

EEE 457
~ Strategic and Entrepreneurial Management ~
The Senior Capstone Course Syllabus
Martin J. Whitman School of
Management Syracuse University

Instructor: Mirza Tihic

Section M006 Monday & Wednesday 8:00 AM - 9:20 AM WSOM 001

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*More information about this course is available on **Blackboard** at <http://blackboard.syr.edu>
Information about other EEE courses and activities can be found at www.whitman.edu/eee*

I. Course Overview

The purpose of this CAPSTONE COURSE is to explore the intersection of management, strategy, finance, and entrepreneurship in the context of 1) independent for-profit ventures, 2) emerging ventures, and 3) large firms. That focus is on the mastery of competencies that foster innovation and growth. The goal of this course is to develop – in each student – a mastery of the skills and competencies that facilitate opportunity recognition, innovation, and creation in the face of a dynamic and uncertain marketplace. This course places unique demands upon you due to its cross-disciplinary and inter-functional nature. It requires you to address many dimensions of your **management education** to include marketing, human resource management, finance, accounting, information technology, production, operations, supply chain management, and managerial economics. It is for this reason that EEE 457 is represented as your undergraduate CAPSTONE experience at the Whitman School.

The course will challenge you to act boldly, and to break with conventional thinking when it comes to the realities of the marketplace and your own ideas. As such, it will act as a vehicle for acquiring knowledge and developing skills, attitudes and behaviors associated with innovative and strategic management in entrepreneurial environments. The centerpiece of this course is the creation and development of a comprehensive business plan for a viable, sustainable, and truly innovative new venture. This new venture will be based on a business concept that YOU construct. You will position it to exploit a **real** opportunity to grow a **real** business. This business plan will be of sufficient quality as to be presented to potential investors (in fact it will be presented by you to real business professionals at the end of the semester). No other project in your undergraduate career will be more demanding, at times frustrating, and in the end fulfilling and rewarding, than putting together an excellent business plan. As such, this course is designed to address a common criticism of business school education – specifically that students lack an understanding of the practical issues surrounding the implementation of theories and concepts.

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However, despite the dominance of the business plan project, this is neither simply a business plan writing course nor is it concerned with the mere mechanical and rudimentary process of writing that plan. Instead the business plan project stresses adaptation, resourcefulness and creativity based on new and changing information and serves as an integrative mechanism that brings together various aspects of your business school education.

Entrepreneurship is approached first as a mindset, an attitude, a way of thinking. It is also approached as a behavior, an activity, and a manageable process. Ultimately, we shall try to convey entrepreneurship as a philosophy of life. To provide you with the intellectual content necessary for developing a top-notch plan, you will be exposed to a number of concepts, frameworks, perspectives and tools that relate to many aspects of the entrepreneurial process. The emphasis will be on both dreaming and doing, on imagining and implementing. You will be challenged to think boldly and to break with convention and rules, but you will also be challenged to do so in ways that are workable and realistic, that reflect the realities of the marketplace, and that are based upon sound analysis, quality data, and keen insight.

II. Course Objectives

This course is designed to address a number of objectives. That said, above all else the objective of this course is to:

- Promote adaptable and reflective thinkers! The student should complete the course with a self-awareness of their own strengths (and challenges) in the context of addressing problems in an entrepreneurial environment.

Further, the student should be able to:

- Draw upon all previous disciplines of learning from their Whitman experience to identify, develop and write an objective, cohesive, integrated, for-profit business or organizational plan, e.g. executive summary, industry, products/services, economics, marketing, design and development, operations, timeline/schedule, critical risks, problems and assumptions, financial planning, proposed company offering, and appendices.
- Understand the interrelationship/interdependency of marketing, accounting/finance, operations/production, and human resources required to formulate a business plan for a “for profit” business.
- Determine primary and secondary research resources used in performing due diligence in order to develop a business development plan.
- Understand the nature of the entrepreneurial process and the great many contexts and environments in which that process applies.
- Evaluate new venture ideas, and the underlying opportunities that give rise to those ideas.
- Perform an objective review of business plans for completeness and logic.
- Develop a presentation oriented towards prospective investors, lenders, or other financial backers of the proposed business.

III. Texts and Resources

1. [The New Business Road Test, 3rd Edition](#) (2010) John W. Mullins, Prentice Hall.
ISBN: 978-0-273-73279-2
2. "The Nuts and Bolts of Business Plans"
Prepared by the Syracuse EEE Program; posted on Blackboard.
3. Library and [Online Resources](#) for Market Research
Prepared by the librarian for the capstone course; available in Bird library

IV. Business Concept: *See minimum expectations/qualifications/rules on attached exhibit*

V. Evaluation

Every student in this section begins the semester with an A. Yes, you are welcome! Now, it's your job to keep it. You can maintain an A by attending and participating in class, and turning in quality work on-time. Missing class, coming unprepared, and missing assignment deadlines will lower your grade. Submitting incomplete or sub-standard work will also lower your grade.

Grades will be based on the following:

<u>Graded Event</u>	<u>Weight</u>
• Business Plan:	50%
○ Interim Deliverables:	(15%)
○ Final Plan:	(20%)
○ Oral Presentation of Plan:	(15%)
• Midterm Exam	20%
• Class Participation	15%
• <u>Peer Evaluations/Group Effort:</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total:	100%

For class participation your baseline is a grade of 75. If you timely complete each of your homework assignments, attend all classes, but rarely ever contribute in class, you will earn a score of 75 for this element. Your score will increase from there based upon your contributions to our weekly class meetings. However, if you miss homework assignments or miss class, your grade will suffer accordingly. Class participation comprises 15% of your course grade.

