New Venture Opportunity Analysis
ESM 256B, Winter 2021

Class: TTh 8:00-9:15 am, via Zoom
(See GauchoSpace for Zoom Link)

Instructor: Emily Cotter
Office Hours: F 10:00-11:00 am (See GauchoSpace for Zoom Link)
Or, by appointment
Cell Phone: 310.569.3941
Email: ecotter@bren.ucsb.edu

Course Description
ESM 256B is about developing analytical and conceptual skills required to assess the market potential for new products or services that can make a positive environmental and/or social impact. Students will perform customer discovery research to generate an idea, identify and define a market opportunity, and perform an assessment of whether the new venture concept represents a viable opportunity. Topics covered include customer discovery, idea generation, industry and competitor analysis, market definition, opportunity recognition, and value proposition design. Skills developed in this course are applicable to future jobs in, including but not limited to, corporate social responsibility, nonprofit management, public sector leadership, or social and environmental entrepreneurship.

Course Objectives
- Acquire skills for researching and analyzing key industry, market, competitor and customer information, gathering data from both primary and secondary sources.
- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills through the process of completing an opportunity assessment for launching a new product or service that can make a positive environmental and/or social impact.
- Build a compelling case to demonstrate whether your concept is a viable opportunity, through a final presentation before a panel of judges comprised of entrepreneurs and investors from the local business community.

Idea Generation
As part of the educational process, throughout the Eco-E program, individual students will bring a variety of ideas and information to an Eco-E class project for discussion, review and analysis. Any ideas or information introduced to an Eco-E class project by an individual student will be available for use by any student team member, both during or after the Eco-E class project, for any purpose, unless it is Prior IP. Prior IP is intellectual property that is developed by a student before the Eco-E class project began and that is both recognized and protectable under United States copyright, patent or trademark laws.
Any Prior IP introduced by a student during the course of an Eco-E class project may be used by all student team members in the course of the Eco-E class project for academic purposes only.

To avoid misunderstandings and confusion, if a student wants to contribute Prior IP to an Eco-E class project, that student should clearly identify it as Prior IP to the other student team members and notify the instructor that the Prior IP is being contributed to the class project for academic use in the Eco-E class project.

**Course Software**
Box – File Sharing Service
GauchoSpace – Learning Management System
Google Drive – File Storage and Synchronization Service
Zoom – Online Conference System

Slack – Messaging Application
Students should register for an account with Slack and join the esm256Bwinter2021 workspace. See GauchoSpace for the invitation link.

**Required Reading**
Harvard Cases
Cases are listed in the schedule below. See course entitled “New Venture Opportunity Analysis (ESM 256B, Winter 2021)” on Harvard Business Publishing site at:

[https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/787135](https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/787135)

All the cases are listed under the Harvard course entitled “New Venture Opportunity Analysis (ESM 256B, Winter 2021).” Each Harvard Case costs $4.25-7.95. The total approximate cost for the coursepack is $24.95 (paid directly to Harvard Business Publishing).

All other required reading will be made available via download on GauchoSpace.

**Optional Reading**
Value Proposition Design
Alexander Osterwalder, Yves Pigneur, Gregory Bernarda, Alan Smith and Trish Papadakos
[https://strategyzer.com/books/value-proposition-design](https://strategyzer.com/books/value-proposition-design)

**Remote Class**
Our class will meet through the Zoom online conference system. We will adopt the same rules and norms as in a physical classroom. For everyone’s benefit, please join the class in a quiet place. Turn on your video. Mute your microphone, unless you are speaking. Close any browser tabs not required for participating in class. This form of learning is somewhat new to all of us, and success will depend on the same commitment we all bring to the physical classroom.

Upon request, live Zoom sessions may be recorded for students who are not able to attend in real time (due to an excused absence or connectivity problems). Each video will be available to individual students by request. By default, your microphone will be muted when you join the session. If you do not want to
be included in the recording, simply turn off your camera and keep your microphone off. You may ask questions in the chat window.

**Course Plan**
Instructional content will be delivered through live Zoom lectures and discussed in small breakout groups during class sessions. Students are responsible for reading assignments and reviewing supplemental materials as homework, prior to class. Students will also collaborate on research outside the classroom, working on small teams or individually. Class sessions will also be used for guest speakers, activities and workshops, and for teams to present their work.

**Course Assessment**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Individual Contribution</th>
<th>Project/Team Contribution</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>400 points (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Class Attendance</td>
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<td>• Guest Speakers</td>
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<td>• In-Class Discussions</td>
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<td>• Workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eco-E Opportunity Project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concept Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Post</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Summaries</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint Presentation</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Summaries</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint Presentation</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Summaries</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>100 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>300 points (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Model Environment – Written Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Analysis</td>
<td>300 points (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>400 points (20%)</td>
<td>300 points (15%)</td>
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**GRAND TOTAL** 2,000 points (100%)

The deadline is at the beginning of class (i.e., 8:00 am) on the due date listed for each assignment, unless otherwise instructed. Assignments submitted after the deadline but within 24 hours will lose 5% of the total points; after that, an additional 5% for each day that the assignment is late.

**Attendance and Participation**
Students are expected to attend every class. The participation portion of the grade is 400 points. Participation is evaluated in a number of ways. Obviously, participation is correlated with attendance. It is impossible to earn participation points if a student is not in class. Students remain responsible for submitting work due even if absent. Students should e-mail the instructor prior to any missed class.
Students remain responsible for the material covered and assignments given during an absence. The instructor is available upon request for a make-up session, due to an excused absence or connectivity problems, in the event that a live Zoom lecture session has not been recorded.

Attendance at all class sessions is critical to the learning process and the participation component of the course. Entrepreneurship is a collaborative and interactive process. Entrepreneurs find opportunities, adapt, and improve themselves by listening and learning from others. Please come to class prepared to participate in the day’s activities.

**Eco-E Opportunity Project**

Working on an Eco-E Opportunity Project, students will demonstrate their ability to perform customer discovery research and analyze a potential Eco-E Opportunity. Students may choose to work individually or on a team comprised of two to five people.

During the quarter, students will conduct customer discovery research, perform industry/market analysis, and research the environmental problem in three “sprints,” as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sprint Period</th>
<th>Sprint Length</th>
<th>Presentation Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sprint 1: 1/19/21 to 2/1/21</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>2/4/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint 2: 2/2/21 to 2/15/21</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>2/18/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprint 3: 2/16/21 to 3/1/21</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>3/5/21*</td>
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*Eco-E Opportunity Project – Final Presentation on Friday, March 5, 2021.*

The goal of these sprints is to “get out of the building” and talk to customers and/or industry experts face-to-face (via Zoom), in order to discover evidence for the following:

- a customer problem exists;
- a proposed solution that solves a problem for an identifiable group of customers/users;
- the market is accessible and potentially large enough that a viable business might be built; and,
- a significant environmental problem exists that potentially can be addressed by the proposed product or service.

Students should set milestones for each sprint (e.g., interview 5 industry experts and 5 potential customers during Sprint 1).

During each sprint, teams should aim to interview at least 10-15 academic experts, industry experts or potential customers. The required minimum for each student will be 3 interviews per sprint.

Students will also gather secondary research to analyze the environmental problem, environmental policy and existing solutions. Additionally, teams will research and analyze the external environment to provide supporting context for developing a business model based on the Eco-E Opportunity.

On each presentation day, students will report what they learned through customer discovery research during the last sprint. Students will also share any new research or analysis that supports the overall Eco-E Opportunity (see the Eco-E Opportunity Canvas for specific questions to be answered).
Description of Course Assignments

Eco-E Opportunity Concept Proposal – Written Post
By the Team Formation Deadline, teams will create a “Concept Proposal Post” in Slack. The post should provide the team’s working name and the name of each team member, followed by a one-sentence description of the team’s proposed Eco-E Opportunity concept or research focus.

In a brief paragraph, explain why the team came together or what initiated the project. Address at least one of the following questions:

- What environmental problem does the team want to help solve?
- Is there a particular industry that interests all the team members?
- Is there a trend in a specific industry that may represent an opportunity?
- Is there a potential customer identified based on observations of a customer problem?
- Is the team continuing research from the previous quarter?

The goal for this quarter is to develop a clear and compelling Eco-E Opportunity concept (customer problem, environmental problem and proposed solution). Consider the Eco-E Opportunity Canvas, when drafting this proposal. Share your initial hypotheses.

In no more than one single-spaced page (excluding references), discuss your proposed research direction for each aspect of the Eco-E Opportunity:

- **Customer Problem Hypothesis**: Describe the target customer segment and customer problem to solve. Share any initial industry/market analysis and customer research. Be sure to cite sources (e.g., industry statistics). What is your customer discovery research plan for Sprint 1?
- **Environmental Problem Hypothesis**: Define the environmental problem. What is the overarching, “big picture” issue? How will you narrow it down? What is the environmental problem? What research have you located already? Where will you focus your research next?
- **Solution Hypothesis**: Do you have any ideas yet for possible solutions? If so, have you gathered any evidence to support your idea(s)? If not, do other solutions currently exist for the customer problem and/or environmental problem? What kind of solution-oriented research, if any, will you conduct in Sprint 1?

