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**University of California, Berkeley
Haas School of Business**

Course Syllabus

Marketing for High Tech Entrepreneurs

3 credits

MBA290E/ENG290.1

Fall 2008: Monday/Wednesday 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Location: Cheit Hall, Room C210

Instructor: Drew Isaacs
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Office hours: Wednesday 12:00 – 2:00 PM (also by appointment)
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Course Summary

Every successful entrepreneurial high tech venture has at its core individuals with two skill sets: marketing and management expertise, and technological ability. This course is intended to provide the marketing skills needed for the management of an entrepreneurial high technology venture, regardless of whether the individual's "home" skill set is technical or managerial. We will examine successful marketing approaches for entrepreneurial companies as a function of markets and technologies. Emphasis is placed on the special requirements for creating and executing marketing plans and programs in a setting of rapid technological change and limited resources. This course is particularly suited for those who anticipate founding or operating technology companies.

Primary Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to develop the marketing skills needed to compete aggressively as an entrepreneur in high technology. Upon completion of this course, the student should have developed the following skills: (a) the ability to assess and predict customer needs in markets that may not yet exist; (b) the ability to create and execute marketing plans that necessarily integrate sophisticated technological development with rapidly evolving customer requirements; (c) the ability to create and grow a focused marketing organization rapidly and efficiently.

Group Project

For this group project you may either (a) critique the marketing at an existing high tech company (b) develop a marketing plan for a new high tech venture or (c) elect to do a project with one of the corporate partners for this course.

Timeline:

- a. You will be assigned to a team of four to five students September 22.
- b. Following the initial team assignment, you may change teams if the other team members agree. Teams must consist of 2-5 students and include both MBA and Engineering students.
- c. Notify me of the company you have selected to study by October 6.

Option A. Critique the marketing at an existing high tech company. This project applies marketing principles in the critical analysis of a new or established high tech company's marketing program. The choice of the company is up to the team, however the company should be publicly traded or have available to you substantial information about their operations and market.

The goal of the project is to develop skills in the critical analysis of the marketing at a present-day entrepreneurial high tech company, and present "what I would do if I ran this company" and "what I would do if I competed against this company" before the class and in a written report. The team should analyze critically the marketing done by the company, identifying successes and failures in that company's marketing relative to the goals set by the company, and detail the lessons we can take away from that company's experience.

Option B. In this project, the team is to create an effective marketing plan for a new venture that you or people you know are creating or considering. Students are expected to synthesize marketing strategy from the class readings and discussions. The business opportunity described in your plan should be comprehensive enough to serve as a vehicle for raising capital and as a roadmap to launch and grow a company. Your strategic vision should be detailed.

Option C: Several high tech companies in the Bay Area have created projects for this course which are of immediate and direct importance to them. The scope of the assignment varies from company to company. The instructor will describe the available projects at the first class meeting.

Groups are encouraged to begin work on this project immediately, and to meet with the instructor regularly during the semester to verify that their work meets the requirements of the assignment.

Group Project continued

Work product:

- a. 15 minute presentation + Q&A, totaling approximately 30 minutes. Your presentation will be in an open discussion format, with questions encouraged.
- b. A hard-copy handout to the class of the materials presented
- c. Maximum 4,000-word paper (plus any appendices) due at 4:00PM on December 8 in hard copy format only.

FAQs on Projects

- a. Utilize the tools we discuss in class.
- b. Combine objective data, your synthesis of those data, and your own subjective views.
- c. Use both primary and secondary sources.
- d. Cite the sources of your data.
- e. When in doubt, follow the description of the assignment in the syllabus.
- f. Who presents: one, some, or all team members – it is up to you.
- g. You may organize your presentation and paper however you wish, but be sure to emphasize analysis and interpretation of the market and the opportunity, and place less emphasis on background data about the market landscape. A reasonable weighting is 30% on background and 70% on analysis and recommendations.
- h. Two of the group projects will be presented in class at the end of the semester; the others will be presented to the instructor during office hours at the end of the semester.
- i. If you want to review your work with me prior to presenting it, please schedule a date to do so in advance.
- j. If your project addresses a specific product, consider beginning your presentation with a brief (1-2 minute) demonstration of the actual product.

Case studies

Several business case studies will be discussed in this class. All are posted on study.net. The HBS cases must be purchased; the UCB cases are downloadable free of charge. Instructions for preparing for discussion of the cases will be reviewed during the first class meeting.

On the class web site you will find questions for the cases. These are graded assignments, due by 12:00 noon on the day of the class meeting, or 12:00 noon the day before class in the case of guest instructors.

Texts

Required. Class discussion will refer to materials covered in these three texts. You will find questions pertaining to each text on the class web site; these are graded assignments, due by 12:00 noon on the day of the class meeting.

- a. **Due September 29th**
Moore, Geoffrey A. *Crossing the Chasm*, Harper Business.
Moore, Geoffrey A. *Inside the Tornado*, Harper Business.
- b. **Due October 13th**
Christensen, Clayton *The Innovator's Dilemma*, Harper Business.

Guest Lecturers

There will be several guest lectures during the semester. These lectures are an integral part of the course and attendance is required.

Grading

- 10% Class participation. Your creative and constructive involvement in class discussion is an essential component of class.
- 60% Case study and reading questions. There are 14 assignments totaling 60 points. I will incorporate particularly creative responses into the class. You are welcome to contact me at any time if you wish to know how you are doing on these assignments.
- 30% Group Project (live presentation 15 points + final paper 15 points). In addition to my assessment of your work, you will be asked to grade your own and your teammates' participation on this project on a 1-10 point scale. All members of a group will receive the same initial grade, however the results of the peer review score may raise or lower a team member's individual grade by up to 10 points.

No exams will be given.

Class Etiquette

- Be on time. I will begin class at 4:10 PM. If you arrive after 4:10, you will not be admitted to class that day.
- Come to class prepared, and expect cold calling.
- Please use your name card throughout the semester. You will not be called on if you do not display a name card.
- Beverages are permitted in class, but food is not.
- If you cannot make a class meeting, or if you will be late for class, send me an e mail advising me of this in advance. The same is applies if you must miss a guest speaker.
- Laptops, PDAs, cell phones and similar electronic devices will be turned off during class and left in your backpack or briefcase.

Thai House

The tradition continues... Many weeks after class, a small group meets at the Thai House restaurant on Channing near Telegraph for follow-up from class and to discuss issues of the day. If your schedule allows, please join us at least once during the semester.