

USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
COMM 579: Entrepreneurship in the New Media
Spring 2016, 4 units

Day/Time: Tuesdays, 5:30-8:20 p.m.

Classroom: Kerckhoff Hall Living Room: 734 West Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007

Instructors:

Ev Boyle (eboyle@usc.edu, @evmonk, ASC 301A)

Office hours: Tuesdays, 2-4pm

Geoffrey Cowan (gcowan@usc.edu, ASC 301B)

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Course Description

COMM 579 explores how the digital revolution and changes in technology, audiences, markets, and regulation are creating new entrepreneurial opportunities for businesses, governments, journalism, and social ventures. Students will develop their own projects while they gain exposure to the practice and theory of entrepreneurship and innovation in the digital era.

Class will be held in a salon-style setting and feature frequent guests, debates on real-world issues, and dinner conversations. We will usually meet on Tuesday evenings in the living room of Kerckhoff Hall, which is just a short walk from USC campus. There will be one or two class trips during the semester to startups or incubators around Los Angeles.

Course Objectives

Throughout the semester, students will gain a basic understanding of the fundamental skills and competencies needed to launch a new venture, including:

1. How to think like an entrepreneur and bring an innovative mindset to a variety of contexts and problems
2. How to precisely define problems, come up with new ideas to solve those problems, and assess the competitive landscape and overall viability of your ideas
3. How to track and understand new technological developments and the tools and services used by entrepreneurs
4. How to manage projects, people and oneself
5. How to evaluate the range of digital media business models and devise a business plan
6. How to brand and market a new venture
7. How laws and regulations present new challenges and opportunities for businesses, governments, journalism, and social ventures
8. How to take advantage of the unique entrepreneurial landscape in Los Angeles
9. How to think about the range of digital media ideas and solutions being developed by entrepreneurs in different fields including journalism, entertainment, nonprofits, government, and book publishing

10. How to think critically about Silicon Valley and the “cult of entrepreneurship” in order to challenge, subvert and remake the status quo

Class Assignments & Grading

Blogging (20%) – You will set up and host your own website, and write eight blog posts on your site throughout the semester. Your first blog post will present at least 10 short but specific ideas for an entrepreneurial idea or innovation. Two subsequent blogs will narrow your focus down to three ideas and, finally, to a single final project. In the five remaining blog posts, you will engage with ideas introduced by readings, guests, or lectures for that week and/or the weeks since your last post. Blog posts reviewing the guests, lectures, and readings should cover four major points:

- **Summarize** - Highlight the main arguments of the guest and/or readings for the week.
- **Analyze/evaluate** - Tear apart, react to, find problems or contradictions with, give strengths of, and/or explain why you agree or disagree.
- **Synthesize** - Place in relation to, bring together themes with, and say what one author and/or guest would say to another from that week or previous weeks.
- **Connect** – Explain how the readings and guests challenge, support, or change your own ideas and projects.

Participation, & attendance (15%) – Students should come to class having completed that week’s assignments and will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. We expect students to attend class and attendance will be taken. ***All students should meet with an instructor at least once within the first ten weeks of class.***

Team presentations (10%) – Students will sign up to present as a team on a topic of their choice. Presentations will be timed and graded on content and delivery.

Final presentation (15%) – As part of the process of developing their final project, each student will make a presentation of their work in progress and will receive feedback from students and instructors. Presentations will be timed and graded on content and delivery.

Final project (40%) – Students will have a choice of topics and approaches for their final project including: 1) a feasibility study for a new venture, or 2) a proposal for dramatic changes and innovations within an existing organization. Projects should include a discussion of how changes in technology, audiences, markets and regulation present challenges and opportunities for your new venture or innovation.