The Concept Proposal Post must be submitted in #concept-proposals within the esm256Bwinter2021 workspace on Slack by 8:00 AM on 1/19/21. This Concept Proposal Post will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

Eco-E Opportunity Concept Proposal – Presentation
The purpose of this assignment is to present your initial Eco-E Opportunity concept proposal to your classmates in order to receive peer feedback on your proposed research direction. For this assignment, you will create five (5) PowerPoint slides, as follows:

1. **Team**: List the name of your project team with all the team members and explain what brought your team together or what inspired your project
2. **Eco-E Opportunity Concept**: What current hypotheses do you have for your Eco-E Opportunity concept (customer problem, environmental problem and proposed solution)? What critical assumptions must be validated to find a customer problem-environmental problem-solution fit?
3. **Customer Problem Hypothesis**: What evidence have you collected, to date? What is your proposed research direction?
4. **Environmental Problem Hypothesis**: What is known? What is your proposed research direction?

5. **Solution Hypothesis**: What ideas do you have? What evidence have you collected, to date? What is your proposed research direction?

A soft copy must be uploaded onto GauchoSpace by 8:00 AM on 1/21/21. This Concept Proposal Presentation will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

**Interview Summaries**
Students will demonstrate their analytical skills and their ability to perform customer discovery research through interviews with academic experts, industry experts or potential customers. Each student is required to participate in at least 3 interviews per sprint. You may have more than one team member participate in an interview and work together on the interview summary. However, each team is required to have a minimum number of interviews per sprint, equal to 3 interviews per team member. For example, a team of 4 students must conduct a minimum of 12 interviews during a given sprint.

An interview summary should be submitted for each interview conducted. It is a brief report of the key insights from an interview with an academic expert, industry expert or potential customer. Be sure to list all students who participated as interviewees. Students should provide a link to the full interview, in case anyone would like to read the full transcript. You will create an “Interview Summary” post in the relevant research channel(s) within the esm256Bwinter2021 workspace on Slack. For further instructions, see “Submit Your Interview Summary by Post” in #tips-for-slack.

Your interview summaries for Sprint 1 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 2/2/21. These Interview Summaries will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points).

Your interview summaries for Sprint 2 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 2/16/21. These Interview Summaries will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points).

Your interview summaries for Sprint 3 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 3/2/21. These Interview Summaries will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points).

**Progress Reports**
At the end of each sprint, a Progress Report will be submitted by each team/project. The Progress Report will state the research focus and goals for the reported sprint, then summarize what was achieved through research and key takeaways. For customer discovery research, the Progress Report should include what was learned during the sprint, any customer problems discovered, any new ideas generated or any resulting pivots, and an assessment of potential opportunities.

Each team will create a “Progress Report” post in their private team/project channel within the esm256Bwinter2021 workspace on Slack. For further instructions, see “Submit Your Team’s Progress Report by Post” in #tips-for-slack.

A progress report for Sprint 1 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 2/2/21. This Progress Report will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points). These points will be the same for each team member.
A progress report for Sprint 2 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 2/16/21. This Progress Report will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

A progress report for Sprint 3 must be completed by 8:00 AM on Tue 3/2/21. This Progress Report will account for 5% of your grade (max. 100 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

**Eco-E Opportunity Project – Final Presentation**
Each team/project will be asked to do a presentation of their opportunity analysis. The presentations will be judged by a panel of experts (business leaders, investors and entrepreneurs). Specific guidelines for the presentations will be posted on GauchoSpace and discussed in class. The Presentation will account for 15% of your grade (max. 300 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

A soft copy must be uploaded onto GauchoSpace by 8:00 AM on 3/5/21.

**Eco-E Opportunity Project – Business Model Environment Final Paper (Written Analysis)**
This written report will demonstrate your ability to research and analyze the business model environment for your Eco-E Opportunity. A separate document regarding the details of the final paper and the grading sheet will be posted on GauchoSpace. The Written Analysis will account for 15% of your grade (max. 300 points). These points will be the same for each team member.

A soft copy must be uploaded onto GauchoSpace by 5:00 PM on 3/11/21.