Economics of Creativity, Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Spring 2015
ECO N 3498 (15255)
Thursday 4:00 pm to 6:20 pm
Classroom: J.Ray Ryan Building Room 204

Professor: Tim Nguyen, MBA, MPA, MA, MA
Office Hours & Location: Thursday 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm and arranged times
Email: thanh.nguyen@uconn.edu

Instructor: Andrew Zehner JD, MA
Office Hours & Location: Thursday 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm and arranged times
Email: andrew.zehner@uconn.edu

Course Description

According to Jonathan Swift (poet, essayist, and satirist), “Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.” According to this insight, the entrepreneur is also one who sees the invisible!

Entrepreneurship involves the combinations of ideas, resources, partners, customers—in the effort to create new market space and place. The “entrepreneurial challenge” then is one of selecting among the many potential combinations. Hence, this ambitious course has two overwhelming objectives.

From a theoretical perspective, students will study economic theories of entrepreneurship and examine the forces that drive the process of innovation. These forces consist of creativity and creative destruction; the innovator’s dilemma; incentives to innovate, competitive advantage; industry evolution; venture capital, and intellectual property.

Simultaneously and from an applied perspective, this unique course attempts to provide frameworks for understanding and making critical decisions in businesses based on innovation and creativity. The course examines (a) the generation of commercializable new ideas situated in both new ventures and existing organizations; (b) the challenges to building and maintaining an organization based on creativity and innovation; (c) trade-offs in making resource allocation decisions in innovative companies; and (d) strategies in industries based on fast-changing creative and innovative products.

With globalization systematically reducing barriers to entry, and increasing quick imitation, organizations (both non-profit and for-profit) are turning more and more to innovation as a driver for sustainable success. Innovation is the cornerstone of new ventures. Innovation is a way for entrepreneurs to create new and valuable organizations!

Students will investigate the following topics:

- Nature of creativity and creative development
This course is ideal for those who are interested in pursuing investment banking, investment management, strategic consulting, nonprofit management, public policy, venture capital/private equity, and entrepreneurship.

About Your Professors

Tim Nguyen
Professionally, Tim Nguyen is Director of Investments at the University of Connecticut Foundation. Before beginning his career in institutional investing, Mr. Nguyen had the pleasure of working at the following financial services companies where he learned the art of credit analysis and financial fraud: MBIA, BNP Paribas, Fitch Rating Agency, Texas Commerce Bank, American Skandia, and The Royal Bank of Scotland. Simultaneously, he is the Research Coordinator at the Traumatic Brain Injury Model System at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital/Partners Healthcare in Boston, MA. Academically, he holds two undergraduate degrees (magna cum laude distinction) from the University of Houston, one in Psychology and one in Political Science. Additionally, he holds advanced degrees from Yale University, Columbia University, Brown University, and The Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Lastly, he is a member of the Dean’s Advisory Board at the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at University of Connecticut.

Andrew Zehner
Andrew Zehner is the Assistant Vice President, Corporate and Business Relations in the Office of Vice President for Research and Counsel in the Office of the General Counsel. Andrew has twenty years of experience providing strategic and business counsel to a wide variety of industries, including life sciences, health care, telecommunications, and information technology. Andrew was most recently Senior Corporate Counsel in the Legal Division of Pfizer Inc., supporting all aspects of pharmaceutical R&D in the U.S. and United Kingdom. He led the negotiations on many research, development and commercialization transactions. Prior to that, he served as in-house counsel for Paradigm4 and People’s Choice TV two fast-growing Connecticut technology companies. Zehner received a B.A. degree in American civilization from Middlebury College, an M.A. degree in history from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a Juris Doctor with Honors from the University of Maryland School of Law. He is admitted to practice law in Connecticut and Maryland.

Course Prerequisites

Students must have completed the following prerequisite courses before taking this course:
   a) Intermediate Microeconomic Theory; and/or
   b) Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory
Additionally, as this course utilizes principles from Introductory Finance and Financial Accounting, students who have already taken such courses will have a competitive advantage.

**Course Materials**


Additionally, the following required items could be found here:

- All readings—with the exception of Harvard Business School Case Studies (HBS Case studies)—are posted on UCONN HuskyCT.
- HBS Case studies could be downloaded from the HBS Case Studies website for a fee: [https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/33423824](https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/33423824)
- INSEAD Case (for iMotors case only) could be downloaded for a fee at the following website: [http://www.thecasecentre.org/students/course/registerForCourse](http://www.thecasecentre.org/students/course/registerForCourse), with course packet code being: C-351-248473-STU


**Course Pedagogy**

The course involves lectures, student led discussion, and analysis of case studies. Applying the Business School method of learning, I will cold call on students to facilitate discussion and provide meaningful observations.

**Honor Code**

The University’s policy relating to the Honor Code is fully enforced.

**Technology Policy**

In order to facilitate class discussion, laptops/iPads/cell phones etc. are not allowed in class.