Extra credit (+5%) – Each student may volunteer to deliver a short (5-7 minute) presentation once during the semester on a relevant topic of their choice, pending instructor approval. ***All requests must be submitted on or before Tuesday, February 9.***

Class Policies & Resources

Statement on Academic Integrity

All students are subject to the University's Academic Integrity Code as detailed at www.usc.edu/scampus. More information can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to an instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The office is located in Student Union room 301 and their phone number is 213-740-0776.

Sexual Assault Policy and Resources

The University of Southern California is committed to fostering a safe campus environment for all members of the university community, free from sexual coercion, violence and sexual intimidation. The university's sexual misconduct and sexual assault policies have been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated (the policy is available in SCampus, section E: <http://scampus.usc.edu/e-integrity-of-the-academic-community/>). To learn more about your reporting options and your rights, or to speak with a counselor confidentially, contact the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center/Center for Women and Men at 213-740-4900, or contact Student Counseling Services at 213-740-7711. For more information and resources, including off-campus resources like the Rape Treatment Center, visit the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center website at <https://sarc.usc.edu/resources/>.

Class Recordings

Computers are allowed for note taking and in-class research, but to encourage an open discussion that protects the privacy of students and guests, recording of the class is not permitted.

Schedule of Classes

**** Note:** The schedule, topics, readings, and guest speakers below are *tentative and subject to change*. Updates to the syllabus will be announced in class and distributed via email and the COMM 579 shared drive.

Week 1 (Tuesday, January 12th) – Introductions

Week 2 (Tuesday, January 19th) – Identifying problems and thinking like an entrepreneur

AUDIO (28 min listen): Startup S01E01: "How Not to Pitch a Billionaire."
<http://bit.ly/StartUpS01E01>

ARTICLE (25 min read): Graham, P. (2012). How to Get Startup Ideas. *Paulgraham.com*.
<http://bit.ly/1OdF8iI>

ARTICLE (50 min read): Mayo, K. and Newcomb, P. (30 June 2008). How the Web Was Won. *Vanity Fair*. <http://vnty.fr/PX8piK>

BOOK (55 min read): Seelig, T. (2015). “Letter to Readers,” “Introduction,” Chapter 1 (“Imagination”) and Chapter 2 (“Envision”). *Insight Out: Get Ideas Out of Your Head and Into the World*. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

ARTICLE (5 min read): Johnson, S. (14 Aug 2012). The Spark File. *Medium*.
<http://bit.ly/1NP95ly>

OPTIONAL VIDEO (17 min watch): Johnson, S. (2010). Where Good Ideas Come From. *TED*.
<http://bit.ly/1OdFaXR>. (Or watch the 4-minute animated version of the talk:
<http://bit.ly/1Vh9WAw>)

OPTIONAL BOOK (50 min read): Seelig, T. (2015). Chapter 3 (“Motivate”) and Chapter 4 (“Experiment”). *Insight Out: Get Ideas Out of Your Head and Into the World*. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

Week 3 (Tuesday, January 26th) – Technology

**** DUE TODAY:** Domain registration and website hosting
Blog post #1 (10+ startup/innovation ideas) **

AUDIO (24 min): StartUp S01E02, “Is Podcasting the Future or the Past?”
<http://bit.ly/startups01e02>

ARTICLE (32 min): O’Reilly, T. (30 Sep 2005). What Is Web 2.0. <http://oreil.ly/1PodFr2>

ARTICLE (60 min): Raymond, E. (11 Sep 2000). The Cathedral and the Bazaar.
<http://nicco.org/readings/raym.pdf>

ARTICLE (17 min): Christensen, C.M., Raynor, M., and McDonald, R. (1 Dec 2015). What is Disruptive Innovation? *Harvard Business Review*. <http://bit.ly/1kjVlqr>

ARTICLE (5 min): Manjoo, F. (23 Dec 2015). For the New Year, Let’s Resolve to Improve our Tech Literacy. *New York Times*. <http://nyti.ms/1RiHiR7>

ARTICLE (10 min): Wang, S. (27 July 2015). Gimlet Wants to Become the “HBO of Podcasting” — Here’s What its Founders Learned Trying to get There. *Nieman Lab*.
<http://bit.ly/1Vha9Uq>

Week 4 (Tuesday, February 2nd) – Audiences, markets and competition

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #2 (reading reflections) **

AUDIO (32 min): StartUp S01E03, “How to Divide an Imaginary Pie.”
<http://bit.ly/startups01e03>

ARTICLE (8 min): How To Conduct Competitive Research (10 May 2010). *Inc.*
<http://bit.ly/1luxwYQ>

ARTICLE (18 min): Yankelovich, D, and Meer, D. (2006). Rediscovering Market Segmentation. *Harvard Business Review*. <http://bit.ly/1Vhq59d>. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

BOOK (58 min): Jenkins, H., Ford, S., and Green, J. (2013). “Introduction” in *Spreadable Media*. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

OPTIONAL ARTICLE (14 min): de Swaan Arons, M., van den Driest, F., Weed, K. (2014). The Ultimate Marketing Machine. <http://bit.ly/1UucVF9>

OPTIONAL ARTICLE (3 min): Mele, N. (14 Dec 2012). Hey. <https://echo.co/blog/hey>

OPTIONAL ARTICLE (20 min): D’Aveni, R.A. (2007). Mapping Your Competitive Position. *Harvard Business Review*. <http://bit.ly/1luxAb8>

Week 5 (Tuesday, February 9th) – Law and regulation

AUDIO (28 min): StartUp S01E04: “Startups are a Risky Business.” <http://bit.ly/1SApzDI>

BOOK (24 min): Lessig, L. (2006). *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0* (pp. ix-8). <http://bit.ly/1Z6bca1>

ARTICLE (27 min): Gross, M.J. (30 April 2012). World War 3.0. *Vanity Fair*.
<http://vnty.fr/NPcP9U>

ARTICLE (25 min): Bogdanich, W., Glanz, J., and Armendariz, A. (15 Oct 2015). Cash Drops and Keystrokes: The Dark Reality of Sports Betting and Daily Fantasy Games. *New York Times*. <http://nyti.ms/1JFXLMe>

ARTICLE (6 min): Alba, D. (9 Oct 2015). DraftKings and FanDuel Scandal is a Cautionary Startup Tale. *Wired*. <http://bit.ly/1PoeW1k>

ARTICLE (5 min): Leeds, J. (25 Feb 2002). Clear Channel: an Empire Built on Deregulation. *Los Angeles Times*. <http://lat.ms/1OLrsm9>

AUDIO (8 min): Tim Wu's The Master Switch. *On the Media*.
<http://www.onthedia.org/story/132980-tim-wus-the-master-switch/>

OPTIONAL AUDIO (21 min): Episode 107: Call Now! 99% Invisible. <http://bit.ly/1OLtFHA>

Week 6 (Tuesday, February 16th) – Fundraising and business models

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #3 (narrow 10+ ideas to 3 potential final projects) ******

AUDIO (27 min): StartUp S01E05: “How to name your company.”
<http://bit.ly/1UwWGqm>

ARTICLE (5 min): Ovens, A. (23 Jan 2015). What Is a Business Model? *Harvard Business Review*. <http://bit.ly/1PKYk6D>

ARTICLE (9 min): Jordan, J., Hariharan, A., Chen, F., and Kasireddy, P. (21 Aug 2015). 16 Startup Metrics. *Andreessen Horowitz*. <http://bit.ly/1RiHL50>

ARTICLE (9 min): McDermin, S. (27 Feb 2015). 16 Common Questions About Fundraising. *Andreessen Horowitz*. <http://bit.ly/1JuFTnA>

VIDEO (2 min): Business Model Canvas Explained. *Business Model Generation*.
<http://bit.ly/1RsVNQh>

