

ENT 78A/B

Advanced Entrepreneurship

Fall 2025 - Winter 2026

COURSE OUTLINE

Our goal is to provide students with a deeply experiential and transformative learning experience in a vibrant urban environment. We empower students with a philosophy of entrepreneurial thinking, passion, and action-orientation that they can apply to their lives, their jobs, their communities, and their own ventures.

We ignite student passions and empower students to achieve extraordinary goals. As Canada's pre-eminent and largest entrepreneurship program, we deliver innovative educational programs and support multi-disciplinary experiences across campus with local, national, and global impact. We provide access to world-class support and funding for our students' new ventures and are deeply embedded within our community.

Advanced Entrepreneurship – Capstone – Fall 2025-Winter 2026

Instructor Information

Classes meet Tuesdays at 10:00am. Unless otherwise announced, the two course sections will be combined and classes will be held with both Professors in Room TRS 3-149.

| | Dr. Charlene Nicholls-Nixon | Prof. Brad Poulos |
|------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| E-mail Address: | cnichollsnixon@torontomu.ca | bpoulos@torontomu.ca |
| Office Location: | TRS 3-085 | TRS 3-039 |
| Office Hours: | By appointment on Tuesday, 2-3pm or Wednesday 11am-noon, arranged in designated slots on google calendar: https://calendar.app.google/r7Jv8vCk29YRLhAJ6 Alternate times may also be made available | By appointment, arranged by email. |

Email Policy:

In accordance with the Policy on TMU Student E-mail Accounts ([Policy 157](#)), Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) requires that any electronic communication by students to TMU faculty or staff be sent from their official university email account; all other accounts will be ignored. *Please include your course code and section number in the subject line.*

E-mail to the instructors should be reserved for questions or issues that are unsuitable for discussion on D2L, such as private or sensitive matters. Do not email instructors with questions that are already addressed in this syllabus; you are expected to be aware of all this information.

Course Description:

ENT 78A/B is the two-semester experiential-learning capstone course for the entrepreneurship major. Students will develop advanced skills in entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship and personal growth. Students gain real-world experience in starting their own companies (entrepreneurship), creating value implementing innovative projects within an existing company (intrapreneurship), and completing a stream of skills-development assignments.

Prerequisite(s): ENT 527; ENT 528 or ENT 56A/B or (both ENT570 and ENT580); ENT 577

Course Overview:

This is a contiguous two-semester course that forms the culmination of your studies in entrepreneurship. It is intended to help you acquire and practice the key skills and competencies required to be an entrepreneur, changemaker and/or intrapreneur. **It is an intensive experiential learning course where you will be expected to work approximately 10 hours per week gaining hands-on experience outside of class (similar to what an internship experience might provide).**

Through working in a consulting capacity with a real world “site company”, you will apply these skills and develop insight into an entrepreneurial organization and the methods by which entrepreneurship theory can be applied to practical managerial decision-making and leadership. In the first semester, the focus is on thoroughly understanding and analyzing your site company’s customers, markets, products, services, value propositions, finances and operations using a wide variety of tools from strategy, design thinking, lean startup, effectuation, business models and disciplined entrepreneurship. The goal is to identify a range of opportunities to create value for your site company. In the second semester, the focus is on hands-on experiential learning within the company to implement these opportunities and create value for your site company and yourselves. Across both semesters, you will also develop and implement an individual plan to develop and demonstrate your entrepreneurial skills.

Teaching Methods:

Students will work in groups of six to find a site company, identify innovative opportunities and implement new sources of entrepreneurial value for their site company. Students are expected to form their own groups, find their own site company, and notify the instructor of their membership by the end of Class 3. You may not change the membership of your group during the remainder of both semesters without the express permission of the instructors.

The first half of this year-long field study course will provide the skills necessary to appraise an entrepreneurial organization. Students will develop an understanding of what drives an entrepreneurial venture, and how such an organization is built and managed. Students will review and evaluate the technologies, processes, capabilities, competencies, functions, and financial and market performance of an entrepreneurial organization. Class sessions are interactive combining instructor led-lectures, student presentations (ad hoc and pre-assigned), and in-class worktime or coaching sessions.