For purposes of the business plan project, students will work within a team environment comprised of fellow students (as selected by the instructor). Each student is expected to contribute equally toward the needs and goals of the team. Peer evaluations are completed by each student team member on a monthly basis. You will assess the performance and contribution of each member of your team, and each other member will assess your contribution in turn. These evaluations will form the basis of 15% of your course grade.

Curve: *While not anticipated, I reserve the right to scale your grade up or down according to compelling circumstance or curve.*

VI. Assignments and Due Dates

Consult Blackboard to see what topic is discussed, what assignment is due, etc. A course calendar has been provided to aid in your awareness of course deliverables. The due dates for ALL assignments are cast in stone. No submissions will be accepted beyond the date and time due. No exceptions, no excuses.

VII. Capstone Competition

All students are required to participate in the capstone competition. There are no exceptions to this requirement. This is the highlight of your Capstone experience and is always met with great excitement and anticipation. It is also that moment when your whole team shines as a cohesive unit during its public presentation. Professional dress is required and **absence from this event is grounds for course failure**. Do not let yourself or your teammates down. Mark your calendars now for Friday, December 8th. Leave the whole day and evening free for this course and your fellow teammates. Should your team be selected for Final Round participation, you will re-present your business plan to another set of judges on Saturday, December 11th.

III. Other Important Dates: (see Course Calendar for detailed specificity)

II. Wednesday October 9th Midterm

E. Friday, Nov. 29th (by noon) your team's Judge's Submission delivered to me electronically as **one** PDF submission (NOT MS Word or Excel). This is your executive summary and selected financial disclosure for the forthcoming BP competition. This document should NOT reference me anywhere, nor should any Whitman faculty/staff serve as advisors or directors to these student enterprises.

EI. Friday December 6th **by 11 a.m.**, your team's full and final edited BP submitted electronically to your instructor, mtihic@syr.edu

EII. Friday, December 6th Capstone presentations & elevator pitches from 9:30AM-2:00PM

EIII. Friday, December 6th Capstone Finals Competition from 2:30PM-5:00PM

II. Participation

You **MUST** come to class prepared – in class, you must be engaged. This course is about action – it's about 'doing' rather than being passive and absorbing a lecture. Coming to class unprepared (not reading the case or assigned readings, etc.) is unacceptable. Voluntary class participation is assumed, and an important part of your learning experience. Evaluating your participation is purely a subjective process on my part. I base my evaluation on the frequency and **quality** of your contribution. Be proactive – this course (and life!) is what you make it.

X. Undergraduate Grading Policy

The faculty at the Whitman School of Management developed and approved a uniform grading policy for our undergraduate program. The policy has three goals:

- To ensure that grading is fair and consistent across courses;
- To encourage excellence in student scholarship; and
- To ensure faculty deliver a challenging academic experience

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All instructors who teach undergraduate courses are required to follow this grading policy.

For all undergraduate courses taken at the Whitman School of Management with 15 or more students enrolled, the mean grade shall be **no higher than 3.30** and the **maximum** percentage of A/A-s is **33%**.

XI. Academic Integrity

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. Under the policy, students found in violation are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Syracuse University students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

All work in this course – when not a group assignment – must be your own effort. When group/team assignments are submitted, those assignments must be solely the work of the team members. Further, lack of personal contribution toward team deliverable(s) comprises a breach of the Student Code and is considered a form of plagiarism as you attempting to gain credit for work that is not your own. Violations of this policy will be considered academic dishonesty and referred to the Academic Disciplinary Committee. The School of Management has adopted a policy emphasizing that honesty, integrity, and respect for others are fundamental expectations in the School of Management. The Policy requires that all SOM students sign a certification that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy. All SOM students should have already completed this certification. All non-SOM students – including SOM minors – are also required to complete this certification. The certification is available in the undergraduate office, and completed certifications are kept on file.

This class will use the plagiarism detection and prevention system Turnitin. You will have the option to submit your papers to Turnitin to check that all sources you use have been properly acknowledged and cited before you submit the paper to me. I will also submit all papers you write for this class to Turnitin, which compares submitted documents against documents on the Internet and against student papers submitted to Turnitin at Syracuse University and at other colleges and universities. I will take your knowledge of the subject matter of this course and your writing level and style into account in interpreting the originality report. Keep in mind that all papers you submit for this class will become part of the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting

plagiarism of such papers.

Related Links:

The Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Twenty Questions and Answers about the Academic Integrity

Policy: <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/faculty-resources/>

What does academic integrity mean?: <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/what-does-academic-integrity-mean/>

As a generally accepted practice, honors theses, graduate theses, graduate research projects, dissertations, or other capstone projects submitted in partial fulfillment of degree requirements are placed in the library, University Archives, or department for public reference

XII. Syracuse University Policies

Syracuse University has a variety of other policies designed to guarantee that students live and study in a community respectful of their needs and those of fellow students. Some of the most important of these concern:

Diversity and Disability (ensuring that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities in a diverse, inclusive, accessible, bias-free campus community) can be found here, at: <https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibilitydiversity/>.

Disability Accommodation

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to meet with me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with ODS, please visit their website at: <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>. Please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityservices@syr.edu for more detailed information.

ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible to begin this process.

Syracuse University and I are committed to your success and to supporting Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This means that in general no individual who is otherwise qualified shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, solely by reason of having a disability.

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Religious Observances Notification and Policy (steps to follow to request accommodations for the observance of religious holidays) can be found here, at: http://supolicies.syr.edu/studs/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

Orange Success (tools to access a variety of SU resources, including ways to communicate with advisors and faculty members) can be found here, at: <http://orangesuccess.syr.edu/getting-started-2/>