Summer 2015 Young Scholars Discovery Syllabus and Daily Curriculum
“Designing Your Own Business”

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This multi-disciplinary course aims to teach students the basics of the business, strategy, and leadership skills needed to launch and manage new ventures. Topics include learning the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, how to assess the feasibility of a new venture, as well as how to apply best practices for planning, launching, and managing new companies. Students will discuss a wide range of issues of importance and concern to entrepreneurs, as well as learn to recognize opportunities, assess the skills and talents of successful entrepreneurs, and learn models and “rules of thumb” to help them navigate uncertainty. The course relies heavily on the I-Corps program, utilizing the lean launch pad and business model canvas with a host of entrepreneurial games and activities to appeal to students and carry concepts.

Teams of students will have the opportunity to garner the hands-on experience of brainstorming and vetting ideas, which they will then transform into a business proposition. Once an idea is selected, the teams will research the respective markets, customers and finances, creating an executive summary and ultimately an investor presentation. The last day of class is set a buzz by the team presentations and following class party, to which parents are invited.

**COURSE GOALS**

- To understand what it means to be an entrepreneur and a leader
- To explore the characteristics and motivations that typically drive entrepreneurs
- To be able to identify and evaluate opportunities for new ventures using lean Launchpad methodologies and the business model canvas
- To know how to gather the required resources to convert opportunities into new ventures
- To create effective executive summaries and make team presentations to investors

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Throughout the course, students will be exposed to proprietary information from other students, guest lecturers and faculty. All such information is to be treated as confidential. By enrolling and taking part in this course, students agree to not disclose this information to any third parties without specific written permission from students, guest lecturers or faculty, as applicable. Students further agree not to utilize any such proprietary information for their own personal commercial advantage or for the commercial advantage of any third party. Students agree that any advice provided by the instructor and any affiliated parties is advisory and not fact, and will not serve as the basis of any legal suit. Any breach of this policy may subject a student to academic integrity proceedings as described in the University of Maryland policies and procedures, and to any remedies that may be available by law. Receipt of this syllabus and registration in this course is evidence that you understand these statements and will abide by them.

**INSTRUCTOR**

Akbar Dawood

**Experience**

Akbar provides advisory, analytical and evaluative support for the TAP venture incubator, the University of Maryland Technology Start-Up Boot Camp, the University of Maryland Business Plan Competition, the Impact Pre-Seed Fund and faculty and students launching technology-based ventures. Akbar is directly involved in the day-to-day management, decision making and fundraising activities of VentureAccelerator portfolio companies, as well as the sourcing and vetting of portfolio companies. In addition, Akbar is Director of the Chesapeake Bay Seed Capital Fund and is active with regional nonprofits.
Before joining Mtech, Akbar held investment banking and trading roles. Most recently, at Credit Suisse, Akbar was part of the Credit Derivatives Portfolio Management desk, where he helped hedge the firm’s $55 billion leveraged loan portfolio in North America. Akbar conducted fundamental credit research and evaluated industry trends and market conditions to create credit opinions and produce relative value recommendations for portfolio positions in the bank loan secondary markets and CDS markets.

Prior to joining Credit Suisse, Akbar was a Senior Investment Banking Analyst at Banc of America Securities in the Leverage Finance group, where he executed leveraged acquisitions, debt recapitalizations, stockholder dividends, and strategic re-pricings, as well as an IPO.

**Education**

Akbar graduated from Duke University with a B.S. in Economics and Markets & Management, where he was also International Association and International Council Treasurer and a member of the Duke Investment Club, a student-run shareholder club.

**Contact Information**

- adawood@umd.edu
- 301.314.9770
- Available by appointment

**Teacher’s Assistant**

Sylviane Alexion

sylviane.alexion@gmail.com

**Location**

Classes are held in the Tawes Building (TWS) building Room 0207.

**Meeting Time**

Mondays through Fridays 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

**Course Materials**

The required text is “Entrepreneurship: Owning Your Future” by Steve Mariotti (11th Ed.)


