Most businesses start small and remain small. However, some grow in leaps and bounds. Why? If we know why, we can teach people how to create enormous amounts of wealth. Entrepreneurship contributes hundreds of billions to the U.S. economy annually.

This course is designed to teach students how to start and grow a high technology company or high technology venture. The course takes students through the complete venture creation process: it covers key issues in high tech markets, corporate law, startup finance, intellectual property law, growth strategies and exit strategies. Guest lectures by practicing entrepreneurs, financiers and legal experts constitute a key component of the course. Teams of students create a startup business of their own: they write a business plan and present their business idea to a financier.

The course typically covers the following topics.

Attributes of entrepreneurs
Conducting an Opportunity Analysis
  • State the vision
  • Conduct market analysis and research
  • Evaluate the competition
  • Research pricing and scaling strategies
Developing a Plan and Setting up the Company
  • Set goals and objectives
  • Start writing a plan
  • Investigate new processes and technologies
  • Determine pricing, market, and distribution channels
  • Set up the company
Acquiring Financial Partners and Sources of Funding
  • Secure early stage funding
  • Secure growth funding
Determining the Resources Required and Implementing the Plan
  • Determine the value of licenses, patents and copyright
  • Prepare the organization for growth
  • Develop an e-business strategy for managing financial operations
Options for Scaling and Harvesting the Venture
  • Franchising
  • Sell or merge
  • Go public
  • Form a strategic alliance
All graduate students are eligible to take the course. There are no technical prerequisites.

Students’ grade will be determined by the following factors:

- Team Project: designing a venture
  - Elevator Pitch (10%)
  - Written Business Plan (20%)
  - Presentation to financiers and experts (30%)
- Individual contribution (40%): consists of class presentations and participation in class discussion.

Course Materials:
A pack of case studies will be available at the PSU Bookstore