

Syllabus

Overview

This course assists aspiring entrepreneurs in developing great ideas into great companies. With strong economies presenting rich opportunities for new venture creation, and challenging economic times presenting the necessity for many to make their own job, the need to develop the skills to develop and act on innovative business opportunities is increasingly vital.

Using proven content, methods, and models for new venture opportunity assessment and analysis, students will learn how to identify and analyze entrepreneurial opportunities. Value propositions, customer segments, strategic alliances, and business modeling are core elements taught in the course. The initial steps to creating a business plan, and raising financial capital to launch the firm, are examined as well.

Prerequisites

This introductory course is designed for those interested in learning about innovative idea generation and new venture creation, and does not require a background in business or any specific area. A desire to build your knowledge and capabilities are the only requirements for entry.

Course Structure

- Videos - Our format will consist of 4 to 6 video lectures per week, typically of 8 to 12 minutes per video. Interspersed within each video is one question mini-quizzes to reinforce key principles and provide added insights for you.
- Weekly Assessments - Each week, there are assessment activities that will provide you with opportunities to integrate and apply learnings from that week's content. These assessments should be completed by the end of the week, after you have viewed all of the video lectures.

Readings

Our recommended text is the "The Opportunity Analysis Canvas" by James V. Green. It is available [here](#). This is not required, but encouraged as a valuable companion for the course. For more information on the business model canvas, we suggest the "Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers" by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur. Selected online readings are also suggested per the syllabus schedule below.

Grading

Details of the deliverables and grading are noted in the schedule below. Students with a total grade of over 70% will receive an online Statement of Accomplishment. Students with a grade of at least 90% will receive the added designation "with Distinction". You are free to follow the course without completing the assignments or final project, but then will not receive a Statement of Accomplishment.

Each assignment has a "soft" due date and a "hard" due date. Submissions after the soft due date incur a 5% penalty per day. Submissions are not accepted after the hard due date.

Assignments 1 to 4 are end-of-week assessments with multiple choice, true-false, numeric, and/or short answer responses. For each assignment, you may submit your responses up to 3 times. The highest score achieved will be the final score for that assignment.

Assignments 5 and 6 are peer-evaluated assessments. Assignment 5 involves the creation of a business model canvas. Assignment 6 involves an evaluation of an existing business plan, with you taking the view of a prospective investor.

Questions

If you have questions, please do not contact the instructor directly, as with over 40,000 students responses to all emails are unlikely. As a more effective approach, the course includes online Q&A forums where students can post and respond to questions. This will go live in parallel with the first lectures. The teaching team will periodically monitor these forums, so that important questions not answered by other students will be addressed.

Schedule

Sessions	Topics and recommended readings	Deliverables due at the end of the week
Week One: Entrepreneurial Mindset	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Course overview</p> <p>The opportunity analysis canvas</p> <p>Entrepreneurs and strategic decisions</p> <p>Entrepreneurial mindset: Part 1 of 2</p> <p>Entrepreneurial mindset: Part 2 of 2</p> <p><i>Recommended readings: The Opportunity Analysis Canvas - Chapters 1 and 2</i></p>	<p>Assignment 1A: Opening Survey (2%)</p> <p>Assignment 1B: Entrepreneurial Mindset (15%)</p>
Week Two: Entrepreneurial Motivation & Behavior	<p>Introduction to entrepreneurial motivation and behaviours</p> <p>Entrepreneurial motivation</p> <p>Entrepreneurial behavior</p> <p>Entrepreneurial decision-makers and the use of biases and heuristics</p> <p>Risk taking in entrepreneurial decision-making</p> <p><i>Recommended readings: The Opportunity Analysis Canvas - Chapters 3 and 4</i></p>	<p>Assignment 2: Entrepreneurial Motivation & Behavior (15%)</p>

Week Three: Customer Understanding	<p>Introduction to customer understanding</p> <p>Exploring real market needs</p> <p>Satisfying real market needs</p> <p>Macro changes that increase new venture opportunities</p> <p>Assessing entrepreneurial opportunities</p> <p><i>Recommended readings: The Opportunity Analysis Canvas - Chapter 5</i></p>	Assignment 3: Customer Analysis (15%)
Week Four: Industry Understanding	<p>Introduction to industry understanding</p> <p>Environmental assessment of entrepreneurial ventures</p> <p>Selecting the right industry</p> <p>Types of innovations</p> <p>Strategic positioning</p> <p>Strategic planning</p> <p><i>Recommended readings: The Opportunity Analysis Canvas - Chapters 6, 7, and 8</i></p>	Assignment 4: Industry Analysis (15%)
Week Five: Business Models	<p>Introduction to business models</p> <p>The business model canvas: Part 1 of 2</p> <p>The business model canvas: Part 2 of 2</p> <p>Developing business models</p> <p><i>Recommended readings: Business Model Generation (Overview) - Available here. For more information on the business model canvas, we suggest "Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers" by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur.</i></p>	Assignment 5: Business Model Canvas (10%)
Week Six: Business Planning	<p>Introduction to business plans</p> <p>Keys to raising financial capital</p> <p>Building financial statements</p> <p>Sources of financial capital</p> <p>Defining the business plan</p> <p>Objectives of the business plan</p> <p>Writing the business plan</p>	<p>Assignment 6A: Financial Analysis (8%)</p> <p>Assignment 6B: Business Plan Evaluation (18%)</p> <p>Assignment 6C: Closing Survey (2%)</p>

Final thoughts

<p><i>Recommended readings: The Opportunity Analysis Canvas - Chapters 9, 10, and 11; and Business Planning Basics available here.</i></p>
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