

High-Tech Entrepreneurship
Fall 2021
Professor Thanos Papadimitriou

Revised: 7 July 2021

Time: 6:00pm - 9:00pm

Office Hours: by appointment

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Course Description

High-Tech Entrepreneurship is no exact science. Identifying a genuine market need, building a product to address that need, and finding a business model to tie it all together profitably can't be automated.

That said, entrepreneurship is no Voodoo art either. While there's no process that guarantees success, savvy entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs can employ market-tested best practices to maximize their chances.

Techniques for evaluating market demand on the cheap, strategies for maximizing value capture, models for creating growth from network effects, and protocols for the early identification of symptoms of start-up failure are just of some of the tools that this course will familiarize you with.

Intended Audience and Prerequisites

This course should be useful to students interested in pursuing careers in established high-tech companies, consulting, entrepreneurship, and technology sector financing.

Although this course does not have any formal prerequisites, the Instructor will assume basic familiarity with present key technologies, including a basic understanding of how the Internet and mobile apps work. Following news from the tech sector before and during the course will equip you with current interesting examples and enable you to participate in class discussion more vigorously.

If you have no prior technical background, you can *still* take this course, if you are a fast learner and are willing to put extra time to learn some of the basic technical concepts during the course. If you are not sure whether you have the appropriate knowledge and background for this course, you can discuss this matter with the instructor.

Approach

This is a highly interactive course. Participants will learn through a combination of class lectures, discussions, student presentations, videos, and case studies. Experts from the industry will also be invited to share their experiences pertaining to the framework being studied and discuss current trends and future directions for these technologies and corresponding industries.

Textbook and Other References

The primary textbook for this course is:

Technology Ventures: From Idea to Enterprise, 5/e by Thomas Byers, Richard C Dorf, and Andrew J Nelson.

In addition, we will draw material from multiple other sources, including:

The Hard Thing About Hard Things: Building a Business When There Are No Easy Answers, by Ben Horowitz.

The Startup Owner's Manual: The Step-By-Step Guide for Building a Great Company by Steve Blank and Bob Dorf.

Group Project

There will be a group term project in this class. In this project, participants will be grouped into small teams and asked to come up with an entrepreneurial opportunity and analyze its potential using the frameworks covered in this class. This analysis will be presented during the last session of the course.

Assessment

Participants will be evaluated based on their:

- Group Project: 80%
- Class participation: 20%

Session Outline

Session	Session Title
1	Introducing High-Tech Entrepreneurship
2	Of Ideas & Opportunities
3	Finding Customers & Building Products that Matter
4	Growing the Lean Start-up & The Art of Pitching
5	Of Runways and Exits & Tools of the Trade
6	Pitching Day

About the Instructor

[Thanos Papadimitriou](#) is an SDA Professor at the Operations and Technology Management Unit of SDA Bocconi in Milan and an Adjunct Professor at NYU Stern. He specializes in Technology Management and Entrepreneurship. He earned a BSc from MIT in Computer Science, an MS in Computer Science from UCLA, and a PhD in Operations and Technology Management from UCLA Anderson, the latter with the aid of an Onassis scholarship. He has published articles and contributed book chapters in the areas of data inventory management, social media networks, illegitimate trade, and other related topics.

In addition to his academic experience, Professor Papadimitriou has 20+ years of field experience. First as a consultant with Cambridge Technology Partners and subsequently as the founder or co-founder of a number of US and EU-based companies, including AlphaDetail, mbriyo, giaola, moveo, and M2Cmedia. In 2015, he co-founded Charge Ventures, a NY based pre-seed and seed venture fund.