INTERVIEW (13 min): Malik, O. (22 May 2012). Kickstarted: My Conversation with Kickstarter Co-founder Perry Chen. *GigaOm*. <http://bit.ly/1PowxuF>

VIDEO (21 min): Osterwalder, A. (2011). A New Approach to Designing Business Models. *Change Is*. <http://bit.ly/1Z9oVC8>

ARTICLE (17 min): Mulcahy, D., “Six Myths About Venture Capitalists” and Malhotra, D. “How to Negotiate with VCs.” *Harvard Business Review* “Spotlight on Entrepreneurship,” pp. 80-90. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

BLOG (4 min): O’Nolan, J. (3 Sept 2014). The Secret Sauce. *John O’Nolan*.
<http://bit.ly/1Z6bYnz>

OPTIONAL VIDEO (67 min): “How Are You Going to Make Money?” *Harvard Innovation Lab*. <http://bit.ly/1VJHmrP>

Week 7 (Tuesday, February 23rd) – Leadership: managing others and managing oneself

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #4 (reading and guest reflections) ******

AUDIO (32 min): StartUp S01E06: “How to value your startup.”

<http://bit.ly/1UwX7Rx>

ARTICLE (25 min): Drucker, P. (2005). Managing Oneself. *Harvard Business Review*. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive.]

BOOK (30 min): Horowitz, B. (2014). Chapter 4 (“When Things Fall Apart”). *The Hard Thing About Hard Things*. [Available on COMM 579 shared drive.]

BOOK (45 min): Bennis, W. (2009). *On becoming a leader*. Chapters 1 (“Mastering the Context”) and 2 (“Understanding the Basics”). [Available on COMM 579 shared drive. Introduction included but optional.]

BOOK (27 min): Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead* (Introduction & Ch. 1, “The Leadership Ambition Gap”). [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

OPTIONAL ARTICLE (46 min): Slaughter, A. (13 June 2012). Why Women Still Can’t Have It All. *The Atlantic*. <http://theatlantic.com/1kMEoFo>

Week 8 (Tuesday, March 1st) – Branding and marketing

AUDIO (34 min): StartUp S01E07: “How Listeners Become Owners.”
<http://bit.ly/1RsX2io>

BOOK (45 min): Holiday, R. (2014). *Growth Hacker Marketing*.
<http://bit.ly/1MTVHuS>

AUDIO (52 min): Seth Godin: “The Art of Noticing, and Then Creating” (4 Dec 2014). *On Being with Krista Tippett*. <http://bit.ly/1UKtIDI>

OPTIONAL BOOK (45 min): Sachs (2012). (Prologue, Ch. 1 “The Story Wars are All Around Us,” & Ch. 2 “The Five Deadly Sins”). *Winning the Story Wars* [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

OPTIONAL VIDEO (40 min): Berger, J. (2013). *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*. *Wharton School*. <http://bit.ly/1n4JFKa>

OPTIONAL BOOK (28 min): Rushkoff, D. (1999). “Introduction.” *Coercion* [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

OPTIONAL VIDEO (16 min): Strauss, S. (2011). \$100,000 of brand strategy advice. *YouTube*. <http://bit.ly/1n4JL4y>

Week 9 (Tuesday, March 8th) – Innovation case studies: Journalism

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #5 (final project proposal) ******

AUDIO (26 min): StartUp S01E08: “Our New Show.”
<http://bit.ly/1ONqu3W>

ARTICLE (23 min): Anderson, Bell and Shirky “Introduction”. *Post-Industrial Journalism: Adapting to the Present*. <http://bit.ly/LrSNFh>

ARTICLE (5 min): Kaufman, L. (6 April 2014). Vox Takes Melding of Journalism and Technology to New Level. *New York Times*. <http://nyti.ms/1mCljXd>

REPORT/ARTICLE (19 min): Benton, J. (15 May 2014). The leaked New York Times Innovation Report is one of the Key Documents of this Media Age. *Nieman Journalism Lab*. <http://bit.ly/1SAsFHJ> [Read the article and skim the full PDF report, which is available on COMM 579 shared drive]

BLOG (16 min): Rosen, J. (2010, September 6). The Journalists Formerly Known as the Media: My Advice to the Next Generation. *PressThink*. <http://bit.ly/1ZOaSyP>

ARTICLE (50 min): Cowan, G. (2007). Leading the Way to Better News: How the Powers that Be Became the Powers that Were. *Harvard Kennedy School Joan Shorenstein Center*. <http://bit.ly/1PKR8rk>

Week 10 (Tuesday, March 22nd) – Innovation case studies: Civic enterprise and gov tech

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #6 (reading and guest reflections) ******

AUDIO (29 min): StartUp S01E09: “We Made a Mistake.” <http://bit.ly/1mCIFNE>

SPEECH (14 min): Pariser, E. (14 May 2005). “The World Needs You to See It with Fresh Eyes”: Simon’s Rock Commencement Address. *Bard College at Simon’s Rock*. <http://bit.ly/1N3taTx>. [Video also available on COMM 579 shared drive]

VIDEO (12 min): Pahlka, J. (2012). Coding a Better Government. *TED*. <http://bit.ly/22LfLLA>

VIDEO (18 min): Shirky, C. (2012). How the Internet Will (One Day) Transform Government. *TED*. <http://bit.ly/1IRfArz>

BLOG (3 min): McGlade, M. (11 Feb 2013). Lessons from a Failed Social Entrepreneur. *HBR Blog Network*. <http://bit.ly/1OANcKD>

ARTICLE (30 min): Issenberg, S. (19 December 2012). How President Obama’s campaign used Big Data to Rally Individual Voters. *MIT Technology Review*. <http://bit.ly/1RiKKeV>

OPTIONAL AUDIO (28 min): Kestenbaum, D. & Goldstein, J. (16 Aug 2013). Act I: “Money for Nothing and Your Cows for Free.” *This American Life*. <http://bit.ly/105xFB9>

OPTIONAL BOOK: Newsome, G. (2013). *Citizenville* (pp. xi-43). [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

Week 11 (Tuesday, March 29th) – Innovation case studies: Books in the digital era

AUDIO (29 min): StartUp S01E10: “Mixing Art and Business.”
<http://bit.ly/22Lg350>

ARTICLE (18 min read): “The Future of the Book” (10 Oct 2014). *The Economist*.
<http://econ.st/1ZXts7Q>

ARTICLE (10 min): Michael, L. (17 Sep 2014). The Future Of The Future Of Books. *Buzzfeed*. <http://bzfd.it/1SeJDMI>

ARTICLE (44 min): Packer, G. (17 Feb 2014). Cheap Words. *The New Yorker*.
<http://bit.ly/1OeFUL7>

ARTICLE (10 min): Alter, A. (19 July 2012). Your E-Book is Reading You. *The Wall Street Journal*. <http://on.wsj.com/1W1BdYf>

Week 12 (Tuesday, April 5th) – Silicon Valley and its discontents

**** DUE TODAY:** Blog post #7 (reading and guest reflections) **

AUDIO (27 min): StartUp S01E11: “Know Your Customer.”
<http://bit.ly/1JY2dko>

ARTICLE (15 min): Eveleth, R. (31 Jul 2015). Why aren’t there More Women Futurists? *The Atlantic*. <http://theatlntc/1UwZHqR>

ARTICLE (18 min): bell hooks (28 Oct 2013). Dig Deep: Beyond Lean In. *The Feminist Wire*.
<http://bit.ly/1kMGpBy>

ARTICLE (10 min): Marwick, A. (25 November 2013). Silicon Valley isn’t a Meritocracy. And it’s Dangerous to Hero-Worship Entrepreneurs. *Wired*. <http://bit.ly/1RaQh6g>

