

**INTL 190 –The Economics of Entrepreneurship  
Winter 2019 Syllabus**

Course Information

- Thu 3-6pm, RBC 1328
- Instructor: Dr. Oana Tocoian
- Office hours: Thu 1:45-2:45pm in Econ 110B
- Email for this class: [entrepecon1@gmail.com](mailto:entrepecon1@gmail.com)

Grading criteria

Writeup with discussion notes	20%
Attendance & participation	20%
Paper proposal	10%
Final paper	40%
Final paper slides and presentation	10%

In this class we will discuss some important aspects of entrepreneurship, primarily from the perspective of a policy analyst or economist. You will write a paper on a particular reform or policy, which took place within a focus area of your choosing (see next paragraph). You have quite a wide scope from which to choose, as we will be interested not just in entrepreneurship *per se*, but also more broadly in innovation and industrial growth. Conversely, we will care not just about innovative entrepreneurship, but also about small-scale business ownership and self-employment.

*Choosing a focus area*

You will each select a particular *country* of interest (other than the US). Alternatively, you could select an *industry*: in this case, the US or another large country can be the main political unit of interest, but I will expect you to also become informed on the relevant *global* landscape in that industry. If you are interested in economic history, you also have the option of choosing a *country* (or region) and *period*, or *industry* and *period*. (A historical period could be, for instance, the Industrial Revolution, the Technological Revolution, the Interwar period, or the decades immediately following World War II)

*Final paper*

You will write a 20-25 page paper on your individually chosen topic. The paper should be double spaced with 1 inch margins and should be written using 12 point Times New Roman font. You are expected to provide a clear research question (the narrower and more specific the question, the better off you are), and approach that question using arguments in various papers, books, journal articles, etc. The paper **MUST** also contain a section where you produce some results using data on that country. This does not require high-level statistical analysis – straightforward graphs or cross tabulations of data often provide convincing evidence. At the same time, be sure not to confuse correlation with causation.

*Final Presentation:*

The last 2 classes are reserved for presentations of your final projects. Each presentation will be 10-15 minutes long. You must submit your presentation 2 days before your assigned presentation date.

*Discussion notes:*

Most weeks, class will be broken up into 2 segments – a lecture segment and a discussion segment: one hour of class will be dedicated to discussion of the theme of the previous week’s lecture in the context of the countries/industries on which you have chosen to focus. I will lecture on our next topic during the remaining hour and a half of class.

- For these 6 weeks (week 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8), everyone will be required to submit a writeup on the discussion topic of the week. These notes should be, on average, 1-2 pages long and can contain key graphs or figures that you are ready to discuss. The notes do not need to read like well-structured essays, but should be readable and well thought through. These notes can be written up as a series of bullet points as long as they are written in coherent, full sentences. *Please email me these notes by 5PM on the day before class, and bring a printed copy to class.*
- Each week I will pick several of you to initiate the discussion by telling us what you learned about your chosen topic. You should expect to speak for 5 mins or so (or more if you want to). The goal is for your discussion to generate further questions and discussions from the group.

*Readings and discussion topics:*

I will assign readings on the relevant topic each week and will provide you with electronic copies if they are not publicly posted. As part of the writeup you turn in for the next lecture’s discussion, you will typically also have to answer a couple of questions about the readings.

**Course Outline**

Below is the tentative schedule of topics. The order of some topics may change, but the broader structure of the class (including deadlines) will not.

Week 1 – *Introduction and brief overview of traditional and modern academic approaches*

- Definition of entrepreneurship, classification and taxonomy
- Key aspects of entrepreneurship, the role of the entrepreneur in the economy
- Entrepreneurship as occupational choice

Week 2 – *Financing entrepreneurial ventures: debt, credit rationing, bankruptcy laws*

- Fundamental reasons why credit markets are imperfect

Week 3 – *Equity financing: venture capital and angel investing*

- *Why does the venture capital model work and when does it not?*
- *Dynamics of capital availability*

Week 4 – *Innovation and intellectual property rights*

- Policies to encourage innovation: IP enforcement, public investment
- Global trends in innovation – historical lessons and modern competition

**Paper proposal (3 pages) due on Friday, Feb 1<sup>st</sup>**

Week 5

Class replaced by 1-on-1 meetings to discuss your paper proposal.

Week 6 – *Private sector innovation:*

- risk, firm and employee-level optimal incentives
- knowledge spillovers, employee spinoffs, entrepreneurial clusters

Week 7 – *Productivity, growth, and job creation*

- The role of small firms, new firms, “gazelles”

Week 8 – *The political economy of firm entry:*

- Regulatory environment, occupational licensing
- Development-specific issues, microcredit

Weeks 9 and 10

- Final paper presentations.

**Final paper due on Friday, March 15**

**Communication**

Please read my emails in their entirety, to avoid missing important announcements or reminders. For this class I will use the account [entrepecon1@gmail.com](mailto:entrepecon1@gmail.com) – I recommend that you add it to your trusted contacts.

**IMPORTANT:** Any files you turn in should be in pdf format and have a standardized name:

**Lastname\_Firstname\_filedescription.pdf**

For instance “Smith\_Adam\_writeup1.pdf”, “Smith\_Adam\_proposal.pdf”

If the submission is by email, the subject line should be the same as the file name.

**Other policies**

No laptops may be used in class. Please let me know if you need to use one (or need another accommodation) due to a disability or injury.