

Building a High Tech Startup

ITP 466 (4 Units)



Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the methodologies and processes involved in building a tech startup. Students will work in teams, learning (by doing) how to turn great ideas into great companies.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Build winning startup teams
- Develop a business model
- Fundraise
- Acquire and sustain customers
- Generate revenue
- Employ sales techniques and meet with investors
- Understand the legal and accounting matters
- Produce product roadmaps and feature sets
- Develop minimum viable products
- Use Agile methodologies
- Produce wireframes, high fidelity designs, and prototypes
- Gather and analyze metrics
- Employ marketing techniques

Prerequisites

None

Lectures and Lab

Mondays, Wednesdays 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM in KAP 158

Instructor

Name: Timothy Li

Office: email or call for appointments

Office Hours: email or call for appointments

Contact Info: ttli@usc.edu or 614.209.9894

Teaching Assistant

TBD

IT Help

IT help will be provided by Viterbi IT

Hours of Service: 8am – 5pm M-F

Contact Info: <http://viterbi.usc.edu/servicedesk> , 213-740-0517, engrhelp@usc.edu

Textbook

This class covers a great deal of territory, so no single textbook can cover it all. In addition to reading/listening material that will be assigned in class, the following textbooks will provide important background, and will be used as reference material:

- Maurya, Ash (2012). Running Lean. O’Rielly Media. ISBN-10 1449305172.
- Blank, Steve and Dorf, Bob (2012). The Startup Owner’s Manual: The Step-by-Step Guide for Building a Great Company. K&S Ranch Publishing. ISBN-10 0984999302.

Your Startup

For a hands-on experience, there will be a semester-long group project assignment. Each group must have between 4 and 5 members. Each group will act as a startup and go through the full process of creating a product that will be pitched at the end of the semester to a group of investors.

Grading

The weight of graded material during the semester is listed below:

In-Class Participation	15%
Peer Review	5%
Assignments	40%
Pitch	20%
Exam	20%

Grading Scale

The following shows the grading scale to be used to determine the final letter grade.

The following grading scale will be used to determine your letter grade:

93% and above	A
90% - 92%	A-
87% - 89%	B+
83% - 86%	B
80% - 82%	B-
77% - 79%	C+
73% - 76%	C
70% - 72%	C-
67% - 69%	D+
64% - 66%	D
63% and below	F

Assignment Submission Policies

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure case studies and assignment are turned in on time. Make sure you follow the procedures outlined in each assignment or case study (Blackboard submissions). Late assignment submissions will be subject to a late penalty of 25% per day. No assignments will be accepted later than four days from the due date.

Additional Policies

No make-up exams (except for documented medical or family emergencies) will be offered nor will there be any changes made to the Final Exam schedule, except as permitted by university rules.

Lecture attendance is not mandatory however it is recommended that students not miss any lecture.

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Course Outline

Week 1 – 8/26/2019

Introduction

- History of the corporation
- Startups
- Profiles of startups

Week 2 – 9/2/2019

Team

- Founders and first employees
- Attracting and hiring the right people
- Roles and team dynamics
- Culture

Week 3 – 9/9/2019

Product Research

- Research TAM (Total Addressable Market)
- Research competitive landscape
- Research product viability and scalability

Week 4 – 9/16/2019

Product Management

- Minimum viable product
- Product vision
- Product roadmap
- Features and requirements

Week 5 – 9/23/2019

UX Design

- User research
- Personas and scenarios
- Wireframes

Week 6 – 9/30/2019

UI Design

- High fidelity designs
- Prototypes
- Usability testing
- A/B testing tools

Week 7 – 10/7/2019

UI Design

- High fidelity designs
- Prototypes
- Usability testing
- A/B testing tools

Week 8 – 10/14/19

Customers

Information technology program

- Customer acquisition
- Customer relationships
- Customer segmentations

Week 9 – 10/21/19

Revenue

- Revenue streams
- Pricing
- Market type, size and share
- Common mistakes
- Revenue first companies

Week 10 – 10/28/19

Sales

- Sales strategies
- Pitch decks
- One sheets

Week 11 – 11/4/19

Fund Raising

- Investor's perspective
- Meeting with investors, pitching, leveraging relationships
- Fund raising process
- Valuation
- Term sheets

Week 12 – 11/11/19

Analytics and Metrics

- Analytics 101
- Key performance indicators
- Tools and platforms

Week 13 – 11/18/19

Marketing

- Marketing channels
- Social media marketing
- Inbound marketing
- Funnel analysis

Week 14 – 11/25/19

Legal and Accounting

- Equity
- Fundraising
- Investor requests

Week 15 – 12/2/19

- Startup Pitch Prep
- Final Review

Week 16 – 12/11/19~12/18/19

Exam

Finals Week

Startup Pitches

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” <https://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, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>