ARTICLE (22 min): Lepore, J. (23 June 2014). The Disruption Machine: What the Gospel of Innovation gets Wrong. *The New Yorker*. <http://bit.ly/1TF23ne>

ARTICLE (36 min): Packer, G. (May 27, 2013). Change the World: Silicon Valley Transfers its Slogans—and its Money—to the Realm of Politics. *The New Yorker*.
<http://bit.ly/1PogqJ6>

OPTIONAL VIDEO (57 min): "Silicon Valley" (2014). HBO. (Episodes 1-2.) [Available on COMM 579 shared drive]

Week 13 (Tuesday, April 12th) – **** Final Presentations ****

AUDIO (25 min): StartUp S01E12: "Burnout." <http://bit.ly/10OR3PV>

Week 14 (Tuesday, April 19th) – **** Final Presentations ****

AUDIO (31 min): StartUp S01E13: "Fake It Til You Make It." <http://bit.ly/1RaQjvd>

Week 15 (Tuesday, April 26th) – Entrepreneurship in Los Angeles

**** DUE TODAY: Blog post #8 (final class reflections) ****

AUDIO (39 min): StartUp S01E14: "Where We Are (season 1 finale)."
<http://bit.ly/1ONs4mm>

REPORT/ARTICLE (5 min): Carney, M. (2013). Built in LA Report shows that the LA Startup Ecosystem has come a Long, Long Way. *Pandodaily*. <http://bit.ly/1W0MhVg>

VIDEO (4 min): Feld, B. (2013). "StartupVille." *Kauffman Foundation*.
<http://bit.ly/1PSQpUY>

ARTICLE (5 min): Wadhwa, V. (2013). "Silicon Valley Can't Be Copied." *MIT Technology Review*. <http://bit.ly/1Pfu4ye>

ARTICLE (4 min): Tech scene takes hold in revitalized downtown L.A. *Los Angeles Times*.
<http://lat.ms/1OfoSg4>

**** Final Project Due (Tuesday, May 3rd) ****

Course Instructors



Nicco Mele is an entrepreneur, angel investor and consultant to Fortune 1000 companies, and one of America's leading forecasters of business, politics, and culture in our fast-moving digital age. He is currently a Senior Fellow at USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy (CCLP) and a contributor to the Harvard Business Review. Nicco is an active angel investor in technology startups, including Plympton (a publishing startup), UMS (mobile), Cignify (data analytics), and iDiet (health care). He advises several startups, including Blueprint Robotics and Good Labs. Most recently, Nicco Mele has served as Senior Vice President and Deputy

Publisher of the Los Angeles Times. He focused on product, content, revenue, and audience development for all of the California News Group's brands, including growing existing digital products and services, identifying possible acquisitions, developing new business opportunities and launching new products. Nicco's first book, *The End of Big: How The Internet Makes David The New Goliath*, was published in 2013 by St. Martin's Press.



Geoffrey Cowan is a USC University Professor, the inaugural holder of the Annenberg Family Chair in Communication Leadership, and director of the USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy. A former director of the Voice of America and dean of the USC Annenberg School, Cowan is also president of the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, a nonprofit organization that convenes high-level conferences for world leaders to address global challenges that hosted President Obama's famed summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping in June, 2013. He is on the boards of the Pacific Council on International Policy, Common Sense Media, and the Susan

Thompson Buffett Foundation, and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Political and Social Science.



Ev Boyle is the Director of Special Projects at the USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy and the founding director of Civic Tech USC, a new initiative working at the intersection of technology, citizenship, and government. Previously, he was a co-founder of two award-winning tech startups in New York City, a producer of short documentaries for Current TV, and an investment analyst at the Democracy Alliance in Washington, DC. He holds a joint M.Sc./M.A. in Global Media and Communications from the London School of Economics and the University of Southern California, and a B.A. in Communication from the University of Pennsylvania.