The Biz and Entrepreneurial Journalism  
JOU 6936 – Spring 2013

Instructor: Matt Sheehan, Director of the 21st Century News Lab and Lecturer  
msheehan@jou.ufl.edu  @mattsheehan  352-354-3629 (rings all phones)

Course Description
This master's level course will provide hands-on experience in developing entrepreneurial business ideas and introduction to business fundamentals. The course will synthesize traditional graduate-level business courses and provide a framework to apply those skills in a journalistic endeavor. We will examine core principles in strategy, finance and business planning through direct application. The course will include journalism and media case examination and classic business education readings. Students will apply the skills and concepts explored during this course in a final project, presenting a written and oral pitch for a journalistic enterprise.

Class Meetings:
Wednesday, Periods 3-5 (9:35 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.)
Weimer 3215 – AHA! Innovation CoLab

Course Objectives:
- Students gain hands-on experience in developing and assessing entrepreneurial business ideas.
- Students will be exposed to basic principles of strategy, finance and marketing
- Students will learn to combine basic business principles in a journalistic environment
- Students will understand key components in developing a business plan, including value statements, revenue, projections and need statements
- Students will refine and explore skills in oral and written presentation

Course text and readings:

Social Media is Bullshit – B.J. Mendelson, St. Martin’s Press (ISBN 1250002958)


Orbiting the Giant Hairball – Gordon McKenzie, Viking Adult (ISBN 9780670879830)

MMC 6936 Course Pack – https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/16825537

Materials from Columbia Case Consortium - https://casestudies.jrn.columbia.edu/collection

Course Schedule:
Week 1: Jan. 9
Course Introduction

Readings:
Post-Industrial Journalism (towcenter.org/research/post-industrial-journalism/)
The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy [HBR Packet]
Begin reading The Innovator’s Dilemma

Week 2: Jan 16
Value Propositions
Market Analysis

Readings:
Analyzing a Case [HBR Packet]

Week 3: Jan 23
Strategy

Readings:
The Newspaper Industry in Crisis [HBR Packet]
Why Business Models Matter [HBR Packet]

Week 4; Jan. 30
Elements of a Business Model
Financial Modeling

Readings:
Politico Parts A & B [Columbia]
How to Write a Great Business Plan [HBR Packet]
Note on Business Model Analysis [HBR Packet]

Week 5: Feb. 6 -- NO CLASS

Week 6: Feb. 13
:: DUE -- INNOVATOR’S DILEMMA ANALYSIS
Effective Presentations
Week 7: Feb. 20
Ideation

**Readings:**
*Orbiting the Giant Hairball*
Chapters 11-13 – *Inspired: How to Create Products Customers Love*

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Week 8: Feb. 27
Customer Analysis and Market Research

**Readings:**
Chapters 15-16 – *Inspired*
The Guardian: *Transition to the Online World* [HBR Packet]

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Week 9: March 3 – NO CLASS

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Week 10: March 13
:: DUE – IDEAS FOR PITCHES
Marketing

**Readings:**
*Not for Profit? The Voice of San Diego Experiment* [Columbia]
*Social Media is Bullshit*

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Week 11: March 20
Finance and Valuation

**Readings:**
*The Jury is Out: The Long Beach Post and Online Local News* [Columbia]
Facebook [HBR]
Chapters 20-25 – *Inspired*

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Week 12: March 27
:: DUE – BUSINESS PLAN DRAFTS
Intrapreneurship

Readings:
Charting a Course for Change: Transforming the Albany Times Union in a Wired World
[Columbia]
Northlands Ledger (Part A) [HBR]
Chapters 29-30 – Inspired

Week 13: April 3
:: DUE – PITCH DRAFTS
Pitch Lab

Week 14: April 10
:: DUE – PITCH DRESS REHEARSAL
Pitch Lab

Week 15: April 17
Business Pitch Presentations

Week 16: April 24
Course Wrap

Grading
Students will submit multiple deliverables throughout the sixteen weeks. The course culminates in a juried business pitch presentation on Wednesday, April 17.

Innovator’s Dilemma paper: 10 percent
Class Participation: 10 percent
Case Evaluations (3 group presentations): 30 percent
Pitch Document Drafts: 15 percent
Business Pitch Presentation and Written Proposal: 35 percent

A paper analyzing the classic book, the Innovator’s Dilemma, and comparing/contrasting to journalism and the journalism industry will be due Feb. 13 and will be worth 10 percent of your grade.
Each member of the class will be expected to read the weekly cases, but discussion of those cases will be lead by a group of students using the business frameworks presented in the course. Each student will be responsible for participating in a team THREE times (with different teams). A signup sheet will be available in the second class.

If I find that you are not reading the cases, or other readings, additional independent, written analyses will be assigned for each case.

Your final portfolio evaluation will take into account the use of multiple media, innovative coverage, self-direction in addition to the quality of content produced.

An A indicates superior performance; B, highly competent, above-average work; C, average; D, below average; E, unsatisfactory. Final grades are calculated following the scale of 100-90, A; 89-80, B; etc.

**CAUTION:** This is a professional course. You must not only do the work, but you must demonstrate that you can do the work acceptably within a limited time. Missed deadlines result in automatic failure of the assignment/project. Errors in proper nouns or facts result in automatic failure of the assignment/project.

**Do your own research, reporting and writing.** Plagiarism—including using material from scholarly and popular press articles, texts, news releases and information gathered from the Internet without attribution—will result in serious and harsh consequences. Should that be discovered, you will fail the course and be recommended for expulsion from the University. You can find the college's official ethical standards at http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/jou/honesty/demic/jou/honesty/. If you have even the smallest doubt or are confused about this or anything else in the course, PLEASE ASK.

Lectures and materials in this class are the property of the University/faculty member. Lectures may not be taped without permission from the lecturer and may not be used for any commercial purpose. Students found in violation may be subject to discipline under the University's Student Conduct Code.

The **University of Florida Honor Code** was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

**Preamble:** In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

**The Honor Code:** We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." *(In this course, everything you complete has an implied acceptance of the honor code. Continued enrollment in this course is implied consent to the honor code.)*
For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean will provide documentation to the student who must provide documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.