

A CLOSE LOOK AT THE STARTUP NATION - B8693

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"Experts are people of the past - for the future we need visioners"

Shimon Peres, 1923-2016

Course Overview:

Israel is rated as #1 in the rate of per capita R&D spending globally; #1 in the number of startups outside Silicon Valley; and #1 in per capita VC investments. There are more Israeli companies listed on the NASDAQ than India, Japan and Korea combined.

How has Israel become such a powerhouse of innovation and creativity? What elements of Israel's history and society made this possible? What is the "secret sauce" of the Israeli startups? What are the key elements of the innovation management in the Israeli ecosystem, how it is different from the more common innovation management? How can it be used by managers from different countries and cultures?

Even during the recent COVID-19 era, startups from the Israeli entrepreneurship

ecosystem has showed agility and innovation, adapting their business models and product value proposition to the new reality, enhancing indoor, remote collaboration aspects over face-to-face interaction aspects. Students will be able to hear first-hand how companies adapted to the new reality, and how for some the crisis became a blessing in disguise.

The course provides a core academic grounding of some of the innovation methodologies used by leading entrepreneurs at Israel's blazing hi-tech economy. This course combines in-class lectures with talks by some of the country's top companies and organizations (such as Startup Nation Central, The Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, AIVF, Ukko, Rilbite, Or Cam, Hargol Food Tech and Our Crowd). Lectures are led by Reichman University's Professors together with prominent figures from the Israeli innovation scene, including entrepreneurs; top angle investors; leaders of corporate innovation; and representatives of entrepreneurship agencies. This combination of academic expertise mixed with streetwise proven experience of industry leaders is the heart of the program.

Course objectives:

- Students will understand key methodologies of early-stage startups, including Need Identification and Need Validation Strategies that merge methodologies from User-centered Design with Lean Startup best practices.
- Students will learn different methodologies for ideation, with special focus on Solution Validation Strategies, based on methodologies from the Service Design disciplines.
- Students will understand how the field of UX (User Experience) methodologies became instrumental to product innovation
- Students will learn how UX Research techniques are used by entrepreneurs and product managers in an agile environment.
- Students will be introduced to the Start-up Nation culture and how to work with Israeli hi-tech industry as a resource in developing innovative products and services.
- Student will understand the unique strategies of technology-based innovation such as short-term planning (vs. long), the importance of "fellowship" instead of leadership, the role of flat hierarchy and direct speech in a successful startup culture.
- They will also learn creativity tools like the closed world principle, the function follows form, adding dimensionality, contradiction and forecasting matrix.
- A crisis is often a blessing in disguise - students will learn how to take

advantage of crisis and make them opportunities. Students will hear from founders and entrepreneurs how the Israeli culture is relevant and has contributed to their ability to adapt to the new COVID-19 reality.

Content:

The course is a collaboration between Columbia University Business School and Reichman University, Arison School of Business and is designed for Columbia MBA students together with up to 30 outstanding Inter-disciplinary center (Reichman University) MBA students who already take an active role in the Israeli innovation ecosystem. The students will work in mixed teams to facilitate cultural exchanges and allow the student from Columbia to experience the Israeli startup culture during hands on exercises.

The course will take place over 5 full days (Sunday – Thursday), Students will be exposed to various aspects of the way innovation is initiated and managed in Israel with an emphasis on the characteristics of the "start-up nation" management style.

The course consists of two main components:

- 1) **Academic classes** by Professor Jacob Goldenberg and Dr. Oren Zuckerman
- Professor Jacob Goldenberg is a marketing professor at Reichman and a visiting professor at Columbia Business School, and Dr. Oren Zuckerman is the founder of Reichman's Media Innovation Lab and the Academic Director of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Global MBA track. The lectures will explore various aspects of innovation, entrepreneurship, and value creation. Specific topics include: technology-based revolution, the importance of short-term planning, how to master change before it masters you with an emphasis on the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the Israeli innovation ecosystem, value creation through need identification and need validation strategies, solution validation strategies, contradiction as a first sign of innovation, resistance to innovation, and specific use cases of technology innovation: from mobiles to Internet of Things.
- 2) **Talks by Israeli industry leaders** - including angel investors, VC's, and serial entrepreneurs. Covering topics such as Israel's unique models for innovation, how a culture of innovation can be built and nurtured, emerging trends within the Israeli entrepreneurship ecosystem, and investors' perspective on the Israeli technology market in times of crisis. Students will interact with leading figures from successful companies who will share the "behind the scenes" of Israeli innovation. The talks will include innovative companies and leading investors.

Grading:

- Class attendance and participation 25%
- Individual assignment - Attribute Dependency 20%
- Individual assignment - Presenting Startup Assessment (section 4 only) 20%
- Group assignment - New Startup Assessment (full assessment) 35%

Participation

Class attendance and participation - much of the learning will occur in the course of the discussions in class. Full and on-time attendance in all classes is mandatory in order to receive credit for class participation.

Assignments:

There will be three assignments.

1. **Contradiction and Attribute Dependency**, Individual Assignment - This exercise focuses on the creativity templates covered during the class sessions. The assignment is due one week after end of course. This is a type B* assignment.
2. **Startup Assessment, Individual assignment** - In this assignment students will analyze one of the startups presented in the course, according to section 4 of the "Guidelines for the Startup Assessment assignment". You must use online resources to deepen your analysis beyond the startup guest lecture. This is an individual assignment, to be submitted one week after the end of course. Note the requirement for this assignment is assessment of section 4 only in the guidelines, no need to analyze the other sections. This is a type B* assignment.
3. **Startup Assessment Group Assignment** - The assignment will be done in teams of up to 6 students (combining student from both CBS and Reichman) based on an online database of Israeli startups that will be introduced in the course. Each team is required to analyze a specific sector in the Israeli startup ecosystem and submit a comprehensive and well-justified "investment opportunity" report, following all the guidelines listed in the "Guidelines for the Startup Assessment assignment". Students will start to work on the assignments during the course's and continue after the course ends. The assignment's due date is two weeks after the course's end date. This is a type A* assignment.

Required Readings:

1. Suggested reading before course: Senor Dan and Saul Singer, (2011), Start-upNation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle. Twelve; Reprint edition
2. Creative connections:
<https://www.thecasecentre.org/main/products/view?id=146049>
3. Less is More: <https://www.thecasecentre.org/main/products/view?id=139155>
4. New product innovation 1: <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/news-opinion/what-framework-innovation-design-councils-evolved-double-diamond>

Honor Code

You are expected to conform to the norms of behavior outlined in the Columbia Business School [Honor Code](#). Use of case or lecture notes from previous sections of the course is not allowed. Any allegation of academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Dean's office for investigation. Any case of proven academic dishonesty will result in failure in the course. Simple things such as arriving on time to class, turning cell phones off during class time and not being tempted by the many distractions that the Internet offers can make the experience more enjoyable and rewarding to all. Students are subject to an Honor Code violation if they violate the Columbia Community Health Compact, please refer to OSA's website with guidance for [how Health Compact issues will be handled](#).

Assignment Types

All of your assignment submissions are subject to the [CBS Honor Code](#). Violations of the CBS Honor Code may lead to failing the assignment, failing the course, suspension, and/or dismissal. In order to avoid ambiguity that may lead to unintentional violations of the Honor Code, assignment description types have been standardized and specified below.

Type	Designation	Grade	Preparation of submission	Discussion of Submission*	Discussion of Concepts**
A	Group Work	Same grade for all group members	By the group	Permitted to discuss (within group)	Permitted
B ¹	Individual w/ Discussions of Concepts and Submission	Individual grade	Individual preparation	Permitted to discuss; sharing solutions or submission files is not allowed	Permitted
B ²	Individual w/ Discussions of Concepts Only	Individual grade	Individual preparation	Not permitted to share/discuss solutions or submission	Permitted
C	Individual	Individual grade	Individual preparation	Not permitted to share/discuss solutions or submission	Not permitted***

* The designated group can be either an assigned study group or a self-selected one.

* Submission means any work and/or output pertaining to the specific assignment. If an assignment submission contains a calculation or decision related to a specific set of data and setting, discussing the details how to make this calculation or decision with regard the data/setting is to discuss the submission. Providing another student with a draft of the calculation or decision is sharing the submission.

** Concepts mean any ideas, examples, readings, or other related materials from the class/course. Conceptual discussion should not be based on a specific set of data or setting related to a calculation or decision required in the assignment, but could be based on other related examples, preferably those from class/course materials.

*** As no conceptual discussion is permitted, Type C is akin to a take-home exam.