

Syllabus

Course Name & Number:	ENTRE 510 – Entrepreneurial Strategy
Quarter	Fall 2020
Class Time	Mon/Wed, 10:30 am -12:20 pm Pacific
Location	Zoom

Course Overview:

Entrepreneurs face a flood of operational decisions on a day to day basis. Some of these decisions are reversible and independent of other decisions. Entrepreneurs can freely pivot to different choices if needed. However, other decisions have strategic implications, such as shaping the payoffs of other decisions, drawing entrepreneurs into different types of 'games' with different types of competitors, or creating other kinds of path-dependencies.

A tricky aspect of strategic decision-making is recognizing which operational decisions have more strategic implications. If entrepreneurs are able to recognize this, then they can be more strategic in their prototyping and hypothesis-testing by resolving uncertainty around the most critical decisions before making irreversible, path-dependent investments.

This course has two primary learning objectives:

1) Strategic decision-making process: The first objective of this course is to show you how to bridge the gap between day-to-day operational issues and high-level strategic issues, so that you are able to recognize when and how the two facets of entrepreneurial decision-making connect and have implications for one another.

2) Strategic decision-making principles: The second objective of this course is to introduce the most fundamental economic principles that determine the profitability of common entrepreneurial decisions. Some of the core topics include: business model design, commercialization and revenue models, technological and economic feasibility, intellectual property protection, first-mover advantages, and market scope.

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Office Hours: By appointment

For those who find it useful to think about entrepreneurial decision-making in terms of the lean canvas, the figure below shows where modules and assignments in this course fall into the lean canvas:

<p>PROBLEM</p> <p>Write-up 1, Q1 Cases: Lit Motors, GolfLogix, Predictive Biosciences, Medical Foods, Inc, Birchbox</p> <p>EXISTING ALTERNATIVES</p> <p>Write-up 1, Q2-5</p>	<p>SOLUTION</p> <p>Write-up 1, Q2-5 Modules: credibility Cases: Predictive Biosciences, Airborne Express</p>	<p>UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION</p> <p>Modules: lean startup, business model design</p> <p>Cases: Lit Motors, GolfLogix, Predictive Biosciences, Birchbox</p> <p>HIGH-LEVEL CONCEPT</p> <p>Modules: business model design Cases: Medical Foods,</p>	<p>UNFAIR ADVANTAGE</p> <p>Modules: business model design, commercializing innovations, competitive dynamics Cases: Flash of genius, X-IT vs Kidde</p>	<p>CUSTOMER SEGMENTS</p> <p>Cases: Lit Motors, Airborne Express, Online pet supply, Birchbox</p> <p>Modules: lean startup, competitive dynamics</p> <p>EARLY ADOPTERS</p> <p>Cases: Lit Motors, Compact ultrasound</p>
<p>COST STRUCTURE</p> <p>Write-up 2, Q7-9 Modules: business model design, competitive dynamics Cases: Airborne Express, Online pet supply</p>		<p>REVENUE STREAMS</p> <p>Modules: business model design, commercializing innovations Cases: Predictive Biosciences, Flash of genius, X-IT vs Kidde, Medical Foods, Inc, Birchbox</p>		

Email and Internet:

UW Email and Canvas are the official means of communication for this class. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students should check their email regularly along with the Announcements section of this course. All instructor correspondence will be sent to your @uw.edu email account.

Course Structure and Format

Readings

There is no required textbook. Readings consist of a case packet and additional articles, which can be found on Canvas.

Deliverables

The primary deliverables in this course consist of two write-ups. These deliverables will address the most common types of strategic questions associated with entrepreneurial ideas.

Grading Policies

Submitting Assignments

Instructions for submitting assignments are included with the assignment descriptions within the Canvas course site. Due dates for all graded work are included in the Course Calendar below, and within the Canvas course.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will have 20% deducted from the graded score (not total possible score) for every hour it is late. Hence, an assignment submitted 1 to 60 minutes after the due time will have 20% deducted. An assignment submitted 61 to 120 minutes after the due time will have 40% deducted, and so on. These deductions are implemented without exception, regardless of the reason an assignment is submitted late. Do not put yourself or team at risk of unforeseen circumstances. Turn assignments with a comfortable margin before the deadline.

Grading Procedure

Assignments in this course are graded using a three-round process. In the first round, all assignments are read without grading. The purpose of this first round is to understand the central claims in the analysis, so that the bigger picture is not lost in assessment of individual points.

In the second round, all assignments are read once more in more detail to assess quality. An assignment is assessed based on its recognition of key points, use of appropriate supporting evidence, and validity of its inference and reasoning.

In the third round, all assignments are read once more in even more detail for the purpose of identifying opportunities for upward point adjustment. In this round, additional credit is awarded for category exemplars, i.e. exceptional analysis of particular points, claims not explicitly made but implied by other

aspects of the analysis, and points overlooked in the previous grading. In this round, all possible benefit of the doubt is given.

