MKTG-GB.2381 01 & 10, Fall 2015
Professor Kim Corfman, kcorfman@stern.nyu.edu
Tisch 817, 212-998-0593

Course Description
Successful business people approach their problems creatively and happy people live their lives as works of art. In this course we explore the many dimensions of creativity that are important in business and in our own lives. Creativity isn’t a mystical quality with which only a special few are endowed. Practical methods to become more flexible, imaginative, and productive thinkers can be learned by anyone, nurtured in others, and harnessed to create new products, uses, designs, theories, methods, strategies, structures, and other solutions of all kinds. We will define creativity, review the science, and develop our own creative skill set by learning about, experiencing, and experimenting with a variety of approaches.

IMPORTANT: This only works if everyone in the class
1. Is invested in their own and each other’s creative development,
2. Is committed to doing all the work, inside and outside of class,
3. Is willing to take personal risks, and
4. Is an enthusiastic participant in all activities (even when they are hard, seem silly, or make you uncomfortable).

Please think carefully about this, review the syllabus thoughtfully, and take the course ONLY if you are excited to invest the time, energy, and courage required.

Course Objectives
- Define creativity and understand its applications.
- Develop an appreciation for the ability of every individual to become more creative and build confidence in the face of challenges better solved creatively.
- Learn about your own creative style and how to work with those whose styles differ from yours.
- Understand the human characteristics that hinder creativity – habits, routines, assumptions, perceptual blocks, cognitive biases, fear of failure, social influences, etc.
- Learn to overcome the barriers and leverage our innate creative talents through practice and the use of specific techniques.
- Experience and critically evaluate formal structures for creative problem solving.

Materials
I have indicated readings for every class. It may look like a lot, but I promise they are a) almost all quite short and b) carefully curated to enrich what we are doing in class. They are optional, but I have never had a complaint that they are not worth the time!

One of the disadvantages of a customized collection of great articles, chapters, blog posts, and other documents is it’s hard to get them all in one place without an expensive coursepack. A small number of items are open source and you can find them in NYU Classes. For the rest, I have tried to make access as convenient as possible.

The easiest way to figure out what you need to do and how to access the readings/videos for a class session is to click on that session in NYU Classes. I have created a link for each time we meet.
**FourSight Thinking Profile.** Directly from the FourSight website:

1) Go to [https://i.foursightonline.com/assessments/d6172ba2706759f6bb0e47dfb9c3ac5f](https://i.foursightonline.com/assessments/d6172ba2706759f6bb0e47dfb9c3ac5f)

2) Pay, read the instructions, and answer all the questions online (~10 minutes). I will give you your results later in the semester.

3) Be sure to complete the assessment before our first class!

**Videos.** These are all easy to find using the links in NYU Classes.

**Books & articles.** The readings are optional, but highly recommended. Here’s where you can find them:

- All readings are on reserve at Bobst in old-fashioned hard copy.
- Most of the articles are also available electronically and you will find links to them in NYU Classes. Then you can either read online or print out.
- HBS doesn’t allow persistent links to their publications, so you can either read the copies I placed on reserve or use the Bobst online search. Not hard, but a bit annoying. Here’s how I do it:
  a) Go to Bobst – [http://library.nyu.edu/](http://library.nyu.edu/)
  b) Click on Articles & Databases.
  c) Click on Search databases by subject or content type.
  d) Under “Databases by SUBJECT,” select “Business.”
  e) It usually works just to enter a distinctive chunk of the title in the search box in quotes and indicate “title” as the field.

**Criteria for Evaluation**

**Class Participation (~15%) & Attendance.** Because this is a fun and fascinating subject and you have all chosen to be here, I can’t imagine this will be an issue, but just to make expectations clear… I expect you to be fully prepared in each class to discuss assignments, be active in our in-class exercises, and be thoughtful in your contributions and questions. I also encourage you to continue our discussions online.

