Anyone (can be an entrepreneur) who wants to experience the deep, dark canyons of uncertainty and ambiguity; and who wants to walk the breathtaking highlands of success. But I caution, do not plan to walk the latter, until you have experienced the former.

An Entrepreneur

Reading Material:

Packet of Selected Readings and Cases – Will be available at the campus bookstore in the near future.


SDSU MBA Program Mission Statement

The mission of the MBA degree program at SDSU is to provide innovative programs for graduate business students that offer opportunities to develop managerial skills through applied learning, research, and collaboration with alumni and the local business community. The MBA program reflects the international and entrepreneurial character of our region, offers a high level of customization, and provides opportunities for students and faculty to integrate their academic work with experience in the San Diego community.

SDSU MBA Program Goals

- Develop the solid foundation in theoretical concepts and managerial skills needed to lead business organizations.
- Ability to analyze environments in which manager make and implement decisions.
• Formulate communicate and coordinate strategies to solve business problems and pursue opportunities.

Mgt 724 Entrepreneurship Course Description:

Entrepreneurship is about creating and building something of value from practically nothing. An entrepreneur is someone who creates or seizes an opportunity and relentlessly pursues it without regard to the resources currently controlled. In this regard, the main difference between managers and entrepreneurs is that managers are “resource driven” whereas entrepreneurs are “opportunity driven”. Within the broadest definition, entrepreneurs are found throughout all facets of business. Any firm, if it is to survive and prosper, must have some measure of entrepreneurial drive.

Entrepreneurship as a business activity is flourishing around the world. Entrepreneurs are riding an innovation wave, creating wealth and jobs in the process. Entrepreneurship represents a paradigm shift in the way we think about, teach and conduct business activity.

This course is designed to provide an overview of the entrepreneurial process. We will begin the class with discussions of the entrepreneurial process, opportunity recognition and evaluation, creativity and innovation and business model analysis. We then will segue into related discussions of alternative forms for financing emerging enterprises, and dealing with challenges confronting entrepreneurs in start-up, growth, and corporate environments. The course will culminate with a series of group presentations of high potential business opportunities identified through your outside research.

Mgt 724 contributes to the overall goals of the SDSU MBA Program through the following student learning outcomes:

Student Learning Outcomes:

After taking this class, students should be able to:

• Evaluate a new venture opportunity that could be pursued by an inspired team either under an existing corporate umbrella or through an independent start-up.

• Design a business model appropriate for pursuit of the new venture opportunity

• Estimate the financial requirements needed to pursue a new venture.

• Give examples of the types of challenges faced by early stage and corporate entrepreneurs.

• Identify key value drivers associated with the various stages of an organization’s life cycle.
These outcomes will be accomplished through review and discussion of key entrepreneurial issues as revealed through the assigned readings, case discussions; experiential exercises and interactions with members of the entrepreneurial business community.

**Course Structure and Deliverables:**

This class requires a high level of involvement and commitment. Students are expected to attend and participate in all scheduled sessions of the course (unless pre-arranged with the instructor). Reading assignments and cases for in-class discussions should be prepared in advance of in-class meetings.

Class participants will have two written assignments (one individual / one group) for the course as follows:

**Individual Assignment:**

All individuals in the class will have to prepare a written assignment that must be turned in on the prescribed class date. You will have the choice of which assignment you wish to take on. Your options are as follows:

- **All In Start-up Book Review:** All individuals in the class will be responsible for reading this book at your own pace. Then, for those choosing the book review as your individual assignment, you will prepare a written analysis (not to exceed 10 typed and double-spaced pages). A guideline for preparing this book review is included at the end of the syllabus. Your final book review must be turned in by November 9.

- **Emerging Entrepreneurial Trends Research Project:** A second option for your individual assignment will be to choose a key trend or set of trends that you believe will have a significant impact on future entrepreneurial opportunities and business models. You are to read at least 10 outside articles discussing your trend and then develop your report (not to exceed 10 typed and double-spaced pages). It may also be helpful to identify entrepreneurs or executives in companies who have developed business models to exploit these trends. If possible, conduct an interview with one or more of these individuals. A guideline for preparing this entrepreneurial trends research project is included at the end of the syllabus. Your final Entrepreneurial Trends paper must be turned in by November 16.

