

Dr. Phil Hennel

Digital Business and Management

Syllabus



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1. Introduction

Dear Students,

The advancing digital transformation is changing not only our everyday lives, but also the business models that companies offer. Innovative digital business models are emerging and, in some cases, driving long-established companies out of the market.

Many of the most successful digital businesses are (former) startups that have been founded by teams of young people, just like you. When collaborating with others, innovative ideas not only come to life, but can also be turned into reality. In this seminar, we will take advantage of these opportunities. In small teams, you are going to experience first-hand what it means to develop a digital business model.

After this seminar, you will be able to ...

- *identify, describe, and interpret* the significance of digitization for today's business.
- *classify and evaluate* the opportunities and limitations of digitization for business models.
- *develop and pitch* your own digital business model.
- *provide* constructive feedback to improve a digital business model.
- *receive and use* constructive feedback to further improve your own business model.

A small “*warning*” in advance, to manage expectations for this seminar: this is not a seminar to “sit back and listen.” Instead, it is a course that builds on interactive and cooperative learning and requires continuous work throughout the semester. Participation in this seminar involves teamwork, presentations, peer feedback, and intensive exchanges. The course is held in English.

If you are not comfortable with this teaching format, I fully understand if you withdraw from the StudIP course. If you are motivated and excited to be actively involved in the course, I look forward to your participation!

This syllabus contains all important information about the course: a time schedule, the examination modalities, and much more. Please take the time to read the syllabus completely. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

See you soon in class,

Phil Hennel

2. General Information

1.1. Format

This is a hybrid course that contains different kinds of sessions and learning.

Teamwork

Teamwork is a big part of this seminar. You are going to work together in teams of about 4 students. Together you will develop, refine, and finally pitch your own digital business model. As the lecturer, I will be available to the teams as a coach.

E-Learning and Milestone Assignments

Besides teamwork, the seminar also contains individual work. The basic knowledge about digital business is acquired independently by each student. E-learning videos are provided for self-study in the first weeks of the semester. Three (graded) milestone assignments will take place during the first weeks to check the knowledge learned during the self-study. During the e-learning phase, the StudIP forum serves as a place to exchange ideas and ask questions. The StudIP forum has the advantage (over other communication channels like Studydrive or WhatsApp groups) that all students can benefit from the questions and that I can provide clarification if needed. Receiving and giving peer-feedback is important.

Tandem Feedback Sessions

One important goal of this course is learning from each other, giving, receiving, and implementing feedback. Each team is therefore assigned a tandem team. The tandem team is another student team that works on a different business model. In the tandem sessions, you will present your business models to each other, give each other constructive helpful feedback, and try to improve your pitches together. Students are responsible for coordinating with their tandem partners. Following the tandem feedback sessions, teams must submit a report outlining the feedback (see Examination). The tandems will be as outlined in the table to the right.

Partner A	Partner B
Team 1	Team 2
Team 3	Team 4
Team 5	Team 6
Team 7	Team 8
Team 9	Team 10
...	

Pitch presentation sessions

In the pitch presentation sessions, the teams will finally present their business models to the course audience. The pitch sessions will follow the format of the famous TV show “Shark Tank” (in Germany called “Die Höhle der Löwen”), where a group of “investors” will ask questions about the business idea. *All* students, those pitching and investing *as well as* all other students, are encouraged to not only sit in class during the pitch presentation sessions, but also to actively engage during Q’n’A by asking questions and “interrogating” and challenging the pitches.

The order in which teams will present will be random and be decided ad-hoc right before each slot. This is to encourage all students to participate in all sessions.

1.2. Time and Place

The seminar is scheduled for **Mondays** between **10:00** and **12:00**. As the university of Bremen observes the “academic quarter”, you can expect the course to start at 10:15 (but sharp!) and end at around 11:45. For a detailed overview of which sessions take place on **campus** (room **WiWi1 A1100**) and which sessions will take place **virtually**, please refer to the time schedule below. During your teamwork/e-learning slots you are free to choose where and when exactly you would prefer to do your tasks. The composition of the teams will be arranged during the week following the kick-off session. The **students are responsible to form teams themselves**. If necessary and given good reasons, adjustments to the presentation schedule can be discussed.

