Catalog Description
Student teams write complete business plans for new ventures they originate. Topics covered include research on the target industry and market; analysis of the competition and potential risk; the development of plans for marketing, operations, technology, and management; full pro-forma financial projections and considerations of milestones, exit, and social responsibility.

Course Description
Businesses are complex entities that involve many moving parts to make the whole system work. In this course, students will explore all facets of a business through the exploration and validation of business ideas generated by student teams. Students will be tasked with developing business concepts and confirming their commercial viability through evidence-based research collected from independent study and interviews with potential customers and other key stakeholders.

In addition to developing business plans, students will also be exposed to critical business soft-skills such as team formation, personal goal setting, project management, public speaking, writing, business communication, and business etiquette.

Prerequisites
ACCT 203, ENTR 200

Required Textbook
Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is very simple: To give you the practical experience of constructing a business plan when there is no money on the table. That way, if you begin a business that really matters to you or others, the plan for that business will not be the first one you have written.

- Only rarely are business plans written by individuals. In the course, you are permitted to do a plan by yourself. You are also permitted to form a team that together will create the plan. This self-organization of teams includes the freedom of a team to "fire" a member whose performance is not sufficient to meet the team's expectations.
- The creation of a new venture involves the creation of a "corporate culture." In the course, this fact is recognized by having teams develop performance standards by which their own contributions will be assessed.
- Even in the "internet era," the background research needed to establish the viability of a business must involve talking to potential customers as well as
- One reason new businesses fail is that their products or services appear before the market is ready. In the course there is extensive consideration of potential markets and how to enter them.
- Finally, the fundamental difference between a “pitch deck” idea and a formal business plan is the detailed financial projections required for a plan. Experience shows that at least in some instances, perfectly fine-sounding ideas turn out, when subjected to the demands of financing, to be likely to fail miserably as businesses. So it is worth noting here that an ability to make money at all (or an ability to scale sufficiently to reward investors) does not affect your course grade (unless your market research should have discovered the problem but did not do so).

Learning Goals Addressed
This course addresses five Learning Goals established by the College of Charleston School of Business:

1. Communication skills. The final written business plan is expected to be well researched, engagingly written and technically correct. Students will present elements of the plan during the semester, and will make their final presentations to an audience that includes business people from outside the College. As a result, the course enhances both written and oral communication skills.

2. Quantitative fluency. The business plan requires three years worth of detailed pro forma financial statements, constructed from quantitative assessments of the market, analysis of required expenses, and generation of an appropriate pricing model. These statements are done in spreadsheet form.

3. Innovation and creativity. A new venture will be successful only if it addresses a real problem, solving that problem in a creative way not already available in the marketplace. Determining how best to organize the enterprise requires creative solutions to a host of
minor problems along the way. So in the overall picture, as well as in the day-to-day
details, the course supports the learning goal of creative problem solving.
4. Global and civic responsibility. Throughout the course choices are made about such
things as non-disclosure agreements, non-compete agreements and risks to investors,
all of which involve ethical issues. Moreover, any class project involving creation of a
web page will necessarily be global in scope.
5. Synthesis. The entire business plan must be synthesized from information and data
gathered by the team members. Thus a plan is truly “made from scratch.”

Attendance and Participation
As a "methods" class, the work of the course is necessarily cumulative. Class attendance is
expected. The instructor may approve occasional absences in advance, but except in cases of
hospitalization, any required written work must be submitted on the due date. All written work is
to be submitted as an attachment to email sent to csernicarm@cofc.edu.

Evaluation
• Assignments: 50%
  ○ Teams will be given 10 assignments over the course of the semester, which will
    constitute 50% of the final grade. Assignments and their respective due dates
    can be found in the COURSE OUTLINE section of this syllabus.
• Final Business Plan: 25%
  ○ The major project for the semester is a complete business plan. The instructor’s
evaluation of this written document will constitute 25% of the final grade in the
    course. The instructor reserves the right to assign different grades to members of
    the team; based primarily on consistency of individual performance and
    participation throughout the semester.
• Final Pitch Presentation: 15%
  ○ Pitch presentations will take place on the day of the final exam. These
    presentations are worth 15% of the course grade. Note that they will also be
    judged by outside guests (but these judgments will not enter into the grade). The
    instructor reserves the right to assign different grades to members of the team
    based primarily on consistency of individual performance and participation
    throughout the semester.
• Individual Attendance: 10%
  ○ Attendance will constitute 10% of the final grade. A student will be docked one
    percentage point off the final semester grade for each instance of unapproved
tardiness (i.e. arriving to class after 5:30pm EST without notifying the instructor in
    advance) and five percentage points for each unapproved absence (i.e. missing
    a class without notifying the instructor in advance). The instructor may approve
    occasional absences and tardiness in advance of class start. It is the
    responsibility of the student to notify and receive approval from the instructor for
foreseeable absences or tardiness in advance of class to avoid penalties against his or her attendance grade.

