

**ENGN 1930G – Fall 2008**  
**Entrepreneurship I**  
**E.M. Suuberg and S. F. Petteruti**

Multidisciplinary teams of Engineering, COE Technology Management students and students from other technical and non-technical disciplines form simulated startup companies to work on mentor-defined opportunities, from product or process conception to commercialization. Intellectual property, marketing (including marketing survey and analysis, market segmentation, identification of target markets, competitor analysis), definition of a product requirements document, human factors (including team building and personnel evaluation), safety and environmental concerns, and legal concerns are emphasized in this first semester of a two-semester sequence. The course is intended to show what it takes to assemble teams with core competencies in different areas into a successfully functioning business organization.

It is expected that different team members will bring different skill sets to the team. This is why there are no formal prerequisites for the course. There will be a series of integrative lectures, with which the intent is to bring all members of a team up to a certain level of understanding on key concepts. This is not, however, a “lecture” course- it is a course in which there is a premium placed on learning by doing. The primary requirements are enthusiasm and a willingness to work in a ‘real-world’ environment. Enrollment in the course is limited and students must fill out a formal application. Selection of students to participate in the course is based on academic credentials, outside experience, and how well your background fits a particular project. Preference will be given to seniors and juniors, and those who will participate in the course for two semesters.

**Instructors:**

*Eric Suuberg, B&H 253, ext. 3-1420, Eric\_Suuberg@Brown.Edu*

Professor Suuberg is the faculty member in charge of the course. He is responsible for all aspects of course management and grading. He will offer many of the lectures, and coordinate the course. All registration questions should be directed to him.

*Steven F. Petteruti , Steven\_Petteruti@brown.edu*

Mr. Petteruti serves in a role as a co-instructor and internal business consultant. A Brown alumnus with many years of experience of being in charge of technology development for a Rhode Island company, he will meet with all teams on a regularly scheduled basis to discuss their progress and offer advice on development of the business

**Course Secretary:**

Ms. Sandra Van Wagoner, B&H 2 North, ext. 3-1415

**Teaching Assistants:**

To be determined

**Office Hours:**

Professor Suuberg, Monday 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Mr. Petteruti- to be determined (see below).

**Participating Mentors:**

*Zebra Technologies Corporation*  
30 Plan Way, Warwick, Rhode Island

*Hasbro*

Pawtucket, Rhode Island

*Professor Joseph Calo*

Division of Engineering, Brown University

**Introduction to Mentors:**

These initial introductory meetings will be held at the mentor's location during the first few weeks of the course. These mentor meetings have to be scheduled at the convenience of the mentors, and attendance is mandatory for all team members. We ask that you be flexible in your planning to accommodate these visits, which normally take place at the mentor's facility.

**Grading Policy:**

There will no formal exams in this course. Your grade will be based on willingness to work aggressively on the defined project, participation in meetings, written and oral reports that will be required, and evaluations from the mentors and team members. There will be a few general homework assignments, but most will be geared to your particular project.

**Required Textbook:**

*Entrepreneurship* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition) by Robert D. Hisrich, Michael P. Peters, and Dean A. Shepherd. McGraw-Hill, 2008. ISBN 978-0-07-321056-8

**Class Times:**

M-W-F, 2:00-2:50 p.m, Room 141, Depending on the scheduling of outside speakers, it may be necessary to adjust the day and time of certain lectures throughout the semester.

**Outside Class Hours:**

*Meeting with your business advisor (Mr. Steven Petteruti).* Each team will be required to set up one hour, during normal business hours but outside of class time, to meet with Mr. Petteruti. These meetings will take place in BH 120 or the new Entrepreneurship facility in Prince Laboratory, when that is completed.

*Team Meetings-* Each team will be required to set up an additional block of time of at least two hours, when the team can meet by itself without faculty or mentors. Again, BH 120 or the new Entrepreneurship facility in Prince Laboratory will be available for use. These meetings will be mandatory for all members.

Room 120 in Barus and Holley has been reserved for your use. It is equipped with computers, internet service, copy machine, fax machine, and a telephone. Please keep this room clean and locked at all times. To reserve the room for private group meetings, arrangements will need to be worked out between teams. This room and its facilities should not be made available to those

outside of ENGN 1930G. If any of the equipment is damaged, lost, or stolen, please inform Professor Suuberg or Ms. Van Wagoner ASAP. Significant resources were dedicated to this room to make it a nice workspace for you and your EN 1930G colleagues. PLEASE respect it.

