

Due Date	Class Session	Reading Type	Title (click to link to page)	Author	Description
Jan 9, 18	Session 0: pre-reading, general	Required	The Business Planning Template (download from Canvas)	me	You really do need to read this thing. It's a simple outline for what investors, teams and others expect from a basic business plan, defined as the thinking behind a business, the case for its existence and growth, and the core decision making, strategy and steps needed to win in the market place. This is the main guide we will be using to help you work on your ultimate business plan submission.
Jan 9, 18	Session 0: pre-reading, general resources	Required	I'm Not Delusional, I'm An Entrepreneur	Hugh MacLeod	Hugh (Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Gaping Void) is an incisive, funny artist and thinker on a wide-range of topics. This is a 2 minute inspirational (and slightly promotional) slideshow about entrepreneurship. Really worth a watch.
Jan 9, 18	Session 0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	Startups in 13 Sentences	Paul Graham	Paul Graham, computer scientist, VC, and essayist, and co founder Y Combinator, gives great general advice for anyone starting a new business
Jan 9, 18	0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	Writing a Business Plan	Sequoia Capital	Sequoia Capital, one of the top VCs in the world, share their simple view of what's needed (and what they look for) in a business plan
Jan 9, 18	0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses	Eric Ries	"Eric has created a science where previously there was only art. A must read for every serious entrepreneur—and every manager interested in innovation." —Marc Andreessen, co-founder of Andreessen Horowitz, Opsware Inc. and Netscape
Jan 9, 18	0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	Why Business Plans Are A Waste Of Time; Forbes Magazine; August 13, 2013	Paul B. Brown	A contrary POV from the whole point of this class: "The longer you plan, the longer you are not in the marketplace."
Jan 9, 18	0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers	Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur	These smart guys, a business theorist and computer scientist, authors and consultants have created an alternative tool and approach to putting together a killer business plan.
Jan 9, 18	0: pre-reading, general resources	Optional, or additional resources	The Business Model Canvas	Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur	Above is the book, this is the tool

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Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Required	The Business Planning Template (download from Canvas)	me	If you didn't read this before the first session, you really need to now.
Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Required	BE ON FIRE	FAKEGRIMLOCK	An inspiring call to action to anyone who wants to start - anything, from FAKEGRIMLOCK , MOST FAMOUS ROBOT DINOSAUR ON ENTIRE INTERNET (a take-off on the Dinosaur Transformers/Decepticon character, whose real identity is not known) who is full of short, simple, clear insights for startups AND ALWAYS IN ALL CAPS BECAUSE AWESOME
Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Required	daily bizcard 034: tony hsieh	Hugh MacLeod	Another nice one from Hugh MacLeod, this a short homage to the driving vision/purpose of the founder of Zappos.
Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Optional, or additional resources	STARTUP IS VISION	FAKEGRIMLOCK	Another great call to action from our anonymous Transformer/Decepticon guru
Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Optional, or additional resources	Launching a successful start-up #1: The brainstorming phase	Bill Aulet	The first in a little start-up blog post series, Here, Bill Aulet - Senior Lecturer at MIT Sloan School of Management and the Managing Director of The Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship - provides some great prompts on how to best search for your ideas.
Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Optional, or additional resources	How to Get Startup Ideas	Paul Graham	A wonderful description of the multiple ways one can come up with terrific ideas. "Live in the future and build what seems interesting."

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Jan 16, 18	1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Optional, or additional resources	Startup Life: Surviving and Thriving in a Relationship with an Entrepreneur	Brad Feld and Amy Batchelor	Real life insights on what it takes to make it in a relationship with an entrepreneur from ace VC, angel and pundit Brad Feld and his super smart wife and partner, Amy Batchelor
Jan 16, 18	Session 1.1. Your Inspiration - from great ideas to a vision/purpose	Optional, or additional resources	The loneliest (and only) job I could ever imagine... The life of startup founder.	Jesse Proudman	Wonderful career and life perspective and advice for entrepreneurs, and everyone from Jesse Proudman, founder of Bluebox (and speaker in Entre 440_540)
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	Required	SECRET LAWS OF STARTUPS (PART 1 – BUILD RIGHT THING)	FAKEGRIMLOCK	BEST PRODUCT TAKE THING PERSON DO. DO BETTER!
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	YOUR MVP IS MINIMAL, BUT IS IT VIABLE?	Alex Iskold	Alex Iskold is an Entrepreneur, Managing Director at Techstars in NYC, and an investor in over 50 companies. Here he provides wise perspective on the balance between simplicity and viability (and fast vs. slow).
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	MVP dilemma: fat vs. lean, lovable vs. laughable?	Michal Faber	Michal Faber, COO of Spark Solutions has a very good summary of the approach and the trade-offs involved in the MVP way of thinking.
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	Making sense of MVP (Minimum Viable Product) – and why I prefer Earliest Testable/Usable/ Lovable.	Henrik Kniberg	Another, at least slightly, contrarian view of product viability - focused on learning by doing and making testable improvements vs. the classic "begin with the end in mind," from a very smart consultant living in Stockholm (which is nice)

