

AI Innovation Studio I

Discover & Prototype

Collaborative Program Syllabus | Fall 2026

A collaborative educational program offered through AI Innovation Studio / uTrack in cooperation with California Science and Technology University (CSTU). This program is not currently listed as a formal CSTU catalog course. Any academic credit, if offered, is subject to separate CSTU review and approval.

Program & Faculty Information

Program Lead	Gordon Bai
Instruction	Core Team & Instructors
Schedule	Saturdays, 6:30-9:30 PM; starts September 26, 2026
Contact Hours	15 hours
Duration	5 weeks
Academic Credit	Not currently assigned; any credit is subject to CSTU review and approval
Delivery	Hybrid - on campus + online
Office Hours	By appointment
Review Date	September 14, 2026

Program Description

AI Innovation Studio I is a five-week, hands-on, project-based program designed to help participants explore the rapidly evolving AI landscape, identify meaningful real-world problems, develop innovative AI-enabled solutions, and build an initial working prototype. Rather than relying primarily on lectures, participants learn AI by using AI. Each session combines current AI tools and emerging developments with business thinking, problem solving, teamwork, experimentation, and project development. Participants may bring an existing idea or begin without one. Through guided exploration, team collaboration, and instructor mentoring, participants progressively identify a direction and turn an opportunity or problem into an initial AI solution. An important objective is not simply to teach a fixed set of tools, but to develop the ability to continuously discover, evaluate, and apply new AI technologies as they emerge.

Topics include:

- Current AI tools, models, capabilities, and limitations
- AI-assisted research, analysis, ideation, and content creation
- Problem discovery and opportunity identification
- AI solution design and innovation thinking
- AI agents, workflows, vibe coding, and rapid prototyping where appropriate
- Product thinking and AI product development
- Customer discovery and market research

- Real-world validation and prototype testing
- Team collaboration and project development
- Project demonstration, reflection, and next-step planning

Textbook and Reference Material

No single textbook is required because AI tools and technologies evolve rapidly.

1. Program class material folder
2. Current AI platform documentation and instructor-selected readings
3. Business cases, industry reports, and project-specific resources

Prerequisite

Basic computer literacy and the ability to use common business software tools. Prior programming experience is not required. Participants should be willing to experiment with AI tools, work collaboratively, and develop a real-world project.

Instructional Method

A combination of short lectures, demonstrations, class participation, hands-on AI practice, team discussion, project development, and mentor coaching will be used to facilitate learning. The program is organized as a studio rather than a traditional lecture course. Each session connects technical AI learning with business and product thinking around the participant's current project. Projects may be completed individually or in teams.

AI Tool & Technology Updates will be incorporated throughout all five sessions. Participants continuously practice the cycle: Discover New AI -> Try It -> Apply It to a Project -> Evaluate the Result -> Improve.

Out-of-Session Work

Participants are expected to continue project work outside scheduled sessions. Activities may include AI tool experimentation, research, customer or user interviews, market research, prototype development, team meetings, testing, and preparation for project demonstrations. This work supports continuous progress between studio sessions.

Learning Resources

Participants may use program-provided resources and other approved academic and industry resources for research. Where access is authorized by CSTU, university learning resources may also support market research, technology research, project development, and information literacy.

Objectives

- Develop practical ability to use current AI tools and adapt to new AI technologies.
- Identify meaningful real-world problems and opportunities that may benefit from AI.
- Translate a problem into an AI-enabled solution concept.
- Build an initial prototype or proof of concept using rapid AI-assisted development.

- Apply business, product, customer, and market thinking to technical development.
- Work effectively in multidisciplinary teams and communicate project ideas clearly.
- Develop a habit of continuous learning, experimentation, evaluation, and improvement.

Program Learning Outcomes

- Explain the capabilities and limitations of selected current AI technologies.
- Use AI tools for research, ideation, analysis, content creation, coding, or prototyping as appropriate.
- Define a real-world problem, target user, and preliminary value proposition.
- Design an AI-enabled solution and create an initial working prototype or proof of concept.
- Conduct basic customer and market research and incorporate feedback into the project.
- Collaborate with team members across technical and business roles.
- Demonstrate the project and present evidence, lessons learned, and a next-step development plan.
- Continuously evaluate and adopt useful emerging AI technologies.

Participation

Participants are expected to attend all sessions, actively participate in studio activities, and complete assigned project work. Because the program is highly collaborative and project-based, regular participation is important to individual and team progress.

Program Evaluation

Feedback and evaluation are based on participation, AI practice, weekly project progress, research and validation, teamwork, and the final prototype and demonstration. The collaborative program does not independently confer CSTU academic credit or an official CSTU course grade. If the program is later approved for academic credit, grading requirements may be revised to conform to applicable CSTU academic policies.

Class Participation & AI Practice	20%
Weekly Project Progress	25%
Research & Validation	20%
Teamwork & Contribution	10%
Final Prototype & Demo	25%
Total	100%

Schedule - 5 Sessions

1. Explore AI & Discover Opportunities

Current AI landscape and emerging tools; hands-on exploration; business cases; personal and professional opportunity discovery.

Build: AI Research & Decision Assistant

2. Discover & Define a Real Problem

Problem discovery; user needs; AI-assisted research; opportunity analysis; team formation.

Build: AI Automates One Annoying Task

3. Create the AI Solution & Prototype

Solution design; innovation thinking; AI agents and workflows; vibe coding and rapid prototyping where appropriate.

Build: My Personal AI Agent

4. Market Research & Real-World Validation

Customer discovery; market and competitor research; user or company interviews; prototype testing and iteration.

Build: AI Marketing Machine

5. Demo, Evaluation & Next Step

Project refinement; demonstration; lessons learned; peer and instructor feedback; development planning.

Outcome: Project demo and Phase II development proposal.

Continuous AI Learning Across All Sessions: Discover New AI -> Try It -> Apply It to a Project -> Evaluate the Result -> Improve.

Academic & Professional Integrity

The use of AI tools is an integral part of this program; however, participants remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity, attribution, and explanation of their work. Misrepresentation of another person's work, fabrication of research or validation evidence, plagiarism, or other dishonest practices are not acceptable. When activities are conducted under CSTU academic requirements, applicable CSTU academic integrity policies also apply.