New York University  
Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute  
Syllabus JOUR-GA 1240  
MEDIA STARTUPS & NEWS INNOVATION  
Fall 2019  
Professor: Singleton, Malik  
Wednesdays, 7 -10 pm EST via Zoom

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Phone: 347-385-4615  
Office hours: Wednesdays 5 - 7 pm EST, or by appointment  
Communication Policy: Send questions via email or Slack. Allow 24 hr response

Course Description  
This is a process course. We'll examine the business of journalism and walk through the steps of creating a business plan. For one of your final projects, you'll also boil your ideas down into a compelling 11-slide pitch deck and prepare to answer tough questions from a panel of entrepreneurs and investors at the end of the semester. While you may not actually launch your business, knowing how modern media companies survive and thrive in a turbulent landscape will make you a richer candidate for future opportunities.

Learning Objectives  
In this course, students will:

● evaluate the business of journalism and news media
● assess how media companies make money
● compare and complete key parts of a business plan
● articulate value propositions and define business models
● master the art of pitching, being both efficient and effective
● conduct research and test models
● develop processes from idea generation to financial projections

Course Structure  
This is a master’s seminar that will use the flipped classroom model. This means that you should complete the week’s readings and assignments before joining the live class session in Zoom. Class sessions will begin with a short lecture or presentation followed by discussion.

Each student is expected to engage with the course materials and with one another. There is a heavy reading load. Your job is to read/view/listen to the assigned material, prepare for tests and quizzes, and produce a range of writing and research assignments. You are also expected to
participate in class discussion through Slack where you, your fellow students, and faculty can share information and ideas, plus publish comments. Unlike many courses at the Arthur L. Carter Institute, this is not a reporting and writing course, however, reporting and writing will be addressed.

**Readings**
Assigned materials are outlined in the [Media Startups ebook](#). Each chapter corresponds to a week in the semester and contains lesson and assignment pages. All lessons are contained within this book, which consists of readings, videos, and images. Some weeks you'll take a quiz. Discussions occur in Slack. Your story and/or research paper assignments will be written and edited in Google Docs and published on the group's site, called [The Click](#).

**Course Requirements**

**Attendance** - We meet over Zoom 13 times during the semester plus there is both a midterm and final assignment. It is said, "showing up is 80 percent of life," so you are expected to attend all class meetings over Zoom. If you are ill or have another valid reason why you must miss class (i.e. religious holiday, death in the family, massive storm, power outage) then you must also inform your professor well before class.

**Participation** - Students are expected to engage in group discussions and contribute ideas to the overall discourse. Comments should be on topic and reflect the assigned reading materials. Comments directed at others should be constructive, respectful, meaningful, and professional.

**Attention** - Studies show that our attention span has been shrinking with the plethora of devices at our disposal. Nevertheless, class time is meant for focus. Students should avoid multitasking with phone, email, text, social media, etc..

**Grading & Assignments**
- Weekly Exercises: 20%
- Business Plan: 20%
- Pitch Deck: 20%
- Personal Pitch: 10%
- 1st Article: 20%
- 2nd Article: 10%
- Professional: 10%

**Schedule**
*Find the reading and assignments in the [Media Startups ebook](#).*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Ebook Chapter</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Guest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>1: Kickoff</td>
<td>❑ Brainstorm three lists: skills, interests and ideas</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>❑ Post intro video in Slack</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>2: Value Proposition</td>
<td>❑ Choose two ideas               ❑ Explain your choices ❑ Discussion in Slack</td>
<td>Trevor Owens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/18</td>
<td>3: Mission Statement</td>
<td>❑ Do Mission Statement ❑ Record an elevator pitch ❑ Discussion in Slack</td>
<td>Sarah Downey</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>4: Audience</td>
<td>❑ Do Market Research section ❑ Do Target Customers section ❑ Discussion in Slack</td>
<td>Gabe Zichermann</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/2</td>
<td>5: Competitors</td>
<td>❑ Identify 3-5 competitors and complete &quot;Competitive Analysis Worksheet&quot; in business plan template ❑ Analyze findings and explain next steps ❑ Discussion in Slack</td>
<td>Phil Beauregard</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>6: Product Design</td>
<td>❑ Answer company description questions ❑ Do company distinction worksheet ❑ Discussion in Slack</td>
<td>David Cancel</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
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| 10/16  | 7: Branding and Distinction   | - Draft the first half of your pitch deck  
|        |                               | - Discussion in Slack                                                 | Susan Lindner TBC                        |
| 10/23  | 8: Funding Models             | - Identify your funding model  
|        |                               | - Describe why it fits                                                 | Eric Paley TBC, Lee Hower TBC           |
| 10/30  | 9: Startup Costs              | - Submit first article  
|        |                               | - Answer startup cost questions  
|        |                               | - List potential expenses                                             | Joel Brodie TBC                         |
| 11/6   | 10: Marketing                 | - Do the "Positioning / Niche" section  
|        |                               | - Do the "How You Will Market" section  
|        |                               | - Describe your marketing strategy  
|        |                               | - Explain audience actions                                             | Marco Greenberg                         |
| 11/13  | 11: Pivots and Failures       | - Do the Executive Summary  
|        |                               | - Discussion in Slack                                                 | TBD                                      |
| 11/20  | 12: Final Business Plan       | - Finalize your business plan  
<p>|        |                               | - Discussion in Slack                                                 | Josh Roenitz                             |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td><strong>Fall Break</strong></td>
<td>Enjoy your break!</td>
<td><strong>NO LIVE SESSION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>13: Final Pitch Deck</td>
<td>- Finalize your pitch deck and prepare for presentation</td>
<td>Josh Roenitz, Lee Hower TBC</td>
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| 12/11  | 14: Final Elevator Pitch | - Submit second article  
- Prepare your final elevator pitch | **N/A**                    |
| 12/18  | Finals                 | **N/A**                                                                 | **NO LIVE SESSION**        |

**Accommodations**
Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with New York University’s Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

**Diversity & Inclusion**
The Institute is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Institute embraces a notion of intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions.