

JOMC 463: News Lab

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

11 Carroll Hall (Reese News Lab)

Fall 2016

Desirability / Feasibility / Viability

Does anyone want/need it? Can it be done? Can it be sustained?

Jeremy Gockel

Lecturer, Reese News Lab

Email: jpgockel@email.unc.edu

Phone: 919.624.4660

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. (in the Lab) or by appointment

Description

This is not a typical journalism school class. It is structured like a VERY early (or even pre-) start-up where the focus is on exploring and developing a sustainable media product or service.

This course is designed to help students develop an idea for a media product and explore its feasibility, viability and desirability. It combines elements of journalism, technology, marketing, public speaking and business to form a framework for developing a sustainable media product or service.

Students should be prepared to:

- **Face extreme uncertainty**
- Work effectively and respectfully in small teams
- Make quick decisions with limited information
- Work on competing priorities
- Receive direct (painful and pleasant) feedback
- Have all actions and decisions challenged and questioned
- Find answers to their own questions with the assistance of the instructor

Successful students will be naturally curious and will not expect to be told exactly how something must be done.

This document sets the schedule, but we recognize that this industry changes rapidly – particularly in a startup setting. We will respond to changes as necessary, and **we reserve the right to amend this document and assignments as needed**. Any changes will be made with advance notice to you.

Everything you do may be published. However, you have the option of not making your work publicly available IF you communicate that in writing to the instructor.

Have fun, work hard, be creative, take risks and challenge the status quo.

Objectives

- Develop and publish a well-researched and tested proposal for a feasible, viable and desirable media product.
- Experience the benefits of trusting and working in a highly effective team
- Pitch and answer questions about the proposed media product
- Learn and follow a process for developing new products. You are not evaluated on the product. You are evaluated on the process of developing a new product.
- Exhibit a working knowledge of:
 - Listening to customers
 - Market research
 - Basic business modeling
 - Prototyping
 - Public presentations
 - Basic journalistic practices

Readings

While there is no required textbook for this class, I strongly suggest you take the opportunity to read the following. All are directly applicable to the Lab's mindset, process and purpose.

- [5 Dysfunctions of a Team](#) by Patrick Lencioni - ISBN-13: 978-0787960759
- [The Innovator's Dilemma](#) by Clayton Christensen - ISBN-13: 978-0062060242
- [The Lean Startup](#) by Eric Ries - ISBN-13: 978-0307887894
- [Rework](#) by Jason Fried & David Hansson- ISBN-13: 978-0307463746
- [Who Moved My Cheese](#) by Spencer Johnson, M.D. - ISBN-13: 978-0399144462
- [Creative Confidence](#) by Tom Kelley & David Kelley
- [Business Model Generation](#) by Alexander Osterwalder & Yves Pigneur - ISBN-13: 978-0470876411

Evaluation

You are NOT being evaluated on the product/service idea you create. You are being evaluated on the process you follow to test for desirability, feasibility and viability. If your process is solid, you may find that your idea is terrible. That's not failure. That's structured, entrepreneurial-based learning.

Teams

You will work in teams of 3 to 5 people all semester. *The team will not succeed without you and you will not succeed without your team.* The key to having a positive and successful team experience is to physically work together. Some tasks can be completed individually on your own time. However, you will develop a better product, strengthen your understanding of the process and receive a higher grade if you trust one another, respect each other and work together.

Reese News Lab Access

The Reese News Lab (Carroll 11) is available to you 24/7 via OneCard access at the outer door in order to facilitate your working together.

