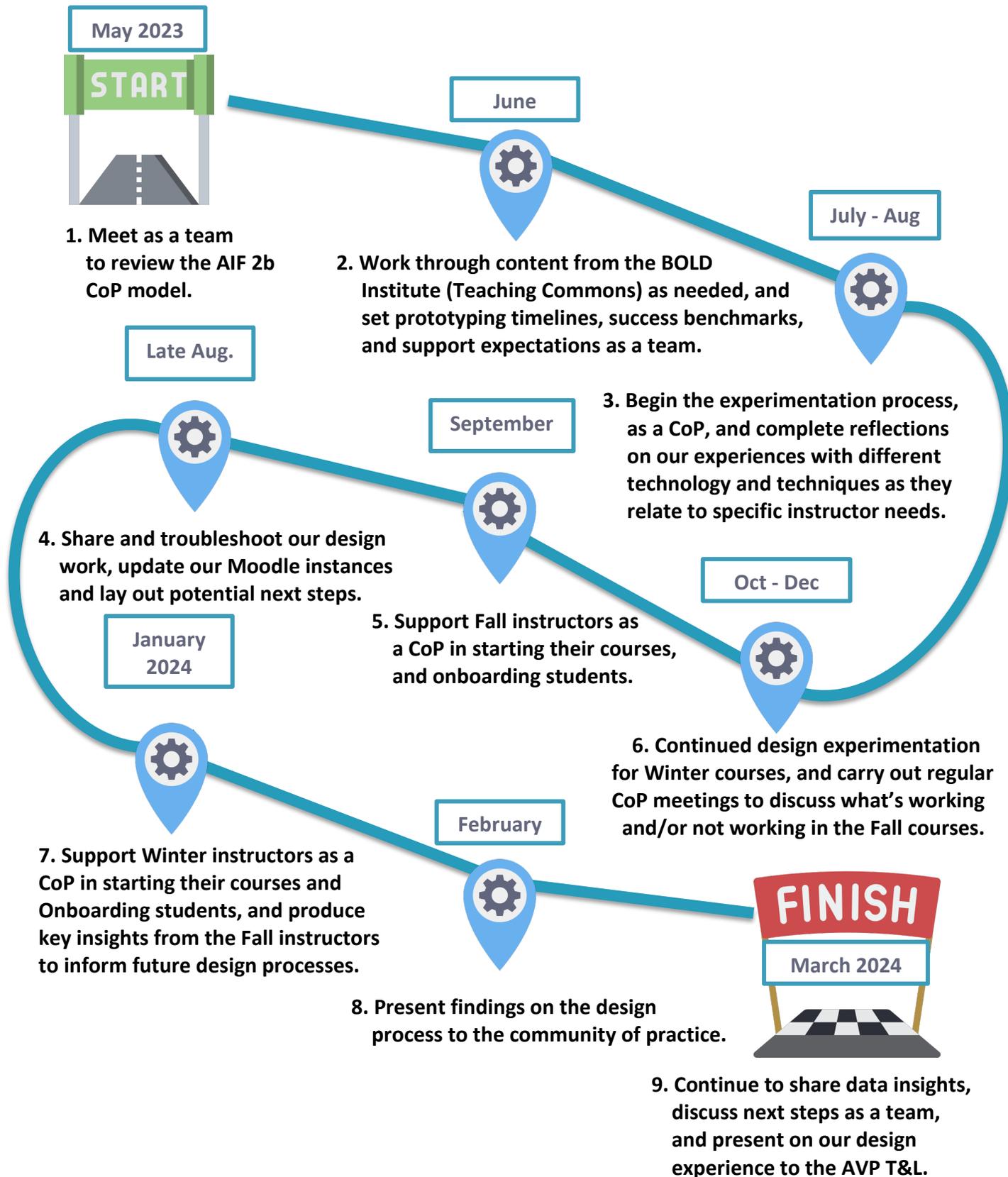
Process of Rapid Prototyping?

Rapid prototyping is a design methodology employed in both the private and public sectors that aims to produce a working prototype of a product (e.g., a course) that is then tested to gather insights on the user experience (e.g., both the teacher and the student learning experience), and those insights are integrated into the next iteration of the design! Failure is a natural part of the rapid prototyping process! But don't worry if this way of designing a course is new to you, because you will have support each step of the way.

Collaborative Design!

This unique AIF category 2b experience will run from May 2023 – March 2024 and involve support from the Office of the AVP Teaching and Learning and UiT. Much of the work we will do, will be completed as a group, but targeted small group and/or individual support will be provided as needed. The process will involve both online and in-person activities and while on campus, we will be taking advantage of new rooms that have been outfitted with cutting-edge technology. These spaces will serve as our design and development sandbox! This is an opportunity for us to not only prototype innovative courses, but to create a potential model for collaborative internal design processes moving forward at York!

Flow of Activities Related to the Community of Practice (CoP) Model.



Benchmarks of The CoP Model for Academic Innovation Prototypes

Group Orientation

- Meeting as a group, in-person, and on-campus, with representatives from the Office of the AVP Teaching and Learning and UiT, to review the overall process and the design goals set out in each instructor's application.

Engaging in a Prototyping Process

- Working as a group at the outset to learn more about innovative instructional concepts and cognitive computing strategies, and how they connect to the specific design ideas or course goals laid out in your AIF application.
- Actively working with instructional designers and technology designers in harmony.
- Meeting bi-monthly in the physical spaces on-campus to play, experiment and create course designs that leverage cutting-edge technologies.
- Accessing one-on-one support via email and/or zoom as necessary, based on the needs of each instructor.

Researching a Prototyping Process

- Completing an anonymous reflection survey bi-monthly (following our in-person sessions) that informally records insights and key takeaways from the CoP process.
- Carrying out informal anonymous surveys with your students at the end of your course to distill how they experienced the changes. How prepared did they feel at the outset of the course? How supported did they feel during the course? What suggestions do they have for improving the integration of academic innovations moving forward?
- Meeting at the end of the Fall and/or Winter semesters to debrief the instructional experience in a focus group style discussion with the CoP.

Accessing Additional Support

- Using the resources of BOLD Open out of the Teaching Commons, as well as other materials as appropriate. The BOLD course will be discussed at our first session to assess the current skill levels within the group and discuss potential knowledge gaps that could be addressed in either the facilitated or self-directed versions of the course.
- Reaching out to staff at the Teaching Commons for additional support as determined by your specific needs.
- Accessing the learning program running out of the Library focusing on the production and use of Open Education Resources (OER).

Group Debrief

- Meeting as a group, in-person, and on-campus, with representatives from the Office of the AVP Teaching and Learning and UiT, to review the final products and debrief the collaborative process.