The second half of the course builds on the appraisal of the first half. Students will have an opportunity to implement the projects identified in the first half to create significant new sources of entrepreneurial value based on a rigorous organizational appraisal, to persuade the entrepreneurial organization to adopt their conclusions, and to help create change within the organization. Students will develop an understanding of the decision-making process that is involved in producing change in an entrepreneurial organization, and have an opportunity to work on the implementation process. Some scheduled class sessions may be used to allow team meetings with the Site Company. In these cases, instructor coaching sessions with the teams may be scheduled in alternate time blocks.

Course Materials:

Required

- Liedtka, J. and Ogilvie, T. (2011) *Designing for growth: a design thinking tool kit for managers*. Columbia Business School Publishing. (“D4G”) (Cost: \$40.00 in TMU Bookstore)

Suggested

- Maurya, A. (2012). *Running lean: iterate from plan A to a plan that works*. O'Reilly.
- Reis, E. (2011) *The lean startup: how today's entrepreneurs use continuous innovation to create radically successful businesses*. Crown Business.
- Liedtka, J. and Ogilvie, T. (2014) *Designing for growth field book: a step-by-step project guide*. Columbia Business School Publishing.
- Osterwalder, A. and Pigneur, Y. (2010) *Business model generation*. Wiley.
- Osterwalder, A., et al. (2014) *Value proposition design*. Wiley.
- Aulet, B. (2013) *Disciplined entrepreneurship: 24 steps to a successful startup*. MIT Press or Wiley.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will have achieved the following formal learning outcomes:

- ENT Goal 1: Opportunity Identification: Students will learn to become proactive and alert to information and technology trends affecting their site company and the global economy. You will practice identifying and analyzing opportunities using a variety of tools and techniques.
- ENT Goal 2: Resource Acquisition: Students will validate opportunities and bootstrap to obtain resources. Students will be able to recruit and manage multi-disciplinary teams to deliver impactful results.
- ENT Goal 3: Persuading and Selling: Students specializing in ENT will develop skills for persuading and selling in a wide variety of contexts.
- ENT Goal 4: Information Literacy: identifying, selecting, storing and processing information from a variety of sources and media; developing successful information seeking and retrieval strategies; and, presenting and communicating information clearly, logically, concisely and accurately.
- ENT Goal 5: Adaptability: Learning from iteration, experimentation, dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty, etc.
- ENT Goal 6: Self-management: Time management, goal-setting, self-leadership, self-directed life-long learning, habit formation, and self-reflection.
- ENT Goal 7: Self and Peer-Based Assessment: Students will evaluate and track their own perceived entrepreneurial skills and attitudes during the course and compare these to peer-based assessments to receive feedback.
- TRSM Goal 1: Communication: Students will be able to express ideas and information effectively and accurately using a range of media commonly used in business environments. Communication Skills including professional behavior, executive presentation techniques, reporting and meaningful email correspondence.

- TRSM Goal 4: Group and Individual Dynamics: Students will be able to effectively self-manage and perform effectively within heterogeneous teams. Teamwork Skills including managing a complex project, task and goal management, running meetings, and ensuring accountability.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is integral to your learning, the credibility of your degree or certification, and the integrity of the university as a whole. [Senate Policy 60: Academic Integrity](#) defines academic misconduct, provides a non-exhaustive list of examples of behaviours that may be considered as academic misconduct, and explains how academic misconduct concerns are evaluated and decided. The entirety of the policy applies in this course. As well, please note that submitting work created in whole or in part by artificial intelligence tools unless expressly permitted by the Faculty/Contract Lecturer, is considered a violation of Policy 60.

Generative AI Course Policy:

Generative AI is optional in this course. Students may use GenAI (e.g. ChatGPT, Grammarly, Perplexity, DeepL Translator). However,

1. If you misrepresent source material (as AI often does), that will be considered a breach of Policy 60
2. If your citations are not genuine (AI often makes up references), that will be considered a breach of Policy 60
3. **Students are required to write a clear declarative statement describing how AI tools were used and the extent of its contribution to the final submission.** Failure to disclose use of generative AI will be considered a breach of Policy 60

Turnitin or another originality detection software:

Turnitin is a plagiarism prevention and detection service to which TMU subscribes. It is a tool to assist instructors in determining the similarity between students' work and the work of other students who have submitted papers to the site (at any university), internet sources, and a wide range of books, journals and other publications. While it does not contain all possible sources, it gives instructors some assurance that students' work is their own. No decisions are made by the service; it generates an "originality report," which instructors must evaluate to judge if something is plagiarized.

