Course Title: Accelerate Your Startup Idea
Course Code: BUS 217
Instructor: Bret Waters

Course Summary*: This fast-paced course will explore an accelerated methodology for turning a startup idea into a launch-ready, investment-ready business in just eight weeks. The process is applicable to all kinds of ventures, including non-tech and social ventures.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Grade Options and Requirements*:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - Students must attend at least 6 of the 8 class sessions.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  - Students must attend at least 6 of the 8 class sessions and complete two pieces of written work (to be discussed further in class).

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Weekly Outline:

Week 1: April 17
So you've got an awesome idea. Now What?
Introduction to the course, including themes of idea vs execution, risk mitigation, customer development, design thinking, and the overall process of accelerating your startup idea.

Week 2: April 24
Validate that puppy. Then validate it again.
The key component of Lean Startup Methodology is to validate your ideas using empirical data, followed by rapid iteration. We'll also look at Design Thinking as a methodology for creating ideas that win.
Week 3: May 1st
**Build a model. Then destroy it.**
We’ll look at creating a business model canvas for your venture, and see patterns that run through various business models. Then we’ll test the assumptions on our business model canvas, make some changes, and iterate upon it until we have a business model canvas where each component has been successfully proven-out and is ready for scaling.

Week 4: May 8
**Math? I was told there would be no math.**
Not a spreadsheet person? You will be by the end of the night. Every venture of every kind needs to have a sustainable economic model. We’ll have fun with spreadsheets (really!), and build an economic model for our startup.

Week 5: May 15
**Lawyers, Guns, and Money.**
Many startups will need outside funding to get off the ground. We’ll look at debt capital vs equity capital, angel capital vs venture capital vs impact capital. We’ll look at how your financing plans will impact the legal structure you will choose for your startup: LLC, S-Corp, C-Corp, etc.

Week 6: May 22
**Storytelling and Growth Hacking**
Every great entrepreneur has the ability to tell a clear, crisp, and compelling story of what she’s working on - and why it matters. We will work on this and we’ll also look at growth hacking as a way to build users and awareness for your startup.

Week 7: May 29
**Jedi Mind Tricks for Entrepreneurs.**
For many of us, our mind is our own worst enemy. We’ll look at how entrepreneurs sometimes trip themselves up, and we’ll look at cognitive processes that can help you succeed as you pursue your entrepreneurial venture.

Week 8: June 5
**Pitch night. Sell it, baby!**
On our final night we will have venture capital investors in the classroom as guest judges and you will have the (optional) opportunity to give your pitch and get feedback from professional investors. Even if you are not seeking outside funding, you will find this process to be helpful in thinking about your own venture.

**Additional (optional) sessions:**
Each week there will also be an optional team meeting before class, and an optional video conference on Sunday night where we will cover certain side sessions topics such as social ventures/non-profits, and a deeper dive into venture capital mechanics and nomenclature.

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions
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