
START UP: NEW BUSINESS FEASIBILITY in Spring 2021 (BA3021)

Course Code	BA3021	Professor(s)	Albert Cath
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-2A03
Class Schedule	M: 15:20-16:40 in G-207 R: 16:55-18:15 in G-207	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	acath@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	N/A

Course Description

This course navigates students step by step through the practical core of entrepreneurship. Students learn what entrepreneurs and investors should consider before launching a lean start-up. The students are asked to bring to class venture ideas they nurture or have already started to develop. After a round of selecting viable ideas are road tested guided by the concepts and tools provided in the textbooks. Teams are formed around these venture ideas to execute the feasibility study.

The course examines and discusses seven crucial domains that offer an integrated framework that is very helpful to underpin the jump in the deep end that entrepreneurship entails. These domains differentiate between micro and macro levels in the external environment (market and industry) of the selected ventures. In addition, they will examine the teamwork (organization and organizing) and economic and environmental sustainability of their ventures.

Students will develop research skills to evaluate customer and business needs through the provided checklists in the two textbooks and additional analytical management frameworks provided to them through articles and lectures. Students gain a practical toolset that will allow them to look at their entrepreneurial endeavor step back, and thoroughly test the feasibility of their venture ideas. An important part of the feasibility is researching and providing qualitative and quantitative data to substantiate the feasibility studies. This entails among other market research (micro and macro), industry analyses, and economic and environmental sustainability analyses.

We will consider how entrepreneurs and investors and firms process information to make decisions. Albeit that the venture capital community plays an important role, the course will also bring to the fore that the majority of fast-growing companies never take any venture capital but are customer-funded. We will analyze entrepreneurship through the lenses of five customer-funded models in addition to the seven domains framework mentioned above. Through lectures, discussions, group case studies, and written analyses the course examines entrepreneurship from a *critical*, *strategic*, and *functional* point of view.

Students will also be confronted with the core issues entrepreneurs face when moving into (international) markets. Case studies and readings will explore challenges that entrepreneurs and investors have to face before they can start making their dreams come true.

A key component of the course is to develop a thoughtful and critical understanding of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in different contexts – globalization, sustainability, and business ethics - and for students to gain the ability to relate entrepreneurship to other aspects of managing and communications, as well as to their own decision making.

Course Learning Outcomes

Apply the seven domains framework of attractive opportunities for entrepreneurship

Apply the five customer funded models for entrepreneurship

Critically evaluate specific entrepreneurial activities according to ethical, sustainability and socially responsible criteria

Demonstrate the ability to research, produce and execute a professional feasibility study

Students will be able to engage in the writing practices and culture of their chosen major, adding to the skills acquired in the Research, Interpretation, and Writing classes to develop a personal, authentic disciplinary voice (CCR)

General Education

Course Outline

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentation. AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. Professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the Language Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, when completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Undergraduate Course Plan BA3021: START-UP: NEW BUSINESS FEASIBILITY

SPRING 2021

Dr ALBERT CATH

*** This course plan is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard ***

TEXTBOOK & ARTICLE READINGS & FILMS & CASES & ASSIGNMENTS

Mondays: 03.20-04.40 pm in Room G-207

Thursdays: 04.55-06.15 pm in Room G-207

DATE	CHAPTER	FILM	CASE	ASSIGNMENTS
-------------	----------------	-------------	-------------	--------------------

Week 1

18 JAN Course Introduction. Inventory of students issues and topics in entrepreneurship with the Pro
Inventory of students issues and topics and business ventures. Working on it in class.

21 JAN CH 1 MULLINS ROAD TEST + Inventory of students issues and topics and business
ventures. Working on it in class: group formation.

Week 2

25 JAN CH 2. Student preferences and outline. Group Formation around business ventures of studen
Class.

28 JAN CH 3. Team Ventures in class; micro markets test.

Week 3

01 FEB CH 4 Part 1.Starting group Case 1 (Sattviko).

04 FEB CH 4: part 2: Team ventures in class. Monitoring Case

Week 4

08 FEB No classes

11 FEB Chapter 5: part 1: Monitoring the Sattviko Case. Macro test of ventures.

Week 5

15 FEB [Group presentations of the Sattviko Case and submitting the paper \(will be graded\).](#)

18 FEB Chapter 5, part 2; feedback on Case. Overview of chapter 1-5. Preparation Midterm exam.

Week 6

22 FEB Team domains. An introduction.

25 FEB No Classes.

Week 7

01 MAR Midterm Exam in Class: Team feasibility essay on business venture through application of the 4 external domains of the Mullins road-test.