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Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	Your ultimate guide to Minimum Viable Product (+great examples)	David Tsalani	A deeper exploration of both this Earliest Testable/Usable/Lovable concept and the Business Model Canvas tool mentioned earlier from David Tsalani, an analyst with Cap Gemini living in Helsinki (which is also nice).
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	Optional, or additional resources	Need a Business Idea? Here are 55, Entrepreneur Magazine	Cheryl Kimball	Fun article excerpted from 55 Surefire Home Based Businesses You Can Start for Under \$5,000, start here if none of these other product methodologies work.
Jan 23, 18	1.2. Idea to Product - validating a real problem/viable solution	Optional, or additional resources	How a Couple of College Kids Turned a Silly Sport into a Booming Business, Entrepreneur Magazine.	Susan Johnston Taylor	A nice story about a crazy business really created by college students.
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Required	SWOT analysis	The Economist Magazine	A thoughtful summary, examination of the origins, application and usefulness of this simple analytical technique, by the weekly magazine I think is the best in the world (November 11th 2009 edition)
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Required	WHY FOUNDER-MARKET FIT IS SO IMPORTANT	Alex Iskold	A short dialogue - between Alex Iskold and Josh Kopelman, Founder of First Round Capital- on how valuable it is for founders to fit with the markets they plan to address.
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Required	The 11 Risks VCs Evaluate	Tomasz Tunguz	Although they are not the only constituency you need to think about, investors are pretty good at thinking about risk. In this very short post, Mr. Tunguz, a venture capitalist at excellent VC, Redpoint, lists and explains his top 11 picks of risks. Skip this one at your peril.
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Optional, or additional resources	The 18 Mistakes That Kill Startups	Paul Graham	While we're wallowing in lists of things to scare and depress us, Paul provides a pretty comprehensive list, from another perspective

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Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Optional, or additional resources	Launching a successful start-up #2: Finding the sweet spot	Bill Aulet	The second in his little start-up blog post series, Here, Bill Aulet outlines the key questions you need to assess in order to find the "sweet spot" to your new business. A really nice supplement to SWOT etc.
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Optional, or additional resources	The Marketing Playbook, Chapters 8 through 11	me and Rich Tong	A more in depth examination of the 3Cs "playing field analysis we will review in class.
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Optional, or additional resources	Competitive Strategy, Five Forces Analysis	Michael Porter	A summary of the incredibly powerful, influential approach to the multiple dimensions of risk and opportunity that face a business - from this classic, classic business strategy book
Jan 30, 18	2.1. Your Playing Field - assessing risks/ opportunities you face	Optional, or additional resources	Competitive Strategy	Michael Porter	The actual classic book
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	Required	WIN LIKE STUPID	FAKEGRIMLOCK	A slightly contrarian view to strategy: BE SMART ENOUGH TO BE STUPID. BE STUPID ENOUGH TO WIN.
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	*Required/ Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	Crossing the Chasm	Geoffrey Moore	Crossing the Chasm is "The bible for bringing cutting-edge products to larger markets" and understanding the new product adoption lifecycle. Here you find a summary of the book and interview with author Geoffrey Moore