**Auditing Policy**

Auditing is not permitted.

**Grading**

Grades will be based on the following:

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<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Student Led Presentations**

Sets of students will be assigned to a reading. Students will highlight key points relating to the reading as well as provide reflection relating to the thesis of the article.

**Case Write-ups**

Depending on the number of enrollees, students will be working teams, which I will be assigning. The write-ups should be typed and include no more than three pages of analysis (plus additional pages with exhibits as necessary), and be written in 12 font and 1.5 space.

**Final Group Project**

For the Final Project, you can elect one of the following two options:

a) Choose an existing company that uses the Internet as a critical part of its business and is struggling to achieve a reasonable and sustainable level of profitability in that business; or

b) Choose a company that would like to start or have already started that uses the Internet as a critical part of its business

You must have your choice of company approved by me.

Please do not choose a company that we are covering in the course.

The final project should answer the following question: **can this company achieve and sustain a reasonable level of profitability or not, and if so, how?**

You could consider creative organizations that are seeking sustainability—universities, other non-profits, benefit corps.

The project should address the following issues:

1) Describe the elements of the business model to the extent possible given the available data.

2) Which parts of the business model present challenges and why? It is **VERY** important to use course concepts to explain the sources of your problems. **YOUR ANALYSIS USING COURSE CONCEPTS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROJECT.** In addition, it is helpful to document the challenges using numerical and financial information where possible.

3) What options should the company consider in order to address these strategic challenges? How can these options potentially ameliorate problems caused by the underlying strategic drivers of the issues identified in your question 2.
4) Which option(s) do you recommend, if any, and why? Or, if you do not believe that any of the options will enable the business to achieve a reasonable level of profitability, explain your reasoning. Be sure to consider possible counter-arguments to your recommendations and conclusions.

Your project must use strategic principles from this course in your analysis—specifically topics covered on February 19th through April 23rd.

The project consists of 3-5 PowerPoint slides that summarize your analysis, accompanied by 10-20 additional slides that explain the analysis and recommendations in more detail. The additional slides can consist of simple bullet points, and should contain the points that you would make if you were writing a paper.

Readings and Case Assignments

Regarding required readings, please note the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan 22</th>
<th>Course Introduction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>The Process of “Creative Destruction”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Economics of Creativity</td>
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</tbody>
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### Feb 5  
**Intersectionality of Creativity & Entrepreneurship**


**When to become an entrepreneur?**


- **Case**: Career at a Crossroad—Akhil Patel, HBS 812-010 through 013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>The Innovator’s Dilemma</td>
<td><em>(The challenges of corporate innovation and resistance to innovation)</em></td>
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<td><strong>Facing the changing basis of competition</strong></td>
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<td>• <em>Case:</em> Studio Realty, (HBS 9-697-036)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>Incentives To Innovate</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The government’s role in innovation and entrepreneurship</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- **Required:** Howkins, John, “Take Chinese Creativity Seriously—or Lose Out,” Financial Times, December 12, 2013, [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6ad6d0ae-5e97-11e3-8621-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2oxoCoeld](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6ad6d0ae-5e97-11e3-8621-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2oxoCoeld)


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**Feb 26  Innovating in the Social & Nonprofit Sector**

- The university as an engine for innovation
- The non-profit world as a source of innovation and creativity (including newly created “benefit corporations” that are designed for mission driven organizations)
- **Readings to be assigned**

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**March 5  Economics of Venture Capital**


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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading and Cases</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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*Case*: Continuous Casting Investments at USX Corporation (9-697-020) |
*Case*: “iMotors: New competition in used cars” (A) and (B), INSEAD, 2001 |

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<th>April 9</th>
<th>Social Network Effects</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Required:</strong> Pfeffer, J. A Note on Social Networks and Network Structure (Stanford OB66)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Case:</strong> HBS: LinkedIn (A) 9-707-406</td>
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**Social Strategies**

- **Case:** mixi (A), HBS 709413

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<th>April 16</th>
<th>Two-sided Markets</th>
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<td><strong>Case:</strong> Monster.com: Success Beyond the Bubble (9-802-024)</td>
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**Effects of “The Winner-Take-All” in Platform Markets**

| **Case:** Foursquare, HBS 9-711-418 |

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<tr>
<th>April 23</th>
<th>“Free Riding” effect relating to products and services</th>
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**Business Models Relating To The Internet**

  - Chapters 1 & 2


- **Case:** Pandora Radio: Fire Unprofitable Customers, HBS 9-610-077
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<tr>
<th>Case: The Newspaper Industry in Crisis, HBS 9-709-463</th>
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**Economics of Cloud-based Services**

- **Required:** “MacAfee, Andrew”, What Every CEO Needs to Know About the Cloud, Harvard Business Review, 11/1/11
- **Case: Amazon Web Services, HBS 9-609-048**

| April 30 | Student Presentations |