**Group Assignment:**

- **High Potential Business Opportunity Analysis:** For this assignment, you will form a study group consisting of 3 or 4 individuals. Based on the ideas posed by individuals in the class, each group will identify a high potential business opportunity to use as the basis for subsequently forming an entrepreneurial venture to capitalize on it. The group shall identify and evaluate a high potential business opportunity without regard to resource-based constraints. Thus, the focus of this assignment is to identify a large “need” in the market that
is not adequately being met by current competitors. During the remainder of the course, the
group will conduct a comprehensive market analysis demonstrating why you think the idea
has so much growth potential. At the second meeting of the course, individuals will present
a 1-2 minute overview of a proposed high potential venture opportunity. Study groups will
then select one of the ideas generated by individuals within the group to serve as a basis for
the comprehensive class project. The final project document, due on November 30, shall not
exceed 15 typed pages. The group shall prepare and deliver a 20-minute oral presentation of
the market opportunity, followed by 20 minutes of q&a. Written work is to be typed,
double-spaced with 1-inch left and right margins and 12-point text. Guidelines for preparing
your group’s High Potential Business Opportunity Analysis are contained at the end of the
syllabus.

**Entrepreneur Class Visits:** During the course, we will be scheduling several
sessions where entrepreneurs will be participating with us in the class. On November 2, we
will invite a panel of up to 4 early-stage entrepreneurs who will discuss problems and issues
they face in striving to grow and nurture their ventures. On November 23, we will invite a
panel of up to 4 relatively successful entrepreneurs who will discuss lessons learned from
their experiences.

**Grading:**

Your grade in this class will be determined by your individual written response to your
chosen case study and your group’s response to the high potential market opportunity
assignment and your active participation with in-class discussions.

Grade distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignment</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note regarding class participation: You are expected to attend all scheduled sessions of this
class. While other responsibilities may from time to time require you to be away from class,
you must realize that you will lose opportunities for class participation when you are not
present. Missing more than two class meetings will result in a one level drop in your final
grade (unless pre-arrangements have been made with the instructor). If you are on travel,
and can arrange to participate in class via skype or some other on-line mechanism, you will
receive full credit for participating in class on that date.

