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BMGT 486.03: Strategic Venture Management (SBI)

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BMGT 486: STRATEGIC VENTURE MANAGEMENT

Fall 2015: Syllabus for Section 3 only

Three credits (3 cr.), Traditional Grading option only

Course Pre-requisites: Completion of upper core; senior

Course Co-requisite: BGEN 499

Open to all business students

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Bambi Douma – GBB 322

Office Hours: M 10:00 am - 12:00 pm; Other times by appointment

Exceptions will be posted in Moodle

Telephone: (406) 243-6148

Email: [Dr. Douma's email](#)

Class Location: GBB 119; TR 12:40-2:00 pm

Class Web Page: UOnline [Moodle Page](#)

****You are expected to attend the section for which you are registered****

School of Business Administration Mission Statement

The University of Montana's School of Business Administration enhances lives and benefits society by providing a world-class business education in a supportive, collegial environment.

We accomplish this mission by acting on our shared core values of creating significant experiences, building relationships, teaching and researching relevant topics, behaving ethically, and inspiring individuals to thrive.

As part of our assessment process and assurance-of-learning standards, the School of Business Administration has adopted the following learning goals for our undergraduate students:

- 1: SoBA graduates will possess fundamental business knowledge.
- 2: SoBA graduates will be able to integrate business knowledge.
- 3: SoBA graduates will be effective communicators.
- 4: SoBA graduates will possess problem solving skills.
- 5: SoBA graduates will have an ethical awareness.
- 6: SoBA graduates will be proficient users of technology.
- 7: SoBA graduates will understand the global business environment in which they

operate.

Course Description

This course is one section of the capstone business course on the topic of strategic venture management. We will discuss forms of entrepreneurship, examine tools—particularly those relating to strategy—to help start and build businesses, and engage in discussions about new real-world ventures. In addition, in this section of the course, we will work directly with outside

entrepreneurs and/or small businesses or non-profits, conducting primary and secondary research and developing deliverables that are useful to these organizations. As the capstone course, we will bring together ideas and skills from the variety of functional areas (such as accounting, operations, information systems, finance, marketing, and management) into a coherent whole. Even though students may be concentrating in only one of the functional areas of business for his/her major, each student is likely to use all areas of knowledge in any business or entrepreneurial organization and will move into positions with increasing management responsibility as his/her career progresses.

Course Process and Objectives

The purpose of the course is to give students an overview of the entrepreneurial process and an opportunity to develop a real venture opportunity into a full-fledged business plan. We will discuss what is meant by entrepreneurship and venturing in their various forms. Subsequently, we will discuss existing strategic and operational frameworks and tools that can help students make sense of the vast amount of information needed to identify, appraise, and develop an opportunity. Lastly, students are asked to refine thinking and integrate business functions by developing an in-depth business plan, to be “pitched” to members and/or leadership of the venturing organization at the end of the semester. Working in teams, students will develop the business plan based on a feasible idea from one of these outside organizations. This exercise will prompt the application of frameworks and models to develop a top-down and bottom-up approach to opportunity recognition, competitive analysis, target customer identification, product development and pricing, marketing and sales strategies, and relevant financial projections. This project will tie together the diverse parts of the course as well as much of the knowledge students have gained in previous business classes. In addition, it will provide students with a ‘product’ to take with them when entering the job search process.

Each group will have the opportunity to present their final products at an invitation-only presentation event.

Objectives of the Course:

1. *Apply and integrate knowledge acquired during student career to real business problems, involving analysis, solution development, and implementation.*
2. *Sharpen communication skills.*
3. *Engage in entrepreneurial and strategic thinking, as well as client interaction.*
4. *Learn how entrepreneurs create opportunities and capture the rewards of their activities (or how they might miss them).*
5. *Recognize the interaction between different business areas, e.g. innovation/R&D, production/operations, financing, accounting, management, and marketing.*
6. *Develop basic managerial skills such as leadership, decision making, and prioritizing/time and project management.*
7. *Perform as part of a group of peers challenged by a demanding project with severe time constraints.*
8. *Improve skills in achieving group effectiveness.*
9. *Fulfill UM’s Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major.*

Learning Outcomes:

1. *Students can integrate knowledge in management, marketing, accounting and finance, and management information systems.*
2. *Students show competence in information technology and digital literacy; they can find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources.*
3. *Students understand what determines the likelihood of a successful business venture in a competitive market environment.*
4. *Students can develop and evaluate a business plan and operating strategy for a venture based on primary and secondary research, create a mission statement and objectives of the venture, and compare the criteria used by various funding sources (banks, angel investors, venture capital, etc.).*
5. *Students can identify the roles of leadership and teamwork in venture management activity, apply teamwork skills to solve a business problem, and assess how personal attributes influence the success and failure of a venture.*
6. *Students have written and oral communication skills as expected of business professionals, including conventions of citation, documentation and formal presentation, adopting the proper voice, and considering multiple perspectives.*

Course Format and Expectations

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. The University of Montana Student Conduct Code specifies definitions and adjudication processes for academic misconduct and states, "Students at the University of Montana are expected to practice academic honesty at all times." (Section V.A., available at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php). All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar the Student Conduct Code. In addition, please read and become familiar with the School of Business Administration's Code of Professional Conduct at <http://www.business.umt.edu/Soba/SoBAEthics/CodeofProfessionalConduct.aspx>

Students are expected to actively participate in class sessions and group sessions outside of the classroom. Therefore, preparation is expected before each class or meeting with the instructor:

- All reading and assignments for the day have been completed,
- Thought has been given to the topics to be discussed,
- Come prepared with questions about *relevant* issues to discuss, explore, or challenge.

Students are expected to be proficient in all business disciplines based on previous coursework. If students feel weak in any specific area, please allocate extra time to develop that knowledge. The instructor will provide references and coaching, if needed.

Cell phones and PDAs must be turned to silent during class time and any meetings with group members, instructor and the client. Class time, including allocated teamwork time, is not the appropriate time to be on Facebook, emailing, texting, or otherwise disengaging from the sessions. Inappropriate use of class/group time will be reflected in the grade.

Contribution is assessed each class session and instructor meeting. Students must be present to earn any points.

Required Class Materials

1. *Business Plans that Work: A Guide for Small Business* by A. Zacharakis, S. Spinelli, and J. Timmons – online book sellers – on syllabus schedule as BPW
2. *The Portable MBA in Entrepreneurship* by W. Bygrave and A. Zacharakis (newest edition) – online book sellers – on syllabus schedule as PME
3. Other articles/material as assigned in Moodle

Grading / Requirements

A	93% and above	B-	80% to 82%	D+	67% to 69%
A-	90% to 92%	C+	77% to 79%	D	63% to 66%
B+	87% to 89%	C	73% to 76%	D-	60% to 62%
B	83% to 86%	C-	70% to 72%	F	Below 60%

1. Group Intro of Project and Pitch; 5% weight; Learning Outcome 6
2. Peer Reviews (3); 20% weight; Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
3. Class and Team Contribution (Instructor evaluation); 10% weight; Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
4. Individual Written Assignments (10); 20% weight; Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6
5. Plan / Presentations; 15% weight; Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
6. Final Plan / Project; 30% weight; Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Group Intro of Project and Pitch – 5%

A key skill for anyone in business is the ability to quickly convey the essence of an idea in a way that builds excitement and that leads a listener to want to hear more. As such, students will give a 2-minute introduction to the organization and project in an “elevator pitch.” Students are also expected to have a plan for technology use in collaboration and develop a scope of work document at this time. This introduction and pitch will be given at the beginning of the fourth week of class. Plan for at least five minutes total with questions and brief discussion.

Criteria and Standards

The introduction and project pitch will be graded based on the rubric found in Moodle. You will receive immediate feedback on content and delivery from your peers.

Peer Review Assignments – 20%

The business plan project (see appropriate requirement section) will benefit from many different eyes and perspectives as it is developed. Therefore, at each critical point (see Moodle schedule), students will be assigned a review of the work of another group, providing feedback and comments. There are three parts to each review: the presentation, the written work, and progress towards meeting the goals of the project. Peer review feedback should be designed to help the other group move their project forward, should be constructively critical if there are areas that need to be changed, and helpful overall.

Criteria and Standards

Each student is expected to put effort into these reviews to help the other groups and engage in the feedback sessions, using the associated feedback forms (available in Moodle) to direct and focus comments. Higher quality reviews show evidence of thought, reading, and include clear responses and are complete.

Class and Team Contribution – 10%

Verbal communication skills are imperative to success in the business world and this class is designed to be a non-threatening place to share ideas, thoughts, and otherwise learn. This class is much better served through an interchange. Student and instructor contributions should be thoughtful and inclusive of the frameworks and themes we have covered. As the course progresses, we expect presentations and contributions to reflect the various articles, readings, case studies, frameworks, tools, and class discussions. Informed and active participation is expected of everyone. Much of the learning in this course comes from listening to fellow students and making comments that move the class discussion forward.

In addition, this class will include a great amount of teamwork. Periodically, students will evaluate their team members and provide feedback to help them improve.

Criteria and Standards

Providing relevant examples; integrating material covered in the reading, outside readings, or in class; arguing (respectfully and with justification) a point made by a classmate to clarify and move the discussion forward; and actively participating in class exercises are all examples of quality contributions. Specifically, we will be looking for:

- Are comments fact-based and relevant? Is the student applying the lessons of the readings or lectures?
- Are comments thoughtful, insightful, and original?
- Do comments advance our understanding of the issue at hand?
- Is the student willing to challenge, respectfully, the ideas expressed by others?
- Does the student contribute meaningfully in group sessions?
- Does the student provide *and receive* feedback in an appropriate manner?

Classroom participation should largely be voluntary, but the group members or instructor may ask for a specific student's participation. There may also be opportunities during most class sessions to participate. In short, be prepared.

Quality contributions (see above) earn a 5, active participation and lower-quality contributions earn a 4, active participation with no contributions earns a 3, passive participation with no contributions earns a 2, sleeping or exhibiting other behaviors that detract from the learning environment earns a 1, and being absent earns a 0 (unless approved by instructor prior to class). The instructor will inform the class through Moodle and email prior to class if she will be absent; the same is expected from students – inform the instructor of absences prior to the class or scheduled meeting.

There is a certain qualitative and subjective component to assessment of preparation and participation, so please check Moodle often and ask in a timely manner if there are questions about grades/scores.

Specifically regarding teamwork: If a student is not contributing to the work of the team in a meaningful manner, the team can “fire” the student. At this point, the student loses one-half the available contribution points for the class and must find another project to complete on his/her own. Group members should attempt to handle any problems first before bringing them to the instructor.

Individual Written Assignments – 20%

Each student is expected to turn in weekly individual written assignments for this course. Assignment formatting requirements and length expectations may differ, so pay attention to the requirements and rubrics posted on Moodle. The due dates for the written assignments are included on the Moodle schedule. Topics for the writing assignments will vary, possibly even within groups/teams.

Criteria and Standards

These written assignments will be graded based on the rubrics provided in Moodle .

Plan / Presentations – 15%

At each critical point, each group/team will make a brief presentation to the class (no more than eight slides and no longer than 10 minutes; times may change based on size of class). Each group will get immediate feedback and comments from the class for each presentation, which should help teams in preparation for the final plan presentation. More information will be given in class closer to these presentations.

Each team will have 20 minutes (maximum 20 slides; time subject to change based on needs of project and size of class) to present the final plan. The outside client, interested guests from the community or other faculty/staff from the School of Business Administration may be present

for the final presentation and may ask questions of any of the presenters. Therefore, each group member should know and be able to discuss each part of the project. Three to four teams will present again at a formal SBI reception on December 8 in the evening. All students, presenting or not, should plan to be there.

Criteria and Standards

Dress for all critical point presentations should be industry appropriate and business dress for the final presentation. Preliminary presentations will be judged by progress toward goals at each critical point. The final presentation will be graded on communication of the plan / project. Higher quality presentations are organized, have been rehearsed but are also open to interruptions and questions, meet the time limits, and include everybody on the team in appropriate roles.

Final Plan / Project – 30%

The business plan affords students a unique opportunity to take an idea for a venture and evaluate it from multiple perspectives (competitive, marketing, financial, etc.) while utilizing help from a team and the client organization. We don't expect that all students will actually continue involvement with the business or venture, but we believe that the more students understand the PROCESS of business planning, the more likely it is that they can hit the ground running (without tripping) should they decide to start a venture or work for an entrepreneurial company. In addition, this exercise provides experience in integration of all business concepts.

The final product is graded based on its comprehensiveness, substance, attention to detail, consistency, writing style (e.g., one voice, not individual sections; clear; convincing) and professional appearance. An outline for a business plan can be found in the texts.

Students will submit sections of the plan at different times throughout the semester at three critical points (see Moodle schedule) for feedback. Each group is expected to keep all submissions and sections, along with all of the feedback and comments received from students and instructor/clients, in a binder that will be turned in at the final presentation and made available to the outside organization. The final written project will be professionally finished (i.e., bound and printed by the SBI program) and presented to the outside organization at the final presentation.

Criteria and Standards

The rubric for grading the final business plan will be posted in Moodle.

Competitions and Research Conferences

As stated earlier, the deliverables for this class will be presented to the outside clients and can potentially be submitted to the Undergraduate Research Conference. This will be discussed during appropriate times and in plenty of time prior to deadlines to see if the project/group/student qualifies for submission.

A Note about Teamwork

As with many start-ups, the business plan development will be team-based. Groups will be formed during the first three weeks of class through an instructor-facilitated process. Teams should be **no larger than four** members and can be single-person teams. Once the projects/teams have been chosen, a team liaison may be selected who will interact directly with the client.

It is critically important that team members learn to manage the various requirements and deadlines of the business plan. Remember that it takes some time for groups to become performing teams and groups will go through several phases before achieving gains toward the project. Each team should determine early how they want to evaluate others on the team and be evaluated and an agreement should be reached in a team charter. Finally, if a team member is not performing, the group may agree to remove that member. This may be done only after consulting with the professor and documenting attempts to motivate the team member. A team member who is removed from a team must complete all assignments individually, including finding a new project, and forfeits one-half of the possible course participation points.

Team evaluations and Impact on Final Grade

Individually, each student will turn in a final evaluation of all team members, including him/herself, after all requirements are complete. The results of this evaluation may result in team members being assigned different grades for the final project (e.g., Team member A doesn't contribute very much and receives a 50% evaluation from his teammates. His final grade for the project would be the team grade multiplied by 50%.)

A Note about Client Meetings

Each student group will be working with an outside organization and is expected to have regular, timely meetings with the client to gather information, discuss ideas, etc. A proposed schedule of meetings will be discussed early in the semester to ensure adequate time is allocated.

A Note about Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

The outside clients who are participating in this class, as well as the School of Business Administration, expect professionalism and confidentiality from students in this class. Students may be privy to private information that should not be shared or discussed outside of the classroom. All students and the instructor are expected to sign and uphold the confidentiality / non-disclosure agreement.

Other Information

EMAIL: According to University policy, faculty may only communicate with students regarding academic issues via official UM email accounts. Accordingly, students must use their umontana or umconnect emails. Email from non-UM accounts will likely be flagged as spam and deleted

without further response. To avoid violating the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, confidential information (including grades and course performance) will not be discussed via phone or email.

ACCOMMODATION: Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications.

Course Schedule available in Moodle.