

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Course Number/Section: ENTP 6370.501
Course Title: Entrepreneurship
Classroom: JSOM
12.210
Term: Spring 2026

Professor Contact Information

Professor: Jackie Kimzey
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Office Hours: Tuesdays: 5:00-7:00 pm, or
available by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites for this course other than acceptance and enrollment into a graduate program at the University of Texas at Dallas. Course participants are not expected to have a formal business or management background.

Course Description

This course provides a broad-based introduction to entrepreneurship. Course activities will include evaluating the commercial potential of business concepts and technological innovation, researching markets and competition, managing patents and copyrights, understanding essentials of licensing and technology transfer, valuing a business opportunity, developing a market entry plan, legal issues relating to launching a new business venture, acquiring resources, avoiding pitfalls, making effective presentations to investors, and financing the new start-up. Participants in the course will explore the mindset, considerations, realities, and real-world methods associated with entrepreneurship and the process of moving an innovation to the commercial world. Whether simply a desire to learn more about entrepreneurship and commercialization or desiring to launch a new enterprise, the course will provide students the know-how and tools to be more effective in the entrepreneurial process.

Students will be exposed to entrepreneurial case studies to gain an understanding of the principles of entrepreneurship.

Both group and individual assignments will be required. A team project focused on the creation of a new business development plan for a new opportunity will comprise a major part of the course.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

This course is intended to help the student achieve the following objectives:

- Through homework assignments in the form of case studies and class discussion: Be able to use tools of analysis to effectively assess the viability and attractiveness of a new business opportunity.
- Using homework assignments and case discussions, be able to describe the actual steps of starting a new enterprise.
- Through homework assignments and presentations: Be able to prepare and effectively present persuasive investor presentations that outline the business development plan for a new product or service. Using case studies: Be able to effectively apply course content to analyze emerging enterprises.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

Ries, Eric, 2011. **The Lean Startup**. Crown Business. ISBN 978-0-307-88789-4

Readings/Cases: [Available in a course pack online](https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1374635): <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1374635>

- Baker, Sapienza, Deekshit, Hundet, How Venture Capitalists Evaluate Potential Venture Opportunities- November 15, 2018 (KE1097)
- Blank, Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything, May 1, 2013-(HBS-R1305C)
- Eisenmann, Ries, Dillar, Experimenting in the Entrepreneurial Venture, September 1, 2014-(HBS-8077)

Case Name	Case Number
Centra Software	HBS-502009
Lemonade: Juicy Flavor Insurtech	HK1216
Gharpar: The Lean Beauty Start-Up	LCA056
Campushash: Evolving Business Model of an Entrepreneurial Venture	W19462
Randy Hetrick and TRX: Protecting Intellectual Property Rights (A)	SCG-549
SprintRay: Kick-Starting Growth	SCG-551
Trucar.IN: Finding a Position in an Emerging Online Market	W18429
Founder-CEO Succession at Wily Technology	(HBS 9-805-150)
The Uber Board Deliberates: Is Good Governance Worth the Firing of an Entrepreneurial Founder?	(CU-242)
Rent the Runway	(HBS 9-705-506)
Evaluating Venture Capital Term Sheets	E-460

Textbooks and some other bookstore materials can be ordered online through Off-Campus Books <http://www.offcampusbooks.com> or the UT Dallas Bookstore <http://www.bkstr.com/texasatdallasstore/home>. They are also available in stock at both bookstores.

Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/getting-started.html#techreqs> on the Getting Started with eLearning webpage <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/getting-started.html>.

To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the Student eLearning Tutorials <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/eLearningTutorialsStudents.html>.

UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The eLearning Support Center <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearninghelp> services include a toll free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

Assignments & Academic Calendar

<u>Week</u>	Readings/Preparation	Assignments
<p>1 Jan 20</p>	<p><u>The Case for Innovation</u> Whether your organization is large, or small, business or non-profit, competitive advantage will fade and surrender to the innovative disruptor. Vision, awareness, and a culture that is open to change can alter the possibilities for us all.</p> <p>Lecture 01: The “Shelf Life” of Sustainable Competitive Advantage: Disrupt or be Disrupted.</p> <p><u>The Entrepreneurial Perspective</u> Foundations of Entrepreneurship, The Nature and importance of Entrepreneurs; Can entrepreneurship be learned? Myths, Self-Assessment, the entrepreneurial mindset</p> <p>Readings: Ries, Chapter 1-<i>Start</i>. Chapter 2: <i>Define</i></p> <p>Unit 2 Lecture: Introduction and Overview-Nature and Importance of Entrepreneurship</p> <p><u>Examples of Past Ideas</u></p>	
<p>2 Jan 27</p>	<p><u>Developing Successful Business Ideas</u> Creativity and the business idea</p> <p>Readings: Ries, Chapter 2: <i>Define</i></p> <p>Unit 3 Lecture: Creativity and the Business Idea</p> <p><u>Evaluating the Opportunity:</u> Evaluating opportunities, Conducting Feasibility Analysis and Innovation and Market Acceptance</p> <p>Readings: Ries, Chapter 3; <i>Learn</i></p> <p>Article: Blank, <u>Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything</u></p> <p>Unit 4 Lecture: Innovation and Market Acceptance</p> <p>Startup Odyssey Documentary-Teaser</p> <p>—</p>	
<p>3 Feb 3</p>	<p><u>Pitch Ideas, Project Selection, Teams Organized</u></p>	<p><u>Due:</u> WA#1, one page summary of individual business idea, 90 second elevator pitch-post into General Bulletin Board on eLearning February 3rd at 8:00 am. Vote on your two favorite ideas on Project Proposal Survey on eLearning by February 4th at 11:59 pm. Organize Teams-Sign-up February 9th.</p>

<p>4 Feb 10</p>	<p>Evaluating the Opportunity: Evaluating opportunities, Conducting Feasibility Analysis and Innovation and Market Acceptance Readings: Ries, Chapter 3; <i>Learn</i> Article: Blank, <u>Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything</u> Unit 5 Lecture: Recognizing Opportunity Startup Odyssey Documentary-Introduction Finalize Project Teams Wild Card Presentation Format Weekly Case Pop Quiz-if needed</p>	
<p>5 Feb 17</p>	<p>Competitive Analysis: Implementing Entrepreneurial Product Strategies: Competitive forces, collecting competitive intelligence, new entry strategy, growth strategies, creating a resource bundle Readings: Ries, Chapter 4, <i>Experiment</i> Unit 6 Lecture: Competitive Analysis – Implementing Entrepreneurial Product Strategies Startup Odyssey Documentary-Final Countdown to Product Introduction</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Lemonade: Juicy Flavor Insurtech</i></p>
<p>6 Feb 24</p>	<p>Developing a Business Model: Strategies, business models_ Readings: Ries, Chapters 5 and 8: <i>Leap and Pivot or Preserve</i> Unit 7 Lecture: Building Business Models Download: Business Model Canvas from eLearning Article: Experimenting in the Entrepreneurial Venture Startup Odyssey Documentary- Searching for Funding <i>Review Business Model Canvas Video:</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP0cUBWTgpY</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Gharpar: The Lean Beauty Start-Up</i></p>
<p>7 Mar 3</p>	<p>Creating and Starting the Business: The Planning Process-Running the Experiments The entrepreneurial process, why start-ups fail, The three phases of growth, the customer development model, understanding the “pivot”, the minimum viable product and measuring your progress Giving Presentations, Essentials of Selling: Format and content of presentations, psychology of the presentation, essential elements Readings: Ries, Chapters 6 and 7, <i>Test, Measure</i> Article: Baker, Sapienza, Deekshit, Hundet, <u>How Venture Capitalists Evaluate Potential Ventures</u> Unit 8 Lecture: Creating and Running the Experiments Unit 9 Lecture: Marketing and Pitching Your Idea</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Trucar.IN</i></p>
<p>8 Mar 10</p>	<p>Intellectual Property and Other Legal Issues: Patents, Trademarks, Copyrights, Trade Secrets, Legal Organization_ Readings: Ries, Chapter 8, <i>Pivot (or Persevere)</i> Unit 10 Lecture: Intellectual Property Startup Odyssey Documentary- Trip to Japan</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Campushash: Evolving Business Model of an Entrepreneurial Venture</i></p>
<p>9 Mar 16-22</p>	<p>Spring Break</p>	

