

MBA 717-03 (CRN 10279): INNOVATION

Spring 2025, Online

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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Office Hours: By appointment

Weekly Q&A: Wednesday 5:30-6:30pm,

MS Teams (starting 1/22/25)

Course Description

Fundamentals and strategies of developing and managing innovations in organizations, with emphasis on group and individual processes, mindsets and skills.

Detailed 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 organization, whether a for or not for profit. Innovation at its core is inventive and effective problem solving, and best implemented through generative, collaborative, and creative mind- and skill-sets. Consequently, the course will cultivate these capacities at individual and group levels to support the innovation process and outcomes. There are no prerequisites or corequisites for this course beyond admission to the MBA program.

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

Grading

Individual Work (65%)

- | | |
|----------|-----|
| • Test 1 | 5% |
| • Test 2 | 20% |
| • Test 3 | 20% |
| • Test 4 | 20% |

Team Work (35%)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • Innovation Portfolio/
Prototype | 35% |
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Total **100%**

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, points, assignments, and due dates are not negotiable under any circumstances. Feedback provided on your work—from your team and the instructor—is intended to be constructively used for improvement.

Office Appointments

Office appointments will be held upon request. Interested students should email the instructor in advance for a phone or MS Teams appointment (no later than the day before) and receive confirmation. Students may also email the instructor with questions.

Weekly Q&A Sessions

Each Wednesday, 5:30-6:30pm, starting January 22, the instructor will host a Q&A session on MS Teams for all online sections of MBA 717. The MS Teams link will be posted on Canvas. At these sessions, questions can be asked of the instructor for clarification or explanation. Attendance is voluntary. No new materials will be presented. These sessions may be especially helpful to receive suggestions on the team project.

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 or assignments, including hiring a service to write your assignments, as well as 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. If unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask the instructor prior to submission of work. Details on expected student conduct can be found from the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity-faqs/>

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/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. Help is always available recovery@uncg.edu.

Technical Support

Students with technical issues with the course and email should contact 6TECH for support either by email or phone or chat (<https://its.uncg.edu/Help/6TECH/>). Please also make your instructor aware of the issue.

Academic & Religious 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/> or by calling [336-334-544](tel:336-334-544) or visiting them in Suite 215, EUC. If requesting a religious accommodation, please see the instructor at least 3 weeks before the dates concerned to arrange the accommodation.

Required Readings

The following three books are required for this course, and may be obtained through various sources, including Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Books are not available through the UNCG bookstore. Please make sure to get the books specified rather than other writings on these subjects, even if by the same authors.

Mindfulness for Creativity: Adapt, Create, and Thrive in a Frantic World (2015) or *Mindfulness for a More Creative Life* (2021) by Dr. Danny Penman, Piatkus

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success by Carol S. Dweck, Ballantine Books, 2006/2016

Character Strengths Matter: How to Live a Full Life by Shannon Polly and Kathryn H. Britton, Positive Psychology News, 2015

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

Other Required Materials

Students are encouraged to use MS Whiteboard or Google Jamboard, a virtual whiteboard, for project work. MS Whiteboard is free as part of the MS suite provided by UNCG. Jamboard is free as part of Gmail if you have an account. Other collaboration tools such as Google docs can also be used. For prototyping exercises and assignments, students are to source inexpensive materials such as drawing paper and post it notes and discarded items such as egg cartons and twist ties.

Course Design

This online course has been designed in weekly unit modules. Each week a unit will be opened on Canvas by Wednesday 5:30pm with lecture videos, readings, and other materials. The units are not opened in advance to sync and pace course content with assignments, tests, and other work. Learning in this course is sequential and cumulative, so units should be viewed in order and with a week to digest the contents.

For the schedule of topics, readings, assignments, and tests go to the summary on the last page of the syllabus. The unit # and date it is opened are in the left-most column, the topics covered that week next to it on the right, the assignments/tests in the middle column, and in the right-most column the preparation to be done that week. The calendar view in Canvas will also show due dates. The module view in Canvas will also show all the materials to go through that week.

Generative AI Policy

Generative AI (Gen AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, are encouraged as learning tools, thought partners, and for editing purposes. However, students must produce their own work. **Plagiarizing content or submitting materials copied directly from Gen AI outputs will be considered cheating** and subject to academic integrity policies.

