

TE 198 FI2: Introduction to Entrepreneurship

Semester & Year: Fall 2026 | **Credit Hours:** 1

Meeting Day & Time: Weeks 8-15 Asynchronous | **Location:** Online

Instructor: Professor Mark Karasek | **Email:** mkarasek@illinois.edu

Course Assistant: TBD | **Email:** TBD

Course Purpose and Description

Innovation is the foundation of growth in existing enterprises and in startups.

Companies must grow to survive over the long term. Innovation is the lifeblood of growth in corporations and startups. But innovation is arguably the most difficult thing an organization can try to do. And the challenge of innovative growth is getting more complicated. Product companies are adding software services. Service companies are adding products. Value in the marketplace is moving from products or services to ecosystems platforms. As ecosystems define value in a marketplace, the profit pool can redistribute creating new winners and losers. Intro to Innovation and Entrepreneurship is an ideal course for undergraduate students across the university who want to begin to build a foundation of understanding of what drives innovation in existing enterprises and startups.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you will:

1. Recognize the differences among innovation, creativity, and invention,
2. Explain how innovation is used in corporations to create value, and how innovation is different in a start-up versus an established enterprise,
3. Explain why innovation and entrepreneurship are important to the economic health of the country,
4. Explain how to identify and evaluate customer problems worth solving,
5. Explain the key steps and tools of customer discovery.

Course Texts

Required

The Canvas site includes a list of links for reading materials and videos that will be in place of a textbook. A list of relevant business books is also provided on the Canvas site for those who want additional background on the topics.

Grading

50% - Weekly individual assignments

20% - Midterm Exam on Canvas

35% - Final Exam on Canvas

Homework Assignments

The course consists of an introduction to customer discovery with a variety of individual assignments each week. All homework assignments are listed on Canvas. Assignments must be submitted in Canvas prior to the listed deadline each week for full credit. Late assignments may be submitted but will be penalized 50% on points awarded. The individual midterm exam will be completed on Canvas during Week 4 and the Final Exam will be completed on Canvas during Week 8.

Grading Scale

- A+ 97 – 100
- A 93 – 96.9
- A- 90 – 92.9
- B+ 87 – 89.9
- B 83 – 86.9
- B- 80 – 82.9
- C+ 77 – 79.9
- C 73 – 76.9
- C- 70 – 72.9
- D+ 67 – 69.9
- D 63 – 66.9

Academic Integrity

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Student Code should also be considered as a part of this syllabus. Students should pay particular attention to Article 1, Part 4: Academic Integrity. Read the Code at the following URL: <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>.

Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade. Every student is expected to review and abide by the Academic Integrity Policy: <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/>. Ignorance is not an excuse for any academic dishonesty. It is your responsibility to read this policy to avoid any misunderstanding. Do not hesitate to ask the instructor(s) if you are ever in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or any other breach of academic integrity.

Mental Health

Significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, substance/alcohol misuse or interferences in eating or sleep can have an impact on academic performance, social development, and emotional wellbeing. The University of Illinois offers a variety of confidential services including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric services, and specialized screenings which are covered through the Student Health Fee. If you or someone you know experiences any of the above mental health concerns, it is strongly encouraged to contact or visit any of the University's resources provided below. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do for yourself and for those who care about you.

- Counseling Center (217) 333-3704
- McKinley Health Center (217) 333-2700
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255
- Rosecrance Crisis Line (217) 359-4141 (available 24/7, 365 days a year)

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Community of Care

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regard to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Connie Frank CARE Center (formerly the Student Assistance Center) in the Office of the Dean of Students. You may do so by calling 217-333-0050 or by submitting an online referral. Based on your report, staff in the Student Assistance Center will reach out to offer support and assistance.

Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the Connie Frank CARE Center (formerly the Student Assistance Center) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Illinois is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities, do not experience barriers to learning and participating fully in class. If you have a letter of accommodation from DRES and have not already given it to me, please do so as soon as possible to ensure your accommodation needs are met.

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-1970, email: disability@illinois.edu, or go to the DRES website (<https://dres.illinois.edu/>).

Disruptive Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution (<https://conflictresolution.illinois.edu>; conflictresolution@illinois.edu; 217-333-3680) for disciplinary action.

Emergency Response Recommendations

Emergency response recommendations and campus building floor plans can be found at the following website: <https://police.illinois.edu/em/run-hide-fight/>. I encourage you to review this website within the first 10 days of class.

Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to reasonably accommodate its students' religious beliefs, observances, and practices that conflict with a student's class attendance or participation in a scheduled examination or work requirement, consistent with state and federal law. Students should make requests for accommodation in advance of the conflict to allow time for both consideration of the request and alternate procedures to be prepared. Requests should be directed to the instructor. The Office of the Dean of Students provides an optional resource on its website (<https://odos.illinois.edu/resources/students/religious-observances>) to assist students in making requests.

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Obligation

The University of Illinois is committed to combating sex-based misconduct. Faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sex-based misconduct to the University's Title IX Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options.

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential. Other information about resources and reporting is available here: wecare.illinois.edu.