CNTV 599 Special Topics:
The Art of Hustling: Ventures in Media, Digital Enterprises, and Beyond
Units: 4.0

Monday, 7p.m. – 10p.m.

Location: SCI 108

Instructor: Diego Berdakin, Bryan Baum
Office:
Office Hours:
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Office:
Office Hours:
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Blackboard Support: blackboard@usc.edu

Course Description

This media and entrepreneurship master class hosts some of the greatest entrepreneurs of our generation. Regular course speakers have included Evan Spiegel (Snapchat), Jeffrey Katzenberg (Dreamworks), Sophia Amoruso (NastyGal), Travis Kalanick (Uber), Jamie Siminoff (Ring.com) and Michael Broukhim (fabfitfun).

Whether you're an entrepreneur, aspiring entrepreneur or just a curious mind, this course will inspire you in all realms — from media to digital enterprises.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The charter for "The Art of Hustling: Ventures in Media, Digital Enterprises, and Beyond" is to identify a media or content idea with impact, and develop the viability and full potential of that idea through the creation of a business plan for deployment. A successful project is one in which by the end of the semester, an individual or team is able to credibly stand behind their venture and be taken seriously by their peers, faculty and course judges.

Success is not judged on whether you're able to raise capital, but rather how well you are able to:

- Identify a real problem (i.e. a problem for which people are willing to pay to solve)
- Create a credible, creative solution
- Share that solution in a new and interesting way through current and future storytelling trends
- Defend solutions against competition

At the end of 15 weeks you will be evaluated by some of the top gatekeepers in the space (from top agents to top investors) – with the hope that some of the projects may be of interest to those individuals. Our goal is provide real-world experience and real-time feedback as you begin your careers as content creators and business people, whether it be Hollywood, Silicon Valley, or on Wall Street. This class will leave you with a deep understanding of what it takes to make it in today's hyper-competitive and ever-changing landscape.

Course Notes

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

TechCrunch, Mashable, AllFacebook, VentureBeat, Hollywood Reporter, AD Week, TechMeme, LA Times Tech Blog

Knowledge of these blogs will be crucial for class discussion and participation.

Recommended Reading:

Zero to One | Peter Thiel

The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon | Brad Stone

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Final Project	50	50%
Class Participtation	15	15%
Individual Forum Posts (10 x 35 pts)	35	35%
TOTAL	100	100%

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A   95-100
A-   90-94
B+   87-89
B   83-86
B-   80-82
C+   77-79
C   73-76
C-   70-72
D+   67-69
D   63-66
D-   60-62
F   59 and below

Assignment Rubrics

Final Project—Develop a New Company Pitch

This master class is intended to help bring your ideas to life. Using what you've learned in this course, start working on your business idea. Your final project will show the progress you've made. Please note, if you have a business idea you've already started to think about, this is a great course to propel your venture forward and get real-time feedback from entrepreneurs and investors.

You will be assessed on these criteria:

- Is your project financially viable? Has a business plan and monetization been taken into account?

- Is there a clear marketing plan in place?

- Is there a strong brand and story component?

- Did you effectively answer and address the target objectives?

- Is your idea compelling?

- Do you have a prototype or sample of what the final "product" will be (mock-ups, designs and videos are fine)

The format of your final project should be one of the following:

a) a video of 3 minutes or less

b) a PowerPoint/Keynote presentation of 15 slides or less, or

c) a live website

This work must be a unique creation for this class. You may work individually or in pairs.

Keep in mind that effective storytelling is a key tool to charm an audience, get them to invest their time and/or money, and join you in your endeavor. Your creative communication strategies will be important in sharing your business idea.

All individuals or pairs must turn in a summary of their final project idea in no more than 300 words by *Friday, end of Week 3.*

All individuals or pairs must a submit a progress assessment *Week 7* *to share where they are in the* *development of their idea, in no more than 500 words.*

All final projects are due by *Week 15.*

Class participation

You'll receive 10 points for being present and participating in class, for a total of 150 points this semester. By attending class, asking questions, and actively listening to lecturers and speakers, this will (hopefully) be an easy 10% of your grade.

Individual Forum Posts

Each week (with the exception of weeks 1, 2, 13, 14 and 15) following class, a question will be posted on Blackboard encouraging students to use what they've learned from speakers and in the course, the readings they've done, and the project work they are engaging in. Each student will be required to develop a substantive post (200-250 words) or short videos (60-90 seconds) substantiating their thoughts with current events. In the interest of ongoing class conversation online, you are encouraged to read and respond to others' posts.

Please note: CNTV 599 Special Topics is a 4-credit course. Students can expect to spend approximately 6-8 hours a week on average in completing assignments in reading, group projects, and online discussion and interaction.

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be due the Friday before each class. The reason for this choice in date is to give your instructions adequate time to review your assignments before class, so that class sessions can be more productive.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be deducted 5% for each day late with no exceptions unless the student has contacted the professor with a strong excuse and has defined a new submittal date in agreement with the professor.

Attendance Policy

Participation in all classes is a requirement of the course. Students missing more than three classes will not qualify to pass the course.

Exceptions can be only made in extenuating circumstances.

Grading Timeline

Grades for assignments will be returned within one week of submission.

Other Questions

How in-depth does the final project need to be in terms of description of the intellectual property and samples of creative content?

Like with real web content the length and depth should be highly variable. The character count on a twitter feed will be substantially lower than a blog. What ultimately matters is the quality of the work not the length.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Course will likely include the following sessions.

Session order is subject to change; final sequence will be determined by speaker availabilities and class flow.

To increase practical value and relevance, topics and speakers may be added or modified based on major business and entertainment news occurring during the semester.

There will be guest speakers at each class; these will be announced at least one week in advance.

Topics/Daily Activities		Assignments & Due Dates
Week 1	Introduction: The Digital Landscape Today We will do a deep dive across the macro-trends informing a changing landscape and new technological paradigms. This primer on the Internet today will give you a lay of the land and expose you to some non-intuitive changes across the digital sphere (Social, Mobile, Real Time, Data-Driven, Graphs and Identity)	
Week 2	**NO CLASS – LABOR DAY WEEKEND**	
Week 3	A Social World: Interactive, Interconnected, Instant and Honest As our lives increasingly move online so do our relationships and modes of communication. Understanding the underlying fabric of the social web and how nodes & edges take part in forming the underlying Social Graph are fundamental. Understanding how this graph can be best utilized, and at times exploited, is important. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	Blackboard Forum Prompt #1: written or video response due end of day Friday ***Submit Final Project idea summary in no more than 300 words***
Week 4	Creating a Brand Everything you create can be expressed as a brand, including your identity as a publisher – real or otherwise. Whether it's your brand as a content creator, a twitter handle, a meme, or specific bodies of work, the brands you are creating are everywhere. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	Blackboard Forum Prompt #2: written or video response due end of day Friday
Week 5	Building and Maintaining Audience Learn how to build affinity for a brand, which is what enables you to create and retain an audience. In this class we will explore what creates strong affinity and broad appeal for a brand. Additionally we'll discuss the social dynamics intra-audience, which result in a virtuous cycle of community creation. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	Blackboard Forum Prompt #3: written or video response due end of day Friday
Week 6	Get Inspired, Story From A to Z Everything you do in your creative or business life is about telling a story. In the changing digital landscape, story can take on many forms. We will discuss different story-telling mediums, story in its many forms and talk about how this story-telling applies in both traditional and new media. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	Blackboard Forum Prompt #4: written or video response due end of day Friday

Week 7	Comedy In All Forms	Blackboard Forum Prompt #5: written or video response due end of day Friday
	We will examine comedy, from the use of comedy to sell a product to all types of humor. We will do an interactive exercise to examine the moment of inspiration, continue with the joke and its many forms, and look at how this has evolved in the new media landscape. By the end of this session, students will have crafted their own one-liners, comedic Twitter accounts, or funny Facebook posts.	***Final Project Progress Assessment due***
	Guest Speaker: TBD	
Week 8	Show Meets Business	Blackboard Forum Prompt #6: written or video response due end of day Friday
	This session is an in-depth look at the inner workings of Hollywood as it relates to the digital landscape. We will look at how to put oneself out there for a career in Hollywood and the myriad new ways to be creative and get noticed digitally. We will also explore many of the myths surrounding a career in show business and how to use who you are, your story-telling expertise, and technology to forge a new model of self-expression that can be turned into a viable business. We will also look at product integration and how to protect your creative vision and work with brands without feeling like a sellout.	
	Guest Speaker: TBD	
Week 9	What's Your Story?	Blackboard Forum Prompt #7: written or video response due end of day Friday
	Finding your passion and inspiration is a key part of the creative process. Whether it's writing a letter to get a job interview or creating an outline for a short film about your life, you have a story to tell. This session will be about finding what interests you and how to best tell that story across all mediums. This will be an interactive session where students will focus on several key areas of interest that will be crafted into stories.	
	Guest Speaker: TBD	
Week 10	Ready, Break!	Blackboard Forum Prompt #8: written or video response due end of day Friday
	This session will be a run like a real Hollywood writers' room. Students will be taken through an extensive story-breaking process, from the log line of an idea to a full story break. By the end of the class, we will have fully broken stories from an idea presented in previous classes.	
	Guest Speaker: TBD	
Week 11	Activating an Audience	Blackboard Forum Prompt #9: written or video response due end of day Friday
	Building an audience is inherently of value. However, your ability to communicate with and drive your audience to take action is the difference between creating something which is simply "popular" or potentially "game changing." In this class we'll explore the nuances in channels and types of content, which will ultimately enable creators to garner a large following.	
	Guest Speaker: TBD	

Week 12	**Monetizing an Audience** Often one of the more overlooked aspects of content creation is monetization. A content creator's ability to monetize their content is often times the difference maker in creating a sustainable and longstanding series. From topics, to audience, to different monetization models this class will be a survey of monetizing audience. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	Blackboard Forum Prompt #10: written or video response due end of day Friday
Week 13	**Selling a Story** Figuring out what's next once you've created a brand and audience and even a business is increasingly more complicated as distribution channels become more fragmented. We'll talk about some of the places your stories can go, who the decision makers in those places are, and most importantly how to get to them. **Guest Speaker: TBD**	
Week 14	**Continued Engagement** Once you've done the hard work of building a brand, an audience of loyal fans and a business model that sustains the cost of production, you're really only starting your journey. There are some key decisions you need to make at this point which will determine the success and longevity of your project. On our final day we'll take a practical exploration of some of the projects you're working on and give you some help as you move into the final segment of the class.	
Week 15	**Demo Day** Groups will have the opportunity to meet, ask questions, and get feedback from our guest speakers. In this format, all students will be able to learn from the real-time "feedback" being provided about their own projects as well as their peers, and ask questions. **Guest Panel of Judges**	*Final projects due*
FINALS WEEK	**Feedback & Reflection** Creating a project that takes the content of the course into account is the ultimate goal. Students will be given feedback on their specific project. Even if your project isn't "bought" or "funded," you may still be on track for success.	

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.
Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion
Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self- expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/

Disruptive Student Behavior:
Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX