

BA 4137 – COURSE TITLE

Course Schedule (Days, Times)

Instructor:	Mehmet Emin Okutan
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Office Hours:	By Appointment
Course Web Page:	Link to ODTUClass Course Page

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the entrepreneurial journey of building a new business from an innovative idea. Students will learn how to identify and develop promising ideas, form effective teams, and explore global markets and customer needs that can be transformed into products and services. The course covers business model development and the integration of key business functions, including marketing, finance, and product development.

Students will gain hands-on experience in preparing financial plans, understanding fundraising processes, and creating compelling investor presentations. Throughout the semester, the entrepreneurship journey from idea to seed to growth is examined through an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating engineering, design, and social sciences.

Open to students from all departments, the course encourages team formation and exploration of different entrepreneurial pathways, such as startups, innovation-driven service businesses, deep-tech ventures, and social enterprises. Using application-oriented learning and web-based simulations that reflect real-life decision-making, students will learn how to balance tactical decisions with long-term strategies related to competition, market entry, scalability, and investor relations.

Course Student Learning Objectives: (CSLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

Sure thing — I've **organized and lightly edited** the learning goals under the three requested categories, keeping the intent intact but improving clarity, consistency, and academic tone.

Course-Specific Skills

- 1- Apply systematic approaches to business concept development, modeling, and real-life validation using commonly accepted entrepreneurial tools and frameworks.
- 2- Conduct market analysis and develop competitive strategies for new business development under conditions of resource scarcity and competitive disadvantage.
- 3- Understand organizational development models through the lens of growth and scalability by identifying structural limitations and strategic opportunities.
- 4- Develop sensemaking skills and managerial heuristics to make decisions that balance short-term tactical actions with long-term strategic objectives.
- 5- Use generative artificial intelligence tools to formulate and simulate business models based on assumptions derived from real-world data.
- 6- Understand and apply product and technical de-risking processes in the development of new products or services.
- 7- Build proficiency in fundamental financial concepts and practices, including budget formation, key financial projections, and the development of fundraising goals.

Discipline-Specific Skills

- 8- Integrate perspectives from engineering, design, and social sciences to support entrepreneurship pathways such as startups, deep-tech ventures, innovation-based service businesses, and social enterprises.
- 9- Apply discipline-specific knowledge to product development, technology validation, market positioning, and scalability challenges.
- 10- Translate technical and domain-specific insights into viable business models and value propositions.

Personal and Key Skills

- 11- Demonstrate the ability to self-assess individual strengths and limitations, and to form teams that provide the essential skill sets required for selected entrepreneurial pathways.
- 12- Develop leadership skills to guide teams through uncertainty, motivate diverse contributors, and foster accountability in early-stage entrepreneurial settings.
- 13- Build foundational management capabilities, including task coordination, priority setting, and performance monitoring in resource-constrained environments.
- 14- Develop the capacity to work effectively within interdisciplinary teams by applying collaboration, communication, and conflict-resolution skills that balance diverse perspectives.
- 15- Strengthen decision-making and sensemaking abilities by applying managerial judgment to balance short-term operational needs with long-term strategic goals.
- 16- Develop persuasive business communication capabilities by enhancing rhetorical and argumentative skills and aligning the interests of multiple stakeholders, including customers, partners, and investors.

Learning and Teaching Methods:

Lectures, class exercises, class critiques on assignments, web-based assignments, use of generative artificial intelligence tools, weekly assignments, final project presentation

Required Reading:

None

Suggested Reading:

Berman, Karen, Joe Knight, and John Case. /Financial intelligence for entrepreneurs: What you really need to know about the numbers/. Harvard Business Press, 2008.

Christensen, Clayton M. /The innovator’s dilemma: when new technologies cause great firms to fail/. Harvard Business Review Press, 2013.

Constable, Giff. “Talking to humans.” /Giff Constable/ 1 (2014).

Furr, Nathan, and Paul Ahlstrom. /Nail it then scale it: the entrepreneur’s guide to creating and managing breakthrough innovation/. No. 658.421 FUR. CIMMYT.. 2011.

Horowitz, Ben, and Kevin Kenerly. /The hard thing about hard things/. New York: HarperCollins, 2014.

Moore, Geoffrey A., and Regis McKenna. “Crossing the chasm.” (1999).

