

MASTER IN SUSTAINABILITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

Sustainable Lifestyles Venture T1

COURSE CODE – 30 hours core Course

Field: Entrepreneurship & Innovation

ECTS Credits: 4

Semester(s): Fall

Campus: Berlin

Audience: Master

Language: English

Course Mandatory for Master in Sustainability Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Prerequisite: none

Professors & Tutors: *Prof. Dr. Robert Charles Sheldon*

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I. INTRODUCTION

A unique feature of the programme is the Sustainable Lifestyles Venture project, running from term 1 to term 3. As an alternative format and experience to learning based on lectures and seminars, the SLV offers a one-year “journey”. Beginning with Design Thinking in term 1, students will thoroughly explore the different production and consumption aspects of an industry that is relevant to the environmental or social problem they wish to address. This observational work culminates in the ethnographic report, submitted at the end of T1.

In T2, using the data obtained from the primary research conducted in Berlin, students will use the Design Thinking method to identify a compelling commercial problem and solution. They will then spend the rest of the term testing the idea, across its business model, using the Customer Development method. This method involves rapid prototyping, persuasive interviewing, mock sales and iteration. Experienced mentors will also coach students as they push their ideas toward the market. By the end of T2 students will have a market-tested idea that is ready for refinement and elaboration in T3.

In T3, students will create business plans targeted at specific investor groups, refine their financial projections, and work on pitching their ideas.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES of the course

This course is designed for ESCP Business School students who will work as highly creative entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs in internationalized business environments, such European venture funds, start-ups, multinational corporations, networks of organizations, NGOs and non-profits. This course helps students to open their minds and to identify opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation in very different and even unexpected situations and contexts. The course allows taking different perspectives on business issues, developing visions and missions for the students’ entrepreneurship and innovation projects. Students have to learn to develop, test, and iterate solutions to the sustainability issues they identified in the first part of the SLV.

The objectives of the course are:

- to improve the students' ability to take different perspectives on business issues,
- to improve the students' understanding of how business solutions can be developed in practice,
- to make students explore different sources of entrepreneurial resources and innovative ideas,
- to provide students with skills to create, test, and iterate business solutions.

III. Expected Learning

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand that very different, and often unexpected, opportunities exist to identify and shape entrepreneurial and innovative ideas, and how to make use of these opportunities,
- Assess the synergies and tensions of ideas, visions, and missions formulated by the members of mixed working groups,
- Create business solutions to societal problems based on the principles of, for example, Design Thinking.

Knowledge and understandings:

You will be able to create different business solutions based on the entrepreneurial and innovation opportunities discovered in the first part of the SLV. This ability of creating solutions, based, for example, on rapid prototyping, is crucial for any kind of innovative entrepreneur or intrapreneur. It is of particular relevance to develop practical solutions to unexpected problems at the intersections of business and sustainability, which often require unusual solutions beyond the mainstream of existing markets.

Skills – T1

Subject specific: At the end of the course the student will be capable of:

- Engaging in multiple types of ethnographic observation
- Engaging in analysis of ethnographic data
- Conducting discovery interviews

Cognitive and intellectual: At the end of the course (T1) the student will be capable of:

- Understanding the nature and importance of ethnography
- Writing an ethnographic report

Transferable: At the end of the course the student will be capable of:

- Engaging in ethnography on their own or in an organization, and within the sustainability context.

Values and attitudes

At the end of the course the student will be able:

- To understand the importance of ethnography as an entrepreneurial method.

IV. LEARNING OUTCOMES of the programme

This course participates in the acquisition/application/reinforcement of the programme following learning goals (LG) and learning objectives (LO):

Knowledge	
LG: Students will have team-building and leadership skills	LO: To understand entrepreneurship as an approach to facilitate social change
	LO: To evaluate the business opportunities hidden in issues

	of unsustainability
Skills	
LG: Graduates will exhibit well-developed critical and creative thinking	LO: To analyse a complex problem which could be viewed from multiple perspectives
	LO: To apply analytical techniques, models and frameworks in specific contexts

V. CONTENT

The SLV in term 1 revolves around ethnography:

Using a design thinking-related methodology, students will identify prospective users and engage in ethnographic observation.

To prepare for September 19 Sessions please read the following and be ready to respond to the discussion questions, and to pose your own questions: (1) T1 Guide Introduction; (2) T1 Guide: Teaching Note on Sustainability Entrepreneurship (Sheldon and Lüdeke-Freund), (3) A Framework for Shaping Sustainable Lifestyles (UNEP).

Session 1 (Sep 19): Introduction to the SLV followed by an introduction to Sustainability Entrepreneurship (Sheldon).

Session 2 (Sep 19): Intro to UNEP and the Sustainable Lifestyles.

Session 3 (Sep 19): Forms of sustainability entrepreneurship (Sheldon)

Session 4 (Sep 19): Workshop on the Sustainability Compass (UNEP).

To prepare for September 20 Sessions please read the following very closely so that you're ready to go when we get to class: (1) T1 Guide: The Teaching Notes on SLV Group Formation

Session 5 (Sep 20): SLV team formation exercise.

Session 6 (Sep 20): Brainstorm and selection of industry niche.

