Course Objectives

This course is designed to help you take the first step as an entrepreneur. Before entrepreneurs can organize ventures around innovative solutions to exploit opportunities, entrepreneurs benefit from first recognizing and evaluating opportunities. But what are opportunities? Opportunities are situational conditions that allow one the potential to create value, and these situational conditions include factors like existing products and competitors, supply of raw materials, distribution channels, technological/political-legal/sociocultural/economic/demographic trends, availability and cost of talent/space, customer and market characteristics, etc.

Herein, you will achieve two course objectives fundamental to being an entrepreneur. First, you will put together an opportunity portfolio—a detailed understanding and analysis of an industry/technology and all of the situational conditions that inform the opportunity within that industry/technology context. Second, based on this opportunity portfolio, you will be tasked with pitching a potential solution to a specific opportunity.

Course Information Guidelines

1. **Statement on Diversity.** The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.
2. **Documented Disability.** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs.
3. **Severe Weather.** Students will be responsible for any academic work which they miss due to absences caused by severe weather conditions. It is the individual student's responsibility to take the initiative to make up any missed class work.

4. **Classroom expectations.** This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for this section of MGMT 3277. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Students who fail to abide by these policies and expectations, risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

5. **Orderly and productive classroom conduct.** I will conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I encourage your active participation in class discussions. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion.

6. **Group Evaluation and Dismissal.** Every group member will have to rank the participation of the other group members. Unless the participation deviates significantly between group members, every member in the group will receive the same grade. If group members unanimously agree on a lower grade for an individual, I will drop the grade by at least two letter grades. If the group unanimously agrees to “fire” an individual for lack of participation, the individual will receive an F with no opportunity to make up the work in an individual or other group project. Teams are to submit a short statement describing work assignments and conditions of dismissal proposed for any non-cooperative team member.

7. **Academic integrity.** Cheating and disruptive behavior have significant consequences. All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity which governs student behavior relating to academic work. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online at: [http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html](http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html). All UNC Charlotte students are expected to be familiar with the Code and to conduct themselves in accord with these requirements. To clarify, any academic dishonesty can result in a grade of F for the course. Academic dishonesty also pertains to violating the “rules” of this syllabus. Anyone violating this policy will receive an F for the course.

8. **Materials.** All materials submitted as part of course requirements become the property of the instructor. Students desiring to retain copies of their work should make such copies before turning in their materials.

9. **Faculty absence or tardiness.** If I am late in arriving to class, you must wait a full 15 minutes after the start of class before you may leave without being counted absent.

10. **Communication devices in classroom.** The use of cell phones, beepers, or other communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class. Except in emergencies, those using such devices must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

11. **Computers in the classroom.** Students are permitted to use computers during class for note-taking and other class-related work only. Those using computers during class for work not related to that class must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period and will be counted as absent for the class.
The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Attendance

All students are encouraged to attend all classes. Prompt arrival to each session will be appreciated. 1 missed (unexcused) classes are allowed. You are responsible for providing the appropriate documentation for excused absences, which include a death in the family, being sick, and formal university-related athletic responsibilities, within one week of the absence. Job interviews, deadlines and other responsibilities for other classes, and vehicle-related issues are examples of unexcused absences. In fifteen years, I have never missed or been late to a class. If I should be late, you must allow 15 minutes before you can leave.

Individual/Group Expectations

Group Formation

Students can work individually or within groups of up to three people. Every group member will have to rank the participation of the other group members. Unless the participation deviates significantly between group members, every member in the group will receive the same grade.

Group composition will remain stable during the entire semester. If the group unanimously agrees to “fire” an individual for lack of participation, the individual will receive a 0 on all remaining group work with no opportunity to make up the work in an individual or other group project.

Assignments

Part of your task is identifying an industry/technology for which you have a significant passion and/or interest. However, every industry/technology is different, and so the opportunity portfolios and solutions of each group will be somewhat different. For example, if your passion is drone technologies, a key component of your opportunity portfolio will be a patent search and analysis. If your passion is running an art gallery, then you likely will not be conducting a patent search and analysis because patents are rarely if ever used in the art world. Therefore, the art portfolio will incorporate research and analysis more strongly in other key areas.

Opportunity portfolio – Research and analysis on 7 different facets of opportunities. You should print out everything relevant that you review, compile in your 3-ring binders, and summarize in 2-3 pages for each opportunity facet. Each submission contributes equally to 35% of your overall grade.

Opportunity portfolio presentation – Presentations for your analysis of each opportunity facet. 10-15 minute presentations of what you learned. Each presentation contributes equally to 35% of your overall grade.
Solution – A detailed analysis of your proposed solution to a specific opportunity. 5-10 pages, double spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1” margins. The solution will account for 15% of your grade.

Solution presentation – A presentation of your solution will coincide your written proposal. 20-minute presentation, accounting for 15% of your grade.

Final Course Grades

Grades will be assigned for each of the performance criteria discussed above based upon the following straight scale. Final grades will be based upon the weighted average of all of the performance criteria, calculated at the end of the semester by multiplying the score of each performance criterion by its assigned weight. Note that grades below C are not acceptable for graduate work

89.5% and above = A
79.5 – 89.4% = B
69.5 – 79.4% = C
Below 69.5% = U

Schedule

Week 1 – Basics of entrepreneurship; finding your passion
Week 2 – The industry/technology
Week 3 – Competitors
Week 4 – Technological trends
Week 5 – Products and components
Week 6 – Breather; catch up
Week 7 – Supply chain – sourcing raw materials and distributing to customers
Week 8 – Market characteristics
Week 9 – Political/legal/regulatory, sociocultural, economic trends
Week 10 – Breather; catch up
Week 11 – Labor market
Week 12 – Solution development
Week 13 – Solution development; presentations

Week 14 - Presentations

In addition to the uncertain circumstances heading into this semester, when the opportunity arises, I like to incorporate a few speakers into the class which can disrupt the schedule. I reserve the right to accelerate or decelerate the schedule as deemed necessary, including dates of submission, presentations, etc. You will be provided a two-week notice for any accelerated due dates.