

Foundations of Entrepreneurship Research
MGT 88000

**Lawrence N. Field Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Zicklin School of Business, Baruch College
The Graduate Center, City University of New York**

“There is nothing so practical as a good theory.”

– Kurt Lewin, pioneer of social, organizational, and applied psychology (1890-1947)

Professor

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Prerequisites

Students must be enrolled and in good standing in the Baruch College PhD program.

Course description

This course is designed to introduce students to the theoretical and methodological approaches used in entrepreneurship research as well as to acclimate them to the work of an entrepreneurship scholar. In so doing, students will explore [1] the major theories, concepts, models, frameworks, etc. that have been developed to predict and explain the behavior of entrepreneurs and the ventures they create, [2] the main analytical techniques that have been used to empirically examine them, and [3] the protocols for evaluating, conducting and revising academic research.

Learning objectives

This course is designed to enrich the student’s abilities as an entrepreneurship scholar. Specifically, upon completion of the course, students will have:

1. Developed a deep understanding of the foundational and contemporary conversations in the entrepreneurship field
2. Learned how to conduct and present original, rigorous empirical research on entrepreneurship
3. Gained insight into the peer-review process from the perspectives of an author, reviewer, and editor

Format

This course will follow a seminar-style format, which means that learning will result not from the delivery of content by the instructor, but rather from discussions among the instructor and students. Class sessions will, therefore, be devoted to discussing, evaluating, debating, and critiquing the readings associated with each topic to better understand the material and to generate ideas for new research. To support this approach, students are expected to arrive at class having read and thought carefully about each of the readings and prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion about them.

Course resources

Students will use [Brightspace](#) to access course documents and select readings, to submit assignments, and to view grades and feedback on those assignments. Students will use online databases (e.g., [Business Source Complete](#), [Google Scholar](#), etc.) to access all other readings.

Class schedule

Class	Date	Topic	Due
1	1/29	<i>The research process I</i>	none
2	2/5	Domain of entrepreneurship	Weekly deliverables
	2/12	no class	
3	2/19	Directions for future research	Weekly deliverables
4	2/26	<i>The research process II</i>	Research canvas
5	3/5	Risk and uncertainty	Weekly deliverables
6	3/12	Opportunity	Weekly deliverables
7	3/19	Resources and resourcefulness	Weekly deliverables
8	3/26	<i>The research process III</i>	Working draft, Interactive presentation
	4/2	no class	
	4/9	no class	
9	3/28	Methods	Weekly deliverables
10	4/16	Psychological perspectives	Weekly deliverables
11	4/23	<i>The research process IV</i>	Submission; Review (due by 12:30 on F 4/24)
12	4/30	Sociological perspectives	Weekly deliverables
13	5/7	Strategic perspectives	Weekly deliverables
14	5/14	Exit and failure	Weekly deliverables
15	5/21	<i>Research presentations</i>	Revision, Response document, Presentation

Grading

Assignment	Percent of grade	
Class contribution	15	
Weekly deliverables	15	
Review	5	
Research paper	Research canvas	5
	Working draft	10
	Interactive presentation	5
	Submission	15
	Revision	15
	Response document	7.5
Presentation	7.5	

Grade	Range
A	93 - 100
A-	90 - 92
B+	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79
C	73 - 76
C-	70 - 72
F	0 - 69

Source: [Baruch College Faculty Handbook](#)

Assignments

Explicit details for all assignments as well as when they are due and how they will be evaluated are listed below. Success in the course is directly linked to adherence to this information, so students should read it carefully.

All submitted work must be original. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, Bard, Claude, etc.) to complete assignments may be allowed in some instances; however, any use of AI must be approved by the instructor ahead of time. If approved, students will be expected to use AI in an academically rigorous way (see Gatrella et al. (2024) for guidance) and are fully responsible for ensuring the accuracy of any AI-generated content, including but not limited to hallucinations and citations. Further, any and all use of AI must be explicitly acknowledged in a detailed statement about how AI was used, which must be submitted as a separate Word document along with the assignment. Failure to either gain pre-approval to use AI or give proper attribution to the approved use of AI is a form of academic dishonesty that may result in a grade of zero for the assignment and may result in a grade of F for the course.

All assignments must be submitted via Brightspace prior to the start of class (unless otherwise noted below) on the date noted in the Class Schedule above in order to receive credit. Any student anticipating a problem in meeting any assignment deadline, should contact the instructor at least one week before the due date to discuss how to remedy the problem; otherwise, late assignments will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero, except in the most extenuating of circumstances.

Readings

A complete list of readings for the course is available on [Brightspace](#). These readings have been carefully selected to provide a broad overview of the entrepreneurship field. They represent a mix of seminal ideas and novel approaches to studying each topic, and while not exhaustive, should provide students with a solid understanding of the main conversations in the field. Students are required to complete all readings prior to the class in which they will be discussed. All readings are accessible via online databases (e.g., [Business Source Complete](#), [Google Scholar](#), etc.) unless otherwise noted.

Class contribution

Because deep understanding occurs when students actively engage in critical discussion, each student's contributions to all class sessions will play an invaluable role in the collective ability to make sense of the theoretical, methodological, and procedural aspects of entrepreneurship research. As such, all students are expected to add meaningfully to the learning environment by thinking carefully and critically about the issues raised in the readings, formulating well-grounded thoughts about them, and then sharing these insights with their peers during classroom discussions. In addition, all students are expected to help their peers improve their own research and reviewing skills by providing thoughtful, constructive suggestions during periodic feedback sessions throughout the semester. Please note that comments expressed during class discussions will not be evaluated based on whether they are "right" or "wrong," but rather on the depth of thought with which they were developed and the degree to which they add to the collective understanding of the course topics. Thus, in grading class contribution, the following criteria will be used:

- Relevance – How well do your comments speak directly to the issues and concepts being addressed, extend our understanding of those issues or concepts, and reflect your adequate preparation to participate in the discussion?
- Additivity – How well do your comments reflect active listening to the comments of other class members by incorporating insights introduced earlier and building upon them?
- Substance – How well do your comments add new ideas to the conversation and make meaningful contributions to the ideas being exchanged?
- Persuasiveness – How well have you articulated and supported your points, such that others take note of the convincing nature of your arguments?

- Questioning – How reasonably and respectfully have you questioned the comments of others or challenged their assumptions?
- Consistency – How evenly has your participation been spread across all class sessions rather than concentrated in one or two sessions?

As a final point, please do not confuse attendance with contribution. Being present is a necessary but insufficient condition for a student's ability to contribute to a positive learning environment. That said, students are expected to attend all class sessions in full, so they should plan their commutes accordingly. Failing to attend, arriving late to, and/or leaving early from class will negatively affect a student's class contribution grade.

Weekly deliverables

In order to best make sense of the course topics, we will engage in thoughtful, critical discussion of all of the assigned readings, both individually and collectively. To facilitate these conversations, students will prepare the following assignments each week (a schedule of which is available on [Brightspace](#)), which will be completed individually and then shared with the entire class via a discussion board.

Reflections

A successful scholar will be able to digest and interpret a good deal of complex information. In order to stimulate thought on the individual readings (and to later serve as an accessible summary of those readings for future reference), one student each week will be assigned to prepare a short summary of each reading (~½ page for each reading in outline/bulleted form) that highlights the following:

- Purpose – What gap are the authors trying to fill, what fundamental assumption are the authors challenging, and/or how do the authors address an incompleteness, inadequacy, or incommensurability in the literature?
- Description – What general approach have the authors taken to conduct the research (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, theoretical, etc.)?
- Contribution – What main takeaways/insights (i.e., the novel ideas, arguments, findings, etc.) from the study move conversations in entrepreneurship research forward (i.e., what makes it interesting and important) and how do they do so?
- Strengths – What qualities of the study (i.e., thesis, theorizing, sampling, empirical techniques, etc.) are particularly novel and/or well-executed and why?
- Weaknesses – What errors, assumptions, controversial assertions, etc. (aside from any limitations acknowledged by the authors) should give us pause when interpreting the research and why?

Though short and to the point, reflections require substantive thought (i.e., "reflection") in order to identify the most important issues related to the above five categories (note, do not include additional categories). Thus, this assignment will be evaluated based on how thoughtfully and efficiently each article is summarized.

Synthesis

An important skill of a successful scholar (and entrepreneur, for that matter) is the ability to see connections among otherwise disconnected ideas. In order to hone this skill, one student each week will be assigned to synthesize the key issues across all of the readings for the topic. Note, the goal is not to summarize each article in sequential fashion (though you may be tempted to do so), so if you find that each paragraph you write pertains to only one of the articles, you are not synthesizing. Instead, the goal is to weave together an integrative discussion about how the articles can collectively inform our understanding of the overarching topic. Thus, each paragraph should discuss how a theme or an idea related to that topic is informed by multiple articles. Following are some questions to help stimulate the synthesis:

- What is the overarching issue being addressed across the entire set of readings?
- What is/are the common thread/s that links the various readings together?

- What nuances/divergent approaches have the various authors taken in researching the topic?
- On what issues is there agreement and/or disagreement?
- What do we know about the topic from reading these articles as a whole?

Syntheses should be both succinct (~750-1,000 words) and well-articulated (essay form, scholarly writing) and will be evaluated based upon how well they integrate that week's readings into a cohesive story of what we know about that week's topic based on the assigned readings.

Class lead

In addition to thinking critically on their own about a given topic, scholars must also demonstrate the ability to challenge others to think critically as well. To this end, one student each week will be assigned to lead a discussion on the major scholarly (i.e., theoretical and empirical, not practical) issues raised in the assigned readings as well as where research on the topic may go in the future. More specifically, the student will develop a set of ~8-10 questions that emerge directly from the readings and which are designed to stimulate conversation about how those readings might collectively shape our theoretical and empirical understanding of the overall topic. Following are some points to consider about the readings (individually and collectively) that may help generate good discussion questions:

- Points of confusion
- Controversial issues
- Omissions in the research design
- Disagreement/debate among authors of different articles
- Ideas for future research (in addition to those identified by the authors)
- Insightful points raised in your peers' reflections/synthesis
- Personal thoughts/ideas about the topic

This assignment will be evaluated based on the depth of thought evident in the questions, the relevance of the questions to scholarly discussions of the topic, and the effectiveness of the student's command of the class discussion of the questions. Class lead questions must be prepared as a single PowerPoint slide (formatted with aesthetics in mind) that the student will share during the class in which that topic's readings will be discussed.

Review

Understanding the review process is essential for any serious scholar for at least three reasons. First, the peer review process serves as the foundation of the scientific process. Thus, all scholars must invest in their academic field by doing their fair share of reviewing. Second, in order to become a respected member of any scholarly community, you must be able to critically evaluate research in your field. This ability will not only make you a valued colleague and co-author, but also facilitate invitations for ad hoc reviewing, editorial review board membership, and editorships at high-quality conferences and journals, all of which will elevate your scholarly reputation. Third, publishing is not solely a function of the rigor of one's research, but also of the ability to make sense of and effectively respond to reviewers' and editors' comments on that research.

In order to help students gain insight into the review process, they will be assigned to conduct a review of a peer's submission. These reviews should begin by providing a confidential recommendation (see Table in Submission section below) and comments to the instructor and then provide somewhere in the neighborhood of 2-3 pages (single-spaced, 12-point font, MS Word) of comments on the submission. Note, this review will be single blind, meaning that the author will not know the reviewer's identity, though the reviewer will know the author's identity.

Given that this may be one of the first reviews students will have conducted, this assignment will not be evaluated based on whether the review accurately identifies all the strengths and weaknesses in the working draft or aligns with the instructor's comments on the submission, but rather on the depth of critical thought

with which it critiques the submission and the quality and constructiveness of the suggestions it provides to reconcile any limitations.