Guidelines for using Gen AI effectively:

- **Use Gen AI for brainstorming and ideation** to enhance your understanding and explore multiple perspectives.
- **Leverage Gen AI for editing and refining** drafts but ensure that the final submission reflects your own analysis, synthesis, and voice.
- **Do not submit unedited AI-generated content** as your own work.

Violations of this policy will result in penalties as outlined in the Academic Integrity section.

Test and Assignment Submission Policy – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

It is important to complete and properly submit all tests and assignments (including extra credit) by the deadlines. **Failure to submit by the deadlines results in a zero.** There are no re-dos, time extensions or grade negotiations. Technical difficulties, traveling for work or personal matters, needing to address a plagiarism issue, not checking the syllabus or Canvas for deadlines is the full and complete responsibility of the student rather than the instructor to accommodate.

It is advised NOT to submit at the very last minute before a deadline in the event of a technical failure on Canvas, a computer, or the Internet. Always double check having submitted the correct test or assignment on time to the proper Canvas location by the deadline. No email submissions to the instructor will be accepted. Please carefully look at the schedule before the start of the semester. If the deadlines conflict with a student's schedule, it is also advised to take the course another semester.

Late submission of the team innovation portfolio-prototype will be accepted but with penalty. **Each day late will result in an 11 point grade deduction for all members of the team regardless of the individual(s) responsible. Non-submission or plagiarism will result in a zero.** The assignment is considered a day late if it is submitted on the due date but after the time deadline. For example an assignment due by 6:30pm would be considered a day late if submitted at 6:45pm that day, two days late if submitted the following day after 6:30pm, and so on.

Under no circumstances will failure by a team member to submit the correct file by the deadline result in a pass for other members. Again, it is advised not to wait to the very last minute before the deadline. It is highly advised that another team member besides the submitter double check timely and proper submission.

The team portfolio-prototype must be submitted TWICE to Canvas: first by **only one team member** to the Turnitin folder to check for plagiarism, and second by **the same team member** on the regular assignment folder after any plagiarism issues have been corrected. Both submissions must be made by the same person by the due date/time. Repeated submissions to the Turnitin folder are allowed but ONLY by the SAME team member who made the original submission. Different students submitting from the same team will be flagged as plagiarized work, resulting in a zero, so please avoid this. **Failure to submit the team assignment by the deadline in the Turnitin folder will result in a 10-point penalty. Failure to submit the team assignment to the regular folder, having assumed the Turnitin submission suffices, will result in a zero. These submissions are not substitutes for one another. Both must be done.**

Ethics Policies

By enrolling in this course, students have agreed to abide by its ethics and grade policies, including but not limited to the following: cheating (copying or plagiarizing) on exams or assignments; conjuring false sources of information or improperly citing true sources (however these were generated); copying, screen capturing or taking photos of lecture or other course materials and sharing them with individuals, websites, or organizations; using aids, devices, technologies, notes, or prior exams when taking a test. Abiding by the

policies also means accepting the consequences of any violation, which can lead to course failure, disciplinary procedures, and legal actions.

Tests

Four tests will be administered via Canvas covering the Units specified and all associated content and materials, including readings, lectures, videos, case studies, lecture exercises, and the innovation project. In other words, any and all course content can be tested. A 48-hour time window will be given for taking each test. Once started, a test must be completed in one sitting during the time allotted. Stopping or pausing a test will be registered as having completed it. NO exceptions will be made for taking the tests other than during the specified window, which is designed to cover days and nights for a weekday and a weekend day. Students concluding that the availabilities will not work with their schedules should take the course another semester.

Only one try is permitted for each test, which students should prepare well for, in the same manner as preparing for an in-person, closed-book exam. It is the full responsibility of the student to ensure proper Internet connection and following instructions for each test. No retakes are allowed. Review of test results or assignments will be provided through an individual phone or in-person appointment with the instructor after class grading is completed.

Failure to take a test within the time window prescribed results in a zero. Again, deadlines and time windows are not negotiable. Students will be notified by Canvas and email well in advance of the times for each test, and should plan accordingly to take it within the period provided.

Team Innovation Project

The aim of the project is to develop an effective and appropriate innovation by applying an approach called Human Flourishing Innovation. Both the mental frames and methods of innovating will be taught.

The course is designed to give students hands-on learning through an actual innovation project. At the end of the semester, students will submit a portfolio (report) and prototype of their innovation.

