

Syllabus

IMAGINATION

EEE 3663/EEE 5663
School of Entrepreneurship
Spears School of Business
Spring 2009

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Class meets: Tuesday 4:30 to 7:10

Room: CLB 102

Office Hours: 2 to 4 p.m. Hideaway Coffee Shop
(and by appointment)

I. Course Prerequisites

You must be willing to risk expressing your creative ideas and thoughts and looking and acting foolish in the quest for insight and innovation.

II. Course Overview

This is a course about the entrepreneur's courage to create and his/her willingness to risk making mistakes in the quest for ideas that lead to a true innovation of a product, service or process. It is about solving problems in an environment of uncertainty and dynamic change. Creativity is the central focus, which might be defined as "the application of a person's mental ability and curiosity to discover something new...the act of relating previously unrelated things."

More specifically, we focus on capitalist creativity, which demands that solutions that are generated be profitable (have a potential to be profitable) and reflect bottom-line practicality. You will experience what it means to fully engage your brain to discover patterns that produce *breakthrough* ideas when attempting to solve business problems.

You will be exposed to a systematic approach to changing the way you create, identify and sell these ideas. You will also be introduced to techniques, concepts and methods that can be added to your creative skills toolkit. The course is designed around real methods that have been proven to work in some of the leading corporations in the world. These methods are conveyed through both interactive and experiential learning approaches.

You will learn how to and then form teams for the purposes of developing creative solutions to problems and coming up with a "wickedly good" new product concept around which a venture can be based.

III. Course Objectives

In the midst of rapid technological change and global economic and social transformation, creativity and innovation have replaced physical labor and organizational bureaucracy as key sources of economic success. Entrepreneurial firms and communities of all sizes are looking for the "next big thing" that will be the key to growth. Increasingly, economic development experts agree that the next big thing is

creativity. This course is intended to introduce principles and techniques of creativity as resources for development of an entrepreneurial mindset. Upon course completion, students should be able to:

- Recognize your own innate creative potential and its role in living a full life;
- Appreciate the courage it takes to come up with and implement new ideas and approaches in business problem-solving;
- Generate a markedly higher number of innovative ideas when confronted with a task or problem;
- Recognize your creative blocks if they are imposed by others, as well as when you might impose the blocks on others;
- Apply a variety of techniques for overcoming obstacles to creative problem-solving;
- Appreciate and overcome the challenges in accomplishing creative solutions in group contexts;
- Assume different roles in successfully managing the creative process;
- Sell creative solutions to others in an effective manner;
- Develop viable product or service concepts around which ventures can be initiated, and lessons to carry forward beyond the class;
- Show increased understanding of the cognitive processes and events that underlie and generate ideas for new products or services and the evaluation of their practical value;
- Acquire skills in formulating ideas for new products or services and determining whether these ideas are feasible and therefore worth pursuing.

IV. Role of the Course in Achieving the Learning Goals

You will be challenged to think critically, appreciate context, engage with other learners, and make thoughtful decisions while examining their consequences. Students are expected to gain unique perspectives on how to combine imagination, intuition, reasoning ability and skills at evaluation in coming up with creative solutions to practical business problems.

You are expected to analyze issues and solve a range of complex problems as they apply to you and in a variety of different organizational contexts. Further, I encourage you to develop an appreciation for the differing assumptions and perspectives that others use to solve problems creatively, depending on the individuals involved, the organizational context, the market environment, and other contextual variables.

Students are also expected to contribute to the learning environment by engaging in intellectual discourse with the instructor, guest speakers and with other students. That means read and prepare ahead for lectures, and especially for the creative problem-solving exercises that you must complete. You are expected to “be creative” in addressing individual and group assignments, but also to critically assess and develop an appreciation for the dynamics involved when an individual or group attempts to “be creative”.

Finally, there is a strong sense of accountability built into the course in terms of your need to come up with decisions that are not only creative, but reflect a high quality level in your creativity. In evaluating your creative solutions, emphasis will be placed on the extent to which the social, moral and ethical implications have been considered.

V. Required Texts and Materials

- i. Michael Michalko, *Cracking Creativity*, Ten Speed Press, 2001.
- ii. Readings packet available at Cowboy Copy.
- iii. Readings on course D2L site

iv. Black, blank journal or notebook (Imagination Diary) at Cowboy Copy. In this you will record one or more original product idea per week and

- ♦ your search results for that product,
- ♦ general creative insights and
- ♦ creative thoughts between classes,
- ♦ creative perspectives on assignments, and
- ♦ brainstorming on tasks and assignments for the course.

IV. Student Assessment/Evaluation

Exams

Midterm Examination *	20%
Final Examination**	20%

Presentations

Individual Presentation (oral)***	10%
First Team Project (oral) ****	15%
Second Team Project (10% oral, 15% written) *****	25%

The **Imagination Diary** and **In-class Assignments** ***** **10%**

Total **100%**

*The midterm examination will primarily be an essay exam addressing the context of the first half of the course. However, as a course in creativity, we reserve the option of having parts of the exam be unconventional, and knowledge of the core concepts from the course and student creativity will be demonstrated in these sections of the examination. The exam will be graded on content knowledge on the creativity process and objective determination of creative ability through practical problem solving skills. Sample study questions will be provided to students prior to the exam, but they are only samples; actual questions may be different.

**The final examination will be an alternative format exam where you apply your creativity.

***Students will make an individual pitch for an original concept related to something that “bugs them.”

****Students in teams will present a concept for a product or service needed in 2020.

*****Students in teams will develop a truly original concept that can result in a fundable new venture. They will pitch the venture orally and turn in a short paper outlining the core elements of the business model.

***** Students are required to keep a diary of their original ideas and creative concepts developed over the weeks of the semester. There must be at least one original idea per week.

V. Attendance Policy

Attendance is required. You are allowed TWO unexcused absences. (That equals a week.) If you miss more than TWICE for unexcused reasons, you will forfeit one letter grade (10%) in the course. This means that if you have a B+ in the entire course, the B+ becomes a C+. Note that an excused absence is one for which you have a doctor’s excuse, or an excuse from your coach if you are on a sports team and there is a team competition. The range of excuses requested in the past and denied as an “excused” absence include: a fraternity or sorority house meeting, a study session or an evening exam for another

course (save your absences if this may be an issue), a group work session for an assignment for another course, not wanting to drive to campus due to weather when courses are being held, or attendance at a sports event if you are not playing. All of these are excuses we have often heard, and they do NOT qualify as excused absences for this course. It is for such situations that you are permitted an unexcused absence.

VI. Participation Policy

You are expected to come to class prepared, and play an active role in the class discussions and experiences. This class will be conducted more like a seminar, than an undergrad class.

- ♦ This means reading all material and preparing all assignments in advance. You may be called upon to present your assignment in class, so be prepared for this.
- ♦ The issue is the creative quality of your contribution more than the quantity. However, quality may depend on the presence of sufficient content to communicate your idea or concept.
- ♦ Contribution includes asking questions, answering questions, agreeing or disagreeing with points made by the instructors or your peers, insights provided regarding the assigned material, examples that you bring into class of issues we are discussing, and so forth.

Professional conduct and respect for others is expected in class. Differences of opinion are acceptable and welcome. They should be professionally presented with supporting rationale. These differences, if expressed, will not affect your evaluation. In addition, if a student shares an idea and requests confidentiality for his or her proprietary idea, that shall be protected.

All students will complete a non-disclosure at the beginning of the course.

Class participation and attendance is a vital part of the educational process. Each class includes experiential components that cannot be made up, either in content or grade. If a session is missed, the benefits are completely lost.

VII. Instructional Methods: Teaching/Learning Style

Methods used in this course may include, but are not limited to, class discussion, group or team discussion, electronic discussion via D2L, presentations, guest speakers and panels, videos, experiential learning, lectures, critical writing, journal writing, research, field trips (though not currently planned), and other methods as determined by the instructor.

The course involves extensive interaction between students and the instructor. The teaching style mixes theory and tested concepts with practical problem-solving. You will be challenged to grasp a concept, relate it to the individual or group creativity process, and then apply it to real-world problem-solving.

The course will start with a lecture the first Tuesday. What are your goals for this course? If you are reading this syllabus in advance of the first class, please reflect for a moment on what you want out of this course. What do you wish to learn or accomplish? We'll shape our interactive class work to meet your needs and goals. So please share your ideas and objectives during the first class!

Students/student teams will be given an assignment on the week previous to when it is due, and will be expected to submit/present it during the class on the following Tuesday. Some assignments are included in this syllabus, and others are TBA.

VIII. Grading Criteria and Related Standards

Assume that students who attend class, actively participate, and complete competent work *on time* will be “B” students. Excellence will raise grades, while tardiness, absenteeism, lack of participation, poor quality and late submissions will significantly lower grades. Assignments are graded on the basis of the following:

1. Adherence to the intent and requirements of the assignment.

Example of adherence to intent: If the intent of an assignment is to brainstorm and generate many ideas, a student who submits 15 ideas when on average the class submits 100 per student will not score as well as the average or above-average performing student. Your classmates will “set the curve.”

Example of adherence to requirements: If the assignment is to be four pages, this means that four pages of content, not including cover page or bibliography, are expected.

2. Evidence of creativity and originality in thinking process, approach or perspective, expression, and resulting product or outcome.
3. Bibliography provided when you use others’ work as a launching point for your own content.
4. Clarity of expression and communication of concepts.

In business, documents are intended to communicate with the reader, and to motivate the reader to respond in a desired way. They are not effective as tools of communication if your reader struggles to understand what you are trying to communicate, or if while reading, the reader asks, “Where is this section going and why is this here?” A well-written paper is also much easier to read and grade. For this course, quality of your completed writing does matter. Please pay attention to the following:

- Spelling, grammar and punctuation: When completing written assignments, proof your work, and use (but do not rely completely on) your spell-check and grammar-check functions on your computer. In the business world, I have seen resumes rejected when they contained more than one typographical fault. A grade of “A” is not possible if there are spelling or grammatical errors.
- All formal text-based assignments must be typed double-spaced using a common 12-point font such as Times New Roman or Arial. An exception to this is the Imagination Diary.
- Margins shall not be less than one inch on either side.
- For all papers longer than 3 pages, number the pages and use headings for each section.
- Brevity and clarity: In a final version of a paper, if you can say something in one sentence rather than two, and be focused in your language, it is easier to read. It may be useful to prepare an outline before you start, including all the points you want to cover in an orderly progression.
- Keep sentences short, no longer than about 20 words which is the span that a person’s brain can easily handle. Discuss only one idea per sentence. Avoid run-on sentences. If your sentence can be broken down into two complete sentences, make it two sentences.
- Thoroughness: the topic should be treated comprehensively. Ask yourself, “Have I covered all of the important facets of this topic?” If work is of minimum length, it must contain maximum content.
- Elaboration: You can go beyond the length criteria for each project and paper, if each additional point adds substance to the document. However, do not use language as filler.
- Document everything that is from another source or is not your own original idea.

Finally, in evaluating projects and assignments in this course, the following four major criteria will be taken into consideration:

1. *Is it original? How new and different is it?*
2. *Does it create value for a customer or user?*
3. *Is there 'reason to believe' that the idea or concept can work, and that implementation issues have been thought through?*
4. *Is it well-presented or explained?*

IX. Academic Integrity

All work in this course must be your own individual effort. When you have a team assignment, the submitted or presented work must be solely that of the team members. Violations of this rule will be considered academic dishonesty and will be referred to the Academic Disciplinary Committee. The Spears School of Business has an Academic Integrity Policy emphasizing that honesty, integrity and respect for others are fundamental expectations in our School. Please note that plagiarism is a serious violation of the Academic Integrity Policy.

X. Course Structure and Reading Assignments

Please note that we will generally adhere to this schedule but may at times move at a slower or faster pace depending upon class circumstances, student questions and comprehension, opportunities that arise, or to improve student creativity or understanding of creativity concepts and their application.

I. Course Building Blocks

Week One August 24	Introduction; Finding the Courage to Create; What to Expect from the Journey; Course Goals, Logistics and Expectations; Events and Activities; Review of Syllabus and Reading List; Description of Assignments to Assess Student Learning and Creativity; Guidelines for Journaling.
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Team Skill: Observation as a skill versus assessing.

Defining Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship; Understanding the Connections

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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Michalko: Introduction, pp. 1-13.

Michalko: Strategy One: Knowing How to See, pp. 19-50.  
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CREATIVITY EXERCISE: Newspaper Towers

Week Two August 31	Basics of Creativity; Different Kinds of Intelligence; Left Brain and Right Brain Issues; The Creative Process; Creative Blocks that Hinder the Process
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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Michalko: Strategy Two: Making Your Thought Visible, p. 51-80

Cleese, J. (1991). "And Now For Something Completely Different," Management Review (May).

Frost, Peter J. (1995). "The Many Facets of Creativity," in Ford and Gioia (Eds.) Creative Action in Organizations, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

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IN-CLASS TEAM EXERCISE: BREAKFAST FOR CHAMPIONS - Construct a creative narrative of at least 1 page in length describing an idea for a new product or service business that does not currently exist and around which a new venture might be started. Think creatively. (Use your journal to record your brainstorming and your thinking process leading to this idea.). Select a spokesperson to present your concept to the class.

ASSIGNMENT #1: *Bug Report (Minimum of 75 items) Hand in next week, and then to be used as the basis for the assignment for January 26.*

II. Cognitive Foundations: Entrepreneurial Thinking

**Week Three
September 7**

**Introduction to Cognition and Ways of Thinking; The Basics and our Basic Systems
Cognitive Limits. Team Skill: listening.**

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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Ariely, D. (2008), Predictably Irrational. "Introduction and Chapter 1," New York: Harper Collins (pp. 1-22).

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Due: Bug Report

ASSIGNMENT #2: For discussion next week - *Select a problem from your Bug Report, keeping in mind factors that are important when applying creativity in an entrepreneurial situation. Identify a new venture that might be successful to address this problem. You will make a 2-3 minute pitch for this idea the week of Feb 9.*

**Week Four
September 14**

Cognitive Errors; Affect and Creativity — Why Emotion Matters

Cognition and the Entrepreneur; The Role of Intuition;

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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Baron, R.A. and Tang, J. (in press) "Positive Affect, Creativity, and Innovation in New Ventures: A Moderated Mediation Model," Journal of Business Venturing.

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**Week Five
September 21**

Week Five Guest Lecture by Dr. Jeffrey Stamp of Bold Thinking and formerly of the Eureka Ranch.

Individual student pitches

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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Michalko: Part II and Strategy Three: Thinking Fluently, p. 81-111

Michalko: Strategy Four: Making Novel Combinations, p. 113-138  
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ASSIGNMENT #2: *Complete the HBDI Instrument online before next week's class*

III. Stimulating Creativity

**Week Six
September 28**

Stimulating Creativity I: Assessing Your Creative Problem-solving Style with the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI); The Importance of Diversity of Thinking Styles. Building A Whole Brained Team.

Team Skill: Questions and a Question Stream.

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**Readings to prepare for this class:**

Michalko: Strategy Five: Connecting The Unconnected , p. 139-172

Leonard, D. and Straus, S.(1997). "Putting Your Company's Whole Brain to Work,"  
Harvard Business Review, (July-August), 111-121.  
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**Week Seven
October 5**

Stimulating Creativity II: "Be Careful What You Assume"

Creative Abrasion; Convergence and Divergence; Roles You Must Play Over the Process; Creative Questions before Creative Answers

The Use of Stimuli in Creativity: Making the Breakthrough.

Team Skill: Speaker Listener

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**Readings to prepare for this week:**

Hirschberg, J., "Creative Abrasion" & "Creative Questions before Creative Answers"

Michalko: Strategy Six: Looking at the Other Side, p. 173-193  
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IV. Discovery and Assessment of Opportunity

Week Eight
October 12

Origins of Opportunities; Sources and Types; Discovery versus Deliberate Search; Opportunity Windows; Opportunity Corridors

Midterm Examination

Readings to prepare for this week:

Baron, R.A. (2006). Opportunity Recognition as Pattern Recognition: How Entrepreneurs 'Connect the Dots' to Identify New Business Opportunities," Academy of Management Perspectives, 20, pp. 104-119.

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**FALL BREAK**

**Get some sun. See what you haven't seen. Carry your journal. Don't lose it. I know, it is a sad, sad thing that you don't get to miss a class in Imagination. Sniff.**

Week Nine  
October 19

**Are Opportunities Real? Do They Emerge? How to Assess an Opportunity Once You Discover (or Create) It**

**Intellectual Property: Linkages to Creativity and Opportunity Discovery. Team Skill: Disagreeing. Assessing.**

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Readings to prepare for this week:

Shah, S. & Tripsas, M. (2007). The Accidental Entrepreneur: The Emergent & Collective Process of User Entrepreneurship. Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, pp. 123-125.

