



interpersonal entrepreneurship

UC 270, section 030

Winter Term 2016

“It’s unfortunate but true: if entrepreneurship is a battle, most casualties stem from friendly fire or self-inflicted wounds.”

Noam Wasserman, author of *The Founder’s Dilemma: Anticipating and Avoiding the Pitfalls That Can Sink a Startup*, analyzed 3,607 startups and found that 65% of problems were caused by interpersonal issues.

Syllabus

Ideation and innovation, venture creation and financing, team development, commercialization, and exit are essentially social processes. From formation and discovery, through networking and pitching, entrepreneurial success is driven as much by interpersonal skills as by technical or financial acumen.

Interpersonal Entrepreneurship is a lecture+workshop in the social aspects of business acceleration. Class readings, discussion, classroom exercises, and focused fieldwork develop functional fluency in entrepreneurial listening, recruiting, customer development, leadership roles, failure and pivots, investor relations, and presentation skills.

The complete IE Curriculum appears in the syllabus below - here’s an outline:

- 1) Principles of Interpreneurship
 - A) Storytelling
 - B) Networking
 - C) Discovery
 - D) Failure
- 2) Team Development
 - A) Leadership
 - B) Roles
 - C) Virtuality
 - D) Culture
- 3) Entrepreneurial Ecosystems
 - A) Clusters
 - B) Investors

Five key course activities challenge students to apply principles in an immediate and impactful way:

1. At the beginning of the course, the "Entrepreneurial Presence" unit helps each student be flexible and completely present in the moment; build productive relationships effectively; express themselves appropriately and congruently; and present opportunities and risks authentically.
2. "Discovery 611" is a mentor-led black-belt dojo for conducting broadband Discovery Encounters through active listening and empathy. Students build a Discovery Pipeline and execute a structured workflow to continuously integrate customer language and ensure product-market fit.
3. "Managing Shoulder-Devils" addresses the challenges that high-IQ/low-EQ entrepreneurs often face in connecting with Team-mates, customers, partners, and investors. It focuses on key, real-time communication skills, and drills students to handle stress and velocity with grace and polish.
4. The "Delphi Ideation Method" exercise applies the RAND Corporation's approach to wargames scenarios in an entrepreneurial context. Students form high-performance virtual Teams to innovate and iterate an idea from whiteboard to market.
5. "Pitches Gone Wild" flips the classroom, asking students to analyze presentations, challenge validation and valuations, and so identify with partners and investors.

Throughout the course, students are challenged, encouraged, and rewarded for taking principles directly into practice, failing, learning, pivoting, and demonstrating understanding.

Coaching/mentorship

Course material is complemented by Professional entrepreneurial mentors (recruited from a2geeks, Factotem, NEF, Ross, SPARK, e.g.) who provide guidance and networked resources. Using the Law of Two Ears, mentors provide commentary and real-world application, while connecting students to a broader array of entrepreneurial resources.

Mentor feedback is a key component of students' curricular experience and mentors use the Ross "P&I" tool to report-out on students relative Perspiration and Inspiration, and comment on performance and opportunities for improvement.

Reflection

The Interpersonal Entrepreneurship blog ("IEblog") is a continuous, contextual, class chronicle for reflection on development and iteration, delivery and feedback, performance and outcomes. Students blog about readings and fieldwork, comment on classmates' IEblog posts, and participate in online discussion to complement classroom discussion. Both the form and the content of IEblog posts and comments are elements of the curriculum.

Grading

Learning objectives are demonstrated four ways:

- 40% IEblog postings, comments, and participation
- 30% Classroom exercises and Teamwork
- 20% Homework assignments
- 10% Mentoring and peer review

These are covered, in turn, below.

IEblog (40%)

- Discussion questions
- Report-outs from readings and fieldwork
- Comments on peer posts
- Relevant, topical posts

The IEblog is an ongoing, term-long simulation of interpreneurial challenges and dynamics. Posts and comments must remain respectful of all participants' viewpoints and positions and, when necessary, agree to respectfully disagree.

The IEblog for the class may be hosted on Canvas, or on another platform (tbd). Participants should familiarize themselves with the platform, and seek support from the U-M 4-HELP desk for any problems.

Participants should log-in to the IEblog daily or as-needed to keep abreast of discussion traffic, or configure email/txt alerts to receive periodic or real-time notifications.

Discussion questions will be posted for each unit, along with instructions for that unit. Please choose two discussion questions to answer that are most interesting/applicable to you. Posts within 72 hours receive full marks; posts beyond 72 hours will be marked-down one letter-grade.

