

Course Outline

Course Code : BSN3713
Course Title : Entrepreneurial Bootcamp
Semester : Semester 1, Academic Year 2026-27
Faculty : Professor Wilton Chau
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Overview

Building on the foundational principles of Lean Startup, this course equips students with a critical understanding of execution risks throughout the venture development processes, especially in dynamic business environments and rapidly evolving technological landscapes. Students will learn to secure stakeholders' support (analogous to an employee gaining buy-in from colleagues and supervisors for new initiatives). Given that team conflicts are a leading cause of startup failure, the course emphasizes self-awareness under pressure, helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses to build cohesive, high-performing teams.

Through case studies, lectures, workshops, and mentor discussions, students will develop a systematic, practical approach to:

- Ideation refinement and opportunity recognition,
- Business model construction,
- Execution planning,
- Strategic resource acquisition, and
- Fundraising strategies.

The course begins with the Idea Space Exercise (developed by Babson College), guiding students to recognize cognitive biases and adopt design thinking to "think outside the box." From idea generation to prototyping and launch, students will learn to define stakeholder value propositions and innovate under resource constraints. A team-building workshop follows, helping students assess dynamics while gaining hands-on experience in market validation, including tools and methodologies for testing demand.

Next, students will construct a business model, identify execution risks, and align them with a resource acquisition plan. The course culminates in a venture pitch, where students must persuade audiences (primarily angel investors and venture capitalists) by building trust and demonstrating viability.

In summary, this course complements other entrepreneurship offerings by addressing key failure factors (mentioned as the first topic in the Syllabus) that frequently derail ventures. These include:

- Inability to adjust business ideas/models frequently to changing environments,
- Founder disagreements,
- Gaps between business plans and execution,
- Insufficient awareness of execution risks (a KPI of investors), and
- Poor funding/fundraising strategies.

Additionally, each project team will be guided by at least two experienced (15+ yrs) investors or entrepreneurs at different stages, ensuring comprehensive experience sharing in business execution and market potential in Asia.

This course provides practical, integrative experience, enabling students to apply their BBA knowledge to

real-world entrepreneurship by equipping them with risk mitigate skills. Upon completion, students will:

1. understand the risks in their business ideas/plans to enhance survivability, and
2. be better prepared to leverage other courses to build investable ventures, whether iterating their original ideas or pursuing new opportunities with new partners.

Furthermore, traditional entrepreneurship courses focus mainly on successful fundraising and seldom address failures and risks. Given the fact that over 90% startup failure within the first three years of operation, learning and avoiding failure/risks are more fundamental to entrepreneurship students.

Course Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to provide an opportunity for students to experience the entrepreneurship process and acquire the skills in:

1. developing innovative ideas
 2. building an effective team
 3. identifying the market pain points and related core customers
 4. constructing business model with very limited resources
 5. identifying the potential execution risks with solutions for risk migration
- preparing a 10-minutes investment pitch addressing the investors' concern

General Guide & Reading

A. Reference Book:

The Four Steps to Epiphany: by Steve Blank

B. Cases

Case Study: Nancy Coffee, Babson College/Harvard Business School and other cases for discussion

Assessment

Assessment Components	Weightage
Class/Tutorial Participation (Individually assessed):	10%
Two Individual reports:	50%
Progress Report (20%):	
To identify with explanations three key execution risks of the project (to be submitted by Week 8).	
Final Report (30%):	
By addressing the three execution risks in the Progress Report, this report will describe the solution development process based on the skills learned in this course particularly after Week 8 (to be submitted by Week 14)	
Group Project:	40%
Presentation (30%) & Written Report (10%). Each group will typically consist of 5 students	

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is “the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own” (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubt, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

- <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/acceptance-record#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>
- <http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

About the Lecturer and the PAVD Entrepreneurship Bootcamp Network in Asia

Professor Wilton Chau has been organising entrepreneurial bootcamps under the Pan Asia Venture Development Platform (“PAVD”) annually since 2021. Its first boot camp was in 2021/2022 together with Hong Kong Cyberport, and Centre for Innovation, Design & Entrepreneurship (“CIDE”) of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Shenzhen (“CUHK Shenzhen”). This boot camp was praised by the Shenzhen Government as the most well-organized boot camp over the last 10 years since the Government started funding the Cyberport boot camp. In 2022, the Shenzhen Government funded the whole PAVD Entrepreneurship Boot Camp. This is an experimental one as this is probably the first time that an English-based entrepreneurship boot camp run across a period of 4 months in China. With another overwhelming success in 2022, the PAVD boot camps have been continuously received funding supports from the Shenzhen Government. In 2024 and 2025, the PAVD Entrepreneurship Boot Camp was extended to cover participants from other silk-road areas including Russia, Kazakhstan, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. NUS students who had completed BSN3713 (semester 1) may be provided opportunities joining this Shenzhen boot camp with free accommodation & meals.

Regarding the lecturer, Prof. Wilton Chau has highly committed to entrepreneurship training/education. He has over 30-year extensive experience in venture development and investment in the Asian Pacific region. Currently, he is the Founding Chairman of PAVD, a non-profit platform with over 60 active angels, super-angels, venture capitalists and private equity investors (mostly trained by him); a founding member of Asia Entrepreneurship Education Alliance, an alliance formed by vice presidents, deans, and professors from over 20 renowned universities in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore; and Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Biotechnology Organisation. In addition, he is in the Board of several technology ventures and two Hong Kong main board listed companies. He is also a board member of the China Three Gorges International, one of the largest clean energy companies in the World. Prof. Chau is an adjunct professor in the NUS Business School, CUHK Business School, Academy of Innovation (CityU of Hong Kong), and the College of Business (CityU of Hong Kong).

(pavd.info)

Schedule and Outline

Wk	Date (2026)	Topic	Activity
1	10-14 Aug	Key failure factors in venture development	
2	17-21 Aug	Know yourself & build your team	
3	31 Aug-4 Sep	Execution risks & plan (il Model)	
4	7-11 Sep	Innovative Business idea	Babson's Idea Space Exe (Design Thinking)
5	14-18 Sep	Latent needs of customers (Case: Nacy Coffee)	(Design Thinking)
6	28 Sep-2 Oct	MVP & Evaluation of an opportunity and value creation	Reference Book A
7	5 - 9 Oct	Launch your products/services	
8	12 -16 Oct	Field work (with ongoing interaction with lecturer & mentors) Identify & find your core customers	No Lecture
9	19- 23 Oct	Issues in venture development	Speaker
10	26-30 Oct	Field work (with ongoing interaction with lecturer & mentors) Business remodelling	No Lecture
11	2-6 Nov	Investment presentation skills + Q&A Skills I	
12	9-13 Nov	Field work (with ongoing interaction with lecturer & mentors) Investment presentation skills + Q&A Skills II	
13	16-20 Nov	Investment Presentation	

*: no classroom teaching in **Week 8 & 10** (1 to 1 field work with lecturer and mentors)