Attendance

You should approach this class as you would a job at a startup. Only a death in your immediate family (or your own demise, obviously) or a physician-noted illness will be accepted as an excused absence. Two (2) unexcused absences are allowed. For each unexcused absence after the first two, you will lose 0.2 points from your final grade (a 3.9 will become a 3.7; a 3.0 will become a 2.8 and so on). **Being late is the same thing as being absent.**

Late Assignments

Late but completed assignments may be published (with your permission, of course), **you will be given a 0 for any late assignment.** Deadlines will be strictly enforced.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
August 23	Lab Orientation	
August 25	Sprint Kickoff	Sprint Product Pitch:

		<i>Due: September 1 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
August 30	Sprint Continues	
September 1	Sprint Pitch Reflection	Team Preferences: <i>Due: September 2 @ 5 p.m.</i>
September 6	Team Formation	Team Name & Bios: <i>Due: September 8 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 8	Brainstorms	5 Good Ideas: <i>Due: September 13 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 13	Desirability & Empathy	Empathy Map: <i>Due: September 15 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 15	Brainstorming	Initial Validation: <i>Due: September 20 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Team Evaluation I: <i>Due: September 20 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 20	Value Proposition	Value Proposition: <i>Due: September 22 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 22	Brainstorming Team Meetings	Pitch I: <i>Due: September 27 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
September 27	Pitch	
September 29	Prototypes & Business Modeling	Prototype I: <i>Due: October 6 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Customer Feedback I: <i>Due: October 6 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Pitch II: <i>Due: October 6 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
October 4	Workday	
October 6	Pitch & Prototype Demos	Cost & Revenue I: <i>Due: October 13 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Customer Feedback II: <i>Due: October 13 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Pitch III: <i>Due: October 13 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
October 11	University Day	
October 13	Pitch & Revenue Explanation	Customer Feedback III: <i>Due: October 25 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>

October 18	Pitching	Team Evaluation II: <i>Due: October 25 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Pitch Script: <i>Due: October 25 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
October 20	FALL BREAK	
October 25	Pitch Practice	Customer Feedback IV: <i>Due: November 1 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Prototype II: <i>Due: November 1 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
October 27	Pitching with Q&A	Cost & Revenue II: <i>Due: November 3 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> Pitch Extras: <i>Due: November 3 @ 9:30 a.m.</i> FAQs: <i>Due: November 3 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
November 1	Pitching with Q&A	Customer Feedback V: <i>Due: November 8 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
November 3	Pitching with Q&A	
November 8	Pitching with Q&A	Revised FAQs: <i>Due: November 10 @ 9:30 a.m.</i>
November 10	Pitching with Q&A	
November 15	Pitching with Q&A	
November 17	PITCH DAY	
November 22	Reflection	Team Evaluation III: <i>Due: November 30 @ 5 p.m.</i> Final Project Report: <i>Due: December 13 @ 5 p.m.</i>
November 24	THANKSGIVING	
November 29	Team Evaluations	Individual Reflection: <i>Due: December 13 @ 12 p.m.</i>
December 6	Retrospective	
December 13	Final Deliverables	

Team Deliverables:

General Assignments - 15%

Combination of all homework assignments turned in on time and according to instructions.

Final Pitch and Q&A - 25%

The presentation (and Q&A) of findings and recommendations for your media product. It must be well prepared, well-rehearsed, and well presented. You must be able to answer all questions appropriately, honestly and sincerely using any and all data and feedback you've collected over the course of the semester. The pitch and Q&A session will be evaluated based on how well you articulate your basic value proposition, how you plan to deliver that value to your customers and how you will financially sustain it. It will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Hook - good, convincing and quick.
- Problem - Clearly defined problem with clearly defined customers
- Solution - Clear explanation of your solution to the problem
- Data - Clear, data-driven connections for the solution to your problem
- Revenue and Costs - Concise and simple revenue and cost structures.
- Not to exceed 5 minutes.

Final Product Report 10%

This is where you include the meat of your work. Similar to the pitch, the report will be evaluated based on how well you prove the desirability, feasibility and viability of your business.