<p>10 Mar 24</p>	<p>Leadership and Culture of the Entrepreneurial Organization: The Role of the CEO, building a board of Directors, building the team, core values, culture, the “5 Dysfunctions of a Team.” Unit 11 Lecture: The Entrepreneurial Organization Unit 12A Lecture: Entrepreneurial Leadership – The Role of the CEO Startup Odyssey Documentary- Losing Faith in the Founder</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Randy Hetrick and TRX (A)</i></p>
<p>11 Mar 31</p>	<p>Unit 12B Lecture: Entrepreneurial Leadership – The Board – Essential Team Member Startup Odyssey Documentary- Board Conflict/Burning Cash</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Founder-CEO succession at Wily Technology</i></p>
<p>12 April 7</p>	<p>Marketing and Selling in the Entrepreneurial Venture: Segmenting the market, product positioning, Closed Loop Marketing and Sales Process, Sales Learning Curve in the new Enterprise. Readings: Ries, Chapter 9, <i>Batch</i>. Unit 13 Lecture: Sales and Marketing in the New Venture Startup Odyssey Documentary- Epilogue</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>The Uber Board Deliberates</i></p>
<p>13 April 14</p>	<p>The Financial Plan: Elements of an Operational and Financial Plan: Defining the business model, forecasting, integrating the plan into the organization, relationship between strategic and operating plans, tying performance to plan Readings: Ries, Chapter 10, <i>Grow</i> Unit 14A Lecture: Building a Successful Company – Execution Planning Unit 14B Lecture: The Financial Plan</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Centra Software</i></p>
<p>14 April 21</p>	<p>Attracting Stakeholders: Financing and valuing the New Venture: Friends, Family, Fools, Friends, Angels VC’s. Financing the Venture, Sources of Finance, time, types of financing vs. Stage of Venture, What to expect from a Venture investor, Networking, the Do’s and Don’ts of fundraising Readings: Ries, Chapter 12, <i>Innovate</i> Unit 15 Lecture: Sources of Capital Deal Structure, Deal Terms; concepts & terminology, Valuing the company, Understanding Term sheets Unit 16 Lecture: Deal Terms</p>	<p>Wild Card Case Presentation and Discussion: <i>Rent the Runway</i></p>
<p>15 April 28</p>	<p>Business Plan Presentations (Bring hard copy of PowerPoint and Appendix to class)</p>	<p>Discussion: <i>Evaluating Venture Capital Term Sheets</i> Due: Group Bus. Plan Written Assignment, WA# 3, New Venture Business Plan (Group) Presentations WA# 3a(Group) Presentation submitted April 28th, 2026, 8 am Class presentation April 28th, 2026, during class</p>

16 May 5	Written Case Analysis: <i>SprintRay: Kick-starting Growth</i>	WA#4 , Case Analysis and Write-Up for the <i>SprintRay</i> Due May 5th, 2026, 8 am Due: Peer Evaluations May 5th, 2026, 8:00 am
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The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

Grading Policy

Assignment	Due Date	Group or Individual	Format	Length	Weight
WA#1 Individual Business Ideas Summary for student polling	02/03/26	Individual	Summary Description	1	Class Participation
Complete On-line Survey: Assignment Project Proposal Survey (eLearning) Team Sign-up: Select Team (Project/Discussion Groups eLearning) Teams Formed	02/04/26 02/09/26				Class Participation
WA#2 Group Case Analysis: Wild Card (2)	Varies	Group	Power-Point	6-10 slides	25%
WA#3 Presentation – Business Opportunity Plan Presentation submitted. Group presentation a	04/28/26, 8 am 04/28/26, in-class	Group	Power-Point Word Appendix	10 min 15-20 PowerPoint slides Appendix-Word/Excel Documents-Various page counts	25%
WA#4-Written Case Analysis: SprintRay-submitted via eLearning	05/05/26 8 am	Group	Word Doc Outline Form	4-6 Pages	25%
Peer Evaluations	05/05/26 8 am	Individual	Form		Class Participation
Class Participation		Individual	Present, Prepared and Engaged		25%
Overall Course Grade					100%

