Technion International
Syllabus
Selected topics in entrepreneurship:
"Hack-that-challenge"

Course Number: 099745
Academic Year: 2019-2020
Number of credit points: XX

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Course Objectives:

This is an intensive short course, which is focused on turning a real-life challenge into a startup idea and then into an MVP – Minimal Viable Product and a startup business model.
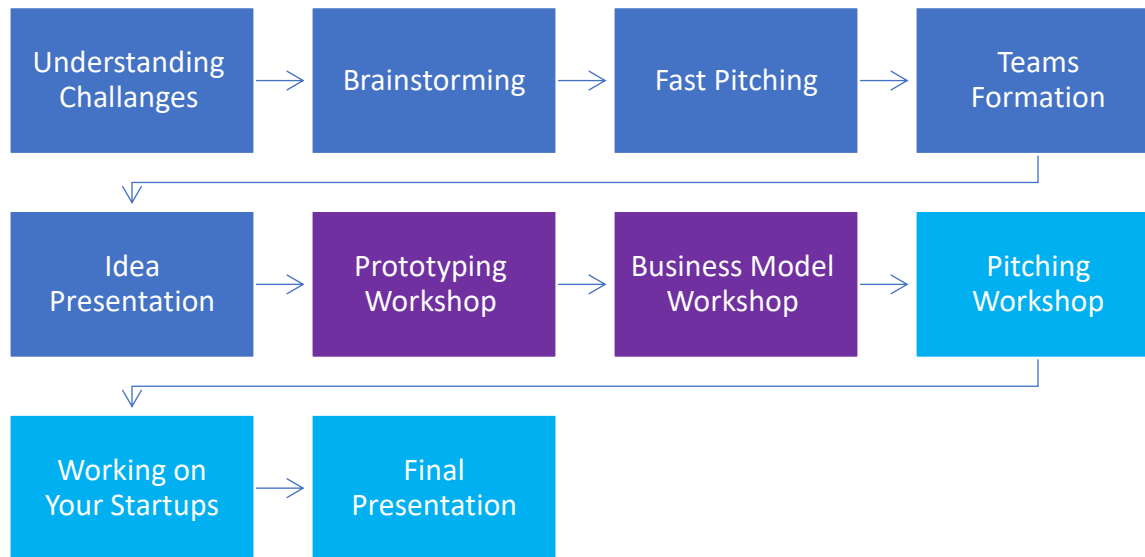
The accelerated program is 3 days long, give the students a hands-on, real-life experience creating a startup. The course challenges participants to understand real life customer's challenges, innovate, overcome obstacles, design and develop a solution demonstration, and present it along with a startup-like investors' presentation.

The course is taught in a real-life context, where students form teams of two to five and acquire relevant skills and know-how to go through all the steps from challenge to concept to startup.

The learning experience in this course corresponds to current and future workplace environments, including cross-functional teams working in tight schedules and under extremely demanding situation, practicing fast learning and implementation, team work and communication skills, innovating, planning, designing, developing, presenting and implementing feedback.

Course scope and process:

The course includes a mix of workshops and teamwork, in a hackathon-like process, based on learning-by-doing. Here is the course structure (using a difference color for each day):

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Understanding  →  Brainstorming  →  Fast Pitching  →  Teams
Challanges                                             Formation
     ↓
Idea           →  Prototyping    →  Business Model →  Pitching
Presentation      Workshop          Workshop          Workshop
     ↓
Working on     →  Final
Your Startups     Presentation
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1. (Day 1) Challenges presentations – by the course instructor, followed by Questions and Answers.
2. Brainstorming / Ideation – working in groups to discuss the challenges and possible ideas to address them. Each group is focused around a single challenge. Each student can select a single challenge / group and may be able to change groups. We might have more than a single group addressing the same challenge.
3. Initial fast pitching – anyone can pitch an idea addressing any challenge. No slides are needed at this stage.
4. Team formation – students form teams of 2-5, based on the short pitches.
5. Initial idea formulation and presentation – creating a basic presentation to clearly define the problem you're solving and the solution.
6. (Day 2) Prototyping workshop – learning prototyping and User Experience basics, including practicing a low-fidelity prototyping tool. At the end of the workshop each team will present its solution using an initial prototype it developed.
7. Business Model workshop – learning what are the elements of a startup business model, following by practice: further development of your idea into a scalable startup business model, using The Lean Canvas or The Business Model Canvas.
8. (Day 3) Investor's pitching workshop – learning how to build an investor's deck and how to pitch.
9. Working on your startup - developing your solution (MVP – low or high fidelity), your business model and your pitch deck, which includes a demonstration of the solution.
10. Final presentation of your startup – investor's like pitch.

In addition to the formal sessions, the teams will work on their startups independently on each of the 3 days.

COURSE VALUE

The course offers participants unparalleled value through:
- Applying leadership, communication skills, time management and teamwork.
- Working in an interdisciplinary environment
- Learning and practicing concepts related to customer and problem analysis, design, development and entrepreneurship.
- Intensive professional and personal development in a supportive environment, in a short timeframe

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

The students will be experiencing firsthand an entrepreneurship process and live a startup-like environment.

Here are some concepts the students will learn:

- Understanding the importance of a clear understanding of customer's challenges and problems.
- Understanding that an idea is great only if customers have proved it so
- Understanding that User Experience is a key element in designing a winning solution
- Realizing that a team that a teamwork excellence is required to succeed
- Understanding that developing a great solution is required but not enough for a startup to make progress and win as a scalable business.

The opportunity to create a product that solves a unique need is a first-time experience for many. The course is therefore a true eye-opener for the students.

Skills and competencies:
- Identify, define, and analyze problems
- Spot opportunities for innovation, ideate and analyze ideas
- Design and development of a solution – the MVP and the customer journey.
- Design and evaluate a startup business model
- Present a startup pitch
- Develop personal competencies such as efficiently work in a complex and dynamic environment comprised of interdisciplinary teams, creative brainstorming, prioritizing in a tight schedule and more.

Student Assessment:

- We expect each student to fully attend all the class sessions and invest additional time working in teams during the period of the course.
- The final grade will be based on the following elements:

Final team presentation:	40%
Design and development of an MVP:	40%
Peer review – within each team:	20%

Recommended Readings:

Steve Blank, Bob Dorf, "The Startup Owner's Manual: The Step-By-Step Guide for Building a Great Company", K&S Ranch, 2012.