

Startup

CS 183

Peter Thiel

Overview

Conception, launch, scaling, and growing of a successful tech company. Bridging the subjects of engineering, science, business, finance, and world history, topics will include: the technology revolution of the 20th century and prior eras; the economics of business; founding a startup; the importance of team vision and passion; long-term strategic planning; building a successful founding team; financing and the VC perspective; secrecy vs. openness; recruiting, managing growth, marketing, regulation and other operational topics. Assignments are designed to explore key concepts at greater depth, using real-world and hypothetical example companies. Inner accounts from the early days of startups including PayPal, Google and Facebook will be used as case studies. The class will be taught by entrepreneurs who have started companies worth over \$1B and VCs who have invested in startups including Facebook and Spotify. Students can expect to be proficient in core skills critical to the founding and growing of a tech company upon completion of this course.

Prerequisites: Introductory calculus and statistics (Math 41 and ENGR 155C, or equivalents); basic modeling skills in student's preferred coding language (e.g. C++, Java, Matlab, Excel).

Classes

Monday and Wednesdays

2:15-3:45pm

Annenberg Auditorium, Cummings Art Building

There will be no office hours unless otherwise announced.

Logistics

The course will be managed through CourseKit and other online resources as announced.

Textbooks

"Founders at Work" – Jessica Livingston

<http://amzn.to/HJiziS>

ISBN-10: 1430210788

"Venture Deals" – Brad Feld, Jason Mendelson

<http://amzn.to/H7B172>

ISBN-10: 0470929820

Grading

Assignments	30% of grade	5 problem sets at 6% each
Pitch deck project	35% of grade	10%: pitch deck, first revision 25%: revised deck presentation
Final exam	35% of grade	

Additional details will be provided as assignments approach.

Lectures

Class 1	Monday, April 2	The Challenge of the Future
Class 2	Wednesday, April 4	Party Like it's 1999?
Class 3	Monday, April 9	Value Systems
Class 4	Wednesday, April 11	The Last Mover Advantage
Class 5	Monday, April 16	The Mechanics of Mafia
Class 6	Wednesday, April 18	Thiel's Law
Class 7	Monday, April 23	Follow the Money
Class 8	Wednesday, April 25	Pitch
Class 9	Monday, April 30	If you Build it, Will They Come?
Class 10	Wednesday, May 2	After Web 2.0
Class 11	Monday, May 7	Secrets
Class 12	Wednesday, May 9	War and Peace
Class 13	Monday, May 14	You Are Not a Lottery Ticket
Class 14	Wednesday, May 16	Seeing Green
Class 15	Monday, May 21	Back to the Future
Class 16	Wednesday, May 23	Decoding Ourselves
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Class 17	Wednesday, May 30	Deep Thought
Class 18	Monday, June 4	The Founder as God
Class 19	Wednesday, June 6	Stagnation or Singularity