UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Business Plan and Project Management

2627-2-F6303M014

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide students with the essential knowledge to effectively engage with the design, development, and management of projects within existing companies or to create new ventures.

In particular, the course intends to equip students with the theoretical and methodological tools to:

define the objectives of a Business Plan;
understand and analyze the contents of a Business Plan;
learn to develop an integrated vision of the economic, competitive, and social theories acquired;
comprehend, through business cases, the organizational complexities and dynamics of the economic environment;
develop analytical skills focused on companies and economic sectors, in order to improve business performance, create reliable forecasts, identify strategic and sustainable innovation initiatives, and/or start a new business (start-up);
harmonize resources and timelines; and
find sustainable and practical solutions to address critical issues emerging throughout a project's life cycle;
provide fundamental knowledge for developing a mature culture of effective project management, characterized by contextual, technical-methodological, and managerial competencies.
In line with the Dublin Descriptors, the specific learning objectives are as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding
Students will acquire in-depth knowledge of the contents, methods, tools, and techniques specific to Business Planning and Project Management applicable in the service industry, with particular attention to the specificities of public and private service enterprises. The course provides mastery of theoretical and conceptual tools for developing sustainable, effective, and efficient Business Plans and projects within the services sector. The theoretical component is complemented by national and international case studies, video clips, and guest testimonials to facilitate conceptual understanding through practical examples.

Applying Knowledge and Understanding
Students are required to develop practical group projects (project work), such as proposing a new service or

product. The projects involve defining the key elements of a Business Plan and designing a Project consistent with that Business Plan. The course encourages the ability to design business strategies, evaluate solutions and scenarios, and implement innovative solutions in real-world contexts.

Making Judgements
Through the analysis of complex cases, students are expected to formulate critical evaluations and propose well-reasoned solutions regarding alternative project approaches, assessing their respective pros and cons. Class discussions, faculty feedback on projects, and simulations support the development of independent judgment regarding the successful development of a Business Plan and project execution.

Communication Skills
Students must present their group projects orally to classmates and faculty, developing the ability to communicate clearly, concisely, and effectively. Active participation and debate are encouraged during interactive lessons and case discussions.

Learning Skills
The course includes self-directed activities, such as individual readings, case studies, and field project development. Students are encouraged to enhance their learning skills through feedback, multimedia teaching materials, and practical experimentation within business contexts.

Contents

The course is structured in two parts: the first in which the theme of the Business Plan is dealt with and the second in which it is the subject of Project Management, combining economic, social and legal concepts learned during the course of study.

The topics on which the course focuses are:

- What is a Business Plan?
- Who needs a Business Plan and in which cases should it be developed?
- How do companies actually use a Business Plan?
- How is a Business Plan structured and with which methodological steps to develop it?
- Definition of a project: when is an activity a project?
- The method, from the project idea to the project - Tools, techniques, resources and solutions.

Specifically, the PM part will provide:

- Context knowledge: basic project knowledge and project management
- Technical-methodological knowledge: tools and methodologies for the effective management of a project (e.g. stakeholder map, RACI matrix, Earned Value method, identification and risk management ...)
- Behavioral knowledge: elements of soft skills a project manager must possess for effective project management;
- Eco-design elements and hints on using artificial intelligence in project management.

The course is able to provide students with theoretical and practical analytical tools, in order to understand how companies operate and plan for economic, competitive and social success. Definition of what a project is and what its typical and peculiar characteristics are;

Application of tools and techniques to set up, manage, monitor and conclude a project (from the project idea to the project)

Define the correct reading key that allows you to identify the strengths, innovativeness and criticality of a project.

Detailed program

Business Plan Section

1. Definition and purpose of the Business Plan (BP)
2. Situations in which the BP is developed and used
3. Structure of the BP
4. The Innovation Driven Enterprise (Incumbents, New Entrants, Start-ups)
5. The Open Innovation approach
6. The role of AI in supporting innovation
7. Innovation and sustainability
8. Soft skills and innovation
9. Innovation classification models
10. The ambidextrous organization
11. Specialized and agile enterprise
12. Strategic and operational process for sustainable innovation
13. Operational methodology for developing a BP
14. Skills required for developing a BP
15. Criteria and indicators for evaluating a BP
16. Tools for monitoring the BP
17. Business cases and testimonials
18. Project Work

Project Management Section

1. Definition of Project and Project Management (PM)
2. Project Management processes
3. Project life cycle
4. Project success criteria
5. Project strategies, requirements, and objectives
6. Project development and evaluation
7. Project organizational structures
8. Risk management
9. Deliverable management
10. Project resource management
11. Project time, cost, and quality management
12. Health, safety, and environment
13. Administrative management and legal aspects
14. Communication management
15. Leadership / Negotiation / Problem solving / Team building / Team working
16. Agile methodologies
17. Project management maturity models: the Prado model
18. Introduction to eco-design in compliance with the European Regulation on eco-design
19. Project Work

The program is developed in alignment with the content required to achieve the PM BASE ISIPM qualification (Italian Institute of Project Management). This qualification is accessible on a voluntary basis thanks to the agreement between MAGES and ISIPM.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of business administration concepts.

Teaching methods

The Course consists of 48 hours, of which approximately 70% with teaching outcomes (lectures with slides, audio and video) and 30% with interactive teaching (group projects, discussion of case studies, exercises, guest speakers).
In particular, and for the first time, the Project Management module includes a Business Game specifically dedicated to project management.
For the Project Management component, the Project Work will consist of a brief presentation providing a critical reflection on the experience gained during the Business Game. Specifically, students will develop a structured collection of “lessons learned,” to be presented by the same teams that participated in the Business Game.
Consequently, participation in the Business Game is an essential and mandatory requirement for the successful completion of the Project Work.
For this first edition, the Business Game will be conducted in Italian.

Assessment methods

Attending students: the exam includes both the possibility of two partial tests at the end of each module, and a single test after the end of the entire course on both modules. Both types of exams will be written and composed of a part with multiple choice questions and a part with open questions. Classroom activities during the part of the Business Plan and Project Management with a weight of 40% on the final evaluation will also contribute to the final evaluation.

Not attending: the exam includes a single test consisting of a part with multiple choice questions and a part with open questions concerning both the part of the Business Plan and Project Management.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Materiale didattico pubblicato sulla piattaforma eLearning Unimib.

Per la parte BP:

“DISCIPLINED ENTREPRENEURSHIP – 24 steps to a successful start-up”, Bill Aulet (M. Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship), Wiley

Per la parte di PM:

«GUIDA ALLE CONOSCENZE DI GESTIONE PROGETTI», a cura di Enrico Mastrofini, FRANCO ANGELI (2020)

«IDEA JOURNEY MAP», Beltrami Giorgio, FRANCO ANGELI (2018)

Semester

First Semester

Teaching language

Italian

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES