American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School: School of Business
Course Number: BUSN635
Course Name: Business Plan Development
Credit Hours: 3
Length of Course: 8 Weeks
Prerequisite: None

Please see the Lessons area in the classroom for additional course specific information

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**Course Description (Catalog)**

This course is designed to teach you how to develop, formulate, write, and implement a comprehensive business plan as a multifunctional tool for your business. This course will serve as a blueprint for success teaching you the proper processes and elements required for successful business plan development and use.

**Course Scope**

All too often, managers and entrepreneurs believe just because they have a great idea, they quickly write a business plan in one day on a rainy Sunday afternoon and emerge hours later with a winning business plan. Reality however, suggests that effective and successful business plans are not written in vacuums and without careful analysis, research and planning. This course is designed to help students develop a business plan and the process of writing one correctly. Students will engage in developing their own business plan throughout the 8-week course while studying the proper success elements of preparing a plan through textbook readings, chapter reviews, instructor lead lectures and a series of weekly discussion questions and possibly a case study, time and workload permitting. As students prepare to write their business plans, they must keep in mind that this exercise is really a matter of testing the
reliability, validity and viability of the business model, concept or idea. Every claim that is made in a business plan must be substantiated with research and analysis. In order to properly evaluate a concept’s chance of success, and to develop an action plan for realizing it, you must first do the research to analyze and refine it. This course will instruct you to accomplish that.

**Course Materials**

**Required Course Textbooks**

The Freaks Shall Inherit the Earth: Entrepreneurship for Weirdos, Misfits, and World Dominators  by Chris Brogan


**Course Objectives**

**After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:**

1. Identify or create a business concept for marketplace entry that is suitable for the business plan development stage.
2. Refine your business concept (if applicable).
3. Develop the business plan and understand all key components required for success development and implementation such as:
   - Why write a business plan?
   - When to write a business plan? (Concept-to-Reality)
   - How to get started and what to know before writing a business plan
   - Types of business plans
   - How to write a business plan and the essential elements of a business plan as follows:
     a) Executive Summary
     b) Vision & Mission
     c) Company & Product Overview
     d) Service & Product Strategy
     e) Market Analysis – Part of the analysis and what it should include
     f) Marketing & Sales Plan
     g) Pricing Strategy
     h) Operations Plan
     i) Management Team
STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

j) Financials & Assumptions
k) Funds Required & Uses

5. Address and validate the market
6. Analyze your competition Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (aka SWOT analysis)
7. Assess your market opportunities
8. Understand the Marketing planning function better
9. Contemplate modeling and operations scenarios
10. Assess and adjust your business model
11. Learn about funding resources for your plan and how to obtain funding
12. Assemble your business plan

Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week as noted and include Forum questions (accomplished in groups through a threaded forum), examination, and individual assignments submitted for review by the Faculty Member). Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

Policies

Please see the Student Handbook to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

   Drop/Withdrawal Policy
   Plagiarism Policy
   Extension Process and Policy
   Disability Accommodations

Grading Scale
Please see the Student Handbook to reference the University's grading scale.

Citation and Reference Style
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Attention Please: Students will follow the APA Format as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University. Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow the citation style cited in the APA Format.

**Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. The due date for each assignment is listed under each Assignment. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. We all know that “life happens” but it is important to adhere as closely to the deadlines in the class as possible.

Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. If arrangements are not made in advance, a late penalty of 10% will be assessed for any assignment submitted 1-7 days past the due date. Assignments will not be accepted after the 7th day. No work will be accepted past the final day of class.

**Netiquette**

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.

- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), : )

**Disclaimer Statement**

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.
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**Academic Services**

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan**: The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books**: You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals**: The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Tutor.com**: AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutor.com connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.
- **Disability Accommodations**: Students are encouraged email dsa@apus.edu to discuss potential academic accommodations and begin the review process.


The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library: librarian@apus.edu.

**Turnitin.com**
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Faculty may require assignments be submitted to Turnitin.com. Turnitin.com will analyze a paper and report instances of potential plagiarism for the student to edit before submitting it for a grade. In some cases professors may require students to use Turnitin.com. This is automatically processed through the Assignments area of the course.