Note about surfing the internet and answering e-mail during class lecturers.
The bottom line is that it is disrespectful and distracting to the rest of the class (especially
when listening to the tapping of keyboard strokes). You may use the internet, if you are
looking something up related to class discussions. However use of the internet for non-class
related matters will not be tolerated and will count against your class participation grade.
Note about leaving class during the break: It has become a common practice for students to leave class during scheduled breaks. While sometimes this may be necessary, it should not happen on a habitual basis. Hence, unless pre-arranged with the instructor, students leaving class during the scheduled break will not be receiving credit for attendance on that particular day.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8/24  | • Instructor Introduction  
      • Course overview  
      • The Evolution of Entrepreneurship: Changes & Trends  
      • Introduction to the Ideator Platform | • Review the Course Syllabus  
      • Come to class thinking about possible business ideas. |
| 8/31  | • Where do business ideas come from?  
      • Presentation of business ideas  
      • Exercise I: Elaborating your Business Idea – Iteration I | • Readings: Framing the Challenge: Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset / How to make your case in 30 seconds or less.  
      • Come to class prepared to present a brief pitch of a business idea  
      • Guest Lecturer: Robert Schulte |
| 9/7   | • No Class – Labor Day |                                                                               |
| 9/14  | • Case Discussion: Spinbrush  
      • Further discussion of business ideas  
      • Exercise I: Elaborating Your Business Idea – Iteration II  
      • Group Formations | • Case: Proctor & Gamble (A): The Spinbrush and Innovation at P&G |
| 9/21  | • Opportunities and Concepts  
      • Characteristics of High Potential Ventures  
      • Exercise II: Assessing the Attractiveness of the Opportunity  
      • Overview of the Zahn Innovation Center (We will meet at the Zahn Innovation Center at 7:00 on the 4th floor of the EBA Building Room 416) | • Readings: Finding and Evaluating the Opportunity  
      • Review the Zahn Innovation Center Website |
| 9/28  | • The Business Model Canvas  
      • Exercise III: The Business Model Canvas  
      • Exercise IV: Linking Value Proposition to Customer segments  
      • Video Case Discussion: Xoom Park (presentation at the 2012 International Business Model Competition) | • Readings: Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything / From Business Model Generation – Read Section on Business Model Canvas – Pages 1 – 52 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Canvas Building Blocks</th>
<th>Exercise/Case Discussions</th>
<th>Readings/Book Reviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10/5     | • Canvas Building Block: Customer Relations  
• Canvas Building Block: Channels  
• Canvas Building Block: Revenue Streams  
• Exercise V – Building Customer Relationships  
• Exercise VI – Building Channels to the Customer  
• Exercise VII – Building Revenue Models | • Readings: Hypothesis Driven Entrepreneurship: The Lean Startup |
| 10/12    | • Canvas Building Block: Key Activities  
• Canvas Building Block: Key Partners  
• Exercise VIII: Key Activities & Key Partners  
• Financing the Business by Bootstrapping and Guerilla Marketing  
• Exercise IX – Bootstrapping and Guerilla Marketing | • Readings: Bootstrap Finance: The Art of Start-ups |
| 10/19    | • Canvas Building Block: Key Resources  
• Canvas Building Block: Cost Structure  
• Exercise X – Resource Requirements & Cost Structure  
• Case Discussion: Field Technologies | • Case: Field Technologies Case (download from the Assignments section of the class Blackboard site) |
| 10/26    | • Raising Equity Capital  
• Deal Structure  
• Pre and Post Money Valuations  
• Exercise XI: Raising Equity Capital  
• Case Discussion: Omega Sensors | • Readings: Raising Startup Capital  
• Case: Omega Sensors |
| 11/2     | • Panel Discussion: Early Stage Entrepreneurs | • Guest Visitors: TBD |
| 11/9     | • Managing Risks  
• Exercise XII: Assessing Critical Risks and Building Value in the Organization  
• Book Discussion: All In Startup | • Managing Risk & Reward in the Entrepreneurial Venture  
• Book review due if you have selected this book as your write-up option |
| 11/16    | • Emerging Trends Assignment  
• Building Entrepreneurial Competencies  
• Exercise XIII: Assessing Personal Entrepreneurial Skills  
• Exercise XIV: Identifying Areas for Skill Improvement | • Emerging Trends Assignment due if you have selected this book as your write-up option |
| 11/23    | • Panel Discussion: Experienced entrepreneurs | • Readings: The Founder’s Dilemma  
• Guest Visitors: TBD |
| 11/30    | • Presentation of High Potential Opportunities | • Each group turns in final report document (hard copy & electronic copy)  
• Groups 1 - 3 to present the results of their project |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>Presentation of High Potential Opportunities</td>
<td>Groups 4 - 6 to present the results of their project to the class. These groups will also turn in electronic and hard copies of their presentation decks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/14</td>
<td>Presentation of High Potential Opportunities</td>
<td>Groups 7 - 9 to present the results of their project to the class. These groups will also turn in electronic and hard copies of their presentation decks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ELEVATOR PITCH ASSIGNMENT

Each participant should prepare a 1-2 minute “elevator pitch” oral presentation of a set of trends that can serve as a basis for driving current and future entrepreneurial ventures. As part of this pitch, you must identify one potential business concept that can be developed to pursue an opportunity evolving from these trends.

Examples of trends which people have been watching that are driving entrepreneurial opportunities in the global marketplace include (but are not limited to) the following:

- GPS embedded in devices/products
- Wireless computing and communication (i.e. smartphones, Netbook computers, etc.)
- Smartphone platform (applications and accessories)
- Digital print (devices and applications portraying content like books, newspapers, etc.)
- Digital content creation and distribution (Internet channels, movies, music, etc.)
- The spiraling cost of healthcare and public and private attempts to address these issues
- The use of wireless technology to improve healthcare delivery
- Local, national and global environmental concerns
- Diminishing federal, state and local support for public education
- Heightened concerns about terrorism and public and personal safety
- The prevalence of natural disaster occurrences (hurricanes, fires, floods, earthquakes, drought etc.)

Any of the above categories of trends (and any other critical trends which you identify) can serve as a basis for spawning an entrepreneurial opportunity. The idea that you decide to present for this assignment can be for a new start-up venture, the expansion of an existing business, or the adoption of a franchise operation. Sources for the idea can be 1) something that you personally have been thinking about; 2) a new venture project that your company has been thinking about; 3) an idea that a friend or acquaintance is currently thinking about or working on; or 4) an idea that you may have read about which appeals to you. Great publications to look for business ideas include Inc. Magazine; Entrepreneur Magazine, the Wall Street Journal or any of the local newspapers.

The “elevator pitch” oral presentation should be based upon the thoughts that you record on your Exercise I worksheet (Elaborating Your Business Opportunity). This exercise worksheet (along with all other worksheets to be used in this class) will be found in the Course Documents section of the class Blackboard website. Look inside the Exercise Worksheet folder. This exercise asks you to jot down some initial thoughts about the following:

- Describe the nature of your business idea.
- What type of customers would be interested in your product or service?
- Why would these customers be willing to pay for your product or service (value proposition)?
- What are the key external trends that lead you to believe that your idea represents a viable business opportunity?
- What is it that you would bring to the table in pursuit of this opportunity (i.e. what special competencies, skills, experiences, unique knowledge, family ties, social networks or assets would give you an advantage in the pursuit of this business opportunity? 
- What do you think that it would take to develop products or services based on your proposed business idea (i.e. financial requirements; special skills or competencies, special assets, critical networks, etc.)

I am not looking for extensive answers to these questions. I pose them as a basis to get you to think about the viability of your potential business opportunity. Please bring your filled out Exercise I worksheet to the class session on 8/31.

Based upon the inventory of ideas we discuss during this class session, you will form a study group of 3 – 4 people for the duration of the semester to evaluate one of the more promising business opportunities. At the end of the course, each group will turn in a written report and do an oral presentation of their proposed business model.

I look forward to the start of this class. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.
HIGH POTENTIAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS GUIDELINES

The following outline and related sub-questions are intended to stimulate your thinking about your proposed business idea. Throughout this course, you had the opportunity to develop a preliminary business model designed to address a key problem or gap in the market. As your final project report, you are asked to describe the business model you have come up with as a result of conducting designed experiments throughout the course. As a result of your experiences, you should be able to assess the market viability of this business concept. Your final paper and presentation should be organized as follows:

**Target Market Segment.**
- Describe the key characteristics of your intended target customer
- Describe the problem or challenge you believe they are experiencing
- What makes you think that they would pay to have this problem addressed?
- How big do you think that this segment could be?

**Your Proposed Solution**
- Describe the product or service you intend to offer as a solution to this problem
- How does your proposed solution represent a compelling value proposition for the customer?

**Final (at end of course) Business Model Canvas**
- Describe your final business model canvas. Include in your discussion how you envision approaching the remaining building blocks of your business model:
  - Customer Relationships
  - Channels
  - Key Activities
  - Key Partners
  - Resource Requirements
  - Cost Structure
  - Revenue Streams

**Assumptions Testing**
- Describe at least 3 critical assumptions you were able to test during the semester. For each assumption discuss the following:
  - What was your original thinking about the business model?
  - Described the experiment you designed to test your assumption.
  - Describe your customer discovery experiences in testing your assumption (i.e. how many people did you speak to? What type of people did you speak to? How did you reach them?)
  - Describe your “persevere” or “pivot” decision based on the evidence you gathered.
Provide any evidence of customer discovery activities in the appendix section of this paper.

**Additional Assumptions That Still Need to be Tested**
- Based on your final business model canvas (at end of course), list the additional critical assumptions that still need to be tested.
- For each assumption, briefly describe a designed experiment you would conduct.

**Assessment of Prospects for the Business**
- This section should be included in the appendix portion of your paper. Each individual in your group should answer the following question independently.
- What is your overall assessment of your identified business opportunity? Is it viable? Why or why not?
Guidelines for Optional Book Review: All In Startup

All members of the class are assigned to read All In Start-up by Diana Kandar. This book offers very powerful messages and insights for entrepreneurs in the midst of contemplating a new startup or managing a growing firm. Should you choose to prepare this book review as your individual assignment option, you will develop a report by responding to the following questions. Your final paper should be no longer than 10 pages double spaced using 12 point Times New Roman Font. Use the following guidelines to organize your paper.

1. Describe the central theme that the author is trying to address about starting and managing a business through the novel that she has written.

2. Describe Owen’s original thinking about his business idea. What did he believe was the problem he was trying to solve? What was his proposed solution? What was the market telling him about his business idea?

3. What type of research did Owen conduct to support his original thinking about his business idea? Critique his approach to market research and how it led to the decisions he made about his original business model.

4. How did Owen first “reconceptualize” his business idea? What circumstances led to his business model pivot? What did you think of the market evidence he gathered to support this new approach?

5. What was Owen’s next reconceptualization of his business idea? What circumstances led to this second business model pivot? What do you think of the new market evidence he gathered to support this new approach?

6. Considering the business model you are currently working on with your group as a class project. Identify and discuss how key lessons from this book might influence how you think about designing your business model.


NOTE: BECAUSE THIS BOOK IS WELL KNOWN IN THE POPULAR LITERATURE, IT WILL BE QUITE EASY TO FIND BOOK REVIEWS ON LINE. DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES USE ONE OF THESE ONLINE REVIEWS AS THE PAPER YOU TURN IN TO FULFILL THIS ASSIGNMENT. IT IS VERY EASY FOR ME TO TRACK AND IT IS NOT WORTH THE RISK!
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN BUSINESS
MGT 724: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Guidelines for Optional Emerging Entrepreneurial Trends Research Project

Current and emerging socio-economic, political, business and technological trends play a key role in influencing 21st century entrepreneurs. The tools available to those wishing to pursue new venture opportunities today are quite different from what was available to entrepreneurs operating in the 20th century. As a result of fast paced and rapidly changing environmental forces, we are seeing unique and innovative business models that define a new wave of entrepreneurs and the companies they create. Should you choose the emerging entrepreneurial trends option for your individual assignment, you will identify a trend that poses significant opportunities for savvy entrepreneurs and significant threats for those still clinging to the status quo. In your paper you will summarize the key facets of your chosen trend and discuss how entrepreneurs can position themselves to capture value by exploiting unique business opportunities. The final project must be substantiated by a minimum of 10 outside references. Your paper should be no longer than 10 pages double spaced using 12 point Times New Roman Font. Use the following guidelines to organize your paper.

1. Describe the nature of the trend or set of trends that point to unique new business opportunities.

2. What underlying forces are driving these trends? Do you believe that these trends represent a short-term fad or do they represent key transformations in our society?

3. To what extent do these trends represent a threat to the status quo?

4. To what extent have these trends already led to emerging new business models? In what ways have we seen business model innovation that incorporates these trends?

5. Are these trends best exploited by new start-up entrepreneurs or established firms engaging in a pivot? Please explain.

6. Identify and describe a specific entrepreneur or company who is actively pursuing opportunities around these emerging trends. Evaluate this person or company’s prospects for success.

7. What do you see as future opportunities for entrepreneurs to design and exploit new business models?

8. At the end of your paper, please include a reference list of at least 10 articles that have shaped your thinking.

To help you in choosing a topic for this assignment, I have included the following list of suggestions. You may choose a topic from this list of choose another topic that may be of interest to you. Please clear your chosen topic with me before you invest significant time and effort on the project:
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN BUSINESS
MGT 724: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Possible Topics for Emerging Entrepreneurial Trends Research Project

- Wireless healthcare (i.e. diagnostics, treatment, monitoring etc.)
- Internet of Things
- Wearable technologies
- The Sharing Economy
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle (i.e. fitness, obesity, aging etc.)
- GPS tracking and monitoring
- Cloud computing
- Next generation social media tools
- 3D Printing
- Distributed education via alternative platforms
- Crowd funding and other alternative sources of financing
- Crowd sourcing for innovation
- Alternative energy solutions
- Web technologies for effective marketing, branding, e-commerce SEO, etc.
- Alternative channels for entertainment (i.e. film, music, games etc.)
- Alternative transportation solutions
- Exploiting and developing the smart grid
- Security and personal protection
- Emerging middle class in 3rd world and developing nations
- Social entrepreneurial endeavors (bottom of the pyramid)