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Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	Rethinking 'Crossing the Chasm'	Alex Iskold	A critical look at this go to market analysis and how it applies to the world of startups in today's world (with a nice summary of the basics along the way)
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	Required	To Bootstrap Or Not?	Perry Tam	Whether to bootstrap - using your own resources to self-fund ("pull yourself up by your own bootstraps") is one of the biggest bets you will have to make. Here, Perry Tam, co-founder and CEO of Storm8, tells his story of the trade-offs between self-funding and spending the time to get funding from others.
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	Optional, or additional resources	THE FIVE ESSENTIAL MARKETING PLAYS	me and Rich Tong	A very brief summary of five, simple, competitive approaches to strategy.
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	Optional, or additional resources	Crossing the Chasm	Geoffrey Moore	The actual classic book itself
Feb 6, 18	2.2. Your Play - picking your bet/market entry strategy to win	Optional, or additional resources	Launching a successful start-up #3: The beachhead market	Bill Aulet	The third in his series, Bill Aulet explores how to establish your first beachhead and the three conditions that define whether a market is such a suitable first place to plant your flag.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Required	16 Startup Metrics	Jeff Jordan, Anu Hariharan, Frank Chen, and Preethi Kasireddy	A simple explanation of the main numbers that investors look at (and that entrepreneurs ought to), from the guys at far-seeing VC, Andreessen Horowitz.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Required	Setting Up Your Accounting System	Brad Feld	Another great article from VC, angel, guru, Brad Feld, summarizing hard-won lessons and tips for how NOT to run of money (without seeing it coming)

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Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Required	How to Choose the Right Business Model for Your Start-up	John Jantsch	The Truth. Every business does 4 things: Make stuff, Market stuff, Deliver stuff, Count stuff. For all the sophisticated alternatives that have come along to do these 4 things, there are actually only a few basic ways to pull them off successfully. John Jantsch of Duct Tape Marketing lays out how to think about this in just two pages. Yippee.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Required	Term Sheet Series Wrap Up	Brad Feld	There is a lot in here. This page summarizes and has links to a whole series of excellent posts on the core terms you need to think about in your first financing. <i>At least look around at some of this stuff to familiarize yourself.</i>
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	How to Read a Financial Report (download from Canvas)	Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc.	My gift to you. Out of print - promotional pamphlet. An incredibly clear, concise primer on financial statements. Changed my life!
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	DEFINING YOUR BUSINESS MODEL	Dummies	Hey, it's ok to dumb. Here are some really good reminders of the things you need to remember - key questions, profit/cash drivers, and the time factor
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	What Is a Business Model?	Andrea Ovans	In this Harvard Business Review article there is some perspective to cut through the hype of the new, but also a nice list of contemporary business models from the book, Seizing the White Space, by Mark Johnson
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	9 Proven Business Models to Consider for Your Startup	Nina Tomaro	Yet another list of business models - but hey, these are well articulated and have great examples.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	The Business Model Canvas	Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur	That nice tool, again.

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Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	The Proliferation of Standardized Seed Financing Documents	Brad Feld	Mr. Feld is at it again. This time with a set of links to a number of free, standard legal documents you can use - at least to start - for your first financing.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	Vesting Calculator	Simeon Simeonov	When hiring people, one of the things they seem to care about is compensation. Well, in start-ups, given that you likely have no money, the biggest such topic of conversation is stock options. This article includes both an explanation of the terms that govern stock options and a nice little tool for calculating the vesting of any grant of stock options.
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	Raising Capital: This is the Advice We Give Our Founders	Jamie McGurk and Steve McDermid	More good, basic advice from the guys at far-seeing VC, Andreessen Horowitz, this time about pricing and terms of your financing and how to structure things between each other
Feb 13, 18	2.3. From Product to Business - business model/financials	Optional, or additional resources	Raising Capital: This is the Advice We Give Our Founders	Jamie McGurk and Steve McDermid	More good, basic advice from the guys at far-seeing VC, Andreessen Horowitz, this time about pricing and terms of your financing and how to structure things between each other
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	5 EXAMPLES OF GREAT BRAND POSITIONING STRATEGY	Harris Roberts	Before you go spending time and money on marketing, you need to know what you really want to say and how - you need to formulate the compelling argument for your offering/company. This is positioning. Harris Roberts, director at a digital design/marketing firm, does a really nice job here of both explaining and providing examples
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	Positioning statements and taglines: Crafting the foundation of your brand's creative execution	Ervin & Smith	Another nice, short summary of positioning and its importance, along with some good examples.