Students will work in teams of 3 persons (no more, no less) of their choosing. All team members will receive the same grade for the innovation project, so are advised to choose members wisely. No divorces are allowed in favor of solo work or to join another team. Once formed, teams cannot be reconstituted. Students take full responsibility for whom they choose to team with, such that any difficulties or conflicts are theirs to manage.

Teams should decide on leadership roles for various aspects of the project, though all members must contribute to each phase of the project.

The team written assignment, called a portfolio, is on the innovation project. Instructions will be given later in the semester in class on its format, length, contents and how to submit it on Canvas. This assignment should be impeccably written: thoughtful, clear, concise, concrete, specific, direct (on the topic required), substantive, logical, correctly formatted (including citations), and well structured, following rules of standard English and effective business writing. Poor spelling, grammar, syntax, and punctuation, and disorganized, vague, superficial or hard-to-comprehend writing or ignoring instructions will result in point deductions. Late submissions will be accepted but with significant loss of points (see Test and Assignment Submissions Policy above). If unclear about the assignment, please reach out to the instructor for clarification before the due date. If having trouble with writing, please go to the UNCG Writing Center for assistance.

Teams may opt for extra credit to do a brief MS Teams presentation of their prototype for feedback from peers to develop their innovation further. All members must be present for the entire duration of the feedback

event (not just their own presentation). If one or more members are absent for any portion, the entire team receives ZERO extra credit.

Why is the Human Process Emphasized?

In this course, students will learn about innovation using a human-centric approach called Human Flourishing Innovation (HFI). The reason is that while there are available technologies and analytical procedures, innovation at its core is a *social and creative process* dependent on human skills and insights. To learn about this process and leverage the individual and group capacities involved, the course teaches the new method of HFI, which emphasize the powerfully human avenue to, rather than mechanical tasks of, invention.

Through the course content and team project, students will use direct sensory experiences (e.g. drawing, observing, interviewing, improvising, and material building) along with advanced research and design thinking tools, activities, and mindsets to generate new understandings of, and build prototype solutions for, complex or “wicked” problems facing organizations.

While algorithms can generate seeming solutions in minutes, these can be derivative, inappropriate, or violate intellectual property rights. The HFI method produces novel and thoughtful answers to wicked problems that are genuine, effective, and meaningful by respecting not only users of the innovations but also the unique, creative, and analytical abilities of innovators (e.g. student teams) to conceive and develop them for organizations. The HFI method is also adaptive to any problem (social, economic, financial, operational, technical, market-related, etc.), and therefore valuable to learn and practice for their current and future business career.

Student teams will produce a portfolio for their innovation project, which will be graded based on how well all activities were done and documented, along with outcomes along the way and at the end. Thus, the process matters most because that is what produces great innovations based on deep human learning, capacities, and transformation.

Enrollment in this course means students have read and accepted the policies and terms specified in this syllabus, on Canvas, and any posted or distributed course materials.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Effective 1/10/2024, Subject to Change)

Wednesday Date & Unit	Topics	Assignments (Post on Canvas)	Prepare for Lectures and Assignments (Bring items in bold to lecture video watching)
1/15 Unit 1	Innovation *Course Overview *Innovation Key Questions (O1)		-Watch Welcome and Course Overview videos -Read How to Use Lecture Videos & Handouts -Watch Lecture 1 videos and fill in lecture handout -Prep Assignment: Introducing Ourselves and Ethics Acknowledgment
1/22 Unit 2	Innovation Strategies *Business & Innovation Strategies (O1) *Creating an Innovation Strategy (O1)	-Submit Ethics Acknowledgement (Wed 1/22, 6:30pm) -Post Introducing Ourselves on Discussion Board (Wed 1/22, 6:30pm)	-Read Pisano (2015) and Rattalino (2017) -Watch Lecture 2 videos and fill lecture handout -Read about and prep for Test 1 (Units 1-2) for next week
1/29 Unit 3	Innovation Forms *Service & Product Innovation (O1) *Open & Closed Innovation (O1)	-Test 1 (Available Fri 1/31, 12am to Sat 2/1, 11:59pm)	-Read Berry (2006) -Watch Lecture 3 videos and fill lecture handout
2/5 Unit 4	Innovation Methods *Stage-Gate (O1) *Design Thinking (O1)		-Read Cooper (1990), Liedtka (2018), Nakata (2020) -Prep Assignment: VIA Strengths Survey -Watch Lecture 4 videos and fill lecture handout -Read about and prep for Test 2 (Units 3-4) for next week -Bring coffee filters to watch Lecture 4 videos
2/12 Unit 5	Human Flourishing Innovation (HFI) *The Approach (O1) *Design Thinking (O1) *Character Strengths & Innovation (O2)	-Submit VIA Strengths Results (Wed 2/12, 6:30pm) -Test 2 (Available Fri 2/14, 12am to Sat 2/15, 11:59pm)	-Read Polly book, pp.5-14, 192-215, and chapters on your signature (top 5) strengths -Watch Liedtka case video and take notes before Lecture 5 video viewing -Watch Lecture 5 videos and fill lecture handout -Bring your VIA results and Liedtka video notes to watch Lecture 5 videos -Bring handy prototyping materials e.g. foil, markers, playdoh, legos, cardboard, paper to watch Lecture 5 videos
2/19 Unit 6	HFI Application: Project & Discover Phase *Project & Deliverables *Discover through Research (O2,3,4)		-Read all innovation project documents -Prep Assignment: Creating & Managing Your Team -Watch Ethnography video and take notes -Watch Lecture 6 videos and fill lecture handout -Read about and prep for Test 3 (Units 5-6) for next week -Bring Ethnography video notes to watch Lecture 6 videos
2/26 Unit 7	HFI Application: Mindsets & Design Aids *Mindsets (O2) *Design Brief, Tools, & Maps (O3,4)	-Submit Team Members (Wed 2/26, 6:30pm) -Test 3 (Available Fri, 2/28, 12am to Sat 3/1, 11:59pm)	-Read & take notes on Dweck book, ch. 1- 5, 8 -Watch Dweck video -Watch Lecture 7 videos WITH TEAM and fill lecture handout -Bring secondary research and MS Whiteboard to watch Lecture 7 videos
3/5 Unit 8	HFI Application: Design Phase *Ideating-Divergence (O3,4)		-Read Nakata & Hwang (2020) -Watch Lecture 8 videos WITH TEAM and fill lecture handout -Read about and prep for Test 4 (Units 7-8) for week <u>after</u> spring break

			Bring secondary and primary research, maps, and MS Whiteboard to watch Lecture 8 videos
3/12	SPRING BREAK (Mar 10-14)		
3/19 Unit 9	HFI Application: Mindfulness & Design Phase *Mindfulness (O2) *Ideating-Convergence (O3,4)	Test 4 (Available Fri 3/20, 12 am to Sat 3/21, 11:59pm)	-Prep Assignment: Team Project Update -Read Penman book, Ch. 1-5 required, with Ch. 6-8 optional -Watch Lecture 9 videos WITH TEAM and fill lecture handout -Bring ideated-divergence concepts and MS Whiteboard to watch Lecture 9 videos
3/26 Unit 10	HFI Application: Design Phase & Prototyping *Design: Prototyping (O3,4)	-Submit Team Project Update -Signup for Extra Credit Prototype Feedback Session	-Watch Lecture 10 videos WITH TEAM and fill lecture handout -Bring prototyping materials to watch Lecture 10 videos
4/3 Unit 11	HFI Application: Deliver Phase & Testing *Deliver: Testing & Iterating (O3,4)		-Watch Lecture 11 videos WITH TEAM and fill lecture handout -Optional: Prep a brief presentation on your prototype for feedback for next week -Bring stakeholder feedback and prototyping materials to watch Lecture 11 videos
4/10 Unit 12	Optional Peer Feedback on Prototype Session Wednesday 4/10, 6:30-9:30pm, Microsoft Teams	-Submit Optional Prototype Feedback Presentation (Wed 4/10, 6:30pm)	-Work on prototype and portfolio
4/17 Unit 13	Portfolio-Prototype Finalization		-Work on prototype and portfolio
4/24 Unit 14	Portfolio & Prototype Due Wednesday 4/17, 11:59pm*	-Submit Turnitin and Final Portfolio & Prototype (Wed 4/24 11:59pm) .	-Work on your prototype and portfolio

O1, O2, O3, O4 = Student learning objectives 1, 2, 3, 4. **#NO** exceptions made for 48-hour window to take quizzes/exams, a window which includes a weekday and weekend day, both day and night. *Portfolio-prototype grades released 2+ weeks after submission along with course grades