. Team presentations of ventures. Submit the analysis paper, this will be graded.

04 MAR Chapter 6: What drives your entrepreneurial dream?

Week 8

08 MAR Chapter 7: Can you and your team execute? + Starting Group Case 2: ILinc

11 MAR Chapter 8: Your connections matter: which matter most? + Monitoring case 2.

Week 9

15 MAR Chapter 9: Develop your opportunity: put the seven domains to work + monitoring case 2.

17 MAR MID SEMESTER

18 MAR Chapter 10: What entrepreneurs should do before pressing 'start'.

19 MAR Midterm Grades are due

Week 10

22 MAR Group Presentations Case 2 + submitting paper (will be graded).

25 MAR Introduction to Customer-funded Models (Mullins) Chapter 1&2.

Week 11

29 MAR Chapter 3: Matchmakers Models + monitoring Case in progress + feedback on case 2 +

01 APR Start feasibility part 2 ventures of the students: add the 3 teams domains to your four external paper you produced for midterm. Ch 4: Pay-in-Advance Models.

02 APR **Last day to withdraw from a course; last day to choose credit/no credit option**

Week 12

05 APR No classes

08 APR Ch 5: Subscription and SaaS Models + monitoring feasibility part 2 in progress

Week 13

12 APR Group Presentations feasibility part 2 + submitting paper (will be graded).

15 APR Ch 6: Scarcity and Flash sales Models. Start final feasibility Start Personal Paper.

Week 14

19 APR Ch 7: Service to Product Models. Start final feasibility report. [Monitoring final feasibility and P](#)

22 APR Ch 8: put a customer-Funded Model to Work in YOUR Business. Monitoring final feasibility a

Week 15

26 APR LAST CLASS

Week 16

03 MAY 3.00 PM: **FINAL EXAM (submit personal paper + presentation feasibility of your venture Feasibility report of your team venture)**

Week 17

[18 MAY: Degree candidates grades are due](#)

26 MAY: All grades are due

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
The Customer Funded Business	John Mullins	Wiley	9781118878859	Yes
The New Business Road Test	John Mullins	Pearson	9781292208398	Yes

Attendance Policy

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES:

1. **Laptops & Mobile Phones:** Laptops can be used during classes especially for taking notes, and having access to the remote aspects of the teaching and, specifically necessary for an in-class project. **Mobile phones are to be turned off and put away at all times while class is in session. Please do not send or receive text messages during class, even in silent mode.** Students regularly observed texting underneath their desks during class will be remembered when I issue final grades. Moreover, mobile phones are not allowed in the room during exams under any circumstances. Students found to be using a mobile phone or other electronic devices during exams will be asked to leave and will automatically receive a failing grade.
2. We will use Blackboard and Microsoft Teams for this course. **Students are expected to check the Blackboard site, The specific Microsoft Teams site as well as their AUP email during the course for updates.** All assignments will be posted here as well as course reader materials and other resources. If you need to reach me outside of class, please contact me via email for an appointment.

1. This is not just a matter of “being present” during class, but also involves arriving on time and being prepared for each course session. Attendance is taken in the first 10 minutes of each class, and late students will be marked as late. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that they are signed in for each class. Moreover, I will not excuse any absences, for any reason, with the sole exceptions being if the student is enrolled in an official AUP Cultural Study trip or has a note from a certified physician that indicates they were unable to attend class on the specific dates of the absence. Other reasons for absence should be reported by email and it is upon my discretion to decide whether the absence is excused or not. Students that experience significant health or personal problems must inform the Student Affairs Office immediately so that we can begin to work out a plan to help maintain your academic performance. Personal travel, visiting relatives and friends, and other non-emergency excuses will not be accepted.

1.

1. **Food and Drinks:** Students may drink beverages in class if they are in spill-proof containers that can be completely sealed. Please do not consume any other food or beverages in the classroom.

1. **Professional Behavior:** Students are expected to behave professionally manner at all times during the course. Please avoid disruptive behavior, such as talking out of turn during lectures and presentations. Other disciplinary actions up to, and including, removal from the course, suspension, or expulsion from the University, may also result from violating course and university policies. Likewise, harassing or threatening behavior in class will not be tolerated. Please uphold professional standards at all times while you are in the university program. The students are expected to fully respect the Sanitary Protocol issued by AUP for the Spring 2021 Semester.

1. **Microsoft Teams etiquette :**

- Please RSVP to meeting invitations.
- Join meetings with the mute on, keep it on if there is any background noise.
- Think about headphones, maybe noise canceling if you're easily distracted. Headphones with microphones may be a good investment.
- Put your cameras on so we can see you.
- To the extent possible, have a dedicated "serious" space for your meetings. This is like being in a class. Remove as much as you can distractions in the room you are "in class". Keep the food and drink to a minimum.
- Cool backgrounds are appreciated.
- Raise your hand to be recognized unless we're working in a very small group. Try not to talk at once in the classroom, this creates serious microphone problems for those attending online.
- Try to keep the chat on the topic.
- I'll ask for a different volunteer every class to remind me to record and to keep track of the chat and any questions there.

1. **Other Policies:** For all other policies and procedures, students are bound by the

University's general policies and procedures. Copies of the University policies on absences and academic dishonesty were given to each student at registration. Students are responsible for adhering to these policies.

1. **Know the Syllabus:** It is your responsibility to read and understand this document as it clearly outlines the course policies, schedule of readings and assignments, as well as the course expectations. If you experience academic problems during the course because you have not been following the course policies, then telling me "you didn't know" is going to be a completely ineffective excuse.

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are still expected to attend ALL scheduled classes. During the pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. If students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In part, students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policies for remote learners.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for any missed work, rests solely with the student.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Excessive absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend withdrawal if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the exam periods.*

Grading Policy

GRADING:

Student Performance will be evaluated based on the following factors:

Class Participation

Based on attendance and participation with (group) presentations, discussions, and in-class projects, as well as group peer evaluations.

- Attendance: this is not simply a matter of being present, but also involves arriving on time and being prepared for each course session.
- Course Presentations: Students (groups) will be selected to present their analysis of a short case assignment intermittently during class. These presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes, although the specific duration will change based on the presentation assignment. There will be no student presentations during the first week of class. Please refer to the course calendar for due dates.
- Course Discussions: Various activities, full class, and small group discussions are an essential part of the learning experience in this course. Students are expected to actively participate by providing input and feedback to other students and by listening when other students are speaking.
- **Be aware that during the semester we may have to switch between in person and remote teaching. Also, some students may not be capable to attend the classes remotely in a synchronous frame, because they are situated in a different time zone. The attendance policies will be maintained during remote teaching. Of course, exceptions to this will be considered in each case. See also the attendance paragraph below.**

Individual Assignments

Individual essay assignments are due throughout the course, this counts especially for the personal midterm assignment and the final assignment. These must be submitted on the due date.

Midterm Exam

The midterm assignment will cover readings, lectures, and class discussions through the course sessions until the midterm exam.

Final Paper

The final essay will cover a topic of the student's choice, incorporating the cases and readings covered during the course. These papers must be a minimum of 2500 words (approximately

8-10 pages at 300 words per page). Criteria for these papers will be discussed following the course midterm.

Grade Allocation

Final grades will be weighted based on performance within the various criteria as follows. These calculations may be adjusted as we progress through the semester:

Class Participation and Attendance	10%
Case Presentations	40%
Mid-Course Analysis Paper	15%
Final Analysis Paper	35%

Grading Scale

Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
100-95 A (4.0)	89-87 B+ (3.4)	79-77 C+ (2.4)	69-67 D+ (1.3)
90-94 A- (3.7)	86-84 B (3.0)	76-74 C (2.0)	66-64 D (1.0)
	83-80 B- (2.7)	73-70 C- (1.7)	60-63 D- (0.7)
			Under 60 F (0)

To give you a better understanding of what the grading scale means, let's take a quick look at the typical student profile for each category:

Excellent: Reserved for students that display superior quality and outstanding performance throughout the course, including the extensive use of resources other than the textbook and assigned readings to complete assignments and presentations. It also means that the student participates fully in course discussions and group activities, maintains excellent attendance, and performs extremely well on course exams and assignments. An 'A' student is highly motivated to learn the material and completes the course readings in advance of the lecture, showing strong skills in critical thinking, global learning, and exceptional informational literacy on all of the assignments, projects, and exams. The student also takes a proactive role in group projects and consistently responds to the presentations of other student groups. My goal is to see every student perform this well.