This course is unusually interactive. What you learn and what your classmates learn will depend to a great degree on your presence and enthusiastic participation. One unexcused absence will not influence your final grade. However, each absence thereafter will reduce your final grade for the course by a half grade (e.g., A to an A-, B+ to a B).

The only excused absences are for religious or civic obligation, serious family emergency, or serious illness. If this is your situation, just send me a brief note explaining the matter as soon as you reasonably can. Please do not ask for an exception for other reasons, such as an interview, a work eruption, a computer malfunction, an unexpected business trip, or a conflicting event. While these things are certainly important, I expect you to make this course a priority, as you would a major business undertaking.

If you must miss a class, please notify me as soon as you can, preferably at least 48 hours in advance. This is important because I may create teams for exercises in advance and need to know who will be in class. It is your responsibility to review the content you missed. (Any lecture slides will be posted in NYU Classes.)

If you already expect to miss a class and the course is being offered as an intensive, please do not take it. If it is being offered over a standard semester, please speak with me about it as soon as possible. While I’d love to have you stay, we may conclude you shouldn’t take the course this term. When delivered in an intensive format, any student who does not attend the first class will be dropped from the course.

**Assignments (~85%).** There are many small assignments and three somewhat larger ones, due as indicated in the course outline. Most involve completing forms and submitting them in NYU Classes or posting on our Course Blog. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due by midnight the night before our class meets. Please submit as Word files (i.e., don’t convert to pdf).

**Exercises** for introspection and practice (~50%)

- FourSight Thinking Profile
- Something Creative
- Enablers & Barriers
- Design Your Own Freshness Experience
• Challenge 1: Make Something
• Challenge 2: Improve Something
• Challenge 3: Invent Something

Freshness Experiences to shake things up, broaden your perspective, and create intersections (~30%)
• Design Store Outing
• Design Watch
• Upside Down Drawing
• How-To
• Newsstand Roundup (optional)
• Eavesdrop
• Pinterest (optional)
• Do Someone Else’s Freshness Experience

There are some (clearly labeled) optional assignments. They are worth doing, but truly optional and just for you. Do them now. Do them later. Do them never! (If you find them useful, just ask. I have many more.)

Due to the subjective nature of creativity and my desire to encourage experimentation, I will place most emphasis in grading on how thoughtful and energetic you are in completing assignments and whether you follow instructions. So, please pay close attention to exactly what I am asking you to do and where and when assignments should be submitted.

Course Blog. Our course blog is in Blogger. You will use it submit some of your assignments (including the first). Before our first class I will send an invitation to your Stern email address. When you have it:
1. Click on the “Accept invitation” link in the message.
2. You will be required to sign in to accept the invitation. Please make sure your profile includes your full name, so we’ll know it’s you when you post.
3. Once you accept the invitation, the invitation link will no longer work. The next time you want to visit, you can find our blog in either of these ways:
   • Go directly to the blog link – http://sterncreativity2015.blogspot.com/ – or
   • Go to http://www.blogger.com/ and click the link that lists your blogs. You will see ours listed as Creativity 2015.
4. To contribute, click “New Post,” top right.
5. IMPORTANT: Check to make sure your full name appears at the end of your post. If it doesn’t, please edit your profile, so we’ll know who you are.

We can also use the blog to tell each other about interesting things we find. If you want to know when something has been posted, opt to “Follow by email” on the home page, top right. (Fortunately, it sends only a daily digest or it would be annoying on days when assignments are due!)

Deadlines. If you miss a deadline for a written assignment, I will deduct a half grade (rounded up) for each day it is late. The only exception is for religious or civic obligation, serious family emergency, or serious illness. Just give me a note as soon as you reasonably can. Please do not ask for exceptions for other reasons.

Communication

From Me to You. When I need to contact you, I will send email to your Stern address. If your Stern email account is not the one you check regularly, please set it up to forward to one you use, since everything for the course will be sent there (including your blog invitation).

