Technology Entrepreneur Center   Spring 2025

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS
Wednesday, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm
DCL – Rm. 1265

OVERVIEW
TE 598 is a hands-on, project-based introduction to Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship. Throughout the term, you will work with your team to build a plan for a new enterprise using a proven framework, the Disciplined Entrepreneurship process, to accomplish this. The course also covers additional topics to make it more comprehensive than simply covering the product aspect of starting a new venture. It is meant as an intensive course for general entrepreneurship and company acceleration.

This course is targeted at anyone who wants to understand firsthand the process of launching a new venture. The course is also valuable for students interested in launching new ventures within existing organizations (e.g., corporations, government, non-profits, academic institutions), or people who want to be entrepreneurial ecosystem builders (e.g., what we call "entrepreneurship amplifiers"). This course will give you a solid understanding of what it takes to launch a new venture and a common language to use in entrepreneurial endeavors in the future.

Our primary goal is to equip you to launch a new venture through a programmatic process. A good analogy is that we are focused first and foremost on teaching you "how to fish" rather than focused on "catching a fish", although the only real way of "catch a fish" is by fishing".

That being said, this is a hands-on course that teaches a rigorous framework and provides a valuable experience to students so that they, upon completion, can be more successful in starting a new venture.

NOTE REGARDING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
See the following link StudentGuide_IP_General.pdf (illinois.edu)

OFFICE HOURS
There are no official office hours for this course. Students can request 1-on-1 meetings with the instructor or any of the coaches, at any time, after checking availability.

INSTRUCTORS
JOHN S THODE jthode@illinois.edu
Clinical Professor
Innovation, Leadership, and Engineering Entrepreneurship
The Grainger College of Engineering | Technology Entrepreneur Center

COACHES
Craig Vodnik
John Renaldi
Manus Govani

TEACHING ASSISTANT
Rawson, Kearsa klrawson@illinois.edu

CLASS RESOURCES
Course Website: Spring 2025-TE 598-Accel Deep Tech Enterprises-Section AI2
Additional Advisory Resources Available
Please refer to http://www.detoolbox.com and the MIT edX entrepreneurship courses
1. Entrepreneurship 101: https://edge.edx.org/courses/course-v1:MITx+15.390.1x+4T2016/about?utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=Bootcamp&utm_source=header
2. Entrepreneurship 102: https://edge.edx.org/courses/course-v1:MITx+15.390.2x+4T2016/about?utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=Bootcamp&utm_source=header
3. Entrepreneurship 103: https://edge.edx.org/courses/course-v1:MITx+Bootcamp3_QUT+2T2017/about
4. User Innovation: https://edge.edx.org/courses/course-v1:MITx+uINOV8x_1+4T2016/about?utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=Bootcamp&utm_source=header

We also strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Entrepreneurs In Residence (EIR) program available through the Incubator - Research Park (illinois.edu).

REQUIRED MATERIALS
Disciplined Entrepreneurship: 24 Steps to a Successful Startup (Wiley)
Bill Aulet, ISBN: 978-1-118-69228-8
The lectures will cover material rapidly.
Disciplined Entrepreneurship: Workbook (Wiley)
Bill Aulet, ISBN: 978-1-119-36579-2
This companion book will allow you to understand more deeply how to apply the concepts and the chapters on each step and should be reviewed before the class in which they are covered. The book can also be a valuable reference as you are working to complete each step.

GRADING
20% individual participation and attendance
30% team deliverables (based on slides prepared for each of 24 steps of DE)
50% final deliverables and final peer reviews

Individual participation and peer review
Class participation is expected. **please refrain from using your laptops, mobile devices, and tablets during class.** Classroom attendance is 100% required. Unavoidable absences due to illness, family emergencies, or religious holidays are excusable but please let your TAs know ahead of time. *More than two unexcused absences will reduce your final grade by up to a letter grade, independent of the overall grading scheme.*

In-class presentations and Team Deliverables
Much of the learning in New Enterprises comes from the shared experience of all groups. All teams must regularly prepare mini slide decks, according to the rubrics posted on Canvas (see Syllabus calendar of classes). **These decks are to be uploaded through Canvas by midnight** on the day of the class it's due. This means deliverables can be submitted after class that day. The decks will be graded, and in-class feedback will be provided. Further qualitative feedback may be provided via office hours.

Teams will be randomly selected in each class to provide a 5-minute presentation of their deck. To gain the most value from the presentations, selected teams shall:

a) deliver brief pitch of the business,

b) briefly summarize how they approach the DE step and,

c) indicate to the class what kind of feedback they are specifically seeking.

Presenting teams should not try to answer the feedback questions from peers real-time, to allow for as much feedback to be provided.

In addition to mini slide decks for each class session, each team will submit several consolidated assignments (see Syllabus calendar of classes) during the semester. These deliverables function as a chance to update earlier steps based on feedback, preparation for the final presentation/deliverable, and as opportunities to obtain feedback from peers and/or guest speakers. The assignments include pitch decks that consolidate the main phases of DE's 24 steps and a financial analysis, including spreadsheet and explanatory slides.

