Unleashing and Sustaining Innovation
Yonathan Feffer

Unleashing and Sustaining Innovation

Goals
Unleashing and Sustaining Innovation takes a hands-on organizational behavior approach to innovation in organizations. It focuses on both the barriers and enablers that constrain or facilitate innovation, basic creative thinking skills, and collaboration techniques. It traces those along the three levels of OB analysis - individual, group/team, and organizational. Most importantly, it does so while giving students the opportunity to practice them on real organizational problems throughout the course, starting on day one. This course enables students to identify - and practice - ways of lifting barriers to unleash innovation and then sustain it through individual and team effort.

Participants will learn about the antecedents to individual and group creativity, how to construct and manage innovation teams, how to identify innovation constraints in organizational and team cultures, and how to implement new and useful ideas across the organization. Learning is both theoretical and experiential – whatever we learn, we will also implement!

The course is designed to help you answer the following types of questions:

- Why innovate? What is it and when is it useful?
- What are the conditions for successful innovation?
- What causes innovations to fail?
- How can I increase my creativity and that of my colleagues’?
- How should an innovative team be managed?
- How do I get my ideas implemented?
- How to address resistance to change?
## Course Outline and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, readings, and assignments</th>
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<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
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| 1     | February 24| Introduction  
Review Course Structure and class charter/Andragogical Approach  
Idea Trail Exercise:  
- What is your experience with innovation?  
- What would you like to know at the end of the course?  
Lecture & Discussion:  
- What is innovation and what is creativity?  
- Guest Speaker from Representative Company – Vision, goals, challenges, and pain points  
Exercise:  
- Teaming |
| 2     | March 2    | Lecture & Discussion:  
Prevalent models of the innovation process – Diamond model, models of closed, open, and hybrid innovation. |
| 3     | March 9    | Lecture & Discussion:  
Team Structure and Processes; The team innovation process model  
Creative Cognition, Mental Expansion, and Measuring Creativity  
Exercise:  
- Brainstorming Session and mental expansion |
|       |            | **UNLEASHING INNOVATION – INDIVIDUAL LEVEL**                                                      |
| 4     | March 16   | Demonstration/Exercise:  
- Your own cognitive biases  
Lecture & Discussion:  
- Cognitive biases, Perception and Paradigms  
- Defining pain points, needs, and challenges  
Interview prep |
| 5     | March 23   | Interview  Representative Company  
Exercise:  
- Beginner’s mindset & Identifying basic assumptions (flipping) |
| 6     | March 30   | Interview  Representative Company staff and leadership  
Interview startups/stakeholders -> Insights  
Exercise:  
- Brain writing |
| 7     | April 6    | MIDTERM: Article Analysis & Discussion |
|       |            | **UNLEASHING INNOVATION – TEAM LEVEL**                                                           |
| 8     | April 13   | Lecture & Discussion:  
- Change & Stress Management |
| 9     | April 20   | Lecture & Discussion:  
- Team Dynamics  
Exercise:  
- Final Project Session: |
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| 10 April 27 | Lecture & Discussion: Strategy, Culture, and Politics  
Final Project Session: Ideation Session |
| 11 May 4 | Final Project Session: Draft Pitch Presentation |
| 12 May 11 | Final Project Presentation: Pitch day  
Feedback: From each other, guest speakers, and professor |

### Grading structure
- Midterm
- Pitch Day
- Participation
- Bonus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>%40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitch Day</td>
<td>%40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>%20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus</td>
<td>%10</td>
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To leverage our proximity to “Silicon Alley” students may interview local startups/entrepreneurs for bonus points. These interviews and write-ups will follow course modules.

### Readings

**Academic Journals**

**Harvard Business Review**
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The Innovator's DNA, Jeffrey H. Dyer, Hal Gregersen, Clayton M. Christensen, December 2009
(https://hbr.org/2009/12/the-innovators-dna)

The 4 Types of Innovation and the Problems They Solve, Greg Satell June 2017

Books
Gamestorming: A Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, and Changemakers; Dave Gray, Sunni Brown, James Macanufo; "O'Reilly Media, Inc.", 2010