Launching Your Startup

Professors: Brendan Burns, Dave Lerner & Adam Royalty
TA: Roger Teran

Mondays 2:15pm-5:30pm Location: The Stewart Room, Union Theological Seminary

Prerequisites

- You must have a Full Team
- Interest in discovering how an idea can become a real company

Pre-Assignment

Submit a short powerpoint deck with MAX 3 Slides that communicates the following:

- The problem your startup solves and how it will solve this problem. Who experiences these problems primarily? What key benefits (value proposition) will your customers derive if they use your products or service
- The team, detailed background on each member, and why it is particularly suited to addressing this problem successfully

8/31 – Class 1: Welcome

Lecture

- Class overview and expectations
- Class and Teaching Team introductions

Workshop

- Introduction to Design: Gift Giving

Assignment

- Bring a short one-pager to the next class reflecting on your skills, interests & experiences as they relate to the product you plan on building

Reading

Founder/Market Fit by Chris Dixon
9/14 – Class 2: Founder/Product Fit

Lecture

- People, Teams & Founders
- Introductions to the NYC tech ecosystem

Workshop

- Give your 30 second pitch to the class or
- Tell the class why (and why not) is your team suited to build this product/tackle this problem
- Reflection

Assignment

- Come to next class prepared to talk about who you assume your customers are
- Solidify your team, come to office hours if you need help forming or finding a team

Reading

[An Introduction to Design Thinking](#)
9/21 – Class 3: Needfinding

Lecture

- The Elephant in the Room or “you might not need to fundraise” with Dave Lerner
- Introduction to Needfinding with Adam Royalty

Workshop

- Get out of the building!
- Reflect with the class on what you just learned during Needfinding

Assignment

- Perform at least 20 interviews of potential customers
- Synthesize what you learned and come up with a broad problem statement to address next class

Reading

Niche to win by Dave McClure

9/28 – Class 4: Unbundling Product

Lecture

- Unbundling Product

Workshop

- Brainstorm as many ways as possible to address your problem and then test

Assignment

- Come to the next class with an exhaustive list of tests against your problem statement. These tests should be quick/easy/manual.

Reading

Lean Prototyping a Practical Guide

DS by Paul Graham
10/5 – Class 5: Tools & Building

Lecture
- Low-Resolution Prototyping with Adam Royalty
- Prototyping tools for web and mobile apps with guest speaker

Workshop
- Prototyping your product in class with your team

Assignment
- Be prepared to show an early version of your prototype at next weeks class

Reading
- Early Beta
- The 10X Product Launch
- Your First Customers

10/12 – Class 6: Testing & Measuring

Lecture
- Testing, iterating & measuring with guest speaker

Workshop
- Prototyping your product in class with your team

Assignment
- No Assignment

Reading
- Read the Forward & Chapter One of Ship While You Sleep
10/19 – Class 7: Code as Cards

Lecture

- Code as Cards with Amol Sarva

Workshop

- Continue to build and iterate on your product
- If you chose to do so, start the code as cards method

Assignment

- Be prepared to demo what you’ve been building (this can be a little as wireframes) next class.

Reading

Demo by Nate Westheimer

10/26 – Class 8: Demo Day

Workshop

- Demo what you’ve been working on in front of NYC investors and Entrepreneurs

Assignment

- Come to next class prepared to give a two minute pitch for you company
- Optional: Make a fundraising deck

Reading

A Simple Approach to Pitch Decks
11/9 – Class 9: Storytelling & Fundraising

Lecture

- Storytelling with Adam Royalty
- Pitching and fundraising with Brendan Burns, Dave Lerner

Workshop

- Iterate on your story and pitch

Assignment

- Come up with a list of pressing startup law questions

Reading

[Here’s the solution to the Uber and Airbnb problems — and no one will like it](#)

11/16 – Class 10: Legal

Lecture

- Startup Law with Charles Torres From Lowenstein Sandler

Workshop

- Are you ready to incorporate? Do you have a founders agreement? If so start now.

Assignment

- Get ready for your final presentation

11/23 – Class 11: Presentations

1st half of class presents
11/30 – Class 12: Presentation II

2nd half of class presents