4PM Sep 20: Talk by Alexander Piutti, founder of SPRK Global and co-creator of Candy Crush.

5:30 PM Sep 20: Reception with Alexander and the UNEP team at 6 PM in the Forum.

To prepare for September 21 and 22 Sessions please read the following and be ready to respond to the discussion questions, and to pose your own questions: (1) The Stanford Design School Bootcamp Bootleg, Introduction and Empathy; 2) The Empathy Field Guide; (3) T1 Guide: The Teaching Note on Ethnography; (4) familiarize yourself with Miro.

Session 7 (Sep 21): Introduction to entrepreneurship, design thinking and ethnography.

Session 8 (Sep 21): Ethnographic fieldwork in Berlin.

Session 9 (Sep 22): Problem definition and ideation using Miro.

Session 10 (Sep 22): Prototyping and market testing.

Session 11 (SEP 22): Design Thinking presentations.

Take-home exam due on October 7 (worth 20% of final grade).

Session 12 (Oct 10): Team coaching sessions (Zoom) with Sheldon to discuss progress and plans for ethnographic work.

Deliverable due Oct. 30: Submit your mid-term peer evaluation to Blackboard.

Session 13 (Oct 31): Progress and problem reports - group share (Zoom)

Session 14 (Nov 14): Team coaching sessions (Zoom).

Session 15 (Dec 12): Present the key findings from your ethnographic report to the class (Zoom).

Deliverable due Dec 12: Submit your ethnographic report to Blackboard.

Deliverable due Dec 15: Submit your final peer review to Blackboard.

VI. TEACHING METHODS

Delivery modes:

100% face to face 100% face to face/teaching materials on Blackboard Blended 100% online

Teaching Methods:

Lectures Case studies Business Games Group Work Projects Tutorials

Skills acquisition:

Design thinking: Students will master the conception phase of design thinking.

Group work: Students will engage in group work and find ways to observe and understand their prospective users. Working openly in groups, learning from others and through the interaction with others are crucial skills. Creativity, communication, conflict solution, and being able to identify joint visions and missions are crucial skills that will be trained.

VII. ASSESSMENT METHODS AND FEEDBACK

Assessment component	Assessment type	Weighting	Minimum qualifying mark	Pass/Fail?
1	Take-home Exam (Individual)	20%	10	NO
2	Ethnography presentation (Group)	15%	10	NO
3	Ethnographic report (Group)	45%	10	NO
4	Participation (Individual)	20%	n/a	NO

Assessment criteria

Take-Home Exam: This short-answer exam will cover key concepts, based on the readings and lectures given by Sheldon and the UNEP team during the period September 19-22.

Ethnography presentation: Evaluation is based on the degree to which students have met or exceeded the instructions given in the Teaching Note on Ethnography.

Ethnographic report: Evaluation is based on the volume and richness of the ethnographic data, and the degree to which it corresponds to the report guidelines.

Participation: Participation is assessed based on attendance at the scheduled sessions, including coaching sessions, and on participation in group work, which is judged based on the final, individual peer evaluations students undertake at the end of the term. The professor will use the final peer evaluations in determining each student's participation grade. There will be an initial peer review done as a group in the middle of the term, which will not be considered in the participation grade.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided through the grades and through continuous verbal feedback/coaching in class, consultation hours, and in the ethnographic report.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the course is 50% or 10 points. The weighting of the different components can be found in the table above. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment component or the module.

Students are required to attend every workshop or session related to SEIP part II. In case of repeated absence or late appearance, the professor may deduct points for non-participation from the final grade.

VIII. REQUIRED READING

Sheldon, Robert Charles (2022). Sustainable Lifestyles Venture Guide to Term 1.

Hasso Platner Institute of Design (2018). Design Thinking Bootleg. *Selected pages*.

Hasso Platner Institute of Design. Empathy Field Guide.

UNEP (2016). A Framework for Shaping Sustainable Lifestyles.

Strongly recommended:

UNEP (2021). Making Peace with Nature.

Glen, R., Suciu, C., Baughn, C. C., & Anson, R. (2015). Teaching design thinking in business schools. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 13(2), 182-192.

Additional reading on design thinking:

Boland, R. J., & F. Collopy, Eds. (2004). *Managing as designing*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Brown, T. (2008). Design Thinking. *Harvard Business Review*, June issue.

Brown, T. and Martin, L.R. (2015). Design for Action. *Harvard Business Review*, September.

Kelley, D., & Kelley, T. (2013). *Creative confidence: Unleashing the creative potential within us all*. Crown Pub.

Kelley, T. A. (2001). *The art of innovation: Lessons in creativity from IDEO, America's leading design firm* (Vol. 10). Broadway Business.

Kolko, J. (2015). Design Thinking Comes of Age. *Harvard Business Review*, September.

Liedtka, J. (2018). Why Design Thinking Works. *Harvard Business Review*, September-October.

Liedtka, J. & Ogilvie, T. *Designing for growth: A design thinking toolkit for managers*. Virginia: Batten Institute/Darden School of Business.

Lewrick, M.; Link, P. & Leifer, L. (2018): *The Design Thinking Playbook*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.