

Business Strategy and Intrapreneurship

Course: [APS1061H](#), Summer 2020

Instructor: Professor [Steve Treiber](#)

Phone: 416-725-1774

e-mail: steve.treiber@utoronto.ca

See his Bio at the end of this document.

Live Virtual classes: July 31, Aug 4-7, 17-21, 28, 9-12pm.

Live Virtual Guest Speakers: Aug 4-6, 17-20, 2-4pm

Webmeetings with Professor Treiber to be scheduled on request.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview:

[APS1061H](#) is designed for engineering students interested in discovering if they have the aptitude and appetite to lead a large business. Every business executive and entrepreneur will encounter complex business problems they urgently must solve. The short course format simulates the speed with which such real-world problems can arise and the speed with which they must be solved. Covid19, SARS, and 9/11 are examples of extreme events that can destroy a business suddenly. Leveraging some of the problem-solving skills, you have learned during your engineering education, this course teaches how to define, solve, communicate, and sell the solution to a complex business problem using an engineering approach.

Challenge Business Problem:

Students will work in groups of 2 to 4 and all groups will develop a solution to the challenge business problem. The groups will be given a package of materials that identifies the problem in the first session and all groups will come up with their own definition and solution during the course. This year the challenge business problem will be: [Facebook](#) is launching [Calibra](#), the Libra Association and Libra digital currency. [Calibra](#) will be a mobile pay method intended for people who do not use banks. The Libra digital currency value will be tied to a basket of international currencies to smooth out value swings such as those experienced by Bitcoin and others. Facebook is facing a number of challenges including skittish partners, regulatory and Congressional resistance who fear money laundering and that sovereign currencies will be undermined. Covid19 could be a threat or an opportunity. Our objective is to develop a business strategy and plan that will make this business successful.

The core tool that we will use for expressing the business problem, solution and plan is the [Business Canvas](#) of Alex Osterwalder with a focus on how this methodology aligns with existing engineering problem solving skills. The tool kit, including the [Value Proposition Canvas](#), and [The Pitch Canvas](#) are, defined in the course notes developed by entrepreneurial engineers during their careers developing their own successful technology start-ups.

The Business Canvas tool will be supplemented by a student developed cash flow projection to complete the course project report as a summary business plan.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Invited industry speakers are experts in their field who are currently working to solve elements of the

challenge problem for their companies. They will speak from the point of view of the disruptors and the disrupted.

Aug 4, 2-4pm	Mr. Scott Howard, Founder, Full Stack Capital	Digital Currency Market Trends
Aug 5, 2-4pm	Mr. Ranier Sandoval Padilla, CDL Toronto	Strategy Workshop
Aug 6, 2-4pm	Mr. Vikram Chopra, Co-founder & CEO, Gift Jeenie	Cryptocurrency and Startups
Aug 17, 2-4pm	Dr. Ajay Singh, CEO, Fairom Inc.	Distributed Ledgers
Aug 18, 2-4pm	Mr. Nassib Kazoun, Mastercard	Mobile Pay using Blockchain
Aug 19, 2-4pm	Mr. Sachin Jaitly, Managing Partner, Tessera VP	Sovereign vs, Digital Currency
Aug 20, 2-4pm	Mr. Harpreet Geekee, CTO and Co-Founder, Highmark Global	Blockchain and Medtech

Taking Notes:

All of the lecture notes used in live-sessions are available to you on your Quercus course website. We provide the entire lecture series' notes and handouts used so that you will not need to take detailed notes. Lectures and guest speaker sessions will be recorded and available to students enrolled in the course after they are given live. Live sessions give students the opportunity to collaborate with the Professor, guest speakers and each other on the subject at hand.

Recommended Reading:

[*The Libra Blockchain*](#)

Hurdle: The Book of Business Planning

Tim Berry, Palo Alto Software, ISBN 0-9712185-0-1

[*Understanding Bitcoin: Cryptography, Engineering, and Economics, Franco, Pedro*](#)

John Wiley & Sons, 2014 ISBN1119019168 (Trade Cloth), 9781119019169

Details

The course is on Quercus, so you should sign in as soon as possible and read the handouts. We will post on Quercus all handouts as the course unfolds on the dates shown in this document so visit often.

Individual Student Assignment

Business Press Review

As part of your live-sessions participation mark each student is expected to read an appropriate article from a reliable business publication (Globe and Mail ROB, National Post – Financial Section, Financial Times, Canadian Business, etc.) and submit a written *half page* report.

Submit your report by midnight of the day *before the morning live-sessions on which it is due*. Submit on Quercus and do not forget to reference the article you are reporting on.

Your report should be about economic, political or personal issues *affecting our subject businesses*. These may be: a drop (or rise) in interest rates; recently released trade figures; import/export news; currency issues; government actions; approvals of financing; bankruptcies; tax matters, entrepreneurs, success stories, etc., etc. We expect you to write a thoughtful report on what you learned from reading the article, not a précis of the article.

At the start of each morning session, up to five selected students will be asked to make a 60-second oral presentation of their report. Students should have a copy of their submission handy in case they are selected.

Successful business people read the financial news every day! This assignment is meant to help you understand the importance of “keeping on top of the business news” and to help you hone your public speaking skills. The best reports will be published and could be part of the supporting material for your business plan.

Student Team Assignments

All work associated with developing the business plan will be done in teams. Students will be organized into teams of two to four students during the first, organizing class. All team assignments will be marked as a team mark. A student may opt to work alone but must get permission from Professor Treiber.

Teams will be organized as Groups in Quercus which will give each team the ability to collaborate using bb_Collaborate in Quercus, interact privately with Professor Treiber, and submit their team assignments.

Market Research Assignment

Market Research is the essential ingredient required to understand whether or not your business solution is likely to be successful. This assignment was designed to help you get started on the Market Research portion of your Business Plan.

During the session at which this assignment is due each team will make a brief(up to five minute) presentation about their market research. The objective of market research at this stage is to determine if there is a feasible business solution to the identified problem.

Business Canvas/Business Plan Proposal

Once your team has come up with an idea for your Business Problem Solution, you must submit the idea to Professor Treiber for approval as soon as possible. While this is not a “marked” assignment, you must have this approved before you proceed with your Business Canvas/Plan.

Milestones in the Business Canvas Progress Report

The business canvas is a tool that will help you define your business problem and its business model. We want to define a business model and how your business solution creates value for itself (generates profit) while delivering products or services for its customers. During this course you will have the unique opportunity to develop the different sections of the canvas and use them as the building blocks to create your final Business Plan. The term project is a Business Plan and it is intended to give you "hands on" experience in developing a document that is absolutely essential if you ever get into business for yourself.

Preparing a Business Plan is not a simple exercise. We start with the Business Canvas – See the document on Quercus that describes this process in detail. The Business Canvas is a Progress Report is on what you are planning in your Business Plan to which the Canvas will lead. This is to ensure that you get started early.

Milestone #1 will be reached by Day 7 of the course. We expect you to have fully developed Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Canvas and there are marks for this document. This will be essential for your Business Plan's success.

During the session at which this assignment is due each team will make a brief (up to five minute) presentation about their Canvas. The objective of the Canvas at this stage is to identify any holes in the analysis of the business opportunity.

Milestone #2 will have all the Sections 1 to 9 inclusive completed. Marks will be assessed for the entire canvas and it will be due at the final session..

During the session at which this assignment is due each team will make a brief(up to five minute) presentation about their Canvas. The objective of the Canvas at this stage is to identify any holes in their analysis of the business opportunity.

Final Business Plan

The creation of your business plan will be an organic process once you have completed all the elements of your business canvas. The comments you receive on your Progress Reports will guide you to validate your hypothesis and value proposition. There is also a lot of help available on the Internet, so please feel free to use any/all such assistance – but make sure you give credit by citing your sources. In addition to the canvas a financial cash flow projection for the business plan is required.

Keep in mind that this is a business document – not a novel. Good communication is essential, so keep your language short and to the point. Always proof read to ensure accuracy of facts and language – do not just rely on spell check!

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

	Report or Assignment	Due
1.	Market Research Assignment	Day 5
2.	Business Canvas Progress Report # 1/Presentation	Day 7
3.	Business Canvas Progress Report # 2/Presentation	Day 9
4.	Business Canvas Report & Financial	Day 10

Please respect the fact that we will enforce these dates. Do not make any excuses because we will not be sympathetic! If you encounter any problems we will always try to help you just set up an appointment and we will make time for you. There will be a 40% discount on the mark if an assignment is handed in late, but we will not accept assignments handed in after we have returned that marked assignment to the session and you will get ZERO for that assignment.

MARKING SCHEME

Virtual Class Participation (includes Business Press reviews) - 10

Market Research Assignment/Presentation – 30

Progress Report #1 – Canvas I/Presentation - 20

Progress Report #2 – Canvas II/Presentation - 20

Final Business Plan/Presentation - 20

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE

APS1061H is designed to let engineering students learn the necessary skills for success in business and discover if they have the appetite to become successful business leader. This video will explain the core

of the problem we will tackle in this course.

Facebook's Calibra could be the most disruptive incidence of commerce transformation in the 21st Century. It will influence the entire lives of today's students; the power of social media communities combined with a common currency will enable the monetizing of everything, from property, to hard goods, to services and knowledge. Once that state is attained all of those things can be exchanged between the participants without the intervention of middlemen.

In today's economy the most successful people are those who have entrepreneurial skills. In fact today organizations actively search for intrapreneurs (an entrepreneurial individual who prefers to work within a larger firm rather than start their own). In order to succeed in entrepreneurial/intrapreneurial endeavor it is important to understand what differentiates entrepreneurs from all others.

All but two key entrepreneurial skills for success can be learned and we teach those here. The two skills that cannot be learned are accepting unavoidable RISK and PASSION for what you do. The difference between successful entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs is that entrepreneurs have more willingness to accept RISK than intrapreneurs. This course will help students assess their own aptitude for these skills.

Our approach to teaching this course is based on real-life business experiences and years of successful practice of "what we preach." The course contains very little theoretical material or academic approaches. It is designed to familiarize you with the kinds of opportunities (problems) likely to be encountered in an entrepreneurial career.

2020 SUMMER SCHEDULE

APS1061H

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Text-Chapter</u>	<u>Topics</u> <u>Milestones</u>	<u>Assignments & Project</u>
0	July 31, AM		Organizational session, group formation	
1	Aug 4, AM	1 + 2 handouts	Business Planning and the Business Canvas - Introduction - The Business Canvas – its role and value Guest Speaker	
	Aug 4, PM			
2	Aug 5, AM	5	Business Plan and the Challenge Business Problem - Business Canvas/Plan - Business Idea Brainstorming - Business Challenge Idea Guest Speaker	
	Aug 5, PM			
3	Aug 6, AM	6 +notes	Market Research - How to define a business problem <i>Market Research Assignment handed out</i> Guest Speaker	
	Aug 6, PM			
4	Aug 7, AM		Business Problem Definition Workshop Defining the Challenge problem opportunity Value Proposition Canvas	
	ONE WEEK	BREAK		
5	Aug 17, AM	7 and 8	Sales & Marketing Strategies <i>Market Research</i> - Value Proposition & the Value Chain Market Research Presentations	
	Aug 17, PM		Guest Speaker	
6	Aug 18, AM	7 and 8	Financial Analysis - What you need for a business plan Guest Speaker	
	Aug 18, PM			
7	Aug 19, AM	A13, 14	Business Canvas Workshop - Team Business Canvas #1 presentations Guest Speaker	
	Aug 19, PM			
8	Aug 20, AM Aug 20, PM		Legal Issues Guest Speaker	
9	Aug 21, AM ONE WK BRK		Team Final Business Canvas Presentations	
10	Aug 28		Business Plan Presentation/Business Canvas Financial Plan	

Resumé

Steven Treiber, Ph.D., P.Eng

Steve Treiber was born in a refugee camp in post-world war II Europe and emmigrated to Canada as a child with his parents. His background gave him a perspective on success that is common to recent immigrants to Canada and provided a unique advantage in entrepreneurial endeavour. He brings that experience and point of view to teaching.

Steve has always had an interest in business. He spent most of his under-graduate years at McGill Engineering working in his fathers corner grocery store after class. Although he started out working for others, he always had an eye on "doing his own thing" – and he did that after just 7 years in the corporate world. So, in 1984, after an engineering career in the pulp and paper and oil industries with Scott Paper and Shell Oil, respectively, he started his own software and engineering firm in Toronto and later Houston, TX. Treiber Controls Inc. developed process control and real-time optimisation software and applications for the oil, petrochemical, pulp and paper and other process industries. In 1998 he sold his company to a NASDAQ listed competitor, Aspen Technologies, and served in various senior management roles.

He left Aspen in 2002 to launch a new business start-up – the entrepreneurial drive was still there. He continues to work with technology start-up companies to apply his knowledge and experience in engineering and business. He is now President of [Manufacturing Technology Network, Inc.](#)

After receiving a Bachelor of Engineering from McGill University he volunteered to work as a high school teacher in Uganda from 1969-1971. He also holds a Master of Applied Science from the University of Toronto, and a PhD from McGill University, all in Chemical Engineering. He has published over 40 papers in the fields of process control and optimisation, and is an author of 6 patents in the same field. See his profile on [linkedin](#).