	Points	Weight
Class Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WA#1 ▪ Project Survey ▪ Attendance/Engagement/Pop Quiz Scores ▪ Peer Evaluation 	100	25%

WA#2 Group Case-Wild Card	100	25%
WA#3 Business Opportunity Plan	100	25%
WA#4 Final Group Case-SprintRay	100	25%
Total	400	100%

Grading Scale

Scaled Score	Letter Equivalent
400 - 372	A
371 - 360	A-
359 - 352	B+
351 - 332	B
331 - 320	B-
319 - 312	C+
311 - 292	C
Less than 292	F

Accessing Grades

Students can check their grades by clicking “My Grades” under Course Tools after the grade for each assessment task is released.

Formation of Groups

Much of the work in this course will be performed in groups. Students will form a small group (5 members) around one of the project ideas submitted and voted on by the students (more on this later).

Peer Evaluation

A peer evaluation process will be utilized to adjust individual grades on all group assignments. The peer evaluation form (attached under submission link) should be completed individually and submitted through eLearning online using the Peer Evaluation assignment by the end of the semester due date.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- **Evaluation:** Seventy-five percent (75%) of your grade will be based on group assignments. Care should be taken to fully address the requirements for each paper detailed in the assignment.
- **Outline Form Response.** Some assignments specify an outline form response. I will expect a short summary or statement followed by a bulleted or numbered list of the key items in your response.
- **Assignment Submission Instructions:** Written assignments and presentations are to be submitted in [electronic form using the assignment dropbox links within the eLearning course site](#). Group assignments are to be submitted only by one member of the group. The team will receive the results and feedback on the assignment from the instructor.

Case Analysis Guidelines:

Each group will be assigned one “Wild Card” case to prepare and present to the class. Case studies are usually about problems within a company. The questions are designed to help identify them, but it is not always obvious. In fact, case studies are replete with symptoms of larger issues that go undetected by the student and student teams. Think! Analyze! Ask the simple question, “Why is this an issue”? Do not just recite the problem symptoms, but draw conclusions based upon the facts that are given. The questions are simple. The answers are not.

Case analysis assignments are designed to evaluate and develop your skills in:

- identifying key organizational issues (decisions or actions required in a given situation).

- analyzing the situation (identifying problems; understanding the underlying causal factors; and identifying and evaluating options)
- recommending specific actions (what should be done, by whom, when and in what sequence) to address the key issues.

I have provided specific questions for each case to focus your analysis. In general, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers for a specific case – different approaches and insights are possible, depending on your individual perspective and approach. Regardless of your approach and conclusions, I expect you to make recommendations that: (1) address the identified issues; (2) follow logically from your analysis and conclusions; and (3) make sense (are feasible) in the context of the case situation.

In William Ellet's The Case Study Handbook, he offers a number of observations:

"Cases have multiple meanings and thus are always controversial."

"Cases rely on an evidence/conclusion relationship where the evidence is usually presented with facts in the case and provide insight to the why (conclusion)."

"Thinking about the case is more important than re-reading/highlighting the text of the case."

To be clear, my goal is to provide a lively debate about the issues and possible conclusions to avoid simple restating the facts without the full consideration of the why.

Evaluation Criteria: Lemonade: “Juicy” Flavor Insurtech		Available Points	Points Earned
1.	Overview	10	
2.	The founders are clearly approaching the business in a creative way. Give examples of their creative process and the implications of their decisions. What were the key assumptions regarding the existing insurance industry that Lemonade founders discovered when they conceived their business idea?	20	
3.	What advantages did the founders have given they did not have experience in the insurance industry? What were the major differentiators of Lemonade’s business model?	20	
4.	The insurance industry is an “old guard” industry with large, entrenched competitors. What were the risks associated with the company’s approach to the industry?	15	
5.	If you were to work for a conventional insurance company and are assigned the task of dealing with the competition from start-ups such as Lemonade, what strategies do you plan to implement?	15	
6.	Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7.	Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION		100	

