USC Iovine and Young Academy

Arts, Technology and the Business of Innovation

IDSN 525: Business Essentials
Units: 3.0
Summer 2023—Tuesdays—7:30pm-9:05pm

Location: Online

Instructor: Aswin Pranam
Office: Online
Office Hours: By Appointment
Contact Info: apranam@usc.edu

IT Help: 2U Student Support
Hours of Service: Available 24/7, 365 days/year
Contact Info: studentsupport@online-iovine-young.usc.edu, 1-855-487-3504

Course Description

"Business Essentials" is a general management course designed for students in the online Master of Integrated Design, Business and Technology degree program. The course provides students exposure to the various functional disciplines found within a business: (1) building theoretical and analytical fluency through the introduction of core concepts, methods, and frameworks, and (2) initiating a discussion about how those disciplines are integrated and/or interdependent. Developed to provide students with a view of the common leadership and managerial challenges found in firms at various points in the organizational life cycle—from prelaunch through maturity—the course uses a variety of methods to enhance students' flexibility and adaptability in a dynamic business world characterized by uncertainty. The course focuses students' attention on the robust quantitative and qualitative analytic skills proven, over time, to support sound decision-making and managerial action—skills in (1) adopting strategies to support long-lived, competitively strong business organizations; (2) choosing and deploying a marketing mix that will generate awareness, trial, and ongoing purchase of those organizations' products and services; (3) understanding how to best allocate and manage financial and other resources to support ongoing operations; and (4) identifying, evaluating, and selecting new opportunities appropriate to business growth or new venture launch.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The high-level goal of this course is to introduce students to an array of basic concepts and tools useful in various organizational settings. Students will:

- Gain a basic understanding of business strategy, accounting, marketing, operations, organizational management, and entrepreneurship
- Understand interdisciplinary and cross-functional interactions within established and emerging firms
- Gain an appreciation for decision-making complexity within organizations and organizational networks
- Apply learned theories and frameworks across a variety of business situations
- Develop critical-thinking skills across an array of business disciplines

Recommended Preparation: IDSN 510: Integrative Practices Residential
No prior business knowledge is required or expected for this class. Those with extensive prior business education are encouraged to complete IDSN-530 Technology Essentials or IDSN-520 Design Essentials in lieu of this course.

Course Notes
This course will be conducted online, using a combination of synchronous and asynchronous methods.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required
Students must provide their own laptop. The laptop specifications take into consideration that students will be creating, streaming, and downloading audio and video; communicating using video conferencing applications; and creating and storing large multimedia files.

	Apple	Windows PC
Laptop (Minimum standards)	2.6 GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 or 2.0 GHz quad-core Intel Core i7 - Minimum 13" display 250 GB SSD or larger 16 GB memory	- Intel Core i5 or Intel Core i7 - Minimum 14" display 250 GB SSD or larger 16 GB memory
Warranty	Manufacturer warranty or extended warranty coverage (Apple Care)	Manufacturer warranty or extended warranty coverage
Operating System	Mac OS X 10.13 or higher	Windows 7, 10 operating system or higher
Peripherals	- HD webcam, speakers and microphone (Most newer laptops have built-in webcam, speakers and microphone) - Headset - Digital camera (Cameras on newer smartphones are acceptable) - External drive for cloud account for backup and storage	
Software	- Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign) - Adobe Acrobat Reader - Microsoft Office Suite - Sophos Endpoint Security (antivirus) - Browser: Most recent version of Firefox, Chrome, Safari, or Internet Explorer	
Network	Cable modem, DSL, T1/T3 or higher	

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
Required reading will be drawn from textbooks, articles, papers, cases, and online publications (e.g., articles, op-ed essays) available through a host of available outlets; in all instances, the material will be delivered via computer. Students will also be required to view online videos; complete web-based, interactive exercises; and respond to peer and faculty comments (within an online discussion forum or group discussion). Lectures, readings, and viewings will be supplemented with current articles and audio/video content.