From You to Me. If you have questions about assignments, please post them in NYU Classes so others in the class can see the answers (or even answer you yourselves). Otherwise, email works best. Please include “Creativity” in the subject line and provide your name whenever you send email if you aren’t using a Stern email address. If you would like to meet with me, just let me know and we’ll set something up. You can also take a chance and stop by, but setting a time is safer.

From You to Each Other. Please feel free to comment on each other’s posts on the course blog and add other interesting things you find there. If you have additional observations to make or questions about what we have been doing in class you can post it on our NYU Classes discussion board. I know that it’s hard to remember to check for posts and additions to our online discussions. Fortunately there are features in NYU Classes and our blog that will help:
NYU Classes discussion forums: Go to Forums and click “Watch” at the top of the page. You will see an option to receive an email either whenever a new message is posted or only when a thread to which you have contributed receives a new message. (If it gets to be too much, you can always unsubscribe.)

Blog: Opt to "Follow by email" on the home page, top right.

Honor Code

The Stern Code of Conduct says, among other things, that as members of the Stern community we commit to:

2) Exercise integrity in all aspects of our academic work including, but not limited to, the preparation and completion of exams, papers and all other course requirements by not engaging in any method or means that provides an unfair advantage.

3) Clearly acknowledge the work and efforts of others when submitting written work as our own. The incorporation of the work of others; including but not limited to their ideas, data, creative expression, and direct quotations (which should be designated with quotation marks), or paraphrasing thereof; must be fully and appropriately referenced using notations both in the text and the bibliography.

8) Refrain from behaving in ways that knowingly support, assist, or in any way attempt to enable another person to engage in any violation of the Code of Conduct. Our support also includes reporting any observed violations of this Code of Conduct or other School and University policies that are deemed to have an adverse effect on the NYU Stern community.

You can find the complete Code of Conduct here – https://nyustern.campusgroups.com/ose/code-of-conduct/. The Code of Conduct applies to your conduct in all classes, including this one. Suspected infractions will be referred to the Graduate Judiciary Committee.

Faculty Guests & Research

As part of our effort to learn from each other, from time to time I give other members of the faculty read access to our course website or invite them to join us in class.