**Grading**

Young Scholars Discovery courses are graded on a completion basis, and the following components will contribute to your completion of the course:

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribution and Discussion of Readings (Individual)</td>
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<td>Homework (Individual)</td>
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<td>Assignments</td>
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<td>Opportunity Assessment (Individual)</td>
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<td>Idea Paper (Team)</td>
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<td>Executive Summary (Team)</td>
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<td>Team Project</td>
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<td>Investor Presentation (Team)</td>
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<td>Peer Evaluation (Individual)</td>
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• **Contribution and Discussion of Readings** – Based on (a) attendance, defined as being in the classroom and prepared on-time, and (b) contribution and discussion, defined as taking an active role in the discussions.

• **Opportunity Assessment** – Based on the readings and classroom discussion, discuss (1) where you see the greatest opportunities for entrepreneurial success now and in the next few years and (2) share your own personal interests and ambitions as related to specific entrepreneurial ideas and markets. One-Page paper.

• **Idea Paper** – As a team, describe an idea that a company may be built around. Two-Page paper.

• **Executive Summary** - As a team, develop the framework for a business plan for your venture which describes the product/service and its features, promotion and advertising details, pricing model, and the placement/distribution and sales plan.

• **Investor Presentation** – Evaluated based on the comprehensiveness of the presentation and evidence of preparation.

• **Peer Evaluation** – Evaluated as described on the peer evaluation worksheet distributed in class.

Assignments submitted after the due dates incur a 10% per day penalty.

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**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Attendance is required, as topics increase in complexity and build upon one another as the course progresses. You are expected to come to class prepared, and play an active role in the discussions that take place during class periods.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLE**

The course will be lecture-based and highly interactive. Class participation is required. The first half of each class will incorporate class discussions on academic concepts with practical examples and applications. The second half will make use of movies, videos, case studies and team exercises as learning tools. Students will be challenged to grasp concepts and relate them to other concepts presented.

**GUIDELINES FOR ALL COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

The following guidelines apply to all assignments without exception.

- Print and bring all assignments in hardcopy to class at the start of class on the due date.
- If you will not be in class on the due date, your paper must still arrive by the time and date it is due in hardcopy or by email to the instructor. You are certainly encouraged to turn in papers before the deadline.
- Assignments must be sent in a single Word document file (with the only exceptions being PowerPoint for the Investor Presentation). If you do not have these applications, they are available in University computer labs to which you have access.
- All assignments must be typed in 12 pt font, Times New Roman, and double-spaced with 1” margins.
- Do not exceed the page limit requirement as stated in each assignment.
- You should put your name and your teammates’ names (for team assignments) on the first page of each assignment in alphabetical order by last name.
- If a team member did not contribute, do not include their name on the assignment as they will not receive any credit for that assignment.
- Assignments not meeting all of these guidelines will not be accepted.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Classes missed due to inclement weather as defined by the University may be offered at a later date determined by the instructor. Check http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/ for University status (Open, Delayed, Closed).
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<td>9:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Course Overview Introductions 1.1 - 1.2 Opening Exercise 1.1 - 1.2 Lecture</td>
<td>2.1 Opening Exercise 2.1 Lecture</td>
<td>TEAMs Guided Team Working Session</td>
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<td>10:00 - 11:00</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial Game Time!</td>
<td>2.2 Opening Exercise 2.2 Lecture Experiential Exercise p.28</td>
<td>3.1 - 3.2 Opening Exercise 3.1 - 3.2 Lecture</td>
<td>4.1 - 4.2 Opening Exercise 4.1 - 4.2 Lecture Experiential Exercise p.88</td>
<td>6.1 - 6.2 Opening Exercise 6.1 - 6.2 Lecture Experiential Exercise p.156</td>
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<td>11:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>MOVIE</td>
<td>Harvard Business School Case Study #1</td>
<td>TEAMs Idea Brainstorming</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial Game Time!</td>
<td>Harvard Business School Case Study #2</td>
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MOVIE