Required Textbooks:
Rogers, S. (2014). Entrepreneurial finance. (3rd ed.)
Peter, P. J., & Donnelly, J. H. Jr. (2015). A preface to marketing management (14th ed.)

Note: The course requires students to purchase HBR cases for classroom discussion & learning. The total cost to be paid out-of-pocket by the student will be between $30-50.

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 ⅓ of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to A-, and A- will be lowered to a 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 many 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.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Type	% of Grade
Organizational Design Analysis	Individual	15%
Marketing/Branding Assignment	Individual	15%
Project Management Assignment	Individual	15%
Final Project (Preliminary)	Individual	10%
Final Project	Team	30%
Section Attendance & Asynchronous Exercises	Individual	15%
TOTAL		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 Submission Policy
All assignments and labs must be delivered, per instructor guidelines to be distributed, by **11:59 p.m. Pacific Time** on the date that deliverable is listed as due. No exceptions. (Early submissions are, of course, encouraged!)

- Upload only one file per assignment. If assignments include images, spreadsheets, etc., merge all into one professional document.

All assignments, no matter how late, must be completed in order to pass this class.

Late Submissions
Assignments will be accepted after the deadline with the following grade penalties. Do not ask for extensions; the below *are* the extensions.

- Submission in the 24 hours after the deadline   10% deduction
- Submission between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline   20% deduction
- Submission between 48 hours and 3 days after the deadline 50% deduction
- Submission more than 3 days after the deadline   100% deduction

Keep copies of all your files and emails until the end of the semester.

Correcting a Grading Error or Disputing a Grade
If you don't inform the instructor of missing or incorrect grades within two weeks of those grades being posted, the grades will be assumed correct. Do not wait until the semester's end to check or appeal any grades. If you feel a grade merits re-evaluation, you are encouraged, within one week of the instructor providing a grade and initial feedback, to send the instructor a memo in which you request reconsideration. The memo should include a thoughtful and professional explanation of your concerns. Be aware that the re-evaluation process can result in three types of grade adjustments: positive, none, or negative. (Note: Complaints on the date of a graded assignment's return to you will not be addressed; it is essential to wait one full day prior to raising a concern.)

Additional Policies

Class notes policy: Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated, or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via e-mail or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings. Again, it is a violation of USC's Academic Integrity Policies to share course materials with others without permission from the instructor.

No recording and copyright notice: No student may record any lecture, class discussion or meeting with the instructor without his/her prior express written permission. The word "record" or the act of recording includes, but is not limited to, any and all means by which sound or visual images can be stored, duplicated, or retransmitted whether by an electro-mechanical, analog, digital, wire, electronic or other device or any other means of signal encoding. The instructor reserves all rights, including copyright, to his/her lectures, course syllabi and related materials, including summaries, slides (e.g., Keynote, PowerPoint), prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in the class whether posted to the LMS or otherwise. They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites. Exceptions are made for students who have made prior arrangements with The USC Office of Disability Services and Programs and the instructor.

Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in this course. In an online forum, participation includes:
- Careful reading and viewing of assigned materials by the date due

- Regular, substantive contributions to discussions
- Active engagement with online content
- On-time attendance and full attention in synchronous sessions
- Significant collaboration with classmates and teammates

Course grades may be affected for students who do not contribute to the course through active participation. Students should notify the instructor in advance if they are unable to attend class.

Contact Hours

This 3-unit course requires 1125 minutes (18.75 hours) of instructional time per semester, which equals 75 minutes (1.25 hours) of instructional time each week. Instructional time may be further broken down into 37.5 minutes (0.625 hours) of asynchronous time and 37.5 minutes (0.625 hours) of synchronous time. In addition, it is expected that students will work, on average, an additional 150 minutes (2.5 hours) per week outside of class — on readings/viewings, homework assignments, field experiences, and individual or team projects. Synchronous class sessions will be offered as regularly scheduled evening or weekend classes, once each week.