Students agree by taking this course that their written work will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin. Instructors can opt to have student's papers included in the Turnitin database or not. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the terms-of-use agreement posted on the Turnitin website. Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with their instructor to make alternate arrangements. Students who choose not to have their papers screened for textual similarity review by turnitin may be required to submit additional work with their research essay. For example:

- an annotated bibliography of each source used in your paper; and/or
- the first few pages of each cited source used in your paper

Even when an instructor has not indicated that a plagiarism detection service will be used, or when a student has opted out of the plagiarism detection service, if the instructor has reason to suspect that an individual piece of work has been plagiarized, the instructor is permitted to submit that work in a non-identifying way to any plagiarism detection service.

Class Schedule – Fall Semester:

Most classes will be comprised of some combination of the following three activities: (1) lecture content, course administration/feedback on assignments; (2) student presentations, developmental discussion/Q&A; (3) team meetings and/or coaching with professors.

Attendance is expected for all classes. Site Company teams are also expected to book appointments and set an agenda for discussion with their supervising Professor during office hours at least twice during the semester. Be proactive. Help us to help you.

| Week | Topics | Required Reading/Videos | Activities and Assignments |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| 1 (Sept 2) | Course introduction Site company approval | D4G p. 3-20. | PREPARE: Identify/contact prospective Site Co. and form teams IN-CLASS: Students pitch Site Companies and form teams |
| 2 (Sept 9) | Finalize Site Company Teams Managing groups | D4G, p. 21-37. Watch: <i>Entrepreneurship is like learning to play the guitar</i> (5:12) | PREPARE: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Start gathering information about the Site Company and the industry from public sources so that you can speak knowledgeablySchedule Site Company meetings to discuss the project |
| 3 (Sept 16) | Understanding “What is” - Planning and conducting Site Company research | D4G p. 41-60. Watch: <i>Module 2 – Bird-in-hand principle</i> (15:58). | DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Site Company proposals,Team roster with design brief (D4G p. 46),DUE: ESD Proposal |
| 4 (Sept 23) | Feedback on ESD Understanding “What is”, cont’d | D4G, p. 61-73. Watch: <i>Module 3 – Design thinking diamond method</i> (17:25). | PREPARE – On-going Site Company research: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the business, how the company works, |

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|----------------|--|---|---|
| | Speaker: Tyler Baird, Environics | | <p>its key issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview stakeholders • Synthesize learning using relevant tools (e.g. Customer Personas, Journey Maps, etc.) • Prepare for Environics |
| 5 (Sept 30) | Turning research into analysis and action | <p>D4G, p. 75-80. Watch: <i>Deep dive 2 of 4. How to spot opportunities?</i> (5:45). Watch: <i>Deep dive 3 of 4 Part 1</i> (10:26) Watch: <i>Deep dive 4 of 4 Part 2</i> (19:42)</p> | <p>IN-CLASS: Informal team progress presentations (who have you met with? What have you learned? Surprises? Challenges? What is each person doing in the next three weeks?)</p> <p>DUE: ESD revision (if req'd)</p> |
| 6 (Oct 7) | Exploring “What if”—Identifying opportunities for value creation in site company | <p>‘What if’: Brainstorming (Read D4G, p. 96-112) and Concept Development (Read D4G, p. 113-121)</p> | <p>IN-CLASS: ESD peer problem solving for individual projects (where are you having difficulties? what can you do about it?)</p> <p>Team work time</p> |
| (Oct 14) | READING WEEK | <p>Watch: <i>Module 4 – Radical collaboration</i> (15:53).</p> | |
| 7 (Oct 21) | Team Site Co. Update Presentation #1 for Group 1 (graded) | <p>Watch: <i>Module 5 – User centricity</i> (29:39).</p> | <p>All students in Group 1 must attend this class plus the full session for either Group 2 or 3; the alternate class is for Team work on the Site Company</p> <p>DUE: ESD Update Memo #1</p> |
| 8 (Oct 28) | Team Site Co. Update Presentation #1 for Group 2 (graded) | <p>Watch: <i>Module 6 – Hunting</i> (8:20). Watch: <i>Job to be Done</i> by Christensen (5:06).</p> | <p>All students in Group 2 must attend this class plus the full session for either Group 1 or 3; the alternate class is for Team work on the Site Company</p> |
| 9 (Nov 4) | Team Site Co. Update Presentation #1 for Group 3 (graded) | <p>Review material as needed</p> | <p>All students in Group 3 must attend this class plus the full session for either Group 1 or 2; the alternate class is for</p> |