Contributing to Discussion

In general, the thought experiment that I use when reflecting on a student's added-value to class discussion is to ask whether the class as a whole would have 1) learned more versus less and 2) learned more efficiently versus less efficiently if that person had not been present for a given day's discussion.

At a substantive level, the orientation that students should take when participating in class discussion is an analytical rather than advocacy orientation. The goal should not be to prove any person right or wrong but to make collective progress as a class towards answering questions of fact and logic. For this to work, it is absolutely critical to avoid personal defensiveness or triggering personal defensiveness. Contributing to the collective process of learning can involve asking questions or drawing inferences about facts and logic that help move everyone closer to discovering the key insights from the readings and cases for a particular day's discussion. In contrast, making statements that clearly contradict or overlook key points in the reading will not only reveal a lack of preparation but hinder the learning process for others. Likewise, making statements that clearly contradict or overlook key points made earlier in class will not only reveal a lack of engagement and attention but hinder the learning process for others. Such instances will be noted and viewed unfavorably when assigning grades.

At a more logistical level, earning credit for contribution to class discussion requires that you be attentive and engaged. Students feel less motivated to speak if they see their classmates are "tuning out" to use electronic devices. This is a serious concern in this class because the level of learning hinges critically on active discussion reflecting a diversity of student perspectives. Speaking in front of classmates can be intimidating, and many students are cautious about speaking up. Whether intentionally or not, tuning out to use electronic devices sends negative feedback to speakers and promotes disengagement. Being consistently distracted or 'tuned out' with electronic devices for reasons unrelated to class discussion will be viewed unfavorably when grades are assigned.

Finally, earning credit for contribution to class discussion requires that you at least be present in class and have read the required material. Regularly missing class will be viewed unfavorably when assigning grades. If you know in advance that you will have regular or prescheduled conflicts that require missing more than 2 class sessions, you are strongly advised not to take this class.

Graded Material Overview

Final course grades are subject to grade distribution guidelines set by the Foster School of Business. This is intended to produce an equitable distribution that ensures academic rigor and offers accurate feedback to students regarding their academic performance relative to their peers in the same cohort. Total points earned will be computed according to the weights below. This figure serves to rank students on a comparable basis; there is no predetermined relationship between absolute numeric scores and final grade points. Final grades will be determined by how students rank relative to one another in the class distribution in terms of total points earned.

Activity	Weight
Contributions to class discussion	20%
Write-up 1	40%
Write-up 2	40%

Grade Appeals

Before initiating a formal grade appeal, be sure to carefully read the individualized feedback on your analysis. Consider whether your concern is addressed by the comments detailed in your feedback document. Also refer to the grading process to be sure your concern is not likely to have been addressed in the upward point adjustment portion of the grading. If, after having done so, you notice a genuine oversight in the grading process, please do the following:

- 1) If you would like your grade on a specific assignment to be reconsidered, compose a memo that explains the reason for requesting further consideration of your work.
 - a) All memos must be submitted within 1 week (7 days) of the original grade being distributed.
 - b) The memo must be no more than 1 page (12-pt font, single-spaced, 1" margins).
 - c) The memo must be emailed to the instructor.
 - d) The memo must point to the specific lines and passages where statements addressing the expectations of the assignment were overlooked in the grading process.
- 2) The assignment will be re-considered in its entirety; grades may be adjusted upward or downward, or remain unaltered.
- 3) All grade appeals must be written; none will be considered during office hours or class time.

Note that you are more likely to be successful in professional settings if you can persuade others logically—rather than emotionally—in a concise and specific manner. Consequently, logically-motivated appeals are most likely to result in more positive evaluations upon further review. Bear in mind that the grade appeal process is designed to provide a corrective mechanism. The process should not be abused, i.e. treated as a lottery ticket.

How does the Honor Code apply to my work in this course?

This course follows the principles and procedures espoused by the University of Washington Student Conduct Code to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Code establishes the expectation that students will practice high standards of professional honesty and integrity. In particular, implementation of the Code at the Foster School of Business prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism—including improper citations of source material—as it pertains to academic work.

If you are unclear about how the Code applies to assignments for this course, please ask for clarification prior to submitting an assignment. All instances of potential violations will be forwarded to the relevant associate dean and handled in compliance with the University of Washington Student Conduct Code as outlined in [Washington Administrative Code 478-121](#). After a case is submitted, no communication will occur between the student and instructor while the case is pending and awaiting the associate dean's investigation and decision.

