The Sociology of Entrepreneurship

Sociology 359, Spring 2015

Wednesday and Friday 10:05-11:20
Sociology/Psychology 129

Instructor: Professor Tiantian Yang; Soc / Psych Building 253
(ty41@duke.edu); office phone # (919) 660-5760

Course Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 10:05 AM - 11:20 AM
Soc / Psych Building 253

Office Hours: WF, 13:30 PM - 14:30 PM (or by appointment)

Course Description

All around us, media and pundits emphasize the importance of a “new economy”, an “ownership society”, another “dot-com” era, and, more generally a culture of entrepreneurial capitalism. Advice and courses on entrepreneurship abound, but more critical perspectives are sometimes lacking. This course is an introduction to the social scientific view of entrepreneurship and innovation. Its goals are (1) to familiarize you with major perspectives on entrepreneurial activity; (2) to develop your skills in applying insights from these perspectives to empirical case studies, as well as practical issues affecting business startups and social enterprise; and (3) to help prepare you for a lifetime spent working in entrepreneurial careers (or partnering with business and social entrepreneurs).

The course considers a range of issues: Why and how are startup organizations created? Why do startups fail? When do entrepreneurs work with others and when do they go it alone? Who reaps the rewards (or suffers the costs) of entrepreneurial efforts? What distinguishes social and for-profit enterprise? How do environments influence entrepreneurship and innovation? What is the broader role of entrepreneurship and innovation in modern society?

This may appear to be a long list, but the literature on entrepreneurship has been distinguished from the outset by the diversity of its subject matter. It is also distinguished by the diversity of backgrounds of those who write in this field. We will examine the work of sociologists, historians, geographers, economists, and even a few business gurus.

Prerequisites:
Although the class has no course prerequisites, it does place some demands on your ability to perform independent research on entrepreneurs, startup enterprises, and innovations. You should familiarize yourself with Duke Library resources -- in particular, databases such as ABI/Inform, Lexis-Nexis (Academic), and Factiva ± that can assist you in collecting business data.

Teaching Assistant:

Hang Young Lee  
Soc/Psych 035A  
HL87@duke.edu  

Office Hours: MT, 12:00-1:30PM  
(or by appointment)

Requirements:

Course participation (20%)
Active participation in class discussion is expected. We will keep track of attendance and ask that you come prepared to discuss the readings for each day.

Quizzes (10%)
For some classes I may also ask you to complete a short quiz or writing assignments on material that we have covered, including readings, classroom presentations and points highlighted in discussions.

Presentations (10%, 5% each)
Each student will participate in two formal presentations, which will occur on specified dates during the term.

Exams (40%, 20% each)
To assess your progress, there will be a mid-term exam. The final exam is cumulative, with a mix of short and long answers.

Research Projects (20%, 10% each)
In addition, there will be two research projects. These are team projects, involving up to fifteen pages of written material. All material for the projects must be submitted in printed or electronic form.
Policy on Assignments and Missed Exams:

The Duke Honor Code will be in effect for all written work. Assistance on research projects is restricted to those individuals who are part of a student’s project team.

Assignments turned in after a specified due date (in class) will be penalized at twenty percentage points per day. The time of the final examination can only be changed with an excuse validated by the dean.

Required Texts:

We will make extensive use of a set of course readings, a number of which are available in PDF form. This syllabus is also web-enabled, allowing you to access many of the articles directly from the internet as electronic readings (ER). The texts for the course can be obtained from the Duke bookstore or an on-line retailer:


Case Studies: Electronic or hardcopy versions should be purchased through Harvard Business School Press. The coursepack is available at …

https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/32432113

Supplemental Reading (optional):

### Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| **Theme I. Studying Entrepreneurs**
  Session 1. Introduction (1/9/15)
  Session 2. History of Entrepreneurship (1/14/15) | Wasserman, Ch.1
| | Gerschenkron, S6 |
| **Theme II. Who Becomes an Entrepreneur?**
  Session 1. Entry into Entrepreneurial Activity (1/16/15)
  Session 2. Creating the Entrepreneurial Team (1/21/15) | Wasserman, Ch.2
| | Wasserman, Chs.3 and 4 (through p.96 only) |
| **>> Project 1 Assigned (Due: 2/27/15) <<** | |
| **Theme III. Networks, Roles, and Rewards**
  Session 1. Entrepreneurial Networks (1/23/15)
  Session 2. Roles and Rewards (1/28/15) | Burt, S12
| | Wasserman, Chs.5 and 6 |
| **Theme IV. Managing the Startup Enterprise**
  Session 1. People and Activities (1/30/15)
  Session 2. Case Study: Wikipedia (2/4/15) | ER, Baron & Hannan
| | Wasserman, Ch.8
| | CS, Project Esperanza |
| **Theme V. Entrepreneurial Environments**
  Session 1. Industry Evolution (2/6/15)
  Session 2. Communities and Entrepreneurship (2/11/15) | Aldrich, S9
| | ER, Saxenian |
| **Theme VI. Entrepreneurial Goals**
  Session 1. Goals and Startup Performance (2/13/15)
  Session 2. Case Study: Apple (2/18/15) | Wasserman, Chs.10 and 11
| | CS, Apple’s Core |
| **Theme VII. Intermezzo**
  Session 1. Mid-Term Exam (2/20/15)
  Session 2. Special Guest: Ted Hall (2/25/15)
  Founder & CEO, ShopBot | |
| **Theme VIII. Case Study Presentations**
  Session 1. Class Presentations I (2/27/15)
  Session 2. Class Presentations II (3/4/15) | |
Session 3. Class Presentations III (3/6/15)

>> SPRING BREAK <<

Theme IX. Social Entrepreneurship
Session 2. Social Entrepreneurship (3/18/15) ER, Dees

Theme X. Studying Innovation
Session 1. Innovation and Intellectual Property (3/20/15) Schumpeter, S2
Session 2. Case Study: 3M (4/1/15) ER, Boyle (Chapter 1)

>> Project 2 Assigned (Due: 4/15/15) <<

Session 2. Diffusion of Innovations (3/25/15) ER, Van den Bulte & Lilien

Theme XI. Intrapreneurship
Session 1. Innovation in Established Organizations (3/27/15) ER, Christensen & Overdorf
Session 2. Case Study: 3M (4/1/15) CS, Profile of an Innovating Company

Theme XII. Environments and Innovation
Session 1. Technical Context of Innovation (4/3/15) ER, Anderson & Tushman
Montoya, S14

Theme XIII. From Innovation to Marketplace
Session 1. Case Study: Unilever in India: (4/10/15) CS, Hindustan Lever’s Project Shakti – Marketing FMCG to the Rural Consumer

Theme XV. Presentations
Session 1. Class Presentations IV (4/15/15)
Session 2. Class Presentations V (4/17/15)
Session 3. Class Presentations VI (4/22/15)

Final Exam: Wednesday, April 29th, 14:00 PM – 17:00 PM