1.3. Start

The kick-off session will take place on **April 8, 2024**. In order to participate in the course, you must be registered for the course via StudIP. Please read this syllabus carefully before asking questions.

3. Time Schedule

The table below shows the time schedule of this course, including the teaching format of each session and the deliverables with deadlines.

#	Day	Topic	Format	Deliverables
1	Apr 8	Kick-Off Session	On Campus	
2	Apr 15	E-Learning & Teamwork	Your Choosing	
3	Apr 22	E-Learning & Teamwork	Your Choosing	Milestone 1 (deadline Apr 28)
4	Apr 29	E-Learning & Teamwork	Your Choosing	Milestone 2 (deadline May 5)
5	May 6	E-Learning & Teamwork	Your Choosing	Milestone 3 (deadline May 12)
6	May 13-17	Coaching Session By appointment	On Campus or via Zoom	
7	May 20	Tandem Feedback Session	Your Choosing	
8	May 27	Tandem Feedback Session	Your Choosing	
9	Jun 3	Teamwork	Your Choosing	Feedback report (deadline Jun 9)
10	Jun 10	Pitch Presentation Session	On Campus	
11	Jun 17	Pitch Presentation Session	On Campus	
12	Jun 24	Pitch Presentation Session	On Campus	
13	Jul 1	Wrap-Up Session	On Campus	Pitch video (deadline Jul 7)

The time schedule for the pitch presentation sessions is shown below. In each of the four pitch presentation sessions, five teams will pitch their business ideas. The designated investor teams are tasked to ask questions and provide feedback for each presentation first, being followed by an open call for discussion among all students.

4. Examination

1.4. General information and form of examination

The exam in this seminar is a portfolio exam that includes multiple individual and team-based deliverables that need to be submitted throughout the semester. An overview of all examination components is shown below.

What?	How?	When?	Graded?
Milestone assignments	<i>Individual assignments</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 assignments in StudIP (Ilias) ▪ Tests knowledge learned during the e-learning ▪ Contain questions that require writing a short text ▪ Aim: transfer the theoretical knowledge to a company 	Apr 28 May 4 May 12	max. 30pts, 10pts/milestone (50% total)
Pitch presentation	<i>Team assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximum 8 minutes pitch per team and 15 minutes Q&A by investor teams ▪ Each team presents their digital business model during one of four pitch sessions ▪ The idea is to practice and improve presentation skills by receiving and using constructive feedback 	See schedule	pass / fail
Feedback report	<i>Team assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtually: Upload on StudIP ▪ Each team writes a feedback report for their tandem team ▪ After the two tandem feedback sessions Maximum 500 words and 2 pages	Jun 9	max. 12pts (20% total)
Pitch video	<i>Team assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtually: Upload on StudIP ▪ Maximum 2 minutes ▪ find a balance of depth/detail and concise arguments 	Jul 7	max. 18 pts (30% total)

The team-based assignments (pitch presentation, pitch video, feedback report) are a valuable opportunity to practice the skill of teamwork in a realistic setting. When handing in your team-assignment, one upload per team is sufficient. All team members are expected to behave in a professional manner and “pull their own weight” in completing the team tasks. The lecturer will not be responsible for resolving any team conflicts. The team-based assignments will be assessed with one common grade for all team members. The only exception to this rule is the occurrence of academic misconduct, e.g., freeriding (that is, not contributing to

the team task), cheating, or plagiarism. In the unlikely occurrence of such cases, the lecturer must be informed immediately.

Students are free to create their pitch presentation and pitch video in whatever form they choose. Creativity is welcomed and rewarded!

The milestone assignments can be handed in online (details will follow soon) while the feedback report and the pitch video can be uploaded in the respective folders in StudIP. All uploads have to have a file name corresponding to the format Team_XX.yyy, with XX being the team number with a leading zero if applicable and yyy being the respective file extension (preferably editable text document formats, otherwise pdf, for texts, analog for presentations, videos should be compressed in a common encoding such as H.264, H.265, VP9 and matching container/file format such as mkv, mp4, m4v). To prepare such a file easily, have a look at, for instance, HandBrake (<https://handbrake.fr>).

1.5. Grading scheme

A maximum of 60 points can be achieved. The detailed evaluation criteria for the examination components can be found in the appendix of this document. The points achieved for each examination component are added up and evaluated according to the following grading key:

Points	Grade
00-30	5,0
31-33	4,0
34-36	3,7
37-39	3,3
40-42	3,0
43-45	2,7
46-48	2,3
49-51	2,0
52-54	1,7
55-57	1,3
58-60	1,0

5. Contact and Communication



Dr. Phil Hannel

University of Bremen

WiWi 2 Building, Room F 3100

Max-von-Laue-Str. 1

28359 Bremen

hannel@uni-bremen.de

Office hours upon appointment

Appendix A: Assessment of the Pitch Video

	Insufficient	Below average	Average	Above average	Exemplary
Background of the idea The team clearly and convincingly ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the everyday need (“problem”). explains why this need is currently not sufficiently met. presents the solution to the need/problem. explains how the own solution works. 	0pts	1.5pts	3pts	4.5pts	6pts
Market for the idea The team clearly and convincingly ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defines the market for the business idea (customers). estimates the market size and customer base. outlines the competitive situation and the competitive advantage over other firms. 	0pts	1.5pts	3pts	4.5pts	6pts
Future of the idea The team clearly and convincingly ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains how the product will be taken to the market and sold. outlines how they will grow the business. explains where the idea could be taken in the future. 	0pts	1.5pts	3pts	4.5pts	6pts
Form and presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pitch is well structured and follows a clear “golden thread.” The pitch is creative and entertaining to watch. 	0pts	1.5pts	3pts	4.5pts	6pts

Maximum 18pts.

Appendix B: Assessment of the Feedback Report

	Insufficient	Below average	Average	Above average	Exemplary
Structure and writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the report well-structured and well-written? Does the report contain all needed aspects (“five fingers”)? Does the feedback follow the feedback rules? 	0pts	1pts	2pts	3pts	4pts
Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the feedback well justified with arguments and explained in a comprehensible way? Is the feedback well-grounded in the theories and models learned? Does the report cover the background, market, and future of the idea? 	0pts	1pts	2pts	3pts	4pts
Advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the report give clear and concrete advice on how to improve the business model? Are the recommendations well-justified and explained in a comprehensible way? 	0pts	1pts	2pts	3pts	4pts

Maximum 12pts.

Appendix C: Feedback Report: Structure & Form

In the feedback report, your team gives constructive feedback about the business idea of your tandem team. Maximum length: **2 pages and 500 words** of formulated text. The feedback report should follow the “five finger feedback method” and should include the five following points:

- **Aspects that were great:**
What were the things that you, as a team, liked about your tandem team’s business idea? These are the things that they should definitely keep.
- **Aspects that could be improved:**
What were the things that could be improved? Give concrete advice how these aspects could be improved.
- **Aspects that we didn’t like:**
What were the things that you, as a team, didn’t like about your tandem team’s business idea? Should they consider leaving out these aspects or fundamentally changing them? If yes, how?
- **Aspects that we will take with us:**
What were the things that you, as a team, learn from the tandem team’s business idea? How will the dialogue with the tandem team help you improve your own business idea?
- **Aspects that came up short:**
What were the things that were missing or that you thought came up too short? Give concrete advice which aspects the tandem team should add or shed more light on.

The most important aspects that should be considered are as follows:

Background of the idea: Does the team clearly and convincingly...

- ... address the everyday need (“problem”)?
- ... explain why this need is currently not sufficiently met?
- ... present the solution to the need/problem?
- ... explain how the own solution works?

Market for the idea: Does the team clearly and convincingly...

- ... define the market for the business idea (customers)?
- ... estimate the market size and customer base?
- ... outline the competitive situation and the competitive advantage over other firms?

Future of the idea: Does the team clearly and convincingly...

- .. explain how the product will be taken to the market and sold?
- ... outline how they will grow the business?
- ... explain where the idea could be taken in the future?

Universität Bremen

Fachbereich 07 | Fachbereich

Wirtschaftswissenschaft

Bibliothekstraße 1, Gebäude WiWi2

28359 Bremen

hennel@uni-bremen.de

www.uni-bremen.de

Herausgeber:in

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