Osterwalder, Alexander, and Yves Pigneur. /Business model generation: a handbook for visionaries, game changers, and challengers/. Vol. 1. John Wiley & Sons, 2010.

Reis, Eric. “The lean startup.” /New York: Crown Business/ 27 (2011): 2016-2020.

Ross, Aaron, and Jason Lemkin. /From Impossible to Inevitable: How SaaS and Other Hyper-growth Companies Create Predictable Revenue/. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

Ulwick, Anthony, and Perrin Hamilton. “The jobs-to-be-done growth strategy matrix.” /The Marketing Journal/ (2016).

Klaff, Oren. /Pitch anything: An innovative method for presenting, persuading, and winning the deal/. McGraw-Hill Education, 2011.

Voss, Chris, and Tahl Raz. /Never split the difference: Negotiating as if your life depended on it/. Random House, 2016.

Assessment and Grading:				
Form of Assessment	% Contribution	Size of the assessment	CSLOs covered by the assessment	Feedback Method
attendance	10	In class discussion	Personal Skill	One to one
Midterm 1	10	750 words max	Course specific	written
Midterm 2	15	750 words max	Course specific	written
assignments	40	Single digital board	Discipline specific	Group critique
Final project	25	25 powerpoint slides max	Discipline specific	Oral feedback

Course Policies:

STUDENT DISABILITIES: Any student, who, because of a disabling condition, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students should present the appropriate documentation from the university's Disability Support Office (Engelsiz ODTÜ Birimi, ODTÜ Kütüphanesi, Solmaz İzdemir Salonu, Tel: 210.7196; engelsiz@metu.edu.tr) verifying their disability, and outlining the special arrangements required. Please note that no accommodations will be provided to the disabled students prior to the completion of this approved University process.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: The Department of Business Administration has no tolerance for acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts damage the reputation of METU, the department and the BA/MBA/MS degree and demean the honest efforts of the majority of the students. The minimum penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be a zero for that assignment or exam.

CHEATING: All university, faculty/institute, and department principles on academic honesty will be strictly enforced. The usual consequence for academic dishonesty is failure of the course and referral of the case to the Dean of the Faculty/Institute for additional disciplinary action. Examinations are individual and are to be completed without outside assistance of any sort. Persons observed cheating during examinations will receive a failing grade in the course. Homework assignments are individual, unless otherwise specified by the instructor, and are to be completed without outside assistance of any sort, as well. Persons observed cheating in their homework assignments will receive a score of zero for the portion of the semester grade that is allocated to such assignments.

PLAGIARISM: The instructor assumes that students will do their own work. By placing their names on assignments (individual or team), students are affirming that the contents are their original work. Any previous work available from files or past students, as well as materials available on the internet may be used only as a suggestive model. Violation of this provision will be considered as unethical behavior, subject to disciplinary action. If you have any doubt about the use of a specific material, see the instructor ahead of time. Any material used from outside sources should be referenced appropriately.

METU HONOR CODE

Every member of METU community adopts the following honor code as one of the core principles of academic life and strives to develop an academic environment where continuous adherence to this code is promoted.

"The members of the METU community are reliable, responsible and honorable people who embrace only the success and recognition they deserve, and act with integrity in their use, evaluation and presentation of facts, data and documents."

The following table gives the tentative schedule for the semester. The lectures will stress the most important and/or most difficult material. Appendices are required only if they are assigned. The students are required to read the chapters and appendices before they are covered in class.

Tentative Course Schedule				
Month	Day	Topic	Reading/ Assignment	CSLO
February	16	Introduction to Startup Ecosystem	Discussion	3
February	23	Team Building and Collaboration	Assignment 1	8, 11
March	02	Problem Definition and Insight Development	Assignment 2	1, 12
March	09	MVP and Lean Startup Approach	Assignment 3	6, 9, 10
March	16	Customer Validation and Value Proposition	Assignment 4	6, 13
March	23	Business Model Development	Assignment 5 / Midterm 1	1
March	30	Market and Competition	Team Review	2
April	6	Go to Market Strategy	Team Review	2
April	13	Financial Planning	Team Review	7
April	20	Growth and Scalability	Midterm 2	7
April	27	Fundraising	Team Review	7,16
May	4	Pitching to Investors	Team Review	4, 14
May	11	Tactical Pivot	Team Review	4, 15
May	18	Strategic Pivot	Team Review	4,15