After posting your answers, please review the traffic and respond to two of your classmates' (or the professor's) posts within 48 hours of their posting. You are encouraged, but not required, to engage in ongoing IEblog discussion.

You may be asked to compose an IEblog post based on readings, Team projects, or other fieldwork, or to comment on the posts of others.

Feel free to post relevant, topical material that you feel enhances IEblog discussion. Post thoughtfully, with integrity and authentic voice, for extra consideration on grading.

While active and frequent participation is encouraged, cluttering a discussion board with inappropriate, irrelevant, or insignificant material will not earn additional points and may result in receiving less than full credit.

Quantity does not equate to quality. Though there is no strict size limit, an IEblog is typically 100-200 words. Also: frequency is not unimportant, but the content of the message is paramount. Please avoid repetition and unproductive debate.

All posted work should be original. Post Web links to the work of others; post images with credit; do not post files obtained from the others. Please remember to cite all sources - when relevant - in order to avoid plagiarism.

Classroom exercises and Teamwork (30%)

- Demonstrated preparedness, engagement, and meaningful contribution
- Direct application of interpreneurial principles in class discussion

This is a discussion-based class. During discussion, we "flip the classroom" and the students drive. The professor may facilitate discussion, provide guidance, and answer questions, as needed.

Classroom discussion is both a real-time simulation of Team challenges and dynamics, and a practicum opportunity, to explore, test, and experience interpreneurial principles at work.

Every class has a Hermione and a Neville - a student who is eager to engage, and one who's reluctant to engage. We go to great lengths to help all students share effectively, by encouraging broad participation - less Hermione, more Neville.

Homework assignments (20%)

- There are six homework assignments over 14 weeks of class. Five will be graded. One assignment may be dropped at any point during the term, without penalty.
- All assignments are 500 words - also called a topline, an executive summary, a business abstract, or simply a brief.
- Assignments are always due Sundays at 9pm. Assignments submitted early will be graded first. Assignments submitted late are marked-down by one letter-grade.

Guidelines for homework assignments:

- Please, no more than 500 words. Use a word-count program.
- 500 words is about two pages of text, double-spaced, in a 12-point font, with 1" margins. Graphics, charts, and photos don't impact word count, though they may add pages.
- Bibliographies and appendices are not bound by the 500-word limit, but all assigned content must appear in the body of the paper, not in the appendices.
- Extra consideration will be given for assignments that fulfill the requirements in 400, 300, or even 200 words.

- Grammar, spelling, and, punctuation, are very important - you will lose points, and needlessly. If this is a challenge for you, seek out the Sweetland Center, please.
- Technojargonbabble is seductive. Be strong. Don't use it.
- Peeves - these nits make papers harder to grade:
 - improper use of homonyms - their/there/they're, principle/principal, e.g.
 - use of nonwords - "irregardless," "expresso," e.g.
 - saying "utilize" instead of "use"

Mentoring and peer review (10%)

This class uses Ross's 360 Perspiration and Inspiration ("P&I") instrument on Qualtrics to elicit and report anonymously on students' effort and impact on group process.

How to ace this class: the Five C's

Content

Please review the discussion question or assignment prompt, and ask clarifying questions to ensure fidelity. Compile relevant talking points, outline your deliverable, and write about what the assignment is about. If you have an urge to write about something else that you find more interesting, please compose a separate IEblog post. Assignments demonstrate specific learning - your content needs to be on-point.

Clear

Please say what you'll say, say what you're saying, and say what you said. Use exposition and examples as needed to frame your talking points in factual, declarative sentences.

Concise

Please get to the point. 500 words seems like a lot to write - it isn't. The challenge of a 500-word deliverable is in choosing what to say and what not to say. It's easy to write complex - it's hard to write simple.

Convincing

Please write with confidence. External validation is more valuable than personal impressions, assumptions, and humble opinions. Use pronouns carefully.

Crap

Please leave out unnecessary filler words. Compose papers to be readable, rather than conversational. Trite phrases boost word-count at the expense of readability.

The goal of the Five C's is to focus writing talents toward fulfilling the discussion question or assignment prompt successfully.

Integrity

U-M is full of resources. They exist to help students focus on being scholars. Trouble writing? The [Sweetland Center](#) is there for you. Need assistance? Go to the [SSD Office](#) at the beginning of the term. Want Tutoring? Check out [Academic Support Services](#). Got the Flu? Go to [UHS](#). Your professors don't know half of the resources available to you - so: please use them.

U-M is also full of rules. LS&A, Ross, Engineering, Art & Design, Kinesiology, and School of Music each have some form of [honor code](#). In this class, we abide by the letter and spirit of the LS&A [Community Standards of Academic Integrity](#). For your first assignment, you'll be asked to dig it out and post about it.

Please don't ask your professor to enforce the rules - there are Honor Councils, peer-advisers, Deans, counselors, deacons, and bartenders to help you do the right thing, and dole out consequences for doing wrong.

Device+Media Policy

Feel free to use electronic devices as learning aids in the classroom. It's ok to take notes on a laptop or a notebook or a tablet, or even a handheld, if you're dextrous. Evernote is a fine note-taking app - also NotePad, OneNote, QuickNote, Handrite, e.g. - these are ok to use during class. Facebook Messenger is not so good for taking notes - nor is txtng, gChat, Hangouts, iMessage, WhatsApp, YikYak, or Tinder - so: please don't engage in social media during class.

There are times when you may want to Google the topic that someone is talking about, so you can have more info. In this class, "more info" always comes from the people in the class, in real-time - so: please raise your hand and ask them for more info.

There are times when you may want to tweet about what's happening in class, so everyone can share the moment. In this class, "sharing the moment" happens best when it's shared with others in the classroom, in real-time - so: please hold your tweets til after class.

Finally, there are times when you may want to post or comment on Canvas, based on what's happening in class. Who could blame you? It's a significant part of your grade! Canvas is the medium we use during the 165 hours a week that we're not in class - so: please refrain from doing homework during class.

What's the big deal? You're the big deal. You chose to go to the University of Michigan, not the University of Phoenix, Coursera, or OSU. The classroom experience is what you make it. If you're having an off-day, zoning out and not paying attention, chances are pretty good that someone in the room still wants to focus on what's going on in the classroom - so: please don't distract her.

TL;DR - devices are ok, distractions are not ok.

Politics

Level playing-field

This class presents a safe and welcoming environment for all students. The subject matter tilts away from historic demographic trends in innovation and entrepreneurship - because diversity and inclusiveness are a boon to ideation and economics.

Trigger Warning

This class deals with difficult entrepreneurial subjects in plain terms. You may be uncomfortable, and you may be asked to write about your discomfort. There will not always be ample advance notice for sensitive material, nor will class time be devoted to damage control. We focus on content.

Professionalism

Students and faculty take pains to be civil, but there will inevitably be lapses. The process for dealing with a lapse is as follows:

- take it up with the person, one-on-one, outside of class; if that fails, ...
- take it up with the professor, one-on-one, outside of class; if that fails, ...
- take it up with the Dean

Please do not derail the class, hijack an IEblog discussion, or disrupt the curriculum with external agendas, or you may be excused.

Cruelty

There is a zero-tolerance policy for snarking, sharking, blaming, shaming, name-calling, deflecting, and Team-destroying behaviors. Eyerolls, sniggers, asides, and social bullying have no place in the classroom.

Trump

Finally: election-year politics, demographic intolerance, and activism - unless they come up in the context of class discussion - are expressly discouraged. Please seek the appropriate forum for these topics. Tuition is not prerogative.

Contact

[David C. Bloom](#)

dcbloom@umich.edu

+1 734 604 3588 (mobile)

Office hours: Wednesdays, 10:30am-Noon

Additional office hours, upon request

IE Curriculum, Winter 2016

Practicum Unit

Practicum Topic

Learning Objective

1. Principles of Interpreneurship ~ 7 weeks

Develop actionable understanding and critical listening skills around emotional intelligence ("EQ") for high-IQ practitioners.

1.A Storytelling

Students can authentically represent themselves and engage with others to accelerate opportunity exploration and development.

1.B Networking

Students can effectively identify and build relationships to address entrepreneurial challenges.

1.C Discovery

Students can build and maintain a continuous and self-sustained Discovery Pipeline.

1.D Failure

Students can distinguish between regressive failshame and progressive win-or-learn cultures.

2. Team Development ~ 4 weeks

Develop and apply relevant entrepreneurial social skills to effectively recruit resources, build structures, and manage growth

2.A Leadership

Students can connect authentically with others to motivate and inspire them to achieve desired outcomes.

2.B Roles

Student Teams can subdivide, delegate, motivate, integrate, and iterate successfully.

2.C Virtuality

Students on a non-co-located Team can optimize situational bandwidth to select, prioritize, and accomplish group tasks.

2.D Culture

Students can proactively implement elements of Interpersonal Entrepreneurship culture, and measure their organizational impact.

3. Entrepreneurial Ecosystems ~ 2 weeks

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem - Develop awareness and fluency to exploit extent resource networks - 2 weeks

3.A Clusters

Students can identify, map, plumb, and leverage established and de-facto industry clusters.

3.B Investors

Students can navigate, network, and present appropriate entrepreneurial opportunities to appropriate investors.