Good: The student provides work that is above average in quality. Maintains good performance

on exams and in-class discussions, including the effective use of assigned readings and above-average course participation. Assignments are turned in on time and to a good level of quality. There is some evidence of additional research and critical thinking on core topics. Attendance, while not perfect, is still good. The student shows evidence of critical thinking, global learning, and information literacy through their engagement in the course.

Satisfactory: Adequate and acceptable work in meeting course requirements and average performance in assignments, exams, and projects. There is little use of external resources beyond the required texts. The student shows some engagement with the course but participates at a minimal level. Meets the minimum attendance requirements. Displays some critical thinking, global learning, and/or information literacy in assignments and group projects.

Unsatisfactory: Failed to meet basic course requirements, below-average performance and attendance. The typical profile for such students: they often show up late to class, are often unprepared for class, and/or are frequently absent. The student is rarely prepared for group presentations or discussions. Assignments are missing, late, or copied or paraphrased directly from general sources that can be found on the internet. The student probably spends an inordinate amount of time in class on their smartphone. Such students are encouraged to withdraw and try again when they have improved their academic skills or they decide to put more effort into their studies.

A significant amount of studying outside of the course meetings is expected from all students who expect a 'B' grade or higher in the course. This means AT LEAST three hours of reading, and research outside of class for every hour you spend in class - much more if the expected grade is an 'A'. I expect students to use resources other than the required materials to complete assignments. Outstanding and good performance will be awarded to those students who go beyond the required and suggested readings in their final projects, assignments, and presentations.

Students with unsatisfactory performance will be notified at the midterm point so that we may mutually assess the likelihood of successful course completion. If I contact you for a meeting at the midterm point, please do not ignore my request. Often, we can work out an academic study plan to get you back on track. However, please be reminded that excessive absences are often the cause of poor performance and this is difficult to remedy.

Other

The purpose of this course is to understand strategy and leadership in the context of sustainable organizations, businesses and management by meeting the following objectives:

1. To understand conventional and critical approaches and frameworks of international business practices.
2. To develop the ability to analyze complex (“wicked”) problems, where great uncertainty is present.
3. To apply international business concepts in practice (cases).
4. To understand local, regional, and global levels of international business policy and practice, as well as the inherent conflicts and paradoxes that may arise between these levels.
5. To investigate some of the common historical narratives of international business and explore how these influence our current perceptions;
6. To help you acquire practical experience in dealing with strategic issues.
7. To learn to work in teams to achieve mutual goals.
8. And last but not least to integrate personal learning goals into the course.

These goals will be realized through the course structure based on an integrative learning framework that is built into the curriculum. It is my hope that students in the course will be able to further exercise and develop their core life, educational and professional skills along the following lines:

- Civic Engagement
- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking
- Complexity Thinking
- Ethical Reasoning
- Inquiry and Analysis
- Oral Communication
- Problem Solving
- Written Communication

Student Performance will be evaluated based on the following factors:

Class Participation

Based on attendance and participation with (group) presentations, discussions and in-class projects, as well as group peer evaluations.

- Attendance: this is not simply a matter of being present, but also involves arriving on time and being prepared for each course session.
- Course Presentations: Student (groups) will be selected at random to present their analysis of a short case assignment intermittently during class. These presentations

should be no longer than 20 minutes, although the specific duration will change based on the presentation assignment. There will be no student presentations during the first week of class. Please refer to the course calendar for due dates.

- **Course Discussions:** Various activities, full class and small group discussions are an essential part of the learning experience in this course. Students are expected to actively participate by providing input and feedback to other students and by listening when other students are speaking.
- **Peer Evaluations:** Student group members may be expected to evaluate one another for the depth and effectiveness of their contribution to in-class activities and the final presentation. Evaluations will be cross-referenced for consistency and fairness.