

MGT 4803 – Special Topics: Business Lab

Fall 2026 – Section C

## **A. Instructor Information**

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Instructor(s): Andre Calmon, PhD; Morvarid Rahmani, PhD

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## **B. General Course Information**

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### **1. Description**

Business Lab is a hands-on, experiential course that teaches the principles of evidence-based entrepreneurship through design thinking, business model innovation, customer discovery, rapid prototyping, pivoting, and experiment design. Students apply tools learned across Scheller College courses to propose, design, and deploy innovative business models that address problems they are passionate about.

The course is aimed at all Scheller College students regardless of concentration. The methodology and concepts are relevant for any student who aims to develop the entrepreneurial confidence required to become a business leader. Business Lab serves as an entry point into Georgia Tech's entrepreneurial ecosystem and tailors Create-X concepts (such as Startup Lab) to the Scheller context; successful projects can continue in the Idea to Prototype (I2P) course or apply directly to Create-X's Startup Launch.

### **2. Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

Articulate and critique the process of evidence-based entrepreneurship.

Create a proof of concept of a new business model that delivers a new product or service.

Evaluate a business idea using the principles of evidence-based entrepreneurship.

Apply concepts learned at Scheller to design a real-world business.

### **3. Required Course Materials**

None. All assignments, readings, and detailed instructions are posted on the course's Canvas page.

#### **4. Grading Policy**

Final grades will be based on the weighted components below. Letter grades will be assigned on the following scale: A for 90% or above, B for 80% or above, C for 70% or above, D for 60% or above, and F for final grades below 60%.

#### **5. Grade Distribution**

Participation and attendance: 20%

In-class presentations: 30%

Reports and assignments: 15%

Mid-term presentation: 10%

Final presentation: 10%

Peer review: 15%

#### **6. Description of Graded Components**

Participation and attendance reflect consistent, active engagement in in-class exercises, coaching sessions, and team activities throughout the semester.

In-class presentations include weekly team updates on customer discovery, hypothesis testing, and MVP progress.

Reports and assignments include weekly written updates on group formation, customer discovery, experimentation plans, and MVP development.

The mid-term presentation consists of a mid-term update report and video pitch summarizing progress on problem framing, customer discovery, and initial business model hypotheses.

The final presentation consists of a final in-class pitch and a final video pitch presenting the validated business model, MVP, and go-to-market plan.

Peer review captures individual contributions assessed by teammates, as well as written feedback provided to other teams during pitches and workshops.

#### **7. Course Topics**

Course topics include: evidence-based entrepreneurship; problem framing and design thinking; business model canvas; business model innovation; value creation analysis; business thesis; customer discovery; value proposition and customer segments; hypothesis creation and testing; pivoting; minimum viable product (MVP) development; agile product

development; teaming and founder roles; product/service delivery channels; and key partnerships, activities, and resources for a startup.

## **C. Course Policies**

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### **1. Attendance and/or Participation**

Attendance is mandatory. Because Business Lab is experiential and coaching-based, students are expected to attend all sessions and actively participate in workshops, team updates, and peer feedback. Participation and attendance account for 20% of the final grade.

### **2. Additional Criteria for Successful Completion**

Successful completion requires timely submission of all weekly reports and assignments, delivery of the mid-term and final presentations, completion of the final video pitch, and active engagement in customer discovery and team coaching sessions.

### **3. Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to adhere to Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code (<http://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code>) and the Student Code of Conduct. All submissions and projects will be actively monitored for violations of the Academic Honor Code.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, presentation, or report will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

### **4. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563; [dsinfo@gatech.edu](mailto:dsinfo@gatech.edu); <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu>) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail the instructor as soon as possible to set up a time to discuss your learning needs. Any accommodations granted will begin only after you present the documentation to the instructor.

## **5. Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.