Creativity, MKTG-GB.2381

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Office Hours: Most Tuesdays & Thursdays, noon-1pm (Please check first!)
and by appointment

Course Description
Successful business people approach their problems creatively and happy people live their lives as works of art. In this course we explore the many dimensions of creativity that are important in business and in our own lives. Creativity isn’t a mystical quality with which only a special few are endowed. Practical methods to become more flexible, imaginative, and productive thinkers can be learned by anyone, nurtured in others, and harnessed to create new products, uses, designs, theories, strategies, structures, and other solutions of all kinds. We will define creativity, review the science, and develop our own creative skill set by learning about, experiencing, and experimenting with a wide variety of approaches.

IMPORTANT: This only works if everyone in the class is
1. invested in their own and each other’s creative development,
2. committed to doing all the work, inside and outside of class,
3. willing to take personal risks, and
4. an enthusiastic participant in all activities (even when they are hard, seem silly, or make you uncomfortable).

Please think carefully about this, review the syllabus thoughtfully, and take the course ONLY if you are excited to invest the time, effort, and energy required.

Course Objectives
- Define creativity and understand its applications.
- Develop an appreciation for the ability of every individual to become more creative and build confidence in the face of challenges better solved creatively.
- Learn about your own creative style and how to work with those whose styles differ from yours.
- Understand the human characteristics that hinder creativity – habits, routines, assumptions, perceptual blocks, cognitive biases, fear of failure, social influences, etc.
- Learn to overcome the barriers and leverage our innate creative talents through practice and the use of specific techniques.
- Experience and critically evaluate formal structures for creative problem solving, e.g., Osborn-Parnes CPS, design thinking, and Lego Serious Play.

Materials
Readings: A custom course pack containing all currently assigned readings is available through the NYU bookstore. Any additional readings will be handed out in class.

Videos: You can find links to required videos both in NYUClasses and the syllabus.
FourSight Thinking Profile: Purchase link and access code from NYU Professional Bookstore (please be sure to buy one for your section of the course!) and complete the assessment by our first class. Instructions from the bookstore:

a) Go to the NYU Book Store web site: http://www.bookstores.nyu.edu
b) Click on the "Textbook Inquiry and Ordering" link
c) **Section 1:** In the "Search by ISBN" option, enter TBA  
   **Section 10:** In the "Search by ISBN" option, enter TBA
d) Proceed to Checkout and complete your order. You will receive a confirmation that your order has been processed and a second email with your FourSight password and the URL.
e) Go to the website, login with your password, and complete the assessment.

Criteria for Evaluation

**Class Participation (25%).** Because this is a fun and fascinating subject and you have all chosen to be here, I can’t imagine this will be an issue, but just to make expectations clear... I expect you to be fully prepared in each class to discuss assignments, be active in our in-class exercises, and be thoughtful in your contributions and questions. I also encourage you to continue our discussions online. In this course, much of the learning comes from doing and class participation is a reflection of the extent to which you have contributed to the learning of the group, which can’t happen unless you come to class and participate enthusiastically.

**Attendance.** One unexcused absence will not influence your final grade. However, each absence thereafter will reduce your final grade for the course by a half grade (e.g., A to an A-, B+ to a B).

The only excused absences are for religious or civic obligation, serious family emergency, or serious illness. If this is your situation, just send me a brief note explaining the matter as soon as you reasonably can. Please do not ask for an exception for other reasons, such as an interview, a work eruption, a computer malfunction, an unexpected business trip, or a conflicting event. While these things are certainly important, I expect you to make this course a priority, as you would a major business undertaking.

If you must miss a class, please notify me as soon as you can, preferably at least 48 hours in advance. This is important because I may create teams for exercises in advance and need to know who will be in class. It is your responsibility to review the content you missed. (Any lecture slides will be posted in NYUClasses; you will have to get notes from a classmate.)

If you already expect to miss a class and the course is being offered as an intensive, please do not take it. If it is being offered over a standard semester, please speak with me about it as soon as possible. While I’d love to have you stay, we may conclude you shouldn’t take the course this term. When delivered in an intensive format, any student who does not attend the first class will be dropped from the course.

Please arrive to class on time. Latecomers are very disruptive. Systematic lateness will affect your grade

**Assignments (75%).** There will be lots of assignments – some quite small, others larger – due as indicated in the course outline. Due to the subjective nature of creativity and my desire to encourage experimentation, I will place most emphasis in grading on how thoughtful and energetic you are in completing assignments and whether you follow instructions. So, please pay close attention to exactly what I am asking you to do and where and when assignments should be submitted. Assignments may be due in one or more of the following locations: the course blog, NYUClasses, in class, the FourSight website. All NYUClasses and course blog assignments are due by 10pm the evening before our class meets.

**Exercises (~20%) for introspection and practice**

- FourSight Thinking Profile
- Enablers & Barriers
- Design Watch
- CPS Problem Finding
- CPS Problem Statement & Idea Finding

**Something New activities (~25%) for freshness and to create intersections**

- Something Creative
- Design Store Outing
• DrawSomething
• Upside Down Drawing
• How-to
• Newsstand Roundup
• Eavesdrop
• Pinterest

Challenges (~30%) to apply your skills
• Make Something
• Improve Something
• TBA (presented on the last day of class)

Course Blog. You can find it here – http://sterncreativity.blogspot.com/. Unless you joined the course recently, you should have received an invitation to contribute. (Check your spam folder if you can’t find it. If you don’t have one, send me an email and I’ll take care of it.) Accept the invitation! To contribute, click the pencil on the top right.

Deadlines. If you miss a deadline for a written assignment, I will deduct a half grade for each day it is late (rounded up). The only exception is for religious or civic obligation, serious family emergency, or serious illness. Just give me a note as soon as you reasonably can. Please do not ask for exceptions for other reasons.

Communication
From Me to You. I will post announcements on the Announcements section of NYUClasses. Please check at least once a day. I assume that within 24 hours you will see any announcement I post. When I have information I need to get to you more quickly than that, I will also send e-mail.

From You to Me. If you have questions about assignments, please post them in NYUClasses so others in the class can see the answer (or even answer you themselves). Otherwise, e-mail works best. Please include “Creativity” in the subject line and provide your name whenever you send e-mail if you aren’t using a Stern email address. I have office hours most Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. If you would like to meet with me at another time, we can make an appointment or you can take a chance and just stop by.

From You to Each Other. Please feel free to comment on each other’s posts on the course blog. If you have additional observations to make about what we have been doing in class or you run across something interesting that relates to creativity, please post it on our NYUClasses discussion board. I know that it’s hard to remember to check for additions to our online discussions and there is an NYUClasses feature that will help. Go to Forums in the course site and click “Watch” at the top of the page and you will see and option to receive an email either whenever a new message is posted or only when a thread to which you have contributed receives a new message. (If it gets to be too much, you can always unsubscribe.)

Honor Code
The Stern Code of Conduct says, among other things, that as members of the Stern community we commit to:

2) Exercise integrity in all aspects of our academic work including, but not limited to, the preparation and completion of exams, papers and all other course requirements by not engaging in any method or means that provides an unfair advantage.

3) Clearly acknowledge the work and efforts of others when submitting written work as our own. The incorporation of the work of others; including but not limited to their ideas, data, creative expression, and direct quotations (which should be designated with quotation marks), or paraphrasing thereof; must be fully and appropriately referenced using notations both in the text and the bibliography.

8) Refrain from behaving in ways that knowingly support, assist, or in any way attempt to enable another person to engage in any violation of the Code of Conduct. Our support also includes reporting any observed violations of this Code of Conduct or other School and University policies that are deemed to have an adverse effect on the NYU Stern community.

You can find the complete Code of Conduct here – http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/student-activities/community-life/code-of-conduct/. The Code of Conduct applies to your conduct in all classes, including this one. Suspected infractions will be referred to the Graduate Judicial Council.
Faculty Guests & Research

As part of our effort to learn from each other, from time to time I give other members of the faculty read access to our course website or invite them to join us in class.

In addition to providing rich learning material for you, data from our exercises can also support valuable research that contributes to the on-going refinement of creativity theory. If data from your class is used in faculty research, only aggregate statistical information would ever be published and complete confidentiality is guaranteed. Names are removed from the results before any analysis is performed and no identifying information is ever involved.
# COURSE OUTLINE

- All NYU Classes and course blog assignments are due by 10pm the evening before our class meets.
- You will find links to most articles and all videos in NYU Classes.

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| 1   | 01      | What is it & why do we need it? | FourSight Thinking Profile: Go to the NYU Book Store website (www.bookstores.nyu.edu). Click on the "Textbook Inquiry and Ordering" link. In the "Search by ISBN" option, enter Section 1: TBA Section 10: TBA Proceed to Checkout and complete your order. You will receive two emails – an order confirmation and a message with your FourSight password. Complete the assessment on the FourSight website by our first class. | Something Creative:  
- Find something you think is creative. Any kind of creative. It can be a product, an event, a building, a work of art, a design, a process, or anything else.  
- Upload a photo of it to the course blog with one line to say why you think it’s creative. If it’s not visual, post a short description. | Bronson, Po (2010), "The Creativity Crisis," The Daily Beast  
Anderson, Joseph V. (1992), "Weirder than Fiction: The Reality & Myths of Creativity," The Executive  
Sawyer, Keith (2012), Explaining Creativity, Ch 5 & 6 |
| 2   | 01      | Internal barriers 1: Our amazing brains and the problems they cause | Enablers & Barriers:  
- Think about yourself at your most and least creative.  
- NYU Classes (form): On the Enablers & Barriers form, make a list of enablers – what helps you be your creative best – and barriers – what stops you from being your creative best. | Design store outing:  
- Visit a design store and look around carefully.  
- NYU Classes (form): What ideas did it give you to and/or what connections do you see with your work, your life, this course, etc.? | Hurson, Tim (2007), Think Better: An Innovator's Guide to Productive Thinking, Ch 2  
"Whatif!" (2002), Sticky Wisdom, p. 3-46 ("Freshness") OR Berns, Gregory, Iconoclast, Ch 2 |
| 3   | 02      | Challenge #1: Fear of change, fear of failure, the VOI & self-acceptance | DrawSomething:  
- Play DrawSomething with class partner at least once a day for a week.  
- NYU Classes (form): Write down how you feel at the beginning and again at the end. | Amabile, Teresa M. (1998), “How to Kill Creativity,” Harvard Business Review  
Ray, Michael and Rochelle Myers (1988), Creativity in Business, Ch 3  
Kelley, Tom and David Kelley (2012), "Reclaim Your Creative Confidence," Harvard Business Review |
| 4   | 03      | The power of play & Lego Serious Play | Challenge #1, Make Something:  
1) Create something new that is of value using some or all of the materials in your kit. May finished item or fully functioning prototype. The only items you may use that are not in your kit are tools to manipulate your materials and glue (only to join items).  
2) NYU Classes (form): Describe your process and your product.  
3) Bring your creation to class with a label that includes a) its name, b) how it is new, c) how it is of value and to whom, and d) your name. | Executive Discovery (2002), "The Science of Lego Serious Play"  
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<td>01 10 Exercises</td>
<td>Design Watch: 1) Spend one whole day with your antennae out for things that could be improved. While getting ready to leave home in the morning, notice how well everything you touch works. Notice everything about your commute. Watch yourself all day. Watch how other people do things and use things during the day and how they interact with their environments. Notice all your service encounters. Pay particular attention to things that annoy or get in the way or fall short or disappoint in some other way. Small things, big things, important things, trivial things, and everything in between. Don't worry about whether improvements are possible, just critique and dream of a world that works better. Take notes and document with photos. 2) NYUClasses (form): Record at least 20 candidates for improvement. Indicate a) what the product or service is, b) where you were when you thought of it, c) opportunities for improvement (briefly). (Don't suggest solutions or ideas for improvements!) 3) Post your top three on our blog with photos.</td>
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<td>05 10/16 10/18 Intro to Challenge #2: improve Something</td>
<td>NYUClasses (form): Record at least 20 candidates for improvement. Indicate a) what the product or service is, b) where you were when you thought of it, c) opportunities for improvement (briefly). (Don't suggest solutions or ideas for improvements!) 3) Post your top three on our blog with photos.</td>
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<td>06 10/23 10/25 Challenge #2</td>
<td>Structures for creativity: Osborn-Parnes CPS</td>
<td>Project selection: Choose your problem with your partner and let me know via the Challenge #2 Topic Choice survey in the Assignments section of NYUClasses. CPS Problem Finding: 1) Think about the problem you chose for Challenge #2 and start generating problem statements. 2) NYUClasses (form) &amp; bring copy to class. At least 10 potential problem statements.</td>
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<td>07 10/30 11/1 Creativity in teams</td>
<td>CPS Problem Statement &amp; Idea Finding: 1) Select the Problem Statement you will be working on. 2) Select an idea generation technique (appropriate to the Idea Finding stage) that we did not work on in class and use it to generate additional ideas for your problem. 3) Blog: Description of the technique you used and your evaluation. 4) NYUClasses (form): Problem Statement, description of the technique, and the output of your process.</td>
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<td>07 11/8 11/10</td>
<td>How-to: 1) Read a how-to article or book chapter this week about something you don't know how to do. Choose something that is completely new to you. (Doing not required.) 2) Course blog: What did you read? Where did you find it? (Please don't post the instructions themselves.) What ideas did it give you and what connections do you see to your work, your life, this course, etc.?</td>
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Stefik, Mark and Barbara Stefik (2005), "The Prepared Mind Versus the Beginner's Mind," *Design Management Review*