● SPECIAL NOTE: In the real process of organizing a business, members of the organizing team find that their interests are no longer compatible. At any point in the semester an individual (or individuals) may elect to "go it alone" with no penalty except the time required to do the work required for the new project. Alternatively, after consultation with the instructor, a team may at any time "fire" a member whose work they consider unsatisfactory. At that point the person who is fired will need to develop a complete plan for a different venture (no partial plans will be accepted).

Honor Code
The College of Charleston’s published Honor Code governs behavior and performance in this course.

Disability/Access
Any student with a documented disability who is approved through the center for Disability Services is welcome to discuss accommodations privately in a schedule appointment.
## Course Outline, Readings, and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Related Textbook Chapters</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Assignment Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/27/18</td>
<td>Personal Goal Setting, Teams, and Idea Generation</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/3/18</td>
<td>Team and Business Idea Selection</td>
<td>Chapter 1 and 2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/10/18</td>
<td>Analysis of Industry, Competition, and Market</td>
<td>Chapter 6,7, and 8</td>
<td>#1: Page 399-400 (Sections III, IV, V)</td>
<td>Sunday 9/16/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/17/18</td>
<td>Strategic Position and Risk Assessment</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>#2: Page 400 (Section VI)</td>
<td>Sunday 9/23/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24/18</td>
<td>Customers and Key Stakeholders</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>#3: Contact List</td>
<td>Sunday 9/30/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/18</td>
<td>Sales and Communication</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>#4: Customer/Stakeholder Interview Write-Ups</td>
<td>Sunday 10/7/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/8/18</td>
<td>Marketing and Social Responsibility</td>
<td>Chapter 10 and 14</td>
<td>#5: Page 400-401 (Section VII and XI)</td>
<td>Sunday 10/14/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/15/18</td>
<td>Operations, Management, and Culture</td>
<td>Chapter 11, 12, and 13</td>
<td>#6: Page 400-401 (Section VIII, IX, X)</td>
<td>Sunday 10/21/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/22/18</td>
<td>Financials</td>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>#7: Page 401 (Section XIII)</td>
<td>Sunday 10/28/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/29/18</td>
<td>Goal Planning and Performance Metrics</td>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
<td>#8: Page 401 (Section XII)</td>
<td>Sunday 11/11/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/5/18</td>
<td>Fall Break (No Class)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/12/18</td>
<td>Branding, Messaging, and Pitch Deck Creation</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>#9: Pitch Deck</td>
<td>Sunday 11/18/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/19/18</td>
<td>Presentation: 5-Minute Pitch</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/26/18</td>
<td>Executive Summary Creation and Business Plan Assembly</td>
<td>Chapter 3, 4, and 5</td>
<td>#10: Page 399 (Section I and II)</td>
<td>Sunday 12/2/18 (12pm EST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/3/18</td>
<td>Next Steps / Business Plan and Pitch Work Day</td>
<td>Chapter 18, 19, and 20</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10/18</td>
<td>Final Exam: Pitch Presentation and Business Plan Submission</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor Biography

Riley Csernica is an Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies at the College of Charleston. She currently serves as Director of Client Interaction for Soteria, a Charleston-based cyber security firm founded in 2014. At Soteria, Csernica assumes roles in areas of marketing, internal operations, and client experience management. In addition to her role at Soteria, Csernica serves as Program Coordinator for NodeSC, a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing educational opportunities to those seeking careers in cyber security and technology.

Before joining Soteria and NodeSC, Csernica served as co-founder of Tarian Orthotics, a medical-device startup based on technology she co-invented while a biomedical engineering student at Clemson University. As a startup cofounder, Csernica gained invaluable experiences in product design, product commercialization, technology licensing, grant writing, business management, and communication.

Csernica received a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering, M.S. in Biomedical Engineering, and MBA in Entrepreneurship from Clemson University.