

**Introduction to Entrepreneurship  
Business 310  
Spring 2014**

**Instructor: Jim Valdez**  
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Orfalea College of Business Room 441

**Office hours:**  
TU/TR, 10-11AM  
and By Appointment

**Course objectives:**

This course focuses on all aspects of entrepreneurship, from the role of the entrepreneur to the financing and exit of entrepreneurial ventures. The goal is to familiarize you with the diverse aspects of business creation, start---ups, financing, and fast---growth management. Through the cases and exercises, you will learn to put yourself in the mind of the entrepreneur from a practical rather than a purely theoretical perspective. **We will learn to think like an entrepreneur, which will benefit us no matter where we end up in life!**

**Learning objectives:**

This course seeks to develop your knowledge and skills in the area of entrepreneurial opportunity and new venture creation, in the following areas:

- LO1: Identify sources of opportunity
- LO2: Describe and analyze business models to address opportunities
- LO3: Utilize customer development and other lean launch processes
- LO4: Analyze the unit economics of opportunity and launch
- LO6: Understand financing of opportunity/launch
- LO5: Present opportunities to garner resources

**Course materials:**

All of the course materials will be made available on PolyLearn. We use only Open Source or Creative Commons materials; students are expected to honor the Creative Commons license.

Each student is REQUIRED to enroll in two web---based instructional sites; instructions and URLs will be provided in first class and on PolyLearn:

1. Udacity course --- How to Build a Startup (EP245) --- free
2. LaunchPad Central – startup management site --- \$40

## Team Assignments:

There are two Team Assignments clearly identified on PolyLearn:

1. The first (Launch) is quarter---long project using a variety of techniques and tools to analyze the “opportunity stage” of an entrepreneurial venture, with the goal being that the team will be able to present a “launch plan” based upon a completed and initially validated business model.
2. The second (Real Startup) is a shorter project evaluating an existing entrepreneurial company, with the goal of understanding and being able to articulate this company’s business model.

The instructor will determine team membership. Each project culminates with student teams presenting their business model and customer development findings.

To maintain fairness to all students, no late projects will be accepted.

## Individual Assignments:

The instructions for any individual assignments and take---home quizzes are on PolyLearn. All completed assignments are to be returned using PolyLearn as well.

## Participation:

Everyone is expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings, videos, and any other assignments. Therefore, students will be evaluated on individual contribution both within the classroom and in the virtual class that takes place on the course PolyLearn site. Active participation on your part requires a commitment to adding value both in---class and on---line.

I also realize that some of you are more reluctant to speak in class than others. While this will in no way excuse you from the expectation that you participate, I will also make available from time to time an online Discussion Board that will also give you an opportunity to take part in class discussions; typically, this will be made available immediately following a guest presentation. You can also use my office hours as a chance to explore issues further.

You are expected to attend each and every class, arriving on---time and to contribute to the class discussion. Your contribution to the learning of others, through the experience and insights you have, is a key part of this learning process. To build on the contributions of others requires you to listen and to consider the timing of your participation. The bottom line is that you must read and prepare, both as a team and individually.

## Evaluation (i.e., grades . . .):

See the document entitled “Grading” (also posted on PolyLearn) for specific detail. As noted therein, I reserve the right to change the grading methodology, including assignments and percentage value. Any changes will be posted on PolyLearn.

The final grade in this course is determined by the following activities:

**1) Individual class participation** will be judged by the quality and quantity of participation, with quality being more important. While each comment will be judged on its merits, worrying about each comment is counterproductive. What is important is your overall contribution to moving the class forward.

**2) Individual assignments and quizzes** will all be posted on PolyLearn. Note that there may be pass/fail assignments, based on completing – in other words, you will receive 100% credit for completing these on time. The corollary to this is that anyone who fails to complete a pass/fail assignment will receive 0 points.

**3) Class quizzes** will be given without notice; these will be brief and simple, only meant to assure that students are managing their individual assignments.

**4) Team projects**--- Each team will be responsible for two related projects with written and web---based assignments due throughout the course and a final presentation.

**5) Peer evaluation** --- Because so much of entrepreneurship, and thus this course, is teamwork oriented, a significant weight is being placed on the student's value to his/her team, as rated by peers. These evaluations of peers and/or of self will take place twice throughout the term (once during week 5 and once at the end of the class).

**6) Test**-There will be an in-class test given near the end of the course covering all assignments during the quarter

## Readings:

The core reading comes from articles and notes that address entrepreneurship and will help with case analysis. The videos are from the Udacity online course entitled **How to Build a Startup (EP245)**. The goals of this are to assist in learning the key steps of the customer development process: how to identify and engage the first customers for a product, and how to gather, evaluate and use their feedback to make a product, marketing and business model stronger.

**A note on your responsibility regarding the readings and videos** – at the start of each class, we will often spend a few minutes talking about what we learned in the readings, the few key takeaways that might have hit a nerve. By we, I truly mean all of us, as I will not be lecturing on the readings except in certain technical areas that may need some more time. So you must be prepared to participate in this discussion, however brief it may be.

## Operating Rules:

Just to be clear, I have also posted on PolyLearn a document covering the practices we will abide by. This covers the following topics:

- Assignments
- Attendance
- Promptness
- Use of electronics
- Identifying yourself

## Office hours:

My office hours are posted on the front of this Syllabus and on my door. It might be easier if you try to make an appointment during those hours, as that will take precedence over walk---ins, but do not AT ALL hesitate to just walk---in. I encourage meeting with teams or portions of teams if the members want to discuss a case or assignment prior to its completion or to get more feedback after.

## **Academic integrity:**

Cal Poly will not tolerate academic cheating or plagiarism in any form. Learning to think and work independently is part of the educational process. Cheating or plagiarism in any form is considered a serious violation of expected student behavior and may result in disciplinary action. All work submitted for this class must be originally prepared for this class; work submitted for any other course is unacceptable. By registering and taking this course, the student officially enrolled hereby declares that this same student will be the author of all work submitted for the course. Allowing another individual to complete assignments constitutes fraud and academic dishonesty. Finding material from internet or other sources and presenting it as original is also dishonest. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of academic records are subject to disciplinary action. Should such behavior come to the attention of the instructor, the student may be dropped from the course or receive a grade of "F."

Section 684 of the Campus Administrative Manual states, "The University will not condone academic cheating or plagiarism in any form." While you are encouraged to discuss readings, assignments, and lecture material with each other, all individual work for the course must be completed without assistance from others. Failure to follow these policies on an assignment will result in a zero for that assignment.

## **Students with special needs:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and the Disability Resource Center, Building 124, Room 119, at (805) 756---1395, as early as possible in the quarter.

## **Student Privacy (FERPA):**

If you have chosen to protect your Directory Information (which includes name and email), it is important you communicate this to me prior to or on the first day of class. This course uses Blackboard tools that will display students' full names and email addresses.