Isaksen, Scott G. et al. (2010), *Creative Approaches to Problem Solving*, Ch 2


Thompson, Leigh (2003), "Improving the Creativity of Organizational Work Groups," *Academy of Management Executive*

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<td>#2</td>
<td>8 11/6 11/8</td>
<td>Structures for creativity: Intro to Challenge #3: TBA</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Improve Something</td>
<td>1) Create a solution to the selected problem, using the CPS framework and other techniques. 2) NYUClasses (form): Describe your process and what you produced. 3) Blog: Name and description, strongest &amp; weakest points, visual to help us understand what you created and how it works.</td>
<td>WhatIf! (2002), Sticky Wisdom , p. 47-78 (&quot;Greenhousing&quot;)</td>
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<td>#3</td>
<td>9 11/13 11/15</td>
<td>Structures for creativity: Design Thinking</td>
<td>Newsstand roundup: Choose three magazines on different topics that you have never read before. Look through them carefully. Read at least one complete article from each. NYUClasses (form): What ideas did they give you to think about and what connections do you see to your work, your life, this course, etc.? Bring to class and trade.</td>
<td>Brown, Tim (2008), “Design Thinking,” Harvard Business Review Stanford d.school, &quot;Bootcamp Bootleg&quot;</td>
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<td>#3</td>
<td>11 12/4 12/6</td>
<td>Why a good idea isn’t enough: Fahrenheit 212</td>
<td>Pinterest: Log in to the SternCreativity account. (I’ll give you the password in class.) Use the search box with an interesting word – broad (like “design” or “architecture” or “cooking”) or random (like “stone” or “orange” or “time”). Explore. Follow what’s interesting and what’s new to you. Repin at least five creative or inspiring things to the appropriate SternCreativity Pinterest account board. Feel free to create new boards if you need them. Put your name in the description box.</td>
<td>Maulik, Pete and Rony Zibara (2011), &quot;Project Fargo: Talent Recruitment,&quot; Fahrenheit 212 Internal Document</td>
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<td>12 12/11 12/13</td>
<td>Team project presentations</td>
<td>Challenge #3, Invent Something</td>
<td>NYUClasses: Presentation slides and Challenge #3 form Presentation: Include your problem statement, something particularly interesting or valuable about your process, your solution, why you think it’s good and where you would like help improving it.</td>
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