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| | | | Team work on the Site Company |
| 10 (Nov 11) | ESD Update Assignment feedback Guidelines for Final Reports | | IN-CLASS: ESD peer problem solving for individual projects (where are you having difficulties? what can you do about it?) Team work time |
| 11 (Nov 18) | Mandatory Coaching sessions to deliver Team Update Presentation #2 (graded) | Review material as needed | Students not presenting are invited to observe and/or use the class session for Team work time for the Site Company project |
| 12 (Nov 25) | Mandatory Coaching sessions to deliver Team Update Presentation #2 (graded) | Review material as needed | Students not presenting are invited to observe and/or use the class session for Team work time for the Site Company project DUE: Individual ESD Interim Report |
| Nov 28, 11:30pm | | | DUE: Site Company Team Interim Report |
| Nov 30, 11:30pm | | | DUE: Individual BHC Report #1 DUE: Individual Group Dev't Report #1 |

Class Schedule – Winter Semester (subject to change)

| Week | Topics | Advance Preparations and Assignments |
|---------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 (Jan 13) | Feedback on assignments | D4G, p. 123-150. |
| 2 (Jan 20) | Guest speaker – Artie Shlykov (SEO, Digital Marketing, E-commerce) THIS CLASS IS MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS! | |
| 3 (Jan 27) | Site company presentations (ungraded) | |
| 4 (Feb 3) | Site company presentations (ungraded) | |
| 5 (Feb 10) | Site company presentations (ungraded) | |
| | Reading Week | |

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|----------------|--|----------------------|
| 6 (Feb 24) | Coaching for Group 1 DUE: Team Update Presentation #3 | |
| 7 (Mar 3) | Coaching for Group 2 DUE: Team Update Presentation #3 DUE: ESD Update #2 | D4G, p. 154-178. |
| 8 (Mar 10) | Guest speaker – Chris Jones (serial entrepreneur) THIS CLASS IS MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS! | Poster slot sign-ups |
| 9 (Mar 17) | ESD feedback Poster Session (optional) | |
| 10 (Mar 24) | Site Co. Final presentations | |
| 11 (Mar 31) | Site Co. Final presentations | |
| 12 (Apr 7) | Site Co. Final presentations THIS CLASS IS MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS! DUE: ESD Final Report | |
| April 9 | DUE: Team Final Report | |
| April 10 | DUE: BHC Report #2 DUE: Group Dev't Report #2 | |

Evaluation:

Students will receive the results of their first assignment work by Week 9. Grades will be posted securely on D2L Brightspace. It is your responsibility to check your own grades. Students who wish to be informed of their grades by an alternative method must obtain the agreement of the instructor by the start of Week 3.

Grading is done on points scale of 100 points in each semester (the final course grade will be calculated out of 200 points). **NOTE:** In order to proceed with the Winter semester, you must earn a passing grade on both the Team assignments (earning at least 25 of the 50 available points) and Individual assignments (earning at least 25 of the 50 available points) in the Fall semester. Students who do not achieve this performance will be asked to **withdraw** from the course at the start of the Winter semester. **Detailed assignment instructions and grading rubrics are provided in a separate document posted on D2L.**

Fall Semester

| Evaluation Component | Points | Due Date |
|--|--------|--------------|
| Site Company Project | | |
| Team Update Presentations #1 and #2 (10 points each) | 20 | As scheduled |
| Team Interim Report | 30 | Nov. 28 |
| Individual Group Development Report #1 | 10 | Nov. 30 |
| Individual Billable Hours Consulting Report #1 | 15 | Nov. 30 |

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|---|------------|----------|
| Individual Entrepreneurial Skills Development Project | | |
| ESD Proposal | 10 | Sept. 16 |
| ESD Update #1 | 5 | Oct. 21 |
| ESD Interim Report | 10 | Nov. 25 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

Site Company Project

Team Update Presentations (2@10 points each)

The team will make formal oral Presentations that provide an update on the project status and document the tools applied and actions taken to research, develop opportunities for your Site Company.

