



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

BUU22570: Creative Thinking, Innovation, and Entrepreneurial Action

(5 ECTS credits)

Michaelmas 2026

Tentative module outline: Do not copy or share without permission!

1 Module Leadership

Lecturer: Dr. Gorkem Aksaray

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Office Hours: By appointment (via email)

2 Class Information

Dates: 16 September – 2 December

Time: 2 PM – 4 PM

Classroom: B101/02 (Dargan Theater), Trinity Business School

3 Module Description

This module provides students with a critical perspective on the key trends, dynamics, and opportunities shaping contemporary entrepreneurship. Over the past decade, entrepreneurship has become a central discipline in business, attracting growing attention from scholars,

policymakers, and practitioners worldwide. It is now widely recognized as a driver of innovation, economic growth, regional competitiveness, and job creation. However, it has also faced scrutiny for reinforcing wealth and income disparities, especially in sectors marked by winner-takes-all dynamics.

As entrepreneurship continues to evolve, expand globally, and provoke both opportunities and controversies, it requires a multidisciplinary and international approach. Recognizing the intricate nature of contemporary entrepreneurship, this module will draw from diverse theoretical and practical resources.

4 Learning and Teaching Approach

Each lecture week will focus on the exploration of a distinct topic, drawing on key academic literature and the analysis of successful cases from diverse global industries. Alongside in-class discussion and assigned readings, students will work collaboratively on group assignments that apply course concepts to real-world entrepreneurial situations.

5 Learning Outcomes

By the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts, dynamics, and vocabulary that shape the formation, growth, and sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures.
2. Explain and apply core frameworks and tools of entrepreneurship, innovation, and the lean startup approach (such as business models and opportunity evaluation).
3. Analyze the strategic, marketing, and financial decisions involved in building and growing entrepreneurial firms.
4. Apply course concepts to assess real-world entrepreneurial situations, opportunities, or ventures.
5. Develop and communicate creative, well-reasoned responses to entrepreneurial problems through collaborative work.

6 Relation to Degree

This module serves as the foundation of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation strand within the undergraduate Business programme, typically the first module in which students engage with entrepreneurship and innovation as formal subjects of study. It introduces the core concepts, vocabulary, and frameworks that underpin entrepreneurial thinking and action, and develops the creativity, critical reasoning, and analytical skills students will draw on throughout their degree. In doing so, it complements the programme's other disciplines

— such as strategy, marketing, and finance — and provides a foundation for further study in entrepreneurship, innovation, and related areas. It has no prerequisites and is open to visiting and exchange students.

7 Workload

Content	Indicative Number of Hours
Lecturing hours	22
Preparation for lecture	18
Group assignments	20
Reading of assigned materials and active reflection on lecture and course content and linkage to personal experiences	20
Final exam preparation	40
Total	120

8 Delivery of Classes

Class time consists of lectures (2 hours per week) held in a face-to-face format and led by the principal lecturer throughout the module. Additionally, there will be several sessions featuring guest speakers, including entrepreneurs and industry practitioners, dedicated to provide valuable insights from their experiences. Depending on the circumstances and speaker availability, some of these sessions may be conducted online via Zoom. Links to access these online sessions will be provided on the module intranet. No class sessions will be recorded and distributed.

9 Textbooks and Required Resources

The module draws on academic articles, cases, practical examples, newspaper articles, and exercises. In addition, podcasts and video clips will be used in class, and guest speakers will also be invited to share their experiences. Readings as listed below will be made available in the module intranet. ***Required readings must be read before attending the class.*** You are asked to supplement these with your own literature reviews as relevant to your coursework and assessment requirements.

Required core course textbooks:

- Blank, Steve, and Bob Dorf. The Startup Owner's Manual: The Step-By-Step Guide for Building a Great Company. K&S Ranch, 2012. (ISBN-13: [9780984999309](#))

Recommended books:

- Bygrave, William, and Andrew Zacharakis. Entrepreneurship (4th edition). Wiley, 2016. (ISBN- 13: [9781119298809](#))
- Reis, Eric. The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses. The Crown Publishing Group, 2011. (ISBN-13: [9780307887894](#))
- Osterwald, Alexander, and Yves Pigneur. Business Model Generation. John Wiley & Sons, 2010. (ISBN-13: [9780470876411](#))
- HBR's 10 Must Reads on Entrepreneurship and Startups. Harvard Business Review Press, 2018. (ISBN-13: [9781633694385](#))

10 Module Communication

Relevant module material (lecture handouts, module outline, required and supplementary readings, etc.), administrative information, and any class announcements will be posted on the module intranet. Please ensure that you have access to the module site and please check it regularly along with your college email. If needed, the lecturer and others who deliver the module will contact you directly via your college email. If you experience difficulties with this module, or require accommodations for a disability or other special need, please contact the lecturer or the College's [Disability Service](#) as early as possible so that appropriate support can be arranged.

Please note that all course related email communication must be sent from your official TCD email address. Emails sent from other addresses will not be attended to.

11 Assessment

The breakdown of the overall module assessment is as follows:

Assessment	% Grade
Final exam	80
Group assignments	20
Total	100

Final exam

The final exam is a written, in-person examination held during the College examination period. It assesses your understanding of the topics covered in lectures and assigned readings, and may include a range of question formats, such as multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer/essay, and calculation questions. Further details and guidance will be provided closer to the examination date.

Exam dates are set centrally by the College and are outside the control of the module lecturer, who has no influence over, or advance information about, the exact timing. It is each student's responsibility to consult the [College academic calendar](#), be aware of the examination period, and remain available for its duration. Students should not make travel or other arrangements that conflict with the examination period.

Group assignments

Details of the two group assignments will be made available on the module intranet during the semester.

Each group assignment will be awarded a group grade. Completing the **peer evaluation form** is mandatory; individual marks may be adjusted on the basis of peer evaluations to reflect each member's contribution. I retain the right to award an individual a lower mark, or a mark of zero, where there is evidence that they made little or no contribution to the group's work.

Supplemental assignment

Students who receive an overall fail mark in their first attempt will be re-assessed by the completion and submission of an individual assignment only, without any consideration of other assessment marks.

Attendance

Attendance at lectures is required; any student who attends less than two thirds of lectures may be deemed non-satisfactory as per [college regulations](#) and may not be allowed to sit the final exam.

12 Module Schedule

Topics and readings, as well as the exact sequence of lectures, are subject to change with class progression and availability. **Tentative** summary schedule is as follows.

Lecture	Topic
1	Module introduction
2	Entrepreneurship and startups
3	Creativity and innovation
4	Entrepreneurial ecosystems
5	Business models
6	Business models, continued
	<i>Reading week</i>
7	Trends and opportunities in tech entrepreneurship
8	Entrepreneurial finance I
9	Entrepreneurial finance II
10	Strategy and marketing for new ventures
11	Module and exam review & guest session (topic TBA)

13 Biographical Note

Dr. Gorkem Aksaray is Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship at Trinity Business School, Trinity College Dublin. Before joining Trinity, he was a faculty member at Koç University in Istanbul. He holds a PhD from Emory University and an MSc from the London School of Economics. Dr. Aksaray's research focuses on entrepreneurship, self-employment, and how individuals make managerial and entrepreneurial decisions under uncertainty. His work has been published in leading journals including *Management Science*, *European Management Review*, *Strategic Change*, and the *Journal of International Money and Finance*. He also teaches advanced quantitative methods, contributes to statistical programming community, and supports doctoral students in their research. As an educator, he is committed to fostering innovation, encouraging entrepreneurial thinking, and helping students develop the skills needed to navigate complex business environments.