Each component of the consolidated assignments will be graded. Qualitative feedback will be provided by a panel of experienced entrepreneurs in "board meetings" on days when or just after consolidated decks are due. These "board meeting" clusters will be assigned after class begins.

Teams should incorporate feedback into their final pitch deck, which will be prepared in two versions. One version will be designed as a presentation for potential investors, while the other will cover all of DE's steps. Specific rubrics for each deliverable will be provided.

CALENDAR OF CLASSES OVERVIEW

- **Deliverables are due by 11:59 PM on the date listed for the deliverable (*Please note subject to change*). If a deliverable is listed as due on 9/5, it must be submitted by 11:59 PM on 9/5. The two final decks are an exception. Please see below or Canvas for details.**
- **See Canvas for additional information on each specific deliverable.**
- **Homework: Due before 12:00 PM (before the start of the first-class section) on the date listed – often reading assignments**
- **Deliverables: Due before 11:59 PM on the date listed – quizzes, slide decks and more**

#	Date	Topic	Homework: **Due before class on the date listed**	Deliverable **Due before 11:59 PM on the date listed unless otherwise noted**
1	1/22/25	Class Intro & Logistics, DE Overview	1. Most Overrated Thing article 2. IDEO "Deep Dive" video 3. DE book, Intro & Step 0 (p. 1-21)	
2	1/29/25	Market Segmentation & Selecting BHM (Steps 1-2)	1. DE & DE Workbook, Steps 1-2	1. Finalized team rosters 2. Description of how you are going to work together
3	2/5/25	How To Do PMR	1. DE Workbook PMR Guide (p. 23-38) 2. PMR Tips from DE blog here	1. List of all markets brainstormed 2. Matrix of top 6-8 market segments to do PMR 3. PMR Pledge
4	2/12/25	End User Profile, TAM, Persona (Steps 3-5)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 3-5	1. BHM selected with some details & why 2. Summary of PMR and plan to continue to do more over course of semester 3. Slides for steps 1 and 2
5	2/19/25	Full Life Cycle Use Case, HL Prod Spec, QVP (Steps 6-8)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 6-8	1. Slides on Steps 3-5
6	2/26/25	Identify Your Next 10 Customers (Step 9) & Define Your Core, Competitive Positioning (Steps 10-11)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 9-11	1. Slides on Step 6-8
7 8	3/5/25 3/12/25	Interim Mock Board Meetings (Steps 1-11)		1. Consolidated Deck Steps 1-11
9	3/26/25	DMU, DMP (Steps 12-13) including WoM & Triggers	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 12-13	2. Slides on Step 9 3. Slides on Steps 10-11
10	4/2/25	Is Your BHM Sharp Enough? Follow on Markets (Step 14)	1. DE & DE Workbook Step 14	1. 1. Slides on Steps 12-13
11	4/9/25	Business Model, Pricing & LTV (Steps 15-17)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 15-17	1. Slides on Step 14
12	4/16/25	COCA and Adjustments – (Steps 18-19)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 18-19	Slides on Steps 15-17
13	4/23/25	Overall Financials	1. Review customer worksheets Review Charlie Tillett spreadsheet	1. 1. Slides on Steps 18-19
14	4/30/25	Identify and Test Key Assumptions (Step 20-21) Define MVBP and Metrics of Success (Steps 22-24)	1. DE & DE Workbook Steps 20-21 2. DE & DE Workbook Steps 22-24	1. Slides on Steps 20-24
15	5/7/25	Mock Board Meetings (Steps 1-24 plus using DE Canvas) Pulling It All Together & Presenting Your Plan		1. Consolidated Deck Steps 1-24
16	5/14/25	Final Presentations		Final full consolidated deck

Frequent Q&A's

Team Presentation Guidelines & Expectations?

1) We will take your team's compliance of presentation guidelines and expectations listed below into account as part of the slide format grade.
2) Please save presentation files as a PowerPoint doc, named: Team Name_Assignment X
   a. Please look at the schedule overview below for which assignments correspond with which number under the "Deliverables" column.
   b. Please note whether you are in Section A or Section B.
   c. Please designate one team member to handle uploads on a regular basis
3) Team overview: Always include an introduction slide including:
   a. Team Name (please finalize your team's name and keep it consistent)
   b. Team Members
   c. Program Name for each Team member
   d. 2-3 sentence overview about your project
4) Audience: The slides you are preparing weekly for class assignments will eventually build into a final pitch deck. You should present your information in a clear, concise, and professional manner that fits the level of expectations that VCs/investors would look for in a pitch deck.
5) Content: Please look at the grading rubrics for guidance on content to include. **A good presentation is the one that meets its goals, and each slide is self-explanatory and connected to the story you are telling through the whole deck. If you think that there is information that should be shared but not included in your slides, please, use the notes to include further details. If you include notes, please make sure to print them. Otherwise, we will not read them.**
6) Participation grade: Your presentation will be included as part of your participation grade for the class. All team members are highly encouraged to present. Non-presenting members will get a lower participation grade as a result.
7) Presentation Time Requirements: Please adhere to the time requirements as posted.