**THINK BIGGER**

Curriculum for Spring 2020

Room: Uris 301, Columbia Business School

Thursdays 2:15 PM - 5:30 PM

Instructors: Professor Sheena S. Iyengar & Professor William Duggan

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

When you have a complex problem that needs solving, you need an innovation, a solution that is both novel and useful. This course focuses on *The Innovation Method*, which utilizes decision making theory, cognitive science, and industry practice to facilitate creativity and innovation. The course is designed to foster new ideas during the beginning of the semester which will then function as the seeds for an entrepreneurially minded final project. The course culminates in a final project where you will be required to help present a formal and polished pitch of an innovative idea in front of a distinguished panel of successful minds from across the city.

Along the way, we’ll ask some pretty big questions: What is a big idea? Where does it come from come from? Is it a physical invention, like the printing press? Is it a way of doing things, like democracy or capitalism? Does something like ‘civilization’ qualify as a big idea? We will wrestle with these questions and more, so you can start to think big about how to approach the problem of problem-solving. We’ll couple this with examples of ‘big ideas’, where they come from, and how you can replicate past success. More importantly, we'll give you a set of tools that have been designed exclusively to help you develop the skills and strategies needed to discover foreseeable and transformative ideas of your own.

You will be challenged with hands-on experiential exercises (both in and outside of the classroom) throughout the course to be your most creative and resilient self. Each exercise contributes to a step in *The Innovation Method* and has been designed to take you through the processes of discovering, ideating, evaluating, and editing your ideas. We’ll also draw heavily from the latest scientific research on creativity and innovation. You’ll learn the benefits and challenges of the Cognitive Innovation as a method as well as drawbacks to other ideation methods like brainstorming, Design Thinking, and Design Sprints. Finally, all students receive direct feedback and coaching from influential business minds (entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, leaders, etc) from across the city.

*To learn more about the instructors for this course, please see the attached bios at the end of the syllabus.*

**Grading:**

**Class Participation (15%)**

***includes attendance, surveys, submitted exercises, etc.***

**Homework Assignments (35%)**

***includes 100 word reflections submitted each Sunday following class***

***(before 11 PM) in addition to any other homework assigned in class (always due before the next class begins)***

**Mentor Sessions (20%)**

**Final Presentation (30%)**

**Notable Class Elements**

**The Innovation Method Tools:**

We will introduce you to a number of tools (digital and otherwise) designed specifically to help you search, ideate, and innovate.

**Coaching Sessions**:

Students will have multiple coaching sessions with our prestigious Columbia Innovation Fellows over the course of a single class. These fellows will assist in the ideation process and ultimately assist in the evaluation of team performance and ideas.

**Innovation Fellows Reception:**

Each semester, we hold a reception inviting all students to mingle with Think Bigger alumni and the Columbia Innovation Fellows in a more relaxed environment.

**Final Presentation**:

Using the medium of their choice, students will be required to create a short group presentation of their big idea. Presentations will be given in front of a distinguished panel of judges and receive feedback in real time.

Jan 30 - **Lecture 1** - Introduction to Creativity

Feb 06 - **Lecture 2** - Defining the Problem

Feb 13 - **Lecture 3** - Innovation Marketplace

Feb 20 - **Lecture 4** - Underlying Desires

Feb 27 - **Lecture 5 -** Breaking the Problem Down

Mar 05 - **Lecture 6** - Search and Research

**1 Week of Exams**

**1 Week Spring Break**

Mar 26 - **Lecture 7** - Building a Choice Map

Apr 02 - **Lecture 8** - Reimagine

Apr 09 - **Lecture 9** - The Third Eye Test

Apr 16 - **Lecture 10** - The Mentoring Session

Apr 23 - **Lecture 11** - Pitch Imperfect

Apr 30 - **Lecture 12** - The Day of Judgment

**INSTRUCTOR BIOS**

**Professor Sheena S. Iyengar** is one of the world’s experts on choice and decision- making. Her book The Art of Choosing received a Financial Times and Goldman Sachs Business Book of the Year 2010 award, and was ranked #3 on the Amazon.com Best Business and Investing Books of 2010. Her research is regularly cited in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and The Economist as well as in popular books, such as Malcolm Gladwell’s Blink and Aziz Ansari’s Modern Romance. Dr. Iyengar has also appeared on television programs like the Today Show, the Daily Show, and Fareed Zakaria’s GPS on CNN. Her TED Talks have collectively received almost four million views and her research continues to inform markets, businesses, and people all over the world.

Dr. Iyengar is the inaugural S.T. Lee Professor of Business in the Management Division at Columbia Business School. She graduated with a B.S. in Economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and received her Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Stanford University. She received the Presidential Early Career Award in 2002 and in 2011 she was named a member of the Thinkers50, a global ranking of the top 50 management thinkers. She was also awarded the Dean’s

Award for Outstanding Core Teaching from Columbia Business School in 2012 and was named one of the World’s Best B-School Professors by Poets and Quants.

**Professor William Duggan** is the author of three recent books on innovation: *Strategic Intuition: The Creative Spark in Human Achievement* (2007); *Creative Strategy: A Guide for Innovation* (2012); and *The Seventh Sense: How Flashes of Insight Change Your Life (2015).* In 2007 the journal *Strategy+Business* named *Strategic Intuition* “Best Strategy Book of the Year.” He has BA, MA and PhD degrees from Columbia University, and twenty years of experience as a strategy advisor and consultant.

Professor Duggan teaches innovation in three venues at Columbia Business School: MBA and Executive MBA courses, and Executive Education sessions. In 2014 he won the Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence. He has given talks and workshops on innovation to thousands of executives from companies in countries around the world.