This syllabus assumes two conditions:
1) Teams will have access to our competition software Launch Pad Central
2) Teams will be given external mentors

Grand Challenges Startup Competition Plan

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Competition Goals
Provide a framework that combines both a business plan competition with educational workshops provides
  1. Experiential learning opportunities that explore the commercial readiness of teams proposed technologies.
  2. Educational workshops on customer discovery and evidence-based entrepreneurship
  3. Access to industry/business-savvy mentors that can guide them along the way

Competition Description
This competition syllabus is based on the Maseeh Entrepreneurship Competition at USC (see http://masseh.usc.edu) which has adopted and incorporated the successful National Science Foundation Innovation Corps (“I-Corps”) methodology of linking university engineering with the marketplace provided through Innovation Node Los Angeles (IN-LA) (see http://lanode.org). We will provide real-world, hands-on learning experience to successfully transfer knowledge into products and processes that benefit society. You will engage with industry and learn from the marketplace.

IN-LA is funded in part by the National Science Foundation I-Corps™ Program under award number 1444080.
This competition will not teach how to write a research grant or a business plan. It is not an exercise on your laboratory skill set or your research capabilities. The end result is not a paper to be published.

In this competition, you will learn how to conduct, gather, and analyze customer discovery interviews, and you must interview at least 20 potential customers, 8 in person. You will also learn how to modify and test business model hypotheses in response to interviews.

Competition winners will attend the Grand Challenges Summit in Beijing, China in September 2015 and compete in their international Student Day business plan competition. This is a rare opportunity that no doubt will be quite memorable!

**LaunchPad Central Software**

You will be required to use LaunchPad Central to:

- Access useful resources
- Log your Customer Discovery interviews
- Show your business model canvas

**Mentors**

In this competition, you will be given industry-savvy mentors to guide you along the process that have donated 4-6 hours per month toward mentoring potential Grand Challenges Teams. They will be given access to LPC and you should encourage them to review your customer discovery notes and make comments. You should also try to meet with them at least once a month in person to review your progress and help plan your customer interviews and prepare for your final presentation.

**Competition Deliverables**

1. An initial 3-minute presentation on your business model (see: Presentation of Session 1).
2. Two 5-minute presentation on your progress. Your slide decks should not contain any proprietary information. They should focus on your business model and customer discovery.
3. Ten (10) customer interviews after each of two workshops; twenty (20) total.
4. A record of your customer discovery progress using LaunchPad Central to capture the narrative, contact information, learning and insight.
5. A 7-minute pitch deck (ppt) for your business given at the completion of the competition
Suggested Texts
The Startup Owner's Manual, Steve Blank and Bob Dorf (Required)
Business Model Generation, Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur (Required)

Workshop Plan

Workshop 1 – Business Model Canvas and Value Proposition

Suggested reading
- Business Model Generation, pages 14-51
- The Startup Owner’s Manual, pages 22-84 and 195-199
- Giff Constable, “12 Tips for Early Customer Development Interviews”
  http://giffconstable.com/2012/12/12-tips-for-early-customer-development-interviews-revision-3/
- http://steveblank.com/category/lean-launchpad/ for background and blog posts on the Lean LaunchPad method and classes
- Previous I-Corps team presentations as examples: http://venturewell.org/i-corps/team-materials/ and http://www.slideshare.net/sblank/tagged/i-corps (note also the number of customer contacts each team made over the course)

Presentation

Submit a 2-slide presentation to present your Team to the class (3 minutes). Save your presentations to Dropbox using this naming convention: TeamNumber_TeamName_Date e.g., 195_DataComm_05062013

Slide 1: Title Slide
- Team name and number
- Pictures/names of your Team members
- Logo
- Product picture/product description (1 sentence)
Slide 2: Populated Business Model Canvas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Partner</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Value Proposition</th>
<th>Customer Relationship</th>
<th>Customer Segments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Team Name Here**

**Fill out all 9 boxes of the canvas in order 1 thru 9.**

- **Key Partner**
  - 1. What key activities do our customers value the most?
  - 2. What are the key resources (suppliers, etc.) that our business model requires?
  - 3. What are the key products/services that satisfy our customers' needs?

- **Value Proposition**
  - 4. How will we keep and grow our customers, including how we will differentiate our value proposition?
  - 5. What are the specific features that match customer needs?

- **Customer Relationship**
  - 6. Channel: Through which channels do our customers want to be reached?

- **Customer Segments**
  - 7. For whom are we solving a problem or fulfilling a need?
  - 8. Who are the customers?
  - 9. Is this a single-sided or multi-sided market?

**Cost Structure**

- What are the most important costs in our business model?

**Revenue Streams**

- What is the revenue model? What are the pricing tactics? For what values are our customers willing to pay?

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## Workshop 1 plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: Teaching team; class goals and philosophy; our expectations; your participation</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team presentations (3 min. + 2 min. for comments)</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 1: Business Model/Customer Development</strong></td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the difference between a startup and a company? What’s a business model? What are the 9 parts of a business model? What are hypotheses? Which experiments are needed to run to test business model hypotheses? What’s “getting out of the building”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 2: Best Practices for Customer Discovery</strong></td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you call on people you don’t know? How do you get the most out of your interviews, and what are the expectations, speed, tempo, logistics, commitments? Who attends? How do you take notes? How do you protect your IP when you speak to partners?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 3: Value Proposition</strong></td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your product or service? How does it differ from your technology? Why will people want it? Where’s the market? What’s the minimum feature set? What unique insight do you have into the market dynamics or into a technological shift that makes this a fresh opportunity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for next week, LPC training, wrap-up <strong>N.B. Mentors should be invited to the LPC training</strong></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Workshop 2: Team Presentations + Lecture on Customer**

**Suggested reading**

- *The Startup Owners Manual* review pages 53-84, 85-9

**Presentation**

Submit a 5-slide presentation to the Presentations Dropbox (via LaunchPad Central):

**Slide 1**: Cover slide
- Team name
- Team number
- Member names
- 1 to 2-sentence description of your product
- Number of customer contacts you made since Session 1.

**Slides 2 and 3**: Hypotheses you tested in the marketplace (via customer interviews)
- What we thought
- Whom we interviewed
- What we learned
- What we would do next

**Slide 4**: Surprises you learned in the last week

**Slide 5**: Revised business model canvas that indicates changes
## Workshop 2 plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Presentations (5 min. + 2 min. comments)</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 3: Customers/ Users/ Payers (EEB 132)</strong></td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who’s the customer? User? Payer? How are they different? Why do they buy? How can you reach them? How is a business customer different from a consumer? What’s a multi-sided market? What’s segmentation? What’s an archetype?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Workshop 3 – Lecture and Panel Discussion on Intellectual Property**

Intellectual Property is often a critical part of any start-up. This section will be taught by invited speakers from a local legal office and will cover patents and copyrights.

It will also include a panel discussion including some entrepreneurs who can share the issues they faced dealing with IP issues.
Workshop 4 – Team Presentations + Lectures on Distribution Channels + Customer Relationships

Suggested reading
- Business Model Generation, pages 127–133
- Sign into LaunchPad Central and watch:
  - Lecture 4 – Distribution Channels
    https://www.launchpadcentral.com/videos/series
  - Lecture 5 – Customer Relationships
    https://www.launchpadcentral.com/videos/series

Presentation
Submit a 5-slide presentation to Dropbox (via LaunchPad Central):

Slide 1: Cover slide
- Team name
- Team number
- Member names
- 1 to 2-sentence description of your product
- Number of customer contacts you made since Total and since Session 2.

Slides 2 and 3: Hypotheses you tested in the marketplace
- What we thought
- Whom we interviewed
- What we learned
- What we would do next

Slide 4: Customers/ Users/ Payers
Slide 5: Revised business model canvas that indicates changes
## Workshop 4 plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Presentations (5 min. + 2 min. comments)</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 4: Distribution Channels</strong></td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s a channel? Physical versus virtual channels. Direct channels, indirect channels, OEM. Multi-sided markets. B-to-B versus B-to-C channels and sales (business to business versus business to consumer).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 5: Customer Relationships: Get/Keep/Grow</strong></td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you create end user demand? How does it differ on the web versus other channels? Evangelism vs. existing need or category; sales funnels. How does demand creation differ in a multi-sided market?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Workshop 5 – Lecture on Story Telling and the Pitch**

This workshop will prepare you for the Final Presentations where you will encapsulate all your evidence into a final pitch.

**Suggested viewing**

**Workshop 5 plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic 6: Storytelling</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 7: The Pitch – Preparing for your final presentations</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s next: More opportunities</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional resource videos
- Pre-Planning Customer Discovery, parts 1, 2, and 3
- Customer Discovery Interviews, parts 1 and 2

Outside the Building
- Death by Demo 1
- Death by Demo 2
- Assuming You Know
- Death by PowerPoint
- Understanding the Problem
- Customers Lie
- The Distracted Customer
- Engaging the Customer
- Customer Empathy
- The User, the Buyer & the Saboteur
- Multi-Person Interview
- B-to-B to C
- Existing vs. New Markets
- Public Interviews

Back in the Building
- Extracting Insight from the Data
- Getting the MVP Right
- Pay Attention to Outliers
- The “Other 85%”