MBA 717 (CRN 10726): INNOVATION
Spring 2020, Thursday, 6:30-9:20pm, Bryan 204
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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Office Hours: Thursday, 5:30-6:15pm and by appointment

Course Description

MBA 717 provides understanding about the fundamentals and strategies of innovation in organizations. Mindsets, methods, skills, and tools to innovate in organizations are emphasized. The course is designed to provide both knowledge and practice in innovating, so that students are prepared to carry out this process in an existing or new organization, whether for or not for profit. Innovation at its core is inventive and effective problem solving, and best implemented through constructive mind- and skill-sets. Consequently, the course will cultivate these capacities at individual and group levels to enhance the innovation process and outcomes.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

The goals for students of this course are as follows:

1. **Explain** the nature, variety, and strategies of innovations by organizations
2. **Formulate** mindsets and generative human capacities for awareness, insight, collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving for innovation
3. **Apply** innovation knowledge and fundamentals to address an organizational opportunity, challenge, or need
4. **Propose** an innovation by framing, conceiving, researching (primary and secondary), designing, prototyping, testing, refining, and planning implementation of a solution to a complex problem

Attendance & Participation

Two (2) unexcused absences, which include illnesses, out-of-town business trips, and other schedule conflicts, are permitted. Each additional absence without prior notification and consent of the instructor will result in a 10-point deduction from the total course score at the end of the term. Students should arrive on time and remain throughout the class period. Late arrival or early departure constitutes an absence.

Note that considerable team work will be done during class, such that absences are detrimental to timely and effective progress of the team innovation project. Teams are expected to use the class time provided to work on their projects. Significant time is also required outside of class, so plan accordingly. If you anticipate that the required assignments for this course, including team meetings, conflict with your work obligations, please plan on taking the course another semester. Due dates, exams, and absence policy will not be negotiated in fairness to other students.

In general, participation in class discussions is expected. A score will be given for participation in class discussions. Participation does not mean mere presence, but refers to active and thoughtful contributions to class discussions. Both quality and quantity of comments and insights count.
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Writing Assignments (5% each)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Innovation Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Portfolio &amp; Prototype</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The course grading scale is below:

A = 94-100%, A- = 90-93%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 84-86%, B- = 80-83%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 74-76%, F = 73% or below

**Grades, assignments, and due dates are not negotiable under any circumstances.**

Academic Integrity

Consistent with UNCG policy, evidence of academic dishonesty can result in a failing grade in the course and disciplinary review by the University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism are forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism includes passing off someone else’s works or ideas as your own, or paraphrasing material from a source (e.g. the Internet), without proper acknowledgement and citation. All sources in written work should be properly credited through formal citations. Details on student conduct can be found at the following website: [https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct-2/](https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct-2/)

Health and Wellness

Your health impacts your learning. Throughout your time in college, you may experience a range of health issues that can cause barriers to your learning. These might include physical ailments, illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may be experiencing. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at [https://shs.uncg.edu/](https://shs.uncg.edu/) or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. Help is always available.

Academic Accommodations

UNCG respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. If you feel you will encounter any barriers to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). The OARS staff can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can learn more about OARS by visiting their website at [https://ods.uncg.edu/](https://ods.uncg.edu/) or by calling 336-334-544 or visiting them in Suite 215, EUC.
**Required Readings**

The following four (4) books are required for this course, and may be obtained through various sources, including Amazon.


*Mindfulness for Creativity: Adapt, Create, and Thrive in a Frantic World* by Dr. Danny Penman, Piatkus, 2015


Additional required readings, videos, and websites will also be assigned.

**Other Required Materials**

Students are to bring materials to class for the team innovation project, such as post-it-notes, markers, and large sheets for wall display. Teams will decide among members how to procure and bring materials to class, and are encouraged to share the costs. Other items such as laptops will also be required on occasion.

**Individual Writing Assignments**

Students will be assigned readings, do exercises based on the readings, and write papers by the specified deadlines. Please put your name, date, and assignment # on each paper. All written assignments are required to be submitted to Canvas by the specified deadlines.

Assignments should be written thoughtfully, clearly, concisely, and in keeping with rules of standard English. Poor spelling, grammar, syntax, and punctuation, and disorganized, vague, superficial or hard to comprehend writing or not following instructions will have points deducted. Late submissions will be accepted but with significant point deductions (see Late Submissions Policy hereafter).

All Canvas submitted individual assignments are automatically scanned for plagiarism via Turnitin. Students are advised to submit assignments in advance of the deadline, determine if there’s plagiarism, correct any issues, and resubmit by the deadline. Plagiarism on the final submission will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.

**Late, Non- or Plagiarized Submission Policy – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

It is important to complete and properly submit all assignments specified on time. Failure to submit assignments on Canvas per the deadline (6:30pm on the specified date) due to technical difficulties, not being aware of or having forgotten the deadline, or needing to address a plagiarism issue is the full and complete responsibility of the student. It is advised NOT to submit at the very last minute before the deadline in the event of a technical failure on Canvas, your computer, or the Internet. Always double check that you have submitted the correct file on time to the proper Canvas folder by the specified deadline. All assignments are submitted through Canvas unless specified otherwise. No email submissions to the instructor will be accepted as a substitute for Canvas submissions.

Late individual submissions will be accepted but with penalty. Each day late for an individual written assignment will result in a 10 point grade deduction. Non-submission or plagiarism of a written assignments
will result in a zero. The assignment is considered a day late if it is submitted on the due date but after the 6:30pm deadline. Assignments submitted after 6:30pm the day after will be considered as submitted two days late, and so on.

Late team submissions will be accepted but with significant point deductions. Each day late for the portfolio, prototype, or presentation will result in a 10-point deduction for all members of the team.

Under no circumstances will failure by a team leader to submit the correct file by the deadline result in a pass for the rest of the team. Again, it is advised not to wait to very last minute before the deadline to submit in the event of a technical failure on Canvas, your computer, or the Internet. Always double check that you have submitted the correct file on time to the proper Canvas folder by the specified deadline.

Assignments submitted after 6:30pm on the due date will be automatically considered as submitted one day late. Assignments submitted after 6:30pm the day after will be considered as submitted two days late, and so on.

All team assignments must be submitted first on the Turnitin folder to check for plagiarism, and submitted second on the regular assignment folder once any plagiarism issues are removed. Both must be submitted by the due date/time. Plagiarism on the final submission will result in an automatic zero on the assignment. Failure to submit a team assignment in the Turnitin folder will result in a 10-point penalty.

**Exam**

A final exam will be administered covering the reading materials, in-class discussions, group project, lectures, and any other content from the course. The exam will be administered only once on the date/time posted for the class. No exceptions will be made. The date/time is determined by the MBA office to remove conflicting exam times. Please plan accordingly. If the date does not work for you due to a schedule conflict, you are advised to enroll another term. The final exam is comprehensive of the entire course and all its contents.

**Team Innovation Project**

The course is designed to give students hands-on learning through an innovation project for an actual organization. Students will form teams, decide on member roles, and carry out the innovation project. At the end of the semester, students will present to the organization their innovation project in the form of a written portfolio (report), presentation, and prototype.

The aim of the project is to develop an effective and appropriate innovation by applying individual and team mindsets and skills (called Human Flourishing) as well as strategically learning and executing the innovation process (called Design Thinking). Thus both the mental frames and tasks of innovating will be taught. Time will be devoted in class to work on projects, though more time will be spent outside of class. On the day of the presentation, formal business attire is required or points are deducted.

Leadership of the team will rotate so every member has a chance to lead. The leadership roles, indicated on your team contract, are below:

- **Leader 1**: Design brief, project scope, secondary research
- **Leader 2**: Primary research
- **Leader 3**: Concepts/ideation, napkin pitches, and prototyping
- **Leader 4**: Presentation
- **Leader 5**: Portfolio
Suggested milestones for each of these roles are noted in the last page of the syllabus. Observing the milestone dates will keep the teams on track and avoid rework and stress at the end of the term. Teams are self-managed and are therefore empowered to make critical decisions.

To ensure equal contribution, team members will anonymously and confidentially evaluate one another on all key parts of the project. The evaluations will be used by the instructor to determine the individual grades for the group project. No member of a team can earn more than the group grade, but can receive one or more letter grades below that of the team.

Team conflicts will arise and must be carefully managed by the team. Teams should identify and address issues early in the project, including from low-contributing or uncooperative members and domineering individuals not open to input. Two discussions at least one week apart must take place with such individuals in order to provide opportunity for corrective action. If the issue remains thereafter, the team may by unanimous vote remove the member. This does not require approval by the instructor. Removal must occur at least one week prior to the presentation. The instructor must be notified at the point of removal.

**Why Did I Get a Lower Grade than the Team?**

Students may receive lower grades than the team grade. This happens when the confidential team feedback indicates those individuals contributed less to the team assignment, such as by not fulfilling commitments, turning in their work late, submitting work that had to be re-done by others, and having a negative or apathetic attitude towards the project or others in the team. The team contract describes expectations of each member, and as signed by all members is binding.

The instructor will not provide the detailed team input to students receiving a lower grade in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of the feedback. The grades, as with all others in this course, are not subject to negotiation or change. It is best throughout the course to maintain cooperative, engaged, and growth minded attitude and actions on the project.

**Why is Writing and Presenting Well Emphasized?**

In this course, students are expected to write all assignments well and present the final project very professionally. The standards for quality business writing are direct, concise, clear, logical, persuasive, and organized sentences and paragraphs, along with observing rules of grammar, syntax, punctuation, and consistent formatting and correct citation of sources. Meandering sentences, confusing or contradictory writing, vague statements forcing the reader to infer meaning, insufficient support for assertions or over generalizations, and unreadable photos of handwriting or figures will result in point deductions.

If you or your team is unclear about instructions for an assignment, please meet with the instructor before the due date. Office hours are on this syllabus. This course provides opportunities for improving your writing, and the feedback given by the instructor should be carefully responded to in future assignments or revisions if permitted. As with the design thinking process, iterative improvements should be pursued. If you are having trouble with writing, please go to the UNCG Writing Center.

The standards for highly professional presentations are very similar to writing, but in addition presenters need to be audible, engaging, and stay within time limits. Slides must be readable, uncluttered, interesting, informative, and communicate quickly. They must however be sufficiently detailed that the audience sees your work is based on rigorous thinking and research along with imagination and effort.

Quality writing and presentation is emphasized because they are often the only means by which ideas, including innovation solutions, are conveyed to decision-makers in organizations, hopefully persuading them of the merit of the work done and adoption of the proposed solution. If an innovation is fantastic but can’t be
understood by the executives reading the report or watching the presentation, then it is unlikely to be
considered and implemented. Written and verbal communications are consistently ranked in national surveys
as the top skills sought by employers, along with problem solving and the ability to work in teams. The
aspiration is for client organizations to adopt and implement one or more innovations proposed by the class.

Writing and Presentation Guidance

Individuals and teams can obtain feedforward on their writing and presentations during office hours or other
specified times. Hard copies (i.e. print outs) must be provided to the instructor for feedback. No feedback
will be provided electronically because content always looks different in print than electronic forms.
Mistakes can be seen and addressed more readily in print.

In preparation for the team presentation, teams may opt to rehearse their presentation before the instructor to
receive input on ways to improve slides and oral delivery. The rehearsals take place outside of class time and
are voluntary. Teams that opt to do the dry-run usually improve their presentations significantly, resulting in
much higher grades than without the input.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**
*(Subject to Change, 1/16/2020)*

**Bring items noted on specified days for in-class work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Canvas Post by 6:30pm</th>
<th>Prepare for Class or Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1/16   | *Course Overview  
*Innovation (SLO1,2)  
*Design Thinking (SLO1) |                        |                                                                                                 |
| 1/23   | *Human Flourishing Innovation (SLO2)  
*Project Overview & Teaming  
*Discover: Secondary Research |                        | -Read Brown (HBR 2008)  
-Watch Liedtka Video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyBBVDrQ08&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyBBVDrQ08&t=1s))  
-Read Project Folder Materials  
-Read Liedtka, pp.2-5, 14-15, 46-47, 95  
**Bring to class laptop, questions on innovation project** |
| 1/30   | *Human Flourishing: Character Strengths & Innovation (SLO1,2)  
*Discover: Project Tools, Scope & Design Brief (SLO2,3,4) | Written Assignment 1  | -Complete VIA strengths survey (free)    
-Read Polly book, pp.5-14, 192-215, and chapters on your signature (top 5) strengths  
-Read Liedtka book, pp.8-13, 93-94  
**Bring laptop; VIA survey results; secondary research; post-it-notes, markers, large sheets** |
| 2/6    | *Human Flourishing: Mindsets & Innovation (SLO1,2)  
*Discover: Primary Research (SLO2,3,4) | Written Assignment 2  | -Read Dweck book, ch. 1-5, 8 (other chapters optional)    
-Watch Dweck Video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0mgOOSpLU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0mgOOSpLU))  
--Read Liedtka book, pp.18-25, 48-53, 96  
-Watch Kelley Video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrpAVe7Z1g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrpAVe7Z1g))  
**Bring laptop**  
Leader 1 Suggested Milestone: Secondary Research, Project Scope & Design Brief |
| 2/13   | *Innovation Case (SLO1,3)  
*Mindfulness & Innovation (SLO1,2) |                        | -Read Innovation Case  
-Read Liedtka 2014 Article: Design Thinking to Solve Problems  
**Bring answers to innovation case questions**  
Suggested Leader 2 Milestone: Primary Research Plan |
| 2/20   | In-Class Project Interviews | Written Assignment 3  | -Read Penman book, ch. 1–5  
-Send out request for 360 form to be completed (see Written Assignment 4)  
**Bring interview questions** |
| 2/27   | *Discover: Mind, Journey, Persona Mapping (SLO2,3,4) |                        | -Read Liedtka book, pp.54-55, 58-63, 98  
**Bring secondary & primary research; post-it-notes, large sheets, markers** |
| 3/5    | **Spring Break**                                                                                         |                        |                                                                                                 |
| 3/12   | *Design: Ideating & Diverging (SLO2,3,4) | Written Assignment 4  | -Read Liedtka book, pp.24-29, 106-107  
**Bring secondary & primary research; post-it-notes, large sheets, markers**  
Leader 2 Suggested Milestone: Primary Research |
| 3/19   | *Design: Ideating & Converging (SLO2,3,4) |                        | -Read Liedtka book, pp.30-33  
**Bring secondary & primary research; post-it-notes, large sheets, markers** |
| 3/26   | *Design: Prototype Creation (SLO2,3,4) |                        | -Read Liedtka book, pp.34-35  
**Bring post-it-notes, markers, large sheets & prototyping materials**  
Leader 3 Suggested Milestone: Concepts |
| 4/2    | *Deliver: Prototype Testing & Iterating (SLO2,3,4) | Written Assignment 5  | -Read Liedtka book, pp.36-37  
-Read Penman book, ch. 7-8  
**Bring post-it-notes, markers, large sheets, & prototyping materials**  
Leader 3 Suggested Milestone: Prototype  
Leader 4 Suggested Milestone: Draft Presentation for Optional Feedback (4/4) |
| 4/9    | Presentations | Presentation & Prototype | **Bring hard and flash copies (1 each) of presentation and physical prototype for client** |
| 4/16   | *Portfolio Synthesizing 1 (SLO2,3,4) |                        | **Bring laptop, printout of draft sections of portfolio**  
Leader 5 Suggested Milestone: Draft Portfolio for Feedback |
| 4/23   | *Portfolio Feedback & Revision (SLO2,3,4) | Portfolio Due Wed, 4/29, 11:59pm | **Bring laptop, printout of entire portfolio for final feedback**  
Leader 5 Suggested Milestone: Revised Portfolio for Feedback |
| 4/30   | **Reading Day – No Class**                                                                                       |                        |                                                                                                 |
| 5/7    | **Final Exam, 7-10pm**  
*(No Alternative Dates or Times)* |                        |                                                                                                 |

Topics column indicates subjects corresponding with student learning objectives in parentheses (e.g. SLO 1).

*The date, along with exact location, is tentative until announced later in the term by the MBA office. NO alternative dates or times will be provided. The MBA office selects the date and time to avoid conflicts among final exams.*