

**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

## Proposal for a New Course

- Course No: DESS xxx
- Course Title: Business and Finance Fundamentals for Design Entrepreneurs
- Per Week Lectures: 3 (L), Tutorial: 0 (T), Laboratory: 0 (P), Additional Hours[0-2]: \_\_\_\_\_(A), Credits  
(3\*L+2\*T+P+A): 3                                  Duration of Course: **Full Semester** / Modular
- Proposing Department/IDP : Design  
Other Departments/IDPs which may be interested in the proposed course: NA Other faculty  
members interested in teaching the proposed course: J. Ramkumar, Deepu Philips
- Proposing Instructor(s): Rajeev Jindal
- Course Description:

A) Objectives: By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand key business concepts and financial terminology relevant to launching or working in a design-driven business.
- Analyze and construct basic components of a business model – including value propositions, revenue streams, cost structure, and customer segments.
- Process to conduct market research to identify customer needs and market opportunities, and how to use this data to inform design and business decisions.
- Develop practical skills in budgeting and financial planning, including interpreting profit-and-loss statements and creating simple budgets.
- Compare different revenue models (e.g. subscription vs. direct sales) and pricing strategies and determine appropriate models for various design-oriented ventures.
- Explore funding options for startups (such as bootstrapping, loans, venture capital, crowdfunding) and understand the basics of fundraising and financial forecasting.

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B) Contents (*preferably in the form of 5 to 10 broad titles*):

S. No	Broad Title	Topics	No. of Lectures
1.	Introduction – Design Meets Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course introduction and expectations</li> <li>The role of business in design careers</li> <li>Basic business terminology (profit, revenue, costs, margin, ROI, etc.)</li> <li>Overview of how successful design-driven companies blend design and business (e.g. brief case of a design entrepreneur)</li> </ul>	6
2.	Market Research & Identifying Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding markets and users</li> <li>Basics of market research for entrepreneurs (market vs. user research, qualitative vs. quantitative methods)</li> <li>Market segmentation and target audience</li> <li>Assessing customer needs and pain points</li> <li>Introduction to competition analysis</li> </ul>	6
3.	Business Models & Value Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining a compelling value proposition: what your design offers and to whom</li> <li>Core components of a design-driven business model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key activities, resources, customer segments, channels</li> <li>Cost structure and revenue streams</li> </ul> </li> <li>Overview of common revenue models: direct sales, subscription, licensing, advertising</li> <li>Connecting value creation to revenue generation</li> </ul>	8
4.	Pricing & Financial Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundamentals of pricing: cost-based vs. value-based</li> <li>Pricing strategies: freemium, tiered pricing, dynamic pricing, etc.</li> <li>Understanding willingness to pay and its impact on profitability</li> <li>Sales forecasting basics: how pricing affects volume and revenue</li> <li>Introduction to financial statements (focus on Income Statement / P&amp;L)</li> <li>Revenue, expenses, gross/net profit, fixed vs. variable costs</li> <li>Interpreting a basic P&amp;L for a project or startup</li> <li>Budgeting essentials: forecasting revenue and expenses, startup vs. ongoing costs</li> <li>Cash flow basics and scenario planning (best/worst case)</li> </ul>	10
5.	Funding Strategy & Financial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding options for design businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bootstrapping, loans, grants, crowdfunding, angels, venture capital</li> </ul> </li> <li>Equity vs. debt financing – what's the difference and when to choose which</li> <li>What funders look for: traction, business model viability, pitch clarity</li> <li>Financial planning when raising funds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use-of-funds plans</li> <li>Key financial slides in a pitch deck</li> </ul> </li> <li>Balancing sustainability vs. growth: strategic financial thinking for entrepreneurs</li> <li>Personal vs. business budgeting considerations</li> </ul>	10

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C) Pre-requisites, if any (*examples: a- PSO201A, or b- PSO201A or equivalent*): DES-644

D) Short summary for including in the Courses of Study Booklet

To equip design entrepreneurs with essential knowledge and practical skills in business and financial management. The course aims to build financial literacy, strategic thinking, and a business mindset, empowering designers to make informed decisions, attract investment, manage budgets, and align their creative practice with sustainable business models.


7. Recommended books: Textbooks:

Theme	Title	Author(s)
Lean startup methodology and innovation	<i>The Lean Startup</i>	Eric Ries
Designing innovative business models	<i>Business Model Generation</i>	Alexander Osterwalder & Yves Pigneur
Understanding financial basics for entrepreneurs	<i>Financial Intelligence for Entrepreneurs</i>	Karen Berman & Joe Knight
Legal essentials for startups and entrepreneurs	<i>The Entrepreneur's Guide to Business Law</i>	Constance E. Bagley & Craig E. Dauchy
Linking creativity with entrepreneurial mindset	<i>Creative Entrepreneurship</i>	Helga Dittmar
Tools and processes for business design and innovation	<i>Design a Better Business</i>	Patrick Van Der Pijl, Justin Lokitz, Lisa Kay Solomon
Simplifying accounting concepts for non-finance founders	<i>Accounting for the Numberphobic</i>	Dawn Fotopulos
Comprehensive overview of entrepreneurship process	<i>Entrepreneurship: Theory, Process, and Practice</i>	Donald F. Kuratko

Popular Reading:

1. "Shoe Dog" by Phil Knight
2. "Start with Why" by Simon Sinek
3. "Zero to One" by Peter Thiel
4. "How to Make Sense of Any Mess" by Abby Covert
5. "This is Service Design Doing" by Marc Stickdorn et al.

8. Any other remarks:

Dated: 27-11-2025\_\_ Proposer: Rajeev Jindal 

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ DUGC/DPGC Convener: \_\_\_\_\_

**The course is approved / not approved**

**Chairman, SUGC/SPGC**

**Dated: \_\_\_\_\_**