# Launching Your Startup

Professors: Brendan Burns, Dave Lerner, Nat Kelner & Adam Royalty
TA: TBD

Mondays 2:15pm-5:30pm Location: The Design Lab @ CU, Riverside Church Room 490

**Prerequisites**

* Interest in discovering how an idea can become a real company

### Pre-Assignment

Submit a short powerpoint deck with MAX 3 Slides that communicates the following:

* The problem your startup solves and how it will solve this problem. Who experiences these problems primarily? What key benefits (value proposition) will your customers derive if they use your products or service
* The team (can be just you), detailed background on each member, and why it is particularly suited to addressing this problem successfully

## 9/12 – Class 1: Welcome

### Lecture

* Class overview and expectations
* Class and Teaching Team introductions

### Workshop

* Introduction to Design: Gift Giving

### Assignment

### Part 1: Detailed exploration of the competitive landscape around your product/idea:

### Current participants

### Substitutes

### Who do you think is the best alternative today, why?

### Elaborate on current value proposition

### Competitive advantage

### What do you think will drive value and the winners longer term?

### How might this market evolve in 5 years?

### Part 2: Your team

### What is your self-assessment (and personal interests), strengths/weaknesses

### Ideal team composition

### What kind of culture will you try to build/develop

### What are your ideas around accountability?

### Success examples

### Not so successful/failures you have been exposed to

### Sitting here today, what do you hope the team looks like 1 year from now?

### Reading

[Founder/Market Fit by Chris Dixon](http://cdixon.org/2011/06/20/foundermarket-fit/)

## 9/19 – Class 2: Founder/Product Fit + Tools

### Lecture

* People, Teams & Founders
* Prototyping tools

### Workshop

* Give your 30 second pitch to the class or
* Tell the class why (and why not) is you team suited to build this product/tackle this problem
* Lean prototyping tools

### Assignment

* Come to next class prepared to talk about who you assume your customers are
* Talk to 3-5 potential customers
* Solidify your team, come to office hours if you need help forming or finding a team
* Send out your weekly update email

### Reading

[An Introduction to Design Thinking](https://dschool.stanford.edu/sandbox/groups/designresources/wiki/36873/attachments/74b3d/ModeGuideBOOTCAMP2010L.pdf?sessionID=9a5d0a2a0cd5fb6c26a567b2636b19513b76d0f4)

## 9/26 – Class 3: Needfinding

### Lecture

* Introduction to Needfinding with Adam Royalty

### Workshop

* Get out of the building!

### Assignment

* Perform at least 20 interviews of potential customers
* Synthesize what you learned and share in your update email

### Reading

[Niche to win by Dave McClure](https://web.archive.org/web/20150315000110/http%3A//500hats.com/niche-to-win)

## 10/3 – Class 4: Unbundling Product

### Lecture

* Unbundling Product with Nat Kelner
* Low-Resolution Prototyping with Adam Royalty

### Workshop

* Brainstorm as many ways as possible to address your problem and then test

### Assignment

* Come to the next class with an exhaustive list of tests against your problem statement. These tests should be quick/easy/manual.
* Build a simple prototype

### Reading

[Lean Prototyping a Practical Guide](http://www.slideshare.net/framebench/lean-prototyping-a-practical-guide)

[DS by Paul Graham](http://paulgraham.com/ds.html)

## 10/10 – Class 5: Testing & Measuring

### Lecture

* Julie Fredrickson, CEO of Stowaway Cosmetics

### Workshop

* Prototyping your product in class with your team

### Assignment

* Be prepared to show an iterated version of your prototype at next week’s class
* Share you experience building the prototype in your weekly email.

### Reading

[Early Beta](http://www.instigatorblog.com/be-selective-in-early-beta-programs/2011/11/16/)

[The 10X Product Launch](http://leanstack.com/the-10x-product-launch/)

[Your First Customers](http://leostartsup.com/2012/06/the-first-people-using-your-product-are-an-amazing-breed/)

## 10/17 – Class 6: Modeling

### Lecture

* CAC, LTV and unit economic with Josh Silberstein

### Workshop

* Prototyping your product and unit economics in class with your team

### Assignment

* Preliminary financial analysis
	+ Unit economics (Customer LTV and CAC)
	+ P&L through break-even and simple cash flow

### Reading

None

## 10/31 – Class 7: Fundraising

### Lecture

* “The Elephant in the room” with Dave Lerner
* Intro to VC with Julian Counihan

### Workshop

* Continue to build and iterate on your product
* Work on your demo/pitch

### Assignment

* Be prepared to demo what you’ve been building next class.

### Reading

[Demo by Nate Westheimer](http://innonate.com/demo/)

## 11/14 – Class 8: Demo Day

### Workshop

* Demo what you’ve been working on in front of NYC investors and Entrepreneurs

### Assignment

* Come to next class prepared to give a two minute pitch for you company
* Optional: Make a fundraising deck

### Reading

[A Simple Approach to Pitch Decks](http://robgo.org/2015/02/05/pitch-decks/)

## 11/21 – Class 9: Legal

### Lecture

* Startup Law with Charles Torres From Lowenstein Sandler

### Workshop

* Are you ready to incorporate? Do you have a founder’s agreement? If so start now.

### Assignment

* Come up with a list of pressing legal questions regarding your startup

## 11/28 – Class 10: Storytelling & Public Speaking

### Lecture

* Storytelling with Adam Royalty
* Public Speaking with TBA

### Workshop

* Iterate on your story and pitch

### Assignment

* Get ready for your final presentation

## 12/5 – Class 11: Presentations

**1st half of class presents**

## 12/12 – Class 12: Presentation II

**2nd half of class presents**