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Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	*Required/Optional (pick one of from this set for this session, rest are optional)	How to build a winning Brand Positioning Statement	Graham Robertson	Very nice, if a bit self-promoting, outline of the key elements of a strong positioning statement
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Required	Minimum Viable Personality	FAKEGRIMLOCK	He's at it again with a very thought-provoking take on brand personality. PERSONALITY BETTER THAN MARKETING NO HAVE PERSONALITY? PRODUCT BORING, NO ONE WANT.
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	Marketing Playbook - Positioning Framework (download from Canvas)	me	This is the positioning framework I use all the time. We will be drawing from it in class. The attached spreadsheet is my belated Valentine's gift to you. Also, you can find more about this stuff in the Marketing Playbook book, Chapter 13.
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	Marketing	Fred Wilson	Fred Wilson, of Union Square Ventures, thinks "marketing is what you do when your product or service sucks." As I recovering marketing person I am not sure how I feel about this but the article has a bunch of good thoughts about how to get started - product forward - on reaching customers
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	How most marketing works	Hugh MacLeod	Another way to look at what marketing is.
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	DUDE, YOU NEED A MARKETING PLAN!	Alex Iskold	"A great marketing plan is simple and thoughtful. It starts by recognizing that one launch, one day, one event may not be enough to lead to a critical mass of adoption. [It's] a week-by-week plan of post-launch activities for the next 3 months." <i>Enough said. Worth a read.</i>

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Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	HOW TO SOCIAL	FAKEGRIMLOCK	Social marketing seems like a now critical part of any marketing effort. Strange then that an anti-social, fake dinosaur monster would be so wise about how to do it right.
Feb 20, 18	3.1. Your logic - formulating the case for your business	Optional, or additional resources	Brands become interesting to us once interesting people start using them, not the other way around.	Hugh MacLeod	Another thought-provoking view of marketing - and what it takes to be truly successful. I like it.
Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Required	How to Present to Investors	Aared Hilaly	A very, very useful and very short guide to keep you focused, from the VC dudes at Sequoia.
Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Required	Startups: How to Storyboard your Pitch Deck in 10 Steps	Brendan Baker	Finally somebody (a former VC from Greylock), doesn't just tell you what a great pitch looks like but shows you how to go about creating one.
Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Required	9 SEED FUNDING GOTCHAS	Alex Iskold	One of the biggest reasons to pitch is to raise money. Alex Iskold shares some very informative lessons on how to be best prepared.
Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Optional, or additional resources	Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story	Jerry Weissman	In this you will find the key tips of my personal pitching guru. Jerry is a good friend and taught me more than half of what I know about pitching. And the Kindle price on this book makes it a no brainer!
Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Optional, or additional resources	3 step pitch (download from Canvas)	me	This is a very, very brief summary presentation on how to do a presentation, given to the UW Lavin Entrepreneurship meeting. We will be diving a bit deeper in class but this can be a handy reminder.

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Feb 27, 18	3.2. Your Presentation - crafting and giving a great pitch	Optional, or additional resources	Don't Get Sick Of Telling Your Story	Brad Feld	Mr. Feld shares some very good perspective and tips, on how to stay sharp and on the types of pitches you need to be ready to give.
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Required	SECRET LAWS OF STARTUPS (PART 2) - BUILD RIGHT TEAM	FAKEGRIMLOCK	"RIGHT PEOPLE MOST IMPORTANT STEP FOR STARTUP. PEOPLE WHAT STARTUP MADE FROM! BUILD STARTUP FROM RIGHT PEOPLE? THEM EVENTUALLY BUILD RIGHT THING." FAKEGRIMLOCK's laws for setting your team up right "BREAK LAW: YOU DROWN ALONE IN SEA OF OWN EGO"
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Required	Failure Modes	David Aronoff	We've looked at risks in previous reading assignments, but this thoughtful article by "accidental/geek VC," David Aronoff highlights a bunch of ways you can fail - most of them stemming from setting up your company and especially your team in the wrong way.
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Optional, or additional resources	I'm Not Delusional, I'm An Entrepreneur	Hugh MacLeod	This is the 2 minute inspirational (and slightly promotional) slideshow about entrepreneurship I shared at the outset. Go ahead and watch it again.
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Optional, or additional resources	STARTUP IS VISION	FAKEGRIMLOCK	Back to the call to action from our anonymous Transformer/Decepticon guru. Worth another read.
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Optional, or additional resources	Do We Need A New Word For Entrepreneur?	Brad Feld	One final word from Mr. Feld. Be a founder (no matter what happens, you will always be that).
Mar 6, 18	3.3. From Plan to Company - beyond initial success	Required	Interview with a start-up	Scott Adams	Worthwhile thoughts about your company culture

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