



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

MGMT 4371-600 The Business Plan

Fall 2025 CRN:10814

Department of Management and Marketing, College of Business

Course Syllabus

Class Meeting Time and Place:

Online

Instructor:

Dr. Robert Thompson

Tel: 512.677.2503

E-Mail: robert.thompson@tamusa.edu

Student emails will receive a reply within two business days.

Course Website:

<https://tamusa.blackboard.com/>

Office Hours:

By appointment only.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide students with an opportunity to apply business knowledge to develop a start-up business plan

COURSE DESIGN

In this course, students should develop the ability to research, analyze and develop a complete business plan for a new business opportunity. Key topics include: industry and customer analysis, competitive strategy, financial and cash forecasting, raising capital from investors and developing and presenting a business plan in both written and oral formats. A strong emphasis is placed on written and oral presentation of ideas and conclusions, in both individual and team project work. The ability (a) to work effectively in teams, (b) to create and deliver concise and compelling presentations, and (c) to conduct rigorous analysis of new business opportunities are the cornerstone to success in the entrepreneurial world, and therefore developing these skills is a major focus of this course. For each credit of a class, you should expect to spend one hour in class and an average of two hours preparing outside of class each week. Therefore, since this is a three-credit class, you should plan to devote an average of nine hours a week to this class

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Master basic knowledge, vocabulary, facts, and key concepts about entrepreneurship.

2. Gain experiential knowledge in which you: test a product on a target market, develop a market analysis and marketing plan, perform an industry analysis, create financial projections, and package these into a persuasive and credible business plan.
3. Hone writing skills by iteration and feedback on components of your business plan.
4. Practice giving helpful but honest feedback to others regarding their business idea..
5. Develop team development skills to see if a team can actually withstand the pressures of a startup.

COURSE MATERIALS

REQUIRED TEXT

HBS Coursepack as noted on Blackboard

- **Blackboard:** Connect to <http://tamusa.blackboard.com>. You will have lecture notes, solutions to problems, multimedia materials and other supplementary materials in Blackboard. All communication will be through email or text messages. Blackboard messaging will not be monitored.
- **Time:** You are expected to spend 4-8 hours per week for the course. Based on the background, some student may require more time. Time spent may be longer when assignment/exams are due.

Other Recommended / Reading Materials: Additional reading materials are available on the course website as recommended by the instructor.

Course Requirements every student must fulfill in order to succeed in course:

1. Students should check the Course Calendar, Announcements, and Messages (e-mail) systems in Blackboard on a regular basis.
2. Students should keep current with all course assignments, quizzes, and examinations.
3. Students should ask questions and communicate with the instructor via email.

Discussion Questions/Assignments

Here are the expected requirements for online grading. Keep in mind that a class week for this section begins on a Monday at 12:00 am and ends on a Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Rubric for discussion questions is posted on Blackboard. Other instructions are provided with the discussion question.

Business Plan Project

The cornerstone of this course is a project to develop a comprehensive written business plan and oral presentation of the plan to investors.

Course Project Papers

During this course you will be writing segments of your business plan as outlined in the course schedule.

Discussion Questions

During this course there are discussion questions that will allow you to interact with other members of this class. Initial responses are due on Thursday EOD and responses to others on Sunday EOD. See rubric on Blackboard.

Grading Summary

Discussion Questions (14 @ 15pts each)	210 pts
Course Project Papers (9@ 20)	180 pts
Final Business Plan (1 @ 200)	200 pts
PPT Presentation (1@ 150 pts)	150 pts

Total **740 pts**

The final letter grades will be assigned as follows: Above 90% ⇒ A; 80 – 89% ⇒ B; 70 – 79% ⇒ C; 60 – 69% ⇒ D; Below 60% ⇒ F.

Note: Late Assignments are not accepted.

Class Schedule (Subject to Change)

Date	Subject	Activities
W1: 8/25	Introduction The Business Plan	DQ1
W2: 9/1	Generating Ideas	DQ2: Business Plan Idea Paper
W3: 9/8	Is Your Ideas Possible ?	DQ3; Rationale and Feasibility Paper
W4: 9/15	Who Is Your Customer?	DQ4
W5: 9/22	Market Opportunity	DQ5: Market Analysis & Research Paper
W6: 9/29	Understanding the Industry	DQ6: Industry Analysis Paper & Competition

W7: 10/6	Understanding Competition	DQ7
W8: 10/13	Marketing	DQ8: Marketing Plan Paper
W9: 10/20	Financial Systems	DQ9: Financial Plan Paper
W10: 10/27	How Will Your Business Operate?	DQ10: Operations Plan Paper
W11: 11/3	Managing Projects	DQ11
W12: 11/10	Human Capital Resources	DQ12; Management Team & Structure Paper
W13: 11/17	How Will Know?	DQ13; Monitoring and Control Paper
W14: 11/24	Thanksgiving	No assignments
W15: 12/1		Final Written Plan and Final PPT plan with narration.

Important Policies and Resources

No Use of Generative AI Permitted

MKTG 4361 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center:

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources:

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Emergency Preparedness: JagE

Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update

your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>. More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf> Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance:

According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center:

The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous Online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Meeting Basic Needs:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support.

Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to

provide any resources they may possess. Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious

holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up

any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule:

Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e.,

courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not

affect the student’s GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be

treated as “F” grades and will impact the student’s GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M San Antonio’s Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university’s Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student’s studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student’s major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student’s unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and

activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an

environment for learning.

5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability.

Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct.

For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the Student Code of Conduct.