Specifically, we will be evaluating the specific criteria that should be included in the report:

- SUMMARY
 - Value proposition - what is the value you are delivering to your customers?
 - Detailed description of your service including how it operates and how the consumer interacts with it.
- DESIRABILITY:
 - Customers - how big is your market? How do you know your customers have the problem you are solving? How do you know your product is desired or valuable to your customers?
 - Primary (and any secondary) audiences including pertinent characteristics of each, how big that potential market is and how you plan to sell your product or service to that market
- FEASIBILITY:
 - What is your solution? How does it work? How have you tested the solution with your customers?
 - Show us your prototype(s)
- VIABILITY:

- What is the cost structure of your business in the first 3 years? What are the main operating costs and the initial startup costs? How did you calculate to get to these costs?
- What are the revenue streams for your business? How many customers will you realistically have? How will you attract/find/sell to those customers? How do you know why price they are willing to pay?
- Provide the spreadsheets
- WHO ARE YOU?
 - Bios of the team
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
 - List out all the Questions you've received (or think you'll receive) and provide short answers to each
- TIMELINE:
 - High level timeline of your product including major points of change and events.
- APPENDIX:
 - Notes
 - Sources

Individual Deliverables

Instructor Evaluation – 10%

The instructor will evaluate each student at the end of the semester based on the News Lab Evaluation Criteria listed below.

- *Resourcefulness and Initiative:* Ability to generate new and improved ideas, concepts, methods, techniques, processes and practices. Ability to deal with new situations effectively. Extent of efforts at creative problem-solving, anticipating needs and planning accordingly.
- *Collaboration & Attitude:* Effectiveness in working with others to generate ideas, seek mutual purpose/understanding, be receptive to differing ideas and opinions while continuing forward progress.
- *Overall:* How this student performed overall in every aspect of the project.

Self & Team Evaluation – 10%

Students must honestly evaluate themselves, their teams and how they operate within their team based on the 5 dysfunctions outlined during team formation three times over the course of the semester.

Lab Report – 10%

During the semester, each student must write one lab report. The schedule for lab reports will be determined during the first week of class. The lab reports should focus on something specific the student experienced, learned or did during the week and their main takeaway. Lab reports are due at 5 p.m. each Friday and should be between 500 and 700 words.

Reflection – 20%

Students will demonstrate understanding of media innovation & entrepreneurship by reflecting on the process. They should explain in detail the three most important takeaways from their work and how they might apply it in the future (1,300 - 1,500 words).

GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY:**Instructor Evaluation – 5%**

As described above

Self & Team Evaluation – 5%

As described above

Lab Report – 5%

As described above

Reflection – 10%

As described above

Media Innovation Application – 15%

Due via Sakai October 13 @ 5 p.m.

Read, review and apply *The Innovator's Dilemma* to the media industry.

Media Business Model Canvas – 10%

Due via Sakai, December 13 @ 12 p.m.

Using the Business Model Canvas (from the book, Business Model Generation) outline and visualize a media company's business model of your choice.

Evaluation Scale

(Each grade can have a "-" or "+" to allow for more granular evaluation).

- 4: Outstanding. Exceptional. A model and example for others to follow.
- 3: Exceeds Expectations. Solid effort with some room for improvement.
- 2: Meets Expectations. Completed the basic assignments & requirements.
- 1: Below Expectations. Significant issues.
- 0: Terrible. Needs to consider a different class/field.

Undergraduate Grade Scale (*Final Grade Range*)

A = 4.0 (3.8 – 4.0)

A- = 3.7 (3.4 – 3.7)

B+ = 3.3 (3.1 – 3.3)
B = 3.0 (2.8 – 3.0)
B- = 2.7 (2.4 – 2.7)
C+ = 2.3 (2.1 – 2.3)
C = 2.0 (1.8 – 2.0)
C- = 1.7 (1.4 – 1.7)
D+ = 1.3 (1.1 – 1.3)
D = 1.0 (0.8 - 1.0)
F = 0.0 (0.0 – 0.7)

Graduate Final Grade Scale

H = 3.4 – 4.0
P = 2.0 – 3.3
L = 1.0 – 2.3
F = 0.0 – 0.9

Honor Code:

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Seeking Help:

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity:

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability,

veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Special Accommodations:

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

ACEJMC Core Values and Competencies

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here:

<http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies. Specifically, this course is designed to help you

- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work