



PRIN 530 Business Essentials for Product Innovators

4 units

Instructor: Aswin Pranam

Meeting Times: 4 hours lecture a week

Course Description:

Basics of business concepts and techniques specific to developing and launching products. Topics include product roadmapping, supply chain, and market research.

Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

Before you can disrupt business, you must build a competent vocabulary and key insights for what business is, and can be. The first of three courses that build the groundwork for students to develop a unique business mindset, Business Essentials provides an overview of general concepts and techniques leading to theoretical and practical fluency, and the skills necessary to thrive across the digital and/or physical product landscape and organization.

After the course, students will be able to showcase demonstrated understanding of business essentials and methodologies including:

- Product roadmapping, supply chain management, market research and trends analysis, brand strategy and marketing strategy, project management, and strategic planning
- Students will also walk away with an introductory understanding of the language of finance, accounting, and statistics.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Microsoft Excel as well as Powerpoint and/or Keynote and/or Google Slides will be necessary for key deliverables. In addition, Adobe CC is suggested, though not required for visual rendering of ideas.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Unless otherwise specified, the following readings and supplementary materials are available online, or in major bookstores.

- *Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy*, Porter, M. HBR, January 2008
- *Blue Ocean Strategy*, Kim, W., Mauborgne, R., HBR, October 2004.
- *What is Strategy*, Porter, M., HBR 4134, December 1996.
- *Making Things Happen: Mastering Project Management*, Scott Berkun
- Spyder Active Sports - 2004 HBS 9-206-027, April 2007
- Introduction to Supply Chain Management, Darden Business Publishing, UV5138 January 2009
- Southwest Airlines in Baltimore, HBS 9-602-156

- Rapid Fire Fulfillment, Ferdos, K., Lewis, m., Machuca, J. HBR November 2004
- *How Pixar Fosters Collective Creativity*, Catmul. E., HBR September 2008
- Airbnb, Lassiter, J., HBS 9-812-046, April 2012
- *What Makes a Leader*, Goleman, D., HBR January 2004
- Mastering the Informational Interview, Alboher, M., New York Times, January 29. 2008
- *A Preface to Marketing Management*, Peter, J. Paul, Donnelly, James H.
- Statements of Cash Flows: Three Examples, HBS 9-193-103

Grading Breakdown and Scale

The following is a breakdown of grading policies. The course will consist of a range of individual and team-based assignments in order to provide hands-on experience in Business Essentials including, but not limited to the proven ability to speak the “language” of business, Finance, Accounting, Supply Chain, Market Research, and Case Studies in innovative business practices.

Deliverable	Points	Percentage
Individual Assignment 01	200	20%
Individual Assignment 02	50	5%
Individual Assignment 03	100	10%
Quiz 01	50	5%
Quiz 02	50	5%
Quiz 03	50	5%
Quiz 04	50	5%
Final Project	300	30%
Participation	150	15%
Totals	1000	100%

Description of Assignments

Individual Assignment 01 - Marketing-Branding Assignment: Students will develop a brand strategy and marketing strategy as well as a marketing program for an assigned or proposed product.

Project Timeline:

- Week 5: Proposal/Outline

Project Grading:

- Proposal/Outline: 10%

- Week 7: Presentation
- Week 7: Deliverable

- Presentation: 40%
- Deliverable: 50%

Individual Assignment 02 - Informational Interview: Students will seek out a product design and/or product industry leader in order to conduct an informational interview about their career pathway and vision of the future.

Individual Assignment 03 - Organizational Leadership Paper: Students will write a paper reflecting on the key tenets of entrepreneurial and organizational leadership discussed in the class and various readings.

Quiz 01 - Assessment of understanding of key insights and methods shared during the class.

Quiz 02 - Assessment of understanding of key insights and methods shared during the class.

Quiz 03 - Assessment of understanding of key insights and methods shared during the class.

Quiz 04 - Assessment of understanding of key insights and methods shared during the class.

Final Presentation & Final Project Deliverable - For the final project in Business Essentials, students will conceptualize a digital or physical product, and bring the product to market using the Product Development Process covered in the course. In addition, students are expected to consider the brand, marketing strategy, project management, leadership implications, and resources (financial, supply, operational, etc.) required to see a successful launch. The final project will be presented, and deliverables will include a go-to-market strategy (product plan) and accompanying visuals.

Project Timeline:

- Week 14: Proposal/Outline
- Week 15: Presentation
- Week 16: Deliverable 01 (Product Plan)
- Week 16: Deliverable 02 (Visual)

Project Grading:

- Proposal/Outline: 10%
- Presentation: 30%
- Deliverable 01 (Product Plan): 40%
- Deliverable 02 (Visual): 20%

Participation - Students are expected to participate actively in class and in team assignments.

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

Assignment Rubrics vary per assignment. Please check with the instructor to ensure you have a clear understanding of what is expected of you for each assignment.

Assignment Submission Policy

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due prior to the class session in which it will be discussed or presented. Assignments may be submitted over email or Blackboard, and students will be informed of the submission platform prior to the commencement of the assignment. In the case of group assignments that have team-based deliverables, presentations will take place during the class session and all slides/deliverables are due before the end of that session.

Academy Student Attendance Policy

The Academy maintains rigorous academic standards for its students and on-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Each student will be allowed two excused absences over the course of the semester for which no explanation is required. Students are admonished to not waste excused absences on non-critical issues, and to use them carefully for illness or other issues that may arise unexpectedly. Except in the case of prolonged illness or other serious issue (see below), no additional absences will be excused. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by 1/3 of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to A-, an A- will be lowered to B+, etc.).

Students remain responsible for any missed work from excused or unexcused absences. Immediately following an absence, students should contact the instructor to obtain missed assignments or lecture notes and to confirm new deadlines or due dates. Extensions or other accommodations are at the discretion of the instructor.

Automatically excused absences normally may not be used for quiz, exam or presentation days. Using an excused absence for a quiz, exam or presentation, such as in the case of sudden illness or other emergency, is at the discretion of the instructor.

In the case of prolonged illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen serious issues, the student should contact the instructor to arrange for accommodation. Accommodation may also be made for essential professional or career-related events or opportunities. All accommodations remain at the discretion of the instructor, and appropriate documentation may be required.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 01	Course Overview; What are the essential business skills for product innovators? Introduction to the Lean Startup.	Watch: Steve Blank at UCSB	
Week 02	Speaking the language of Business 1: Finance (Net Present Value, WACC)	Statements of Cash Flows: Three Examples, HBS 9-193-103 Prepare for Quiz 01 (Finance)	Quiz 01 due W2
Week 03	Speaking the language of Business 2: Statistics [DS]	Prepare for Quiz 02 (Statistics)	Quiz 02 due W3
Week 04	Branding, Brand Positioning, Brand Architecture		
Week 05	Market Research, Consumer Behavior and Segmentation	<i>A Preface to Marketing Management</i> , Peter, J. Paul, Donnelly, James H. (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5)	Proposal for Individual Assignment 01 due W5
Week 06	Marketing Mix, Distribution Strategy, Pricing, Pricing Strategy [<i>Online Module?</i>]		
Week 07	The Bridge Between Branding and Marketing		Individual Assignment 01 due W7 (Marketing-Branding Assignment)
Week 08	Entrepreneurial Leadership in Product Innovation [DI, CS, PD3]	<i>What Makes a Leader</i> , Goleman, D., HBR January 2004 Mastering the Informational Interview, Alboher, M., New York Times, January 29. 2008	Individual Assignment 02 due W8 (Informational Interview)
Week 09	Organizational Leadership and Behavior (DS)	<i>How Pixar Fosters Collective Creativity</i> , Catmul. E., HBR September 2008 Airbnb, Lassiter, J., HBS 9-812-046, April 2012	Individual Assignment 02 due W9 (Organizational Leadership Paper)
Week 10	Speaking the language of Business 3: Value Chains, Lean Operations, Profit	Selection from Introduction to Supply Chain Management, Darden Business Publishing,	Quiz 03 due W10

	Management and Dynamic Pricing [online?]	UV5138 January 2009 Southwest Airlines in Baltimore, HBS 9-602-156 Rapid Fire Fulfillment, Ferdos, K., Lewis, m., Machuca, J. HBR November 2004 Prepare for Quiz 03 (Supply Chain and Operations)	
Week 11	Speaking the language of Business 4: Accounting (Financial Statements, Ratios)	Case Study: Spyder Active Sports - 2004 HBS 9-206-027, April 2007 Prepare for Quiz 04 (Accounting)	Quiz 04 due W11
Week 12	Speaking the language of Business 5: Project Management (Scheduling, Resource Management)	<i>Making Things Happen: Mastering Project Management</i> , Scott Berkun (Chapters 2, 5, 7, 10)	
Week 13	Product Development; Product-Market Fit (When to trust the data, and when to trust your gut) [PD1]	Reading Selections from: <i>What is Strategy</i> , Porter, M., HBR 4134, December 1996.	Final Project Proposals
Week 14	Strategic Planning: Internal Environment, External Environment, and Competitive Advantage	Reading Selections from: <i>Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy</i> , Porter, M. HBR, January 2008 <i>Blue Ocean Strategy</i> , Kim, W., Mauborgne, R., HBR, October 2004.	
Week 15	Final Presentations		Final Project Presentations
FINALS	STUDY DAYS	STUDY DAYS	Final Project Case Study and Deliverables

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.

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.