Students will be assigned a submission to review on the day those submissions are due as noted on the class schedule. Students will then have until 12:30 the following day to submit their reviews. This 24-hour turnaround is designed to get the feedback to authors as soon as possible so that they can maximize the amount of time they have to respond to the reviewers' comments as they prepare their revisions.

Research paper

The ability to publish high quality research is essential to a successful career as a scholar. Thus, each student will write an original research paper on a pre-approved topic within the entrepreneurship domain. All papers must be empirical in nature and include statistical analyses of data surrounding an entrepreneurial phenomenon (i.e., no case studies, qualitative studies, reviews, meta-analyses, etc.). Given the constrained timeline in which this paper must be completed, students are strongly encouraged to use publicly-available data. Please note, a link to a list of databases that may be useful, as well as exemplar articles that have used many of them, is available on [Brightspace](#). Given that a main objective of this assignment is to mirror the actual research process, there will be several deliverables associated with this assignment over the course of the semester to keep students on track:

Research canvas

During the first few weeks of the semester, students should think carefully about what puzzle, gap, problematic assumption, incompleteness, inadequacy, and/or incommensurability they see in the domain of entrepreneurship that they would be interested in researching. Based on a combination of these limitations, the student's interests, and the instructor's guidance, each student will complete a research canvas following the Dorobantu et al. (2024) article discussed on the first day of class (note, there is also a reference list that must be completed on page 2). Research canvases will be evaluated based on how effectively they address the questions on the canvas in a coherent, interconnected way.

During class, each student will have a maximum of 10 minutes to share their research canvas (as a single slide) with and explain the logic underlying it to their peers in an informal, roundtable-style discussion. Peers and the instructor will then have 15 minutes to provide constructive feedback on each canvas with an aim toward improving its focus, rigor, and contribution.

Working draft

Based on the oral and written feedback provided on the research canvas, each student will prepare a working draft of his/her research paper. The working draft should be ~10-15 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, MS Word), with a focus on the "front end." In other words, students need not have analyzed their data yet, but should have access to and have begun to explore it, as well as have a plan for how they will code and analyze it. Thus, working drafts should include the following major sections (note, this is a general guide from which students are free to deviate so long as the requisite information is included):

- Title – Choose something provocative and descriptive
- Abstract – Provide an overview of the research in 200 words or less
- Introduction – Make a case for why the research you are conducting is interesting and important (e.g., a gap worth filling, an assumption worth testing, a literature that is incomplete, inadequate, and/or incommensurate, etc.)
- Hypothesis development – Review relevant, current literature, identify a theoretical foundation for your conceptual model, explain the causal mechanisms at work, and present the conceptual model visually (i.e., a figure with boxes and arrows)
- Method – Explain in detail the sample (what database is being used), the measurement model (how will the dependent, independent, and control variables be operationalized), and the empirical approach (how will the data be analyzed)

Strategies for writing each of the above sections are discussed at length in the “Research Process” readings, so students should be sure to refer to them for more detail. Also, for the sake of consistency, and to prepare students for future submissions to top journals and conferences, working drafts must be formatted according to the Academy of Management Journal’s [Style Guide for Authors](#). Note, an idea is only as good as the reader’s ability to comprehend it; thus, grammar counts.

Working drafts will be evaluated based on how well (in terms of the logic, structure, organization, formatting, and grammar) they articulate the motivation, theoretical mechanism(s), and planned empirical approach for the research.

Interactive presentation

Papers that are promising but not quite developed enough for formal presentations are designated to informal, discussion-based presentation sessions at the leading academic conferences for entrepreneurship research, including the Academy of Management Conference and the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference. As the research papers at this stage of the course are similarly undeveloped at this point in the semester, and to gain experience in this format of presentation, students will share the main ideas of their working drafts with the instructor and their peers in a 25-minute roundtable discussion. Note, because this is a conversation (i.e., two-way dialogue) rather than a traditional presentation (i.e., one-way dialogue), PowerPoint will not be used to communicate any information except a visual representation of the model the student intends to test; thus, the only slide that may (and must) be used is a figure with boxes and arrows. The goal of this session, therefore, is for the student to explain the motivation, theoretical mechanism(s), and planned empirical approach of the working paper and for peers and the instructor to offer constructive feedback on how to improve the quality of the research and offer useful suggestions for the work ahead.

This assignment will be evaluated based on the clarity of the student’s explanation of the ideas behind the working paper and the slide limit (i.e., one slide only).

Submission

Based on the oral and written feedback provided on the working draft, students will prepare an initial draft of their research paper for submission. There is no page requirement; however, somewhere in the neighborhood of 30 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, MS Word) all-inclusive is a good estimate. The submission should include all of the major sections included in the working draft as well as the following:

- Results – Explain what you found and which hypotheses they do/do not support
- Discussion – Explain what the findings mean with respect to your theorizing as well as how they contribute to theory and practice more generally
- Limitations and directions for future research – Identify limitations with your study and how they might be improved upon by future scholars
- Conclusion – What is the main takeaway from the study
- References – Cite all sources
- Tables and figures – Please add these at the end of the manuscript (after the references) and call out where they belong in the text (i.e., “-----Insert Table ## about here -----”)

As with the working draft, students should refer to the articles in the various “Research Process” readings for more detail on these sections and format their submissions according to the Academy of Management Journal’s [Style Guide for Authors](#). Submissions will be evaluated based on the interestingness and importance of the topic, the logic, structure, and organization of the arguments, and the formatting and grammar employed to articulate the overall story.

In order to build upon the students' understanding of the peer-review and editorial processes and to provide them experience in responding to critiques of their own research, submissions will be handled as if they were submitted to a journal. Thus, the instructor will provide each student with a thorough review of his/her submission and render one of the following editorial decisions on it, which will correspond to a grade for the assignment per the rubric below:

Decision	Description	Points
Accept	No/minimal logical flaws in the manuscript; topic is interesting and important; excellent structure, organization, grammar, and/or formatting; publishable as is	100
Minor revisions	Some flaws with the theory and/or method; topic is interesting and important; good structure, organization, grammar, and/or formatting; all errors should be addressable in one round	95
Major revisions	Significant flaws with the theory and/or method; topic is interesting and important; satisfactory structure, organization, grammar, and/or formatting; all errors could be addressed with a substantial overhaul of the manuscript	85
Reject and resubmit	Serious flaws with the theory and/or method; weak structure, organization, grammar, and/or formatting; errors cannot be addressed without an entire rewrite of the paper, although the topic's interestingness and importance merit another opportunity to submit	75
Reject	Fatal flaws with the theory and/or method; topic has limited interestingness and importance; poor structure, organization, grammar, and/or formatting; no viable path forward for the research, and a new paper on a new topic is required	0-50

Revision

Based on the written feedback provided on the submission, students will prepare a revised draft of their research paper. This revision is expected to address the concerns outlined in the instructor's decision letter in substantive ways. As with the working draft and submission, students should refer to the articles in the various Research Process topics for more detail on these sections and format their submissions according to the Academy of Management Journal's [Style Guide for Authors](#). Revisions will be evaluated based on the interestingness and importance of the topic, the logic, structure, and organization of the arguments, and the formatting and grammar employed to articulate the overall story. As with the submission, the instructor will provide each student with a thorough review of his/her revision and render a second editorial decision on it along with a corresponding grade per the rubric above.

Response document

The difference between submitting a paper and publishing it is almost always determined by the author's responsiveness to the reviewers and the editor. For good or bad, those who review and edit journal submissions are the gatekeepers and, thus, authors must respond to their concerns in ways that appease them. This does not mean that authors have to do whatever the reviewers and editors say, but they do need to do most of it and, for those things they choose not to do, they must put forth a defensible (and respectful) argument in support of their non-action. Thus, in order to develop experience and competency in responding to reviewers and editors, students must document, point by point, how they revised their submissions in response to each of the individual concerns raised by the instructor (acting as the editor) and their peer reviewer. The response should be both parsimonious (i.e., do not cut-and-paste entire sections of the revision to show how the manuscript has evolved) and specific (i.e., provide a concise explanation of each change along with page references to where those changes reside in the revision). While preparing a response document may seem tedious, there are four important reasons for doing so:

- It is standard practice in the field
- It communicates to the reviewers and editors that all of their concerns have been addressed
- It minimizes the likelihood that reviewers and editor will introduce new concerns in future rounds
- It allows the author to present their version of what they did rather than allow reviewers and editors to infer what was done (or not) on their own

With the above in mind, this assignment will be evaluated based on the student's responsiveness to the editor's and reviewer's comments and his/her ability to concisely, but effectively, communicate how the manuscript improved as a result of the revision process. Response documents (single-spaced, 12-point font, MS Word) should include each comment made by the editor and reviewer, followed immediately by an explanation of the way in which the manuscript was (or was not) revised to address it.

Presentation

During class, students will present their revised research papers to their peers in a formal research presentation. Consistent with most conference guidelines, each student will have 15 minutes to present their papers (presentations will be timed), and there will be a 10-minute question and answer period. PowerPoint slides must be used; however, they should be used to aid the student in his/her communication of the research and not the other way around. Accordingly, this assignment will be evaluated based on the quality of the student's visual and oral communication of the research paper and adherence to time limits.

Academic integrity

All students are expected to abide by the [CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity](#), which states, in part:

- Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.

Academic sanctions in this class will range from an F on the assignment to an F in the course. All violations of this policy will be reported to the office of the Dean of Students and recorded in the student's permanent file.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Baruch has a continuing commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who may need some accommodation in order to fully participate in this class should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible at disability.services@baruch.cuny.edu. More information is available from [Student Disability Services](#).

Mental health services

The Baruch College Counseling Center provides free and confidential services focused on the mental health and well-being of the student body. Counselors are trained to provide culturally-responsive and compassionate care in both individual and group sessions to address a wide range of concerns, with a focus on the emotional, professional, and personal development of undergraduate and graduate students. Please visit the Baruch College Counseling Center [website](#) or call at 646-312-2155 for more information and/or to make an appointment. If you need immediate assistance outside of business hours (Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm), please visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [website](#) or call the 988 national crisis line to connect with trained counselors.

Faculty bio

Scott Newbert is Professor and Lawrence N. Field Chair in Entrepreneurship, the Academic Director of the Lawrence N. Field Programs in Entrepreneurship, and the founding Chair of the Lawrence N. Field Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Baruch College. He received his PhD in entrepreneurship and strategic management from Rutgers University. Before joining Baruch College, he was a Professor of Management at

Villanova University, where he held term appointments as the Harry Halloran Emerging Scholar in Social Entrepreneurship and the Anne Quinn Welsh Faculty Fellow in Honors. Dr. Newbert has taught doctoral-, masters-, and bachelors-level courses in entrepreneurship, design, strategy, and business ethics at Baruch College, Villanova University, Rutgers University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, and Monmouth University.

Dr. Newbert's research interests include the processes by which existing and nascent firms create value through the entrepreneurial use of resources, the determinants of firm creation, and the socioeconomic impacts of entrepreneurial activity. His research on these and related topics has appeared in the world's leading academic journals, including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Management Studies*, and *Journal of Business Ethics*, has received best paper awards from the *Academy of Management Conference*, the *Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference*, and *Entrepreneur and Innovation Exchange*, and has garnered more than 10,000 citations. Dr. Newbert also serves as a field editor for *Journal of Business Venturing*, the top-ranked entrepreneurship journal, an editorial board member for *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, *Journal of Small Business Management*, and *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, an online contributor for *Entrepreneur* magazine, and a member of CNBC's Disruptor 50 Advisory Council.

Prior to obtaining his PhD, Dr. Newbert worked in sales for Hershey Foods Corporation, consulted for several high-profile clients, including the Department of Homeland Security, Sandia National Laboratories, Colgate-Palmolive, and Johnson & Johnson, and co-founded Monmouth University's Division I FCS college football program.