Specific Applications of the Conduct Code (list not all-inclusive)

- 1) Submitting assignments that reflect uncited work or ideas from others is an act of academic dishonesty.
- 2) Using external sources without properly citing them is an act of academic dishonesty. As a general rule, do not structure your writing in ways that may result in you intentionally or unintentionally receiving credit for someone else's better writing or ideas as a result of unclear delineation.
 - a) Do not use 'lazy' paraphrasing. It is improper to use complete sentences or blocks of text in which there are only minor changes in wording from the original source. Even if the source is cited, lazy paraphrasing without quotation marks makes it unclear what is one's own original writing and what

is simply paraphrased from the source. When you do use complete sentences or blocks of text from external sources, you must use quotation marks.

- b) Do not cite references by only including a list of references at the very end. You must use citations in the text. Moreover, you must use citations in the text for every instance in which ideas or wording from external sources is used, as opposed to only the first use of a source. This, again, is important for delineating your own ideas and writing from external sources.
 - c) For websites, provide the URL of the specific page with the cited material, as opposed to only domain names or high-level sections where the location of the cited material is not apparent.
- 3) Teaching cases (e.g. HBS) are not permitted as external sources.
 - 4) If you use any sources that cannot be publicly-accessed via hyperlink, e.g. analyst or market research reports, copies of these reports must be submitted as attachments along with your assignment. As a general rule, avoid using sources that provide analysis, i.e. inferences, reasoning, conclusions. Use external sources for facts, and do your own analysis.
 - 5) Do not provide course materials or information about course content to other students who have not yet taken the course or ask for course materials or information about course content from students who have previously taken the course.

SimCheck

The University has a license agreement with SimCheck, an educational tool that helps identify plagiarism from Internet resources. In this course, assignments will be submitted electronically and checked by SimCheck. The SimCheck Report will indicate the amount of original text in submitted work and whether material that is quoted, paraphrased, summarized, or used from another source is appropriately referenced.

In addition to SimCheck, manual checks of written assignments will be done at random and when suspicious text is encountered. For instance, 1) noticeable shifts in the tone or quality of writing and 2) sentences or passages that seem to be written for some other purpose besides answering the questions in the assignment will trigger a check of the entire text of an assignment using tools beyond SimCheck.

Access and Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

Religious Accommodations

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>).

Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>).

Course Calendar

Week	Topic	Day	Date	Activities
1	Introduction	Wed	Sep 30	Read syllabus <u>closely</u> Download course packet
2	Why think strategically about entrepreneurship? I	Mon	Oct 5	
	Why think strategically about entrepreneurship? II	Wed	Oct 7	Packet: Birchbox Canvas: What's next for sample beauty boxes? Canvas: The rewards of sampling Canvas: Birchbox, seller of beauty products, steps out from web with a store Canvas: Birchbox store Yelp reviews
3		Mon	Oct 12	Coaching for Write-up 1
	Lean startup I	Wed	Oct 14	Canvas: An MVP is not a cheaper product, It's about smart learning Canvas: Continuous customer discovery Packet: Lit Motors
4	Lean startup II	Mon	Oct 19	Continuation: Lit Motors Packet: Hypothesis-driven entrepreneurship Packet: GolfLogix
	Business model design	Wed	Oct 21	
5		Mon	Oct 26	No synchronous class By appointment: Individualized coaching for Write-up 1
		Wed	Oct 28	No synchronous class By appointment: Individualized coaching for Write-up 1
6	Credibility I: is your idea technologically realistic?	Mon	Nov 2	Packet: Predictive Biosciences Canvas: (Optional) The Holy Grail of cancer diagnostics
		Wed	Nov 4	
		Sun	Nov 8	**** Assignment due: write-up 1 ****

Week	Topic	Day	Date	Activities
7	Credibility II: is your idea economically realistic?	Mon	Nov 9	Packet: You can't be good at everything (Read up to p. 18, "Putting It into Practice".) Packet: Airborne Express
		Wed	Nov 11	No class: Veteran's Day
8	Credibility III: disruptive innovation	Mon	Nov 16	Packet: Airborne Express, continuation In-class: Compact ultrasound
	Commercializing innovations I	Wed	Nov 18	Canvas: Profiting from technological innovation (Read sections 1, 2, 3.1, 3.3, 6.1 to 6.4) Canvas: Flash of Genius Packet: X-IT and Kidde
9	Commercializing innovations II	Mon	Nov 23	Packet: Medical Foods, Inc.
		Wed	Nov 25	No class: Day before Thanksgiving
10	Competitive dynamics I: first-mover advantages and end-games	Mon	Nov 30	
	Competitive dynamics II	Wed	Dec 2	Packet: Online pet supply
11		Mon	Dec 7	No synchronous class By appointment: Individualized coaching for Write-up 2
		Wed	Dec 9	No synchronous class By appointment: Individualized coaching for Write-up 2
		Sun	Dec 13	**** Assignment due: write-up 2 ****