Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Innovation Management and Start-up
Course Code	97113
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	ECON-07/A
Language	English
Degree Course	Bachelor in Design and Art - Major in Art
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Prof. Alessandro Rossi, Alessandro.Rossi@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/16304
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2nd, 3rd
CP	8
Teaching Hours	30
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	170
Planned Office Hours	24
Contents Summary	The course introduces students to key literature in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation with a focus on the application of knowledge to real case studies.
Course Topics	Entrepreneurial Mindset and Behavior: exploring foundational principles and attitudes that catalyze successful entrepreneurs; analyzing diverse entrepreneurial journeys through case studies. A Primer on Innovation: understanding core concepts and types of innovation; examining its role in business contexts; real-world examples of innovation driving success.

	Developing and Evaluating Business Ideas: identifying, nurturing, and critically assessing ideas; hands-on sessions on idea generation and evaluation. Refining Business Ideas: crafting effective elevator pitches; profiling early adopters with personas; applying the "jobs to be done" framework to align solutions with customer needs. Design Thinking & Lean Validation (Problem Perspective): principles and phases for deeply understanding customer problems; conducting problem-validation sessions with early adopters. Design Thinking & Lean Validation (Solution Perspective): iterative solution development and rapid prototyping; feedback loops to fine-tune value propositions. Business Modeling: Validating Value Delivery & Value Capture: building and testing business models to ensure both value creation and capture. Market Analysis, Competitor & USP Definition, Team Competency & Execution: researching market size and trends; defining your Unique Selling Proposition; structuring development and go-to-market timelines; assembling a skilled, balanced team. Resource Acquisition & Financial Management: exploring bootstrapping, angel investing, and venture capital; managing cash flow, budgeting, and financial planning through case studies. Pitching & Public Speaking: crafting compelling pitches; tailoring messages for diverse audiences; simulation exercises with feedback.
Keywords	- Entrepreneurial Mindset and Behavior - A Primer on Innovation - Developing and Evaluating Business Ideas - Refining Business Ideas - Design Thinking & Lean Validation - Business Modeling

	- Market Analysis, Competitor & USP Definition, Team - Competency & Execution - Resource Acquisition & Financial Management - Pitching & Public Speaking
Recommended Prerequisites	none
Propaedeutic Courses	none
Teaching Format	The course combines lectures, case studies, guest talks, and highly interactive workshops. Group work is central: students collaboratively develop startup projects and receive continuous feedback. Assignments and presentations reinforce theoretical concepts through practical application, while active participation and peer-to-peer learning foster an entrepreneurial mindset.
Mandatory Attendance	not compulsory but recommended
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	Disciplinary competence Knowledge and understanding - have acquired the basic knowledge to be able to turn a critical eye to their own work and to deal with contemporary complexity - have acquired the basic knowledge necessary for further Master's studies in all components of project culture as well as in scientific and theoretical subjects. Applying knowledge and understanding - recognise the main phenomena of contemporary society, to observe them critically, also from an ethical and social point of view, and to elaborate appropriate solutions at the level of a design proposal/response. - make use of the skills acquired during the course of study in the event of continuing studies in a Master's degree programme in the field of design and to develop them further. Transversal competence and soft skills Making judgements - Be able to make independent judgements, both in the critical evaluation of their own work and in their ability to use the right interpretative tools in those contexts in which they will work professionally in design and/or continue their studies, also

	considering ethical and social aspects. Communication skills - to professionally communicate and substantiate their own decisions and justify them from a theoretical point of view. Learning skills - have acquired basic knowledge in theoretical subjects as well as a study methodology suitable for continuing studies with a Master's degree programme.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	Disciplinary competence Knowledge and Understanding - Master the language and frameworks of innovation (e.g. incremental vs. disruptive innovation; innovation life-cycle stages). - Describe in detail key lean-startup and design-thinking tools (Business Model Canvas, Value Proposition Canvas, Customer Personas, MVP). Applying Knowledge and Understanding - Ideate, evaluate, and iteratively refine multiple business concepts using structured selection criteria. - Plan and conduct problem- and solution-validation interviews; synthesize findings into clear problem statements. - Design, build, and test minimum viable products (paper or digital prototypes); incorporate real-time user feedback. - Perform market sizing, competitor analysis, and define a clear Unique Selling Proposition and pricing strategy. - Construct basic financial projections: cost/revenue models, cash-flow forecasts, and break-even analyses. Transversal competence & soft skills Making Judgements - Balance risk and opportunity: decide when to pivot vs. persevere based on customer and financial data. - Apply ethical reasoning to venture decisions, identifying

	social/environmental impacts and proposing mitigation. Communication Skills - Craft and deliver investor-ready pitches: structure a concise pitch deck and employ storytelling techniques. - Write a data-driven executive summary (2–3 pages) covering problem, solution, market, team, and financials. Teamwork & Leadership - Lead and collaborate in small, cross-functional teams using agile/lean project-management sprints. - Navigate and resolve team conflicts or strategic disagreements to maintain project momentum. Learning Skills - Adapt to uncertainty by applying "build–measure–learn" cycles for continuous product and process improvement. - Reflect on personal entrepreneurial growth via a learning journal, capturing lessons from both successes and failures.
Assessment	Attending students - Oral presentation of the group project - Final written exam Non-attending students - Individual final report (in lieu of the group project) - Final written exam In both cases: Active participation and steady progress throughout the semester are essential; deadlines and milestones will be communicated in advance. N.B. ALL THE STUDENTS ATTENDING THE EXAM AS "OPT" OR AS NON-ATTENDING STUDENTS MUST AGREE UPON THE CONTENTS WITH THE TEACHER.
Evaluation Criteria	Attending students: - 50% oral presentation (pitch) of their startup project

	- 50% written exam (test) Non-attending students - 50% individual report of their startup project - 50% written exam (test) (50% individual report / 50% written exam) Evaluation criteria for the pitch: - Problem identification & customer understanding - Solution proposal & MVP demonstration - Market context & USP definition - Revenue model - Execution plan & timeline - Visual and presentation quality (slides, delivery) - Overall persuasiveness & clarity Evaluation criteria for the individual report: - Clarity of problem statement - Target customer definition - Initial solution proposal - Validation methodology & findings - Market context & USP - Overall organization & coherence of the report - Overall originality & depth of the report Content of the written exam - Multi-choice questions - Open questions
Required Readings	• Neck, N.; Neck, P.; Murray, E., *Entrepreneurship: The Practice and Mindset* (2018), Sage • Selected readings and slides, available on the course platform
Supplementary Readings	• Thiel, P., *Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future* (2015) • Blank, S., *The Four Steps to the Epiphany* (2007) • Ries, E., *The Lean Startup* (2011) • Kawasaki, G., *The Art of the Start* (2004)

	• McGrath, R.; MacMillan, I., *Discovery-Driven Growth* (2009) • Blank, S.; Dorf, B., *The Startup Owner's Manual* (2012)
Further Information	Attendance is not mandatory but highly recommended for workshops and group work; deadlines and milestones will be shared in advance; students unable to participate fully should arrange alternative individual work with the instructor in due time.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Quality education, Decent work and economic growth, Partnerships fot the goals, Responsible consumption and production, Climate action, Industry, innovation and infrastructure