TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

B8565 TECHNOLOGY AND DISRUPTION: IMMERSION SEMINAR
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Course Overview

This elective half-course provides an in-depth analysis of key issues in technology over the next decade. More specifically, we will focus on how technology is a driver of disruption for many business and industries. We will explore questions such as:

- How do incumbents deal with and prevent disruption of their existing and profitable business models?
- What strategies can new entrants use to attack entrenched incumbents?
- What are the industries that are most ripe for disruption, and what form will that disruption take?

Class sessions consist of lecture and discussion of course readings, site visits to technology companies and startups in the NYC area, talks and discussions with industry analysts and leaders. Speakers will address in particular what changes they foresee, including how jobs and companies in the industry might evolve over the next few decades. The class sessions will be highly interactive and at a particular site will include panel discussions of the leaders of that organization.

Course Organization

This course is one of a series of New York City Seminars on key industries that students might consider for their careers.

The first session will take place in Uris Hall, with an introduction by the professor, and a talk to all the New York City Seminars by Michael Bloomberg, (or another eminent NY Leader) on New York City’s future as a world business center.

The next four sessions will take place at technology companies in the New York City area, for talks and discussions with leaders from those companies. Buses will take students from campus to the site. The first 15 minutes of each site visit will include a presentation worked on by six students, collaboratively prior to the site visit. The presentation will be consistent from site visit to site visit (I will develop prototype slides for broad content) but will be customized to the particular company. It will cover that company’s market position, breadth of service capabilities, and public data about the firm relevant to a core understanding of who the company is, where they play and their competitive positioning. Each site visit ends with a student-faculty debriefing to discuss what students learned.

The last session will take place in Uris Hall again, for a conclusion and review of the course. In each of the first and last sessions the class experience will include a visit from one of the
consulting industry’s leading analyst organizations for an interactive discussion on the industry and the trends that each of the consulting players will need to tackle in the next decade.

**Connection to the Core**

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<td>Strategy Formulation</td>
<td>Network Effects and Competitive Advantage</td>
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<td>Marketing</td>
<td>New products and customer acquisition</td>
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**Assignments and Grading**

Requirements for the course are: attend class and participate in class discussions (40%), group presentation to site visit host (20%), and submit an individual final paper a week after class ends (40%).

**Group Presentation**

Students will prepare (as a team) a 10-15 minute “presentation” for the host company. The presentation will be based on the team’s analysis of the organization’s competencies and capabilities, their competitive situation, and disruption threats/opportunities. (Maximum of 10 slides.)

**Final Paper**

The final paper will have students do an analysis of the future trends in technology and discuss the implications of these trends for a firm’s strategy and execution:

- Pick a firm or industry (not ones from the site visits) that is at risk of, or is the driver of disruption
- Identify potential disruption opportunities or threats in the industry
- Analyze/articulate the incumbent or (potential) entrant’s strategy (e.g., competitive advantage, competitors, and scope decisions) in dealing with the disruption threat/opportunity, and propose strategic recommendations for the firm going forward.
- Recommendations should be based on supporting data based on research conducted by the student and course materials
- The paper should be at least 5 pages (1500 words), not including figures and tables
## Course outline – Current recommendations & required readings

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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| **Session 1**                 | **Introduction**                                                        | **Disruptive Technologies: Catching the Wave**  
by Joseph L. Bower and Clayton M. Christensen  
Harvard Business Review, Jan 1995  

**The Disruption Machine**  
by Jill Lepore  
New Yorker, June 2014 | **Uris Hall** |
| **Session 2**                 | **Disrupting enterprise technologies**                                   | **Investing in the IT That Makes a Competitive Difference**  
by Andrew McAfee and Erik Brynjolfsson  
Harvard Business Review, August 2008 | **Work-Bench** |
| **Session 3**                 | **Incumbents and disruption**                                            | **Leveraging the Incumbent’s Advantage**  
by Marco Iansiti; F. Warren McFarlan; George Westerman  
MIT Sloan Management Review, July 2003 | **Bloomberg** |
| **Session 4**                 | **Organizing for disruption**                                            | **Breakthroughs and the “Long Tail” of Innovation**  
by Lee Fleming  
MIT Sloan Management Review | **Google** |
| **Session 5**                 | ** Scaling disruption**                                                  | **The Innovator’s Challenge: Understanding the Psychology of Adoption** |
Session 6

The future of disruption

Disruptive Technologies: Advances that will transform life, business, and the global economy

Uris Hall

McKinsey Global Institute, May 2013

Final paper due