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 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. 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. 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.
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: 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. 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. 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. 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, e.g., personal, financial, and academic. 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. 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. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety UPC: (213) 740-4321 HSC: (323) 442-1000 24-hour emergency or to report a crime
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics	Weekly Preparation	Deliverables
Week 1	Design of Organizations: Business Frameworks	- Reading (article): What's a Business For? https://hbr.org/2002/12/whats-a-business-for - Reading (article): "The McKinsey 7-S Framework." MindTools https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_91.htm - Video: Amy Kates. "What is Organization Design?" Kates Kesler, 2014 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41v3PENTEXw (5min) - Doblin's '10 Types of Innovation': https://www.doblin.com/ten-types - Ordinary Heroes of the Taj (HBR): https://hbr.org/2011/12/the-ordinary-heroes-of-the-taj	
Week 2	Design of Organizations: Business Life Cycle	- Art Kleiner. "The Cult of Three Cultures." Strategy + Business, 3rd Quarter 2001. https://www.strategy-business.com/article/19868 - Fritz Schumann "Houshi." Vimeo, 2014. https://vimeo.com/114879061 - The Five Stages of Small Business Growth: https://hbr.org/1983/05/the-five-stages-of-small-business-growth	
Week 3	Design of Organizations: Teams and Processes	Worley, C. Designing Organizations That Are Built To Change: https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/designing-organizations-that-are-built-to-change/	Organizational Design Analysis (Individual Assignment) Due

		• Duhigg, C. What Google Learned From Its Quest To Build The Perfect Team: https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html • Logan, D. Tribal Leadership (TEDxUSC) (16 min video) • Reading (article): Discipline of Teams—J. Katzenbach & D. Smith	
Week 4	Marketing: Fundamentals	• Reading (article): 30 Years Ago Today, Coca-Cola Made Its Worst Mistake https://www.cbsnews.com/news/30-years-ago-today-coca-cola-new-coke-failure/ • Peter, P. J., & Donnelly, J. H. Jr. (2015). A preface to marketing management (14th ed.). Chapters 1, 2,3, and 5. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.	
Week 4	Marketing: Marketing Mix & Innovation	• Reading (case): On Your Bike! Using Marketing Mix to Drive Successful Bicycle Sharing Programs in Europe— Nathalie Laidler-Kylander, Steven Strauss, Laura Winig • Peter, P. J., & Donnelly, J. H. Jr. (2015). A preface to marketing management (14th ed.). Chapters 10,11, and 12. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.	
Week 5	Marketing: Branding	• Peter, P. J., & Donnelly, J. H. Jr. (2015). A preface to marketing management (14th ed.) Chapters 6 and 8. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.	Marketing/Branding: Marketing Program (Individual Assignment) Due
Week 6	Finance I: Interpretation	• Reading (article): The 6 Essentials of a Basic Cash Flow Statement https://quickbooks.intuit.com/accounting/reporting/cash-flow/#about • Reading (article): Why the Volkswagen Phaeton Failed in the U.S. https://www.thecarconnection.com/news/1034260_why-the-volkswagen-phaeton-failed-in-the-u-s • Reading (article): Accounting Basics https://www.accountingcoach.com/accounting-basics/explanation • Rogers, S. (2014). Entrepreneurial finance (Chapters 2 through 4). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.	
Week 6	Finance II: Translation	• Rogers, S. (2014). Entrepreneurial finance. Chapter 5 through 8. Boston, MA: Harvard Business	
Week 7	Operations Management	• Darden Business Publishing (2009, January). Introduction to supply chain management, UV5128: http://store.darden.virginia.edu/introduction-to-supply-chain-management • Oliva, R., Gittell, J. H., & Lane, D. Southwest Airlines in Baltimore, HBS 9-602-156.F: https://hbr.org/search?term=602156 • Ferdos, K., Lewis, M., & Machuca, J. (2004, November). Rapid-fire fulfillment. Harvard BusinessReview: https://hbr.org/2004/11/rapid-fire-fulfillment	

Week 8	Project Management	• Peter, P. J., & Donnelly, J. H. Jr. (2015). A preface to marketing management (14th ed.) Chapter 7.New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. • Hyer, N. L., Hirsch, B., & Brown, K. A. (2014). Implementing LEAN operations at Caesars Casinos,TB0389. Thunderbird School of Global Management: https://store.hbr.org/product/implementing-lean-operations-at-caesars-casinos/TB0389	Project Management: Product Development Process (Individual Assignment) Due
Week 9	Entrepreneurship: Ideation	• Reading (article): Hypothesis-Driven Entrepreneurship: The Lean Startup— Eisenmann, Reis, Dillard: • How To Identify New Business Ideas: https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/how-entrepreneurs-identify-new-business-opportunities/	
Week 10	Entrepreneurship: Realization	• Zider, B. How Venture Capital Works: https://hbr.org/1998/11/how-venture-capital-works • Competition Is For Losers by Peter Thiel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Fx5Q8xGU8k • Funding Startups In The Next Normal: https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/technology-media-and-telecommunications/our-insights/global-vc-view-funding-startups-in-the-next-normal	Final Project: Preliminary Deliverable Due
Week 11	Traditional Strategy Tools	• Reading (article): What Is Strategy— Michael Porter: • Reading (article): Why Do Strategies Fail— Jan Rivkin • Reading (article): Types of Strategy: Which Fits Your Business?—Excerpt	
Week 11	Strategy In The Age of Disruption	• Williams, T. The Agility Factor: https://www.strategy-business.com/article/00188 • Blank, S. Why The Lean Startup Changes Everything: https://hbr.org/2013/05/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything	
Week 12	Final Presentations		Team Presentations & Business Plan Due

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Assignment 1: Organizational Design Analysis (Individual Assignment)
Deliverable: Document (paper) with in-class summary presentations
Details: No more than five pages in length, single spaced, 12-point font

This individual presents a case study on an organization's failure to accomplish its goals and requires an analysis through through the multiple "lenses" that make up the frameworks of organization design as discussed in this module.

Assignment 2: Marketing/Branding: Marketing Program (Individual Assignment)
Deliverable: Document (paper)
Details: Three pages, single spaced, 12-point font

Your assignment is an individual effort to use marketing management and branding principles discussed in these modules to invent a product/brand concept for your company, or for a new enterprise/brand, and to outline its marketing elements. It is to be ONLY three pages in length, single spaced, 12-point font.

Appendices should include your sample ads (digital or print), video-commercial (three frames with a beginning, middle, and end), and any other creative units.

Assignment 3: Project Management: Product Development Process (Individual Assignment)
Deliverables: Document (paper)
Details: No more than five pages in length, single spaced, 12-point font

Your individual assignment in operations and project management is to bring a product (or service) created in the marketing and branding module through the entire product development process to market. While this assignment was developed primarily with a physical product in mind, it can be easily adapted to a digital product or any service-based project. Individuals will determine which of the individual projects to move forward with, leveraging the insights from the marketing plan into this phase of going to market. Each of the subprocesses in the product development process should be thoroughly addressed. Additional charts, graphs, visuals, etc., can be included in appendices.

Assignment 4: Final Project: Preliminary Deliverable (Individual Assignment)
Deliverables: In-class presentation
Details: No more than three slides (plus title and any appendix)
Using everything you have learned in this course, find an unidentified opportunity for a new product, service, or brand extension within a company or industry. Pretend you have 3 minutes to convince a busy investor, executive, or professor to look seriously at this opportunity. In reality, you will present in class to your peers with the objective of attracting fellow students to join your team for Assignment 5.

Assignment 5: Final Project: Team Deliverable (Team Assignment)
Deliverables: In-class presentation with slides, as well as business plan deliverable.
Details: 20 minute presentation w/ 15-20 page business plan submission

Teams will submit and present a business plan in which they identify the central problem faced by a business model and are required to address the relevant strategy concepts in the context of developing a holistic solution.