Sometime in September, the new Entrepreneurship facility on the balcony of Prince Laboratory will become available, and we will move operations to that location.

### **Class Topics:**

These topics are listed below in no particular order. As the semester proceeds, more specific dates and readings will be handed out.

The Entrepreneurial Process  
Effective Team Building and Leadership  
Marketing  
Strategic Business Planning – The Business Plan  
Accounting & Management Information  
Intellectual Property and Patenting  
Liability Issues  
Sales and Distribution Channels

### **Is the business that students create “real”?**

The primary goal of the course is to provide a realistic experience, as opposed to creating an actual for-profit venture. Still, throughout the course we will operate as though there is an expectation that the business will have to become real and raise money to do so (more emphasis on funding in second semester). In every year that the course has been offered, some of the student team-created businesses have been selected as finalists, or won, business plan competitions at Brown and statewide in Rhode Island, and even placed very high in international competitions. There is truly the chance to create a genuine business opportunity, and to raise funds to take it to the next level.

A question often arises as to who “owns” any business that might be created. If the seed idea comes from Brown-based research, the University owns the intellectual property (generally required by federal law for any idea coming from government funded research). It is possible that a student team (or an organization derived from it) could license the core technology in order to proceed with it beyond the course. In some cases, additional funds have been raised to continue research on the idea at Brown, and some students have remained to conduct such work. If the seed idea comes from a mentor company outside of Brown, it is received with the understanding that the mentor company has rights to any developments or intellectual property based upon that seed idea. It has been the case that mentor organizations have sometimes offered the intellectual property to the students and/or University upon completion of the course, but there should be no expectation that this will be the case generally. In some instances, companies have also considered the possibility of student-created organizations becoming suppliers of product to the parent (mentor) company.

### **General Policies**

We will ask that teams control their contacts with mentors in a manner that will be described more fully in class. Basically, it needs to be remembered that mentors are busy running

real businesses or research labs, and can only give so much time to the project that you are working on. They are doing so as a favor to Brown and the course, and we want it to not become burdensome for them.

We require all teams to keep a hard-copy notebook, in the manner of a laboratory notebook. All team discussions must be recorded in the notebook, which should have non-removable pages that will be dated for each entry. This is essential, should you develop any patentable ideas (and will serve as proof of when and in what circumstances the ideas came to light). It is a good idea to designate a team member to be the recording secretary for any meeting (which does not preclude others from also taking notes).

We ask that all team members act professionally and courteously when dealing with any companies or organizations outside of Brown. This obviously applies to mentor organizations, but also to others who might be regarded as suppliers or competitors for the startup. Be truthful when contacting non-mentor companies for information; do not mislead them by representing that you are a customer with significant product purchase interests. Also, when making contact with any outside organizations do not represent that you have a relationship to a particular mentor company, even if you do. Mentor companies are sensitive to their image, and would not wish inaccurate information about their intentions or policies to come from those not authorized to speak for the company.

When visiting a mentor company, please dress in appropriate business or business casual attire.

We do not encourage anyone in the course to assume the responsibility of signing a non-disclosure agreement (NDA), in which you promise to keep certain information confidential. If asked to sign such an agreement, please inform Professor Suuberg.

All members of the team need to be registered for the class, and nobody outside of the class has any standing in the team or company. We do not take on other “student consultants” or maintain any relationship with those who have left the class; if a member of a team leaves ENGN 1930G (or ENGN 1930H next semester), it is treated just like any situation of an employee leaving a company with full severing of the relationship, unless explicit arrangements are made with the course faculty. New employees may, however, be added in between semesters, in a process that will be discussed further in class.

Each team will have a small budget to purchase limited amounts of material to prepare prototypes. If you would like to make purchases of this nature, please discuss this with Professor Suuberg. We do not ask mentor companies to provide any equipment or supplies, though they might sometimes volunteer to do so. If they do provide you with equipment, prototypes or samples, please treat them carefully, assuming that they will need to be returned to the company, unless you are explicitly told otherwise.