Evaluation Criteria:Gharpar-The Lean Beauty Start-Up		Available Points	Points Earned
1.	Overview	10	
2.	Create a timeline of actions undertaken by GP’s founders since launch. Do you believe each of these actions was critical to the progress of the company? Can you suggest different actions the founders could have taken?	25	
3.	Since the inception of the company, have the co-founders consistently carried out hypothesis-driven-decision-making? Elaborate on three examples of lean start-up logic followed by GP’s founders since inception.	20	
4.	In October 1919, the four partners are considering whether to (1) focus solely on growing and sustaining their market share in the Lahore market, or (2) to expand into the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi concurrently and take on additional outside investment. What would you do about this	25	

decision?		
5. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
6. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluation Criteria: Trucar.IN-Finding a Position in an Emerging Online Market

	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. What is the impact of Porter’s Five Forces model on the online car portal industry?	15	
3. What is the consumer decision-making process for purchasing a car, and what is the role of online car websites in this process?	15	
4. What bases for segmentation could be useful for: TruCar to identify key target segments? What are the possible key target segments for TruCar?	20	
5. What are the possible marketing strategies that TruCar can adopt to cement its position in the online car portal industry?	20	
6. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluation Criteria: Campushash-Evolving Business Model of an Entrepreneurial Venture

	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. Using the Osterwalder and Pigneur “ <i>Business Model Canvas</i> ” framework (template), define the company’s current business model	20	
3. What are the pivot options for the company? Using the concepts in our reading, <i>Experimenting in the Entrepreneurial Venture</i> , which practices have they applied successfully and which ones need to be followed in order to have a chance at a successful pivot? Be sure to elaborate on the changes that will be required to the business model in the different pivot options.	20	
4. Is the company justified in considering a pivot at this stage? Please explain.	20	
5. Which pivoting option, if any, should the company choose? Why?	10	
6. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluation Criteria: Randy Hetrick and TRX: Protecting Intellectual Property Rights	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. What are the reasons for TRX's success? What are some of the business challenges TRX faces?	10	
3. What features make a product ripe for IP infringement? How does the TRX system reflect these features? How did TRX address this growing problem?	15	
4. How has the online consumer economy changed the practical implications of patent law? What types of patents should an inventor acquire in order to protect a product from IP infringement in the digital economy?	15	
5. What role does Amazon play with regard to IP infringement? How is Amazon contributing to Hetrick's problem?	15	
6. Should Hetrick file a lawsuit? What are the pros and cons of filing or not filing suit? What are the possible outcomes of each choice?	15	
7. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
8. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluation Criteria: Founder-CEO Succession at Wily Technology	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. Has Lew Cirne been a good CEO so far? Should he fight to remain CEO? Are there any clues from Levensohn's article, "Managing CEO Transition in Venture-Backed Technology Companies"?	20	
3. What are the pros and cons of Wily's approach to finding a new CEO?	15	
4. As Lew Cirne, why would Dick Williams want to replace you as Chairman?	15	
5. As David Strohm, if Lew rejects Dick Williams' demand and threatens to leave Wily, what would you do?	20	
6. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

The Uber Board Deliberates: Is Good Governance Worth the Firing of an Entrepreneurial Founder? CU242

Evaluation Criteria:	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. Who was responsible for the mess at Uber? What are your key Kalanick take-aways? Why does Kalanick wield so much power? What is your assessment of the board members? Why did Kalanick choose Thain and Burns as appointees of the board?	20	
3. Why is Kalanick valuable as a driver of Uber's growth?	20	
4. What are the challenges to good governance in this case? Are there differences in the governance practices between private and public companies? Gurley leaves the board in 2017 and then his venture firm, Benchmark sues. Why?	15	
5. What is the board's responsibility? What is the role of the VC director in deciding what to do?	15	
6. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluation Criteria: Centra Software-HBS 9-502-009

Evaluation Criteria:	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. We know what Centra is selling, but what exactly have its customers been buying? What benefits have they derived from its three products? How should Centra segment its market?	20	
3. Does Centra need a strategy to tell it which customers to select, or should it fish where the fish are biting?	20	
4. Should all three channels sell all three products to all customers, or should Centra target some products and channels to some segments?	15	
5. How would you resolve the dispute between Reed and Lesser on how to deploy the telephone-based sales team? Would you expand telesales?	15	
6. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
7. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Rent the Runway 9-812-077

Evaluation Criteria:	Available Points	Points Earned
8. Overview	10	
1. The co-founders took several steps to validate the business model hypotheses with an eye on refining the business concept. Which of these have been important in preparing to raise additional capital and what is still lacking that may pose an obstacle to fund-raising?	20	
2. The co-founders are considering whether to stick with their original plan to (a) pursue operational improvements before raising more capital or (b) to accelerate fundraising in order to expand inventory and product assortment to serve a broader customer segment and usage occasions. What would you do about this decision? Provide your rationale.	20	
3. The article <i>How Venture Capitalists Evaluate Potential Venture Opportunities</i> offers insights into the venture funding model. At this juncture, what are the pros and cons of investing in Rent the Runway from a VC perspective?	15	
4. Given the time-consuming nature of fund-raising, will the accelerated course distract the team at this crucial juncture? What is the risk of taking venture capital too early?	15	
5. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
6. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Evaluating Venture Capital Term Sheets-Stanford E-460

Evaluation Criteria:	Available Points	Points Earned
1. Overview	10	
2. What items should the entrepreneurs focus most carefully on?	10	
3. How do various terms impact their return if the company does well?	10	
4. How were the venture capital term sheets affected by the outstanding convertible notes?	10	
5. What is missing from these term sheets?	10	
6. If they run into trouble, how would they fare under each of the offers?	10	
7. How, if at all, should they negotiate these terms?	10	

8. With only a few days before the term sheets expire, what should they do?	10	
9. Conclusion/Recommendations	10	
10. Presentation and Class Interaction	10	
OVERALL EVALUATION	100	

Final Group Case Analysis

Each group will submit a case analysis (final exam) on “SprintRay: Kick-starting Growth (Written Assignment #4) by [May 05, 2026](#). The case analysis is to be in bulleted essay format and 4 to 6 pages long.

SprintRay: Kick-starting Growth-SCG-551

1. Overview
2. The company’s early path included a number of challenges. What were the miscalculations and challenges they encountered and what were the key learnings along the way?
3. In your opinion, what are the key challenges SprintRay experienced in operations. What would you have done differently?
4. In your opinion, why did the company experience challenges with funding? What should have been done to increase their chances of success?
5. Was the company’s choice of target market correct? Was their process to determine the correct market appropriate? Product pricing?
6. Faced with an expanding market and rapidly growing sales coupled with severe challenges in funding the growth, what are the paths available to the company? What is your recommendation to the founders and the Board of Directors?
7. Conclusion/Recommendations

GROUP PROJECT: BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

A group project focused on the identification and analysis of a new business opportunity will comprise a major part of the course.

(a) A one-page Business Idea Summary from each individual submitted to the instructor and class members via eLearning (General Bulletin Board, WA#1 Project Proposals) by [February 03, 2026](#) for your classmates to review.

(b) Students will vote on eLearning (Assignments, Project Proposal Survey) for their two favorite projects by [February 04, 2026](#). Students will select a team on eLearning (Projects/Discussion Groups) by [February 09, 2026](#)

(c) A final business development proposal submitted and presented on [April 28, 2026](#).

Individual Business Idea. Everyone will submit and present one business idea on [February 03, 2026](#). This idea will be a candidate for selecting a new business concept to take forward as a team project.

In developing the Business Idea, the student will:

- Select an industry and identify a specific business concept or opportunity for research.
- Conduct a preliminary evaluation of the business opportunity.

- **Summarize your idea in the context of the market and competitive environment in a one-page summary. Submit the summary to the instructor and team members. Include the following information for each idea summarized:**
 1. **Project description (What significant need does it fill? How big is the problem? How grand is your solution?)**
 2. **Who is the customer?**
 3. **Is there significant potential for value creation?**
 4. **What is its “Value Proposition” --How will your idea benefit customers (why they will buy?) benefits to the customer (e.g., faster, less expensive, higher quality, more reliable, more accurate, more convenient, better performance, more fun, less work, etc.)**
 5. **How is Product or Service unique/different/superior to other offerings?**

Each individual business idea will be considered by the class members, and a determination will be made by majority vote regarding which business ideas will be selected for Group Projects. Students will have the opportunity to select one of the projects or be assigned by the instructor.

A great entrepreneurial opportunity is one that brings something new, valuable, innovative and difficult to imitate to the market and occupies a position of sustainable competitive advantage in the market. New ventures that go head-to-head with established firms in crowded markets are not recommended. Once a business Idea is selected, it is then developed by the Group during the semester.

The New Venture Market Entry Plan (Written Assignment #3 due April 28, 2026)

- **Prepare the feasibility analysis and final Launch Plan** for your venture. The final PowerPoint should not exceed 20 pages, not including exhibits or appendices. Thoroughly document your assumptions and analyses in exhibits or appendices and provide a list of the references and information sources utilized in your research.
- Use course principles and information to create a comprehensive Plan.
 1. The feasibility analysis is the first half of the Plan which includes a description of the business concept and its products or services and why they are unique or special. Emphasis should be placed on the competitive advantages of your new venture. You should include information regarding the unmet needs of the market that the products or services are providing, and the customers being targeted. Primary research such as interviews, surveys, focus groups, etc. should offer validation and support to the secondary research for the problem being solved. The foregoing should be followed by an overview and analysis of the industry in which the venture will operate. The comprehensive Industry analysis section will include the outlook and trends, analysis of overall industry, market needs, comparison among and between competitors and the company (competitive matrix), the opportunity and associated unmet needs, and an estimation of company’s future revenue. The presentation also should provide a description of the objectives (short term and long term) of the company. The first half of the PowerPoint will consist of:
 1. **Introduction, Business Concept, Mission, and Strategy**
 2. **The Problem, Market Opportunity, and Unmet Need**
 3. **The Solution, Unique Value Proposition**
 4. **Industry Overview and Market Analysis**
 5. **Competitive Analysis**

2. The second half of the plan is the Launch Plan and will include the following sections to the presentation. A Comprehensive Marketing Plan: This section of the plan should include a summary analysis of the target market(s), the reason for selecting a specific market segment, the general market strategy and positioning among competitors, imaging of the firm, advertising and promotional activities, pricing strategy, sales and distribution strategy, service and support plan, sales forecasts and detailed marketing budget.
3. Resources needed, Financial and Funding Plan, Risk Factors, Timeline. This section should include a) non-financial resource requirements of the firm, b) a start-up budget forecast (capital expenditures and expenses through break-even), c) sources and uses of funds (with use of proceeds chart), d) the investment offering including projected returns d) pro forma Income Statement for 3 years (monthly for the first 12 months and quarterly for years 2 and 3) and a break-even analysis, e) critical risk factors and how they will be mitigated, and f) a timeline table or chart of events and milestones to be achieved over the next year. **NOTE: In the presentation, provide a very simple, brief and legible summary of key financial information (e.g., a summary table of the budget (use of proceeds, including capital expenditures), a summary table of the income statement (with revenue projections, costs, profit and Income for next 3 years), and a break-even chart. The spread sheets are to be located in the appendix. Include a short description of the design and development plan. You should also include the key management and talent requirements that are essential for this plan.**

6. Business Model

7. Marketing Plan

8. Financial Projections, Funding Plan

9. Milestone Timeline

10. Presentation Quality/Delivery

11. Supporting Appendix

Present your final Feasibility Analysis and Market Entry Plan in a PowerPoint presentation (a 10-minute oral presentation) on [April 28, 2026](#).

1. Introduction, Business Concept, Mission and Strategy

2. The Problem, Market Opportunity and Unmet Need

3. The Solution, Unique Value Proposition

4. Industry Overview and Market Analysis

5. Competitive Analysis

6. Business Model

7. Marketing Plan

8. Financial Projections, Funding Plan

9. Milestone Timeline

10. Presentation Quality/Delivery

11. Supporting Appendix

Team Member Participation in Group Projects. Each team member will create portions of each group project as agreed by team members and the team will integrate the respective pieces. Please remember to save sufficient time to properly edit the work into one integrated paper that will be agreed upon by the team and Team Leader.

