



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Business Planning

2526-1-F7603Q020-F7603Q02002

Aims

The module provides the strategic, technical and financial foundations necessary to develop a successful business plan (BP). It covers the topics from business idea development, market analysis to financial assessment. In addition, it provides the foundations of effective BP presentation techniques.

The module helps to learn the purpose and structure of a business plan, conducting feasibility analysis, and evaluating industry and market conditions. Attention is given to teach students how to prepare and present a real business plan. To this purpose, the course covers financial projections, providing tools for evaluating profitability of strategic options and attracting investors.

Turning an entrepreneurial idea into a successful business requires reliable planning. A well-structured business plan guides decisions, ensures financial viability, and attracts investors. The course covers the key steps such as refining the idea, analyzing the market, developing operational and management strategies, assessing financial viability and presenting the plan effectively.

Students are invited to consult the syllabus of the entire course for details regarding learning- and skill-related objectives.

Contents

Business planning

- the what and why of a business plan;
- developing the business idea;
- feasibility assessment;
- business plan preparation;
- competitive analysis (industry and market analysis);
- recipe for a successful business (marketing plan, management plan, operations, and product development);
- financial analysis;
- business plan presentation.

Detailed program

- An important tool that helps people willing to start a new business is the business plan (BP). A BP is a document carefully explaining every aspect of a new business venture. Although some entrepreneurs simply “wing it” and start a business without the benefits of formal planning, experts recommend preparing a BP. For most new ventures, the BP is a dual-purpose document used both inside and outside the firm. Inside the firm, the plan helps the company to develop a “road map” to follow in executing its strategies and plans. Outside the firm, the BP introduces potential investors and other stakeholders to the business opportunity pursued by the firm.
- A properly conducted feasibility analysis lays the foundation for a well-reasoned and well-researched BP. The most compelling facts included in a BP are the results of a feasibility analysis of the business, including feedback from industry experts and prospective customers.
- A target market is the limited portion of a sector market that a firm goes after or tries to appeal to at a certain point in time. Most firms do not try to serve their whole markets. Instead, they focus on serving a specific market segment. Separating the analysis of a firm's industry from its target market is important, because understanding the industry helps the entrepreneur to gain a better idea of the target market.
- The market analysis focuses on three aspects: describing a firm's target market, customers, and competitors; explaining how the firm will compete in the marketplace; and forecasting potential sales and market share. The market analysis is an extremely important section of a BP for two reasons. First, it helps defining the nature of the business and the remainder of the plan. Second, it shows that the entrepreneur has a well-thought-out target market, understands its customers, and can generate sales in the face of competition.
- A company's marketing plan start by articulating a marketing strategy, positioning, and points of differentiation. Then it explains how the mentioned aspects be supported by price, promotional mix, sales process, and distribution strategy.
- The operations plan section of a BP outlines how the business will be run and how the product or service will be delivered. The operations plan generally delals with the operating model and procedures, the business location, facilities and equipment, and the operating strategy. Further topics may be included depending on the nature of the business.
- The final section of a business plan translates the described strategy into financial projections. It includes the source and use of funds statement, the necessary assumptions, and pro-forma statements for income, balance, and cash flow — key for assessing profitability, liquidity, and the overall financial position of the business.

Prerequisites

- Basic knowledge of financial accounting.
- Basic notions of mathematics.

Teaching form

- 3 CFUs of mixed theoretical and interactive lessons in the classroom (30 hours):
- 10 two-hour lectures, in person, Delivered Didactics;

- 5 two-hour lectures, in person, discussing problems, exercises, experiments, case studies, and pitch clinics, Interactive Didactics.

Attendance to lectures and interactive exercises is highly recommended.

Textbook and teaching resource

- Barringer, Bruce. Preparing Effective Business Plans: An Entrepreneurial Approach, Global Edition. Pearson Education Limited, 2015. ISBN-10: 1292059338, ISBN-13: 978-1292059334.
- Slides and notes.

Semester

II semester (March - June)

Assessment method

Groupwork (30% of the grade for the module):

- Team Business Plan – Students will work in teams to develop a BP related to a sustainability-related business idea. The output should demonstrate understanding of key concepts, with technical, economic, and environmental considerations.
- Pitch Presentation – Each team will present their BP in a structured pitch, highlighting the feasibility, innovation, and economic assessment.

Oral Examination (70% of the grade for the module):

- individual assessment, covering course topics and the BP developed in group.

The final score will be between 18/30 and 30/30 *cum laude*, based on the overall assessment considering the following criteria:

- (1) knowledge and understanding;
- (2) ability to connect different concepts;
- (3) autonomy of analysis and judgment;
- (4) ability to correctly use scientific language.

Office hours

Always, after scheduling an appointment *via* phone or e-mail.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
