

MBA – Focusing on Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology Management

Syllabus

Project in Entrepreneurship **AI based innovation initiative within organizations**

Course Number: 00990775

Number of credit points: 5

Mini-Semester: 8 **Academic Year:** 2025

Time: Thursday, 17:30 – 21:30

Course Instructor: **Dr. Barak Ben-Avinoam**

E –mail: **barak.benavinoam@gmail.com**

Telephone: +972-54-780-7300

Office hours for students: Thursday at 15:30 or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: **Shiri Fadel** **shirif@campus.technion.ac.il**

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Course Objectives:

This course simulates the founding of a new venture or leading innovation initiative within organizations using State of the Art AI-based tools. Students will have a unique opportunity to experience the full cycle of leading an innovation process within an existing organization and enhance its performance using advanced technological solutions.

Starting from a basic idea, each group of students will be asked to develop a pitch deck, a short business plan, and a financial model for the venture and present it in front of the decision makers and stakeholders within the organization, or potential investors. The students will benefit from learning from experienced entrepreneurs, investors and practitioners through Zoom interviews.

Course Scope:

- Familiarize the student with the necessary steps to evaluate a new idea – from patent search and market research through idea validation and pivoting.
- Familiarize the student with possible business models and monetization possibilities.
- Familiarize the student with concept and tools in developing R&D, marketing and work plans.
- Present the student with go-to-market strategies and how to implement and integrate the innovation initiative within the organization.
- Provide the student with the tools needed to build a budget and financial projections for the venture.
- Provide the student with necessary tools for developing a business plan.
- Experiencing real-life dilemmas whereas decisions need to be taken despite uncertainties in the presence of limited resources and time constraints.
- Experiencing working as part of a founding team who is expected to deliver while competing other teams/ventures over funding, traction and resources.
- Improve presentation and pitching skills.

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- Experiencing pitching in front of potential investors or decision makers and stakeholders in the organization.

Teaching Methods:

- Learning by doing will be used as the primary teaching method. Students will gain hands-on experience through the initiation of a real-life venture.
- In-class discussions and brain storming over common challenges and decision takings.
- Weekly meetings with the teaching team and/or recorded interviews with industry experts from relevant areas.
- Lectures that will be given by the Course Instructor / Teaching Assistant / Guest speakers providing tools necessary for founding a new venture / innovation initiative.

Course Content & Requirements:

Team assembly and idea selection -

Students need to form teams of 2-4 members and send the team's composition along with short bio of each member in the team.

By the first session, all students should already have been assigned to teams.

Submit Bio by May 22, 2025 to Dr. Ben-Avinoam and Shiri Fadel.

All students should register on www.startupnationcentral.org and familiarize themselves with the Finder search engine.

Innovation initiatives within organizations need to be viable for near-term implementation and should utilize AI-based solutions.

Course Assignments – Verbal and Written:

I. **5 short in-class Presentations:**

The teams will be asked to prepare and be ready to verbally present and discuss the following topics:

A 1-minute elevator pitch – Session #2

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A 5-minute presentation on the venture (problem/solution/market/implementation within the organization) – Session #3

A 5-minute presentation on the venture's business model canvas – Session #5

A 5-minute presentation on the venture's budget & operations plan – Session #6

A 5-minute draft final presentation – Session #7

The presentations/pitch will be presented in class by one of the team members (each team member will be required to present at least once along the course).

II. Interview with a relevant person from the field:

Each team will present the class with a short pre-recorded interview with a domain expert relevant to the topic of class discussion of that week (e.g., you can interview a Chief Financial Officer of a company for the Budget class). You should strive to interview an interesting figure, with relevant questions which demonstrate your understanding of the essence of the chosen topic. An interview should last 15-20 minutes.

III. Final Course Presentation:

The final team presentation will be composed of no more than a 15-slide presentation that will be held during the last session of the course. Each team will have 15 minutes to pitch its venture to the investors/ decision makers in the organization.

