

COURSE OUTLINE

Entrepreneurship Theory

PhD course

Responsible Teacher:
Associate Prof. Ewald Kibler
ewald.kibler@aalto.fi

Teaching Assistant:
PhD candidate, Bernadetta Ginting-Szczesny
bernadetta.ginting@aalto.fi

Entrepreneurship Unit
Department of Management Studies
Aalto University, School of Business

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1 Basic information

Name:	Entrepreneurship Theory
Teacher:	Ewald Kibler
Credits:	6 ECTS (160 hours of workload)
Period:	IV
Language:	English
Number of Students:	Max. 25
Target group:	Early or mid-stage Doctoral Students from Finnish Universities (interested in entrepreneurship-related research)
Working methods:	Contact teaching, independent studying, (virtual & in-class) group work, individual & team presentations, Q&A/panel discussions, personal guidance/feedback
In-class presence:	Four full days (9:15-17:00), 19–22 April 2022
Place/rooms:	Aalto School of Business, Aalto, 00076, Finland. Room for Tuesday (19.4.) – Thursday (21.4.): Otakaari, B-Sali (Y203a); Room for Friday (22.4.): Ekonominaukio 1 V001
Online platform:	Materials and assignments are shared/submitted via https://my-courses.aalto.fi/ . Non-Aalto students will be manually added to the <i>My-Courses</i> site by the teacher.
Course application:	Applications to be sent to ewald.kibler@aalto.fi by 11 February 2022. Notification of acceptance by 18 February 2022.
Organizing institutions:	(1) Entrepreneurship Unit, Department of Management Studies, Aalto School of Business / (2) <i>Kataja</i> - Finnish Doctoral Programs in Business Studies, Graduate School of Management & Organization (<i>GRAMO</i>): Home (kataja.eu)

2 Learning objectives and themes

The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of this doctoral course are aligned with the core learning objectives of the [PhD Curriculum \(in Entrepreneurship\) at the Aalto School of Business \(BIZ\)](#). The main goal of this course is to support doctoral students in learning how to approach and conduct theoretically original and relevant entrepreneurship research. Specifically, students will:

- gain an overview of the main research traditions and current themes in entrepreneurship research and learn about the different concepts and theoretical perspectives commonly applied;
- be able to identify research problems and under-explored phenomena in the entrepreneurship literature and learn to develop theoretically motivated research questions for generating novel contributions;
- learn to use theories from other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, economics, and geography, for studying entrepreneurship as a multifaceted phenomenon and pronouncedly multi-disciplinary field of scholarly inquiry;
- learn about different ways of theorizing and gain deeper insight into the process of publishing different genres of entrepreneurship research with a particular focus on making a theoretical contribution;
- be able to discuss their research ideas with peers and experienced entrepreneurship scholars, and collectively brainstorm about potential ways to advance their ongoing research;
- build and strengthen their research network and move from generating research ideas to writing a short academic—review, theoretical or empirical—paper of topical interest.

Note! For a more detailed overview of the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) (i.e., linked to knowledge-, skills-, and/or mindset-related ILOs) see *Table 1* in the Appendix. Three weeks after notification of acceptance to the course, students will also receive a detailed outline of the specific content of the individual lectures and workshop sessions through *MