

MMC 3254 Media Entrepreneurship

Spring 2015 / Section 023D / Period 8, Wednesdays, Pugh Hall 120 / 1 credit



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Office: Weimer 3052

Office hours: Tuesdays periods 3-4 (9:30 to 11:30 a.m.); Wednesdays periods 9-10 (4 to 6 p.m.)

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“Office hours” are times I dedicate to being in the office and are first-come, first-served. Otherwise, make an appointment or drop in.

ABOUT THE COURSE

Course Description

This course will help you catch the spirit of digital media entrepreneurship by (a) identifying how you can foster intrapreneurship in a legacy media organization and (b) creating a prototype for a viable digital media startup.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify your personal competitive advantage.
- Propose how you would foster intrapreneurship in a legacy media organization.
- Research and identify sustainable business opportunities in digital media.
- Pitch a prototype and business plan for a viable digital media startup.

Prerequisite

None. The course presumes you have these skills: clear writing, basic familiarity with a spreadsheet, and effective presentations using PowerPoint or equivalent.

Course Format

The class will meet for one period one day a week. Most work will be done outside of class. We also will need to schedule an evening for pitch night before a shark tank and perhaps practice sessions. In short, while this is a one-credit class, it is not a blow-off course.

Required Textbooks

- “Zero to One” by Peter Thiel with Blake Masters. Crown Business, 2014. ISBN: 978-0804139298. Also available as an e-book.
- “The Startup of You” by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha. Crown Business, 2012. ISBN: 978-0307888907. Also available as an e-book.

- “The Lean Startup” by Eric Ries. Crown Business, 2011. ISBN: 978-0670921607. Also available as an e-book.
- “Hatching Twitter” by Nick Bilton. Portfolio trade, 2014. ISBN: 978-1591847083. Also available as an e-book.

Other readings will be assigned during the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignments and Grade Allocation

My Competitive Advantage Paper (10%)

This is a paper of about two double-spaced pages that thoughtfully identifies the competitive advantage you now bring to the workplace or wish to develop. Be specific about the skills you bring and why they are distinctive. (Hint: “good writer” is not a competitive advantage.) Be specific about the skills you wish to develop to make yourself distinctive and how you plan to acquire those skills. The assigned textbooks can help you with this paper.

Legacy Media Intrapreneurship Paper (30%)

This is a paper of about five double-spaced pages about a legacy media organization of your choice – preferably, one you would like to work for. Your paper will analyze the market challenges and opportunities facing the organization. It will propose realistic innovations and ways to infuse intrapreneurship into the organization to help it adapt to the evolving digital media environment. The assigned textbooks and readings can help you with this paper.

Digital Startup Prototype and Business Plan (60%)

This is a presentation to a shark tank built on the lean startup model. It incorporates several elements: (a) identification of an underserved niche market and an analysis of the competition, (b) market research involving potential customers, (c) an extensive wireframe or working prototype of the proposed product, (d) a three-year business plan that identifies revenue sources, estimates expenses and proposes a viable path to economic sustainability, and (e) justification for why your proposal is viable and why you’re the right person to do it.

This is a team project. As in the workplace, you will rise or fall as a team, and everyone on the team will get the same grade. If someone does not pull his/her share of the load, call a team meeting to resolve it. If you are unable to resolve the conflict, I’m happy to meet with you to help you – but only if all members of the team are in the same room at the same time.

On the other hand, teamwork can be remarkably productive and rewarding. Good teams share a common goal while benefitting from diversity, as each person brings a distinctive perspective or skill set that complements the others on the team. As the saying goes, none of us is as smart as all of us. So enjoy learning from each other!

Grading Scale

	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent
		B+	89-87%	C+	79-77%	D+	69-67%
A	100-93%	B	86-83%	C	76-73%	D	66-63%
A-	92-90%	B-	82-80%	C-	72-70%	D-	62-60%

Scores are rounded to the nearest whole point: 89.4 rounds down to 89 (B+) while 89.5 rounds up to 90 (A-). The UF grading policy can be found in the undergraduate catalog [online](#).

Tentative Schedule

Wk	Date	Topics covered	Readings	Assignments
1	January 7	The current and near-future digital environment		
2	January 14	Identifying your personal competitive advantage	“The Startup of You”	
3	January 21	Legacy media intrapreneurship	“Hatching Twitter”	Competitive Advantage paper
4	January 28	How to infuse a startup mentality into an existing media organization	“Zero to One”	
5	February 4	Finding opportunity	“The Lean Startup,” part 1	Legacy Media Intrapreneurship Paper
6	February 11	Conducting research into your target market	“The Lean Startup,” part 2	Niche market paragraph
7	February 18	Competition analysis	“The Lean Startup,” part 3	Market research results
8	February 25	How to wireframe an idea		Competition analysis paragraph
	March 4	No class; spring break		
9	March 11	How to create a prototype		Basic wireframe of your idea
10	March 18	Sources of revenue		Basic prototype of your idea
11	March 25	How to write an elementary three-year business plan		Preliminary source of revenue paragraph
12	April 1	Your unique value proposition		Preliminary three-year business plan
13	April 8	Presentation skills		Value proposition paragraph
14	April 15	Practice presentations		Draft two-minute presentation
15	April 22	Final presentation before the shark tank		Final three-minute presentation

THE FINE PRINT

Attendance

Attendance is expected. Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with UF [policy](#).

Academic Integrity

University of Florida students pledge to abide by an [honor code](#) that prohibits academic dishonesty such as fabrication, plagiarism and cheating. You have an affirmative obligation to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. You also must report to appropriate personnel any condition that facilitates academic misconduct. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

When I discover cheating, my default policy is to fail all involved for the entire course and report the details to the Dean of Students Office.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Such requests should be made as early in the semester as possible.

Help With Coping

The UF [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) is a terrific, free resource for any student who could use help managing stress or coping with life. The center, at 3190 Radio Road on campus, is open for appointments and emergency walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To make an appointment or receive after-hours assistance, call 352-392-1575.

The UF Police can be reached at 392-1111 or, in an emergency, by dialing 911.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online [evaluations](#). You will be notified by email when the evaluations are open, typically in the last two or three weeks of the semester. Summary [results](#) are available to you and the public.