IV. Investment Memo:

Following the final presentations each group will prepare and submit an investment memo recommending investment in one of the ventures / initiatives (not including the venture they are a part of).

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Course Plan

Submit Bio and your initial ideas by May 22, 2025 to Dr. Ben-Avinoam, and Shiri Fadel.

Pay attention: there will not be a session on 5/6/25

Session	Date	Class Topic	Written Assignment Due
1	29/5/25	Housekeeping, course intro. LLM's vs SLM's, Agentic AI, Ideation and patent search. Validation.	Draft Idea for the internal project
2	12/6/25	Elevator Pitch. Business Model Canvas 1: Customer, value proposition, revenue streams	Validation Board + Elevator Pitch
3	19/6/25	Business Model Canvas 2: Resources, cost structure	
4	26/6/25	Budget and Operations Plan	Business Model Canvas
5	3/7/25	HR; ESOP	Budget and Operations Plan
6	10/7/25	Term Sheet, Investment Memo	
7	17/7/25	Term Sheet negotiations Simulation. Peer review of final projects	
8	24/7/25	Pitch Event	Investor Presentations
N/A	31/7/25		Due: Group Investment Memo

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Sessions Structure:

Each session will be divided into three sections:

The first section will be devoted to a short team presentation, in which ONE team will present to the class a short, pre-recorded Zoom interview with an industry expert in the field that is relevant to that particular lesson. The presentation will be in front of class followed by class feedback and discussion over common difficulties/issues.

The second section will be devoted to a theoretical overview of topics and tools relevant to that particular lesson – AI tools, patents, technology, marketing, business models, financial planning, HR aspects and financing.

The third section will be devoted to live feedback with Dr. Barak and each group.

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Student Assessment:

This course accredits 5 points and should be the main course taken during the mini semester. Accordingly, it is expected that EACH student will attend the weekly meetings and invest 10 hours per week either in team or individual work, during the entire period of the course.

The final grade will be based on the following elements*:

Assignments:	30%
Pre-recorded Interview:	10%
Investors/ decision makers Presentation**:	30%
Investment Memo:	20%
Personal contribution (Class discussions / Teamwork)***:	10%

* Attendance in 7 out of the 8 sessions is compulsory (throughout the entire session).

** Attending the last session is mandatory.

*** Students who plan to miss a session should notify and receive the lecturer's approval, in advance.



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Recommended Readings:

[letters from Shopify CEO and Fiverr CEO]

- ❖ http://www.ted.com/talks/steven_johnson_where_good_ideas_come_from
- ❖ **Ask dumb questions, embrace mistakes — and other lessons on innovation:**
https://www.ted.com/talks/dave_raggio_ask_dumb_questions_embrace_mistakes_and_other_lessons_on_innovation
- ❖ **The era of open innovation:**
https://www.ted.com/talks/charles_leadbeater_the_era_of_open_innovation
- ❖ **Want to innovate? Become a "now-ist":**
https://www.ted.com/talks/joi_ito_want_to_innovate_become_a_now_ist
- ❖ **What is an AI anyway?:**
https://www.ted.com/talks/mustafa_suleyman_what_is_an_ai_anyway
- ❖ **Google's AI Course for Beginners (in 10 minutes)!:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yq0QkCxoTHM>
- ❖ **Scott Shane**, "Finding Fertile Ground: Identifying Extraordinary Opportunities for New Ventures", Pearson Education, 2005.
- ❖ **Kawasaki Guy**, "The Art of the Start: The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide for Anyone Starting Anything", Penguin Group, 2004.
- ❖ **Ries Eric**, "The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses", Crown Publishing, 2011.
- ❖ **Magretta Joan**, "Why business models matter", HBR, May 2002; 80(5):86-92, 133.
- ❖ **Sinek Simon**, "Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action", Penguin Group, 2011.
- ❖ **Dan Senor and Saul Singer**, "Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle", Hachette Book Group, 2009.

Van Aardt, Isa, "Entrepreneurship and New Venture Management", Oxford University Press, Cape Town South Africa (4th Edition), 2011.