In addition to providing rich learning material for you, data from our exercises can also support valuable research that contributes to the on-going refinement of creativity theory. If data from your class is used in faculty research, only aggregate statistical information would ever be published and complete confidentiality is guaranteed. Names are removed from the results before any analysis is performed and no identifying information is ever involved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Freshness Experiences</th>
<th>Background Readings, Videos, etc. (not required, but highly recommended)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>What is it?</td>
<td>FourSight Thinking Profile</td>
<td>Something Creative</td>
<td>Bronson, Po and Ashley Merryman (July 19, 2010), “The Creativity Crisis: For the First Time, Research Shows that American Creativity is Declining. What Went Wrong — and How We Can Fix It,” Newsweek, 156 (3), 44-49.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Why Do We Need It?</td>
<td>1) Go to link in NYU Classes. 2) Pay, read the instructions, and answer all the questions online (~10 minutes). I will give you your results during our class on teams.</td>
<td>1) Find something you think is creative. Any kind of creative. It can be a product, an event, a building, a work of art, a design, a business model, a process, or anything else. 2) Course blog: Post a photo of what you found. (If it’s not visual, post a short description.) For the last line of your post complete the sentence: I think this is creative because....</td>
<td>Anderson, Joseph V. (1992), “Weirder than Fiction: The Reality &amp; Myths of Creativity,” Academy of Management Executive, 6 (Nov), 40-47.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where Do We Get It?</td>
<td>3) Be sure to complete the assessment before our first class!</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ferguson, Kirby (2011), “Everything is a Remix, Part 3: The Elements of Creativity” (video) Keep watching after the closing credits!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intro to Challenge #1: Make Something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Internal Barriers 1: Our Amazing Brains &amp; the Problems They Cause</td>
<td>Enablers &amp; Barriers</td>
<td>Design Store Outing</td>
<td>Berns, Gregory (2010), Iconoclast: A Neuroscientist Reveals How to Think Differently , HBR Press, especially Ch 2, “From Perception to Imagination.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Think about yourself at your most and least creative. What activities, habits, environments, and mindsets influence how creative you are? 2) NYU Classes (form): List of enablers -- what helps you to be your creative best -- and barriers -- what stops you.</td>
<td>1) Visit a design store (or two) or a design museum and look around carefully. 2) NYU Classes (form): Ideas your outing gave you and connections with your work, your life, this course, etc.</td>
<td>Ness, Roberta B. (2012), “Becoming a Keener Observer,” in Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas, Oxford University Press, Ch 7, 53-61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An Aside on Measurement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gallery: Make Something</td>
<td>1) Create something new that is of value using some or all of the materials in your kit. Make it either a finished item or a fully functioning prototype. (If it’s a prototype, you must be able to show that it works!) The only things you may use that are not in your kit are a) tools to manipulate your materials and b) glue to stick your materials together. 2) NYU Classes (form): Description of your process and your product. 3) Bring to class: Your creation and a label that includes a) its name, b) how it is new, c) how it is of value and to whom, and d) your name.</td>
<td>Kaufman, Scott Barry (August 12, 2015), “The Emotions That Make Us More Creative,” Harvard Business Review, digital article.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rotate this Students are to read at least one complete article from each. 2) Write down the ideas they gave you and connections you see to your work, your life, and this course.</td>
<td>Ray, Michael and Rochelle Myers (1988), &quot;Destroy Judgment, Create Curiosity,&quot; in Creativity in Business, Broadway Books, Ch 3, 39-64.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External Enablers &amp; Barriers</td>
<td>1) Spend one whole day with your antennae out for things that could be improved. Notice everything. Pay particular attention to things that annoy or get in the way or fall short or disappoint in some other way. Take notes and document with photos. 2) NYU Classes (form): At least 20 wishes for improvement and your top three with photos. 3) Bring to class: A printout of the last page of the homework form (one-sided, please).</td>
<td>Amabile, Teresa M. (1998), “How to Kill Creativity,” Harvard Business Review, 76 (5), 77-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intro to Challenge #2: Improve Something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pink, Dan (2009), &quot;The Puzzle of Motivation,&quot; TEDGlobal 2009 (video)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10/19</td>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>10/28</td>
<td>11/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>Challenge #2. Select Problem &amp; Gather Data 1) Choose the problem for your project with your partner. (I'll send you the options.) 2) Gather information to help you develop a clear understanding of the problem and what solutions are already out there (DIVERGE). 3) NYU Classes (form): Summary of most important data about your challenge [CONVERGE].</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Formulate the Challenge 1) Formulate the Challenge - Finish generating Challenge Questions (DIVERGE) and select the one you will address (CONVERGE). 2) NYU Classes (form): Challenge Question you selected and a runner up. 3) Challenge #2, Explore Ideas 1) Explore Ideas -- Select two idea generation techniques that we did not work on in class with your problem (okay to use a technique I demonstrated) and generate additional ideas for solving your problem. (DIVERGE). 2) Blog: For each technique, a) tell us what it's called, b) if it's new to the class, describe how it works, and c) tell us what you think -- how useful, what you liked, what you didn't like.</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Explore Ideas 2 1) Review the ideas you generated. Generate more if you're not happy with your alternatives or don't have at least 20 or don't have some pretty crazy ones in the mix (DIVERGE). 2) NYU Classes (form): List at least 20 ideas; rate each on its potential and wildness.</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Online Presentation 1) Narrow down your ideas to the 2-3 you think are most promising as a foundation for your solution, either individually or in combination (CONVERGE). 2) Blog: Post your Challenge Question and a summary of at least one of your solutions (with a visual to help us understand how it would work) and your assessment of its originality and value. Be sure to include all team member names!</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Online Presentation 1) Narrow down your ideas to the 2-3 you think are most promising as a foundation for your solution, either individually or in combination (CONVERGE). 2) Blog: Post your Challenge Question and a summary of at least one of your solutions (with a visual to help us understand how it would work) and your assessment of its originality and value. Be sure to include all team member names!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshness Experiences</td>
<td>Upside Down Drawing 1) Read the complete instructions in NYU Classes. 2) NYU Classes (form): Description of your drawing environment and the process; insert photo or scan of your drawing. 3) Bring to class: Your original drawing or a copy.</td>
<td>Start thinking about How-To, due in two weeks.</td>
<td>Eavesdrop 1) Eavesdrop on a conversation. (Booths in coffee shops, crowded restaurants, and cell phone talkers are good for this.) 2) Course blog: Write a short (~100 words) biography of one of the speakers. Include what you heard, if you wish, but focus on using your imagination to complete the individual. Use a red font for what you know for sure from what you heard, green for what you imagine that seems reasonable, and blue for what you imagine that makes the story more interesting, compelling, or fun.</td>
<td>How-To 1) Adopt a playful and courageous attitude. 2) In the 2 weeks leading up to this class, learn how to do something completely new to you. 3) NYU Classes (form): A description of what you learned how to do, how adventurous it was, how you learned it, and your experience. 4) Bring to class: What you made (or be prepared to demonstrate what you learned in some other way).</td>
<td>How-To 1) Adopt a playful and courageous attitude. 2) In the 2 weeks leading up to this class, learn how to do something completely new to you. 3) NYU Classes (form): A description of what you learned how to do, how adventurous it was, how you learned it, and your experience. 4) Bring to class: What you made (or be prepared to demonstrate what you learned in some other way).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline, p.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Challenge #2, Feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Design Thinking</td>
<td>Course blog: Comment on at least three solutions created by others. Be sure to include in your feedback your assessment of: a) The solution’s originality, b) How much value is likely to be created, c) How clearly the idea is communicated, and d) What you suggest they add, change, consider, do next.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge #3, Solution Ideas &amp; Problems Solved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Generate a large set of possible solutions using any appropriate methods you like.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) Select three that seem promising.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) NYU Classes (form): Three possible solutions with POVs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Thanksgiving break (Wednesday section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lego Serious Play</td>
<td>Challenge #3, Prepare to Prototype</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prototyping</td>
<td>1) For each solution you are still considering, where are you and what would it be helpful to know?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) NYU Classes (form): Three things about the user you would like to understand better (empathy) and/or aspects of your idea(s) you would like to test.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Speaker: Fahrenheit 21</td>
<td>Challenge #3, Formulate Solution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why a Good Idea Isn’t Enough</td>
<td>1) Strengthen and narrow down your solutions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) NYU Classes (form): PPCO analysis for your proposed solution (DIVERGE) and your improved solution (CONVERGE).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Challenge #3 Presentations</td>
<td>Challenge #3, Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Finish refining your solution.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) NYU Classes (form): Describe your solution and your process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Presentation: TBA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignments**

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due in NYU Classes or on the course blog by midnight the night before our class meets.

**Freshness Experiences**

Start thinking about Design Your Own Freshness Experience, due next week.)

**Optional: Pinterest**

1) Login to the NYU Stern Creativity Course account. (Find the username and password in NYU Classes.)
2) Use the search box with an interesting word -- broad (like "design" or "architecture" or "cooking") or random (like "stone" or "orange" or "time").
3) Explore. Follow what's interesting and what's new to you.
4) Repin a few creative or inspiring things to the appropriate board on our account. Feel free to create new boards if you need them. Put your name in the description box.

**Background Readings, Videos, etc.**

(not required, but highly recommended!)


Stanford d.school, "Bootcamp Bootleg"