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**EXERCISE:** Create concepts for products/services that will be in demand in 2020

Week Ten  
October 26

**Panel: Perspectives on Being Creative from an Array of Professions**

**Creativity in Entrepreneurship: Guerrilla Behavior, Leveraging and Risk Management**

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Readings to prepare for this week:

Michalko: Strategy Seven: Looking In Other Worlds, p. 195-225

Michalko: Strategy Eight: Finding What You're Not Looking For, p. 227-253

Morris, M.H., M. Schindehutte and L. Pitt (2008) "The Rules have Changed" in Rethinking Marketing, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

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**ASSIGNMENT #3: "Looking at Problems Differently" (Part 1) Due 11/3**  
**Identify a different "Bugs" from your Bug Report:**

*-What is your solution to this problem? Describe the problem and a potential solution from the perspective of two of the following individuals (2 pages maximum):*

*-Artist*

*-Janitor*

*-Philosopher*

*-College professor*

-Physician  
-Scientist  
-Mathematician  
-Corporate jester

-Entrepreneur  
-Traffic cop  
-Einstein  
-Corporate futurist

**Week Eleven  
November 2**

**Team Presentations and Assessments of 2020 concepts.**

**Week Twelve  
November 9**

**Selling Your Creative Ideas; Social and Communication Skills  
Piaget and Kholberg: How you process information and can work at Creativity.**

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Readings to prepare for this week:

Baron, R. A and Markman, G.D. (2000). "Beyond Social Capital: The Role of Social Skills in Entrepreneurs' Success." Academy of Management Executive, 14, pp. 106-116.

Piaget and Kohlberg on the D2L site.
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**EXERCISE:** A Brand Called "You". You will work out a pitch for yourself in the company of your team, using their input.

#### **IV. Exploration of Creativity in Team and Company Environments**

**Week Thirteen  
November 16**

**Creativity in Teams: Collaborative Creation and Innovation**

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Readings to prepare for this week:

Paulus, P.B. (2008). "Fostering Creativity in Groups & Teams," in J. Zhou & C. Shalley (Eds.), Handbook of Organizational Creativity, London: Taylor & Francis, pp 165-188.

Michalko: Strategy Nine: Awakening the Collaborative Spirit, p. 255-281
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**EXERCISE (Team):** *Design an interview strategy and hiring process that will be used to hire three new employees to join you on a team to design and implement a new concept in your company. In your planning, think about (but don't limit yourself to) skills needed, ways to assess those skills, and how to evaluate creative potential. What else should be included to create a successful team?)*

**Week Fourteen  
November 23**

**Creativity in Established Companies; Understanding Obstacles; Fear of Failure and Resistance to Change;**

**Intrapreneurial — Stimulating Creativity Within Companies: Maximizing Creative Output**

*Happy Thanksgiving.* Deciding you are thankful and focusing on the things for which you are thankful is a great discipline in tough times.  
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Readings to prepare for this week:

Amabile, T. (1998). "How to Kill Creativity," Harvard Business Review (Sept.-Oct), pp.77-87.

Morris, M.H, Ireland, R.D. and Kuratko, D.F. (2006). "The Entrepreneurial Health Audit: Preparing Firms for Corporate Entrepreneurship." Journal of Business Strategy, 27, 1, pp.10-17 (Parts I and II).

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**Week Fifteen**  
**November 30**

**Managing Creative People**

**Team Presentations of Viable Venture Concepts**

**TURN IN YOUR JOURNAL.**

**TURN IN YOUR TEAM'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION MATERIALS.**

**TURN IN YOUR INDIVIDUAL REPORTS.**

**Receive Your Final Exam**      TBA. It is not what you have done before.

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Readings to prepare for this week:

Shalley, C. (2008). "Creating Roles: What Managers Can Do to Create Expectations for Creative Performance." in J. Zhou & C. Shalley (Eds.), Handbook of Organizational Creativity, London: Taylor and Francis, pp. 147-164.

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**Week Sixteen**  
**December 7**

**Team Presentations of Viable Venture Concepts**

**TURN IN YOUR TEAM'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION MATERIALS.**

**TURN IN YOUR INDIVIDUAL REPORTS.**

**Turn in Your Final Exam**      TBA. It is not what you have done before.