Students in each course will sign an agreement indicating that at the end of the semester, if a student does not want to pursue starting the company, they agree to surrender any rights in the concept to other students on the team and agree to not block or impede the other students from launching the company

***INDIVIDUAL PEER EVALUATION BY TEAM MEMBERS.** A peer evaluation of the respective individual team members will be utilized to adjust individual grades on ALL group assignments (maximum range of +/- 20% of the group grade). The peer evaluation form attached to this syllabus will be completed individually and turned in by each group member as part of each group project assignment.

At times teams have been formed for class projects wherein someone did not contribute significantly but expected the same grade as strong contributors. Fairness will prevail. I will compute individual grades for each group project and presentation based on the team score for each project and the group peer evaluations that each team member receives. Therefore, strong contribution to projects and regular attendance at team meetings are essential for optimal grading. See the attached student peer evaluation form. Students will not directly grade (A, B, etc.) one another but will provide the instructor with feedback (with peer evaluation forms) as to the percentage of contribution of each member on a base of 100%. Individual grades may be lowered by the instructor given poor peer evaluations. Typically, the grade received by a team will be multiplied by the percentage of contribution by the team member, thus if all team members contribute equally, each will score 100% for their participation which will be the multiplier of the team score. Additional instruction regarding peer evaluation will be provided on the peer evaluation form.

Failure to complete a peer evaluation can result in a reduction in grades. Evaluations will be kept confidential. The team is accountable for warning any student who is in danger of receiving a failing peer evaluation. Failure of a team to warn a team member in a timely manner as described may invalidate negative ratings. Interim evaluations may be completed at any time during the semester and submitted to the instructor as a means of identifying a problem with a team member. At that time, the instructor will talk with all parties involved to determine what course of action may need to be taken. Please do not be afraid to discuss these problems with me individually and early on. Warnings as to failure on peer evaluations most often reverses a negative course of action on the part of a team member, but removal of a team member from a team is possible. Please handle individual team member issues with proper care, courtesy and diplomacy.

Students dropped from teams by the instructor may be required to complete group projects on their own and such removal from a team may result in a lower grade for that team member. Other options include dropping or failing the course.

Group Projects

Students will use a group sign-up sheet to form groups for group assignments or projects. A private discussion area will be set up on the discussion board for internal group communications. A group chat room can also be created for each group to use. A web conference system is available for use. Teams can schedule a live web conference for teamwork. Please see [Web Conferencing page](#) for instructions on making a reservation and other web conference information.

Assignment submission instructions

You will submit your assignments (in the required file format with a simple file name and a file extension) by using the Assignments tool on the course site. Please see the Assignments link on the course menu or see the icon on the designated page. You can click each assignment name link and follow the on-screen instructions to upload and submit your file(s). Please refer to the Help menu for more information on using this tool. **Please note:** each assignment link will be deactivated after the assignment due time. After your submission is graded, you may click each assignment's "Graded" tab to check the results and feedback.

For the team project assignment, one group member will submit the assignment for the group and all group members will be able to view the results and feedback once it's been graded.

Program Policy on AI

Recently, various AI programs (ChatGPT, DALL-E, Open AI, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, etc.) have become widely used tools that people can use to create content and even streamline their work.

The UT Dallas MBA faculty and administration team expect MBA students to be thoughtful, creative, innovative and develop their own critical thinking skills. With this as the primary expectation, any work performed by an AI tool, and then submitted as one's own original work, is strongly discouraged, and may also constitute plagiarism.

There may be times when a student assignment requires content produced by an AI tool. In these circumstances, students must clearly source the content as AI generated. Program policies on plagiarism and sourcing remain in place – even for AI generated content.

It should be noted that AI content is not completely accurate and is not considered a referenceable source. AI is essentially a “plagiarism generator”, as it produces results without citations – unless the user specifically asks for sources. Even then, those sources should be checked by the author for accuracy.

There are beneficial opportunities to use AI generated content:

- Conduct front end research, identifying referenceable sources, including academic research, business research and news.
- Build the framework for process or decision-making models.

AI is not considered an acceptable source, as there are no references. If you choose to use AI, you must find the source of information and properly cite it. **Papers will be checked for AI generated text from a large language model and AI generated text that was AI paraphrased.**

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: *“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”* **UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.