Team Interim Report (30 points)

The Team Interim Report comprises the site company assessment, evaluation, and selection of the opportunity to implement. Each member in the group will receive an individualized grade for this assignment that will be based on the overall group grade for the report, modified based on the group's evaluation of your individual contribution to the overall effort. The group may choose to provide a copy of this report to your site company for their information and comment.

Individual Group Development Report #1 (10 points)

Each individual in the group will provide a report analyzing their team's performance (overall and for each team member) and elaborate the actions you will take to improve your own performance, how you will help others to improve, how the team overall can improve and the steps you plan to take to ensure this improvement (don't just complain about other people – what will YOU DO to help them improve?). Each group member will receive their own individual grade for this assignment. To achieve this, you must realistically rate and provide a supporting narrative about each person's contribution to the team as well as your own. This rating will be used to adjust each individual's grade in the Final Report.

Individual Billable Hours Consulting Report #1 (15 points)

This report will document your individual contributions including your expected ten hours of weekly hands-on experience devoted to the site company project. This report is to be written in the form of a consulting timesheet such as might be expected if working at a professional consulting firm. You must track and "bill" your weekly hours according to account codes that will be provided in class.

Individual Entrepreneurial Skills Development (ESD) Project

ESD Proposal

You are required to consistently build your human and social capital by applying entrepreneurial methods, theories, attitudes and competencies to some form of entrepreneurial activity throughout

the duration of the course. You must submit an initial proposal that outlines the nature of your project, its current status, and the specific actions you propose to undertake during the semester.

ESD Update #1

This update report should be written in memo form and clearly explain what you have accomplished (with supporting documentation provided as an attachment), whether or not you think you are on track with your plan (why/why not), where you are having difficulties, and how you are planning to address them. A revised workplan for the remainder of the semester should also be attached.

ESD Interim Report

This report explains and documents your progress against the approved plan and any deviations from it. The report should explain how the specific activities in each category (primary research, secondary research, and structured learning) have helped you move your entrepreneurial project forward, demonstrate how you have used entrepreneurial knowledge/skills/tools to synthesize and draw meaningful insights from your research, and provide an in-depth reflection on your experience, and a workplan for the second semester.

In the second semester students may have the option to continue their project from the fall semester, or begin anew with something else. For those who are starting over, your plan for the second semester should be included.

Winter Semester

| Evaluation Component | Points | Due date |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| Site Company Project | | |
| Team Update Presentation #3 | 10 | As scheduled |
| Team Final Report | 40 | Apr. 9 |
| Individual Group Development Report #2 | 10 | Apr. 10 |
| Individual Billable Hours Consulting Report #2 | 15 | Apr. 10 |
| Individual Entrepreneurial Skills Development Project | | |
| ESD Update #2 | 10 | Mar. 3 |
| ESD Final Report | 15 | Apr. 7 |
| TOTAL | 100 | |

Site Company Project

Team Update Presentation #3 (10 points)

The team will make formal a Presentation that provides an update on the project status and document the actions taken to implement opportunities for your Site Company and plans for completion over the remainder of the term.

Team Final Report (40 points)

The Team Final Report will comprise the final deliverables for your site company's opportunity that you implemented during the year. Each member in the group will receive an individualized grade for this assignment that will be based on the overall group grade for the report, then modified based on the group's evaluation of your individual contribution to the overall effort. Your group may choose to provide a copy of this report to your site company for their information and comment.

Individual Group Development Report #2 (10 points)

Similar to the Fall semester

Individual Billable Hours Consulting Report #2 (15 points)

Same as Fall semester.

Individual Entrepreneurial Skills Development (ESD) Project

ESD Update #2 (10 points)

This update report should be written in memo form and should include a brief introduction of the project for context and a progress update on each of the five modules/elements in your current semester plan. Through objective evidence, it should demonstrate your use of concepts and tools from ENT78A/B and other previous courses.

ESD Final Report (15 points)

Similar to the Fall semester.

Class Rules:

TMU has many policies that govern how courses operate. As a senior student you are expected to know all of them (they are available on the Senate website). In addition, the D2L site for this course contains a "Boilerplate" document with policy information specific to this course (which is hereby incorporated into this syllabus by reference). If you stay in this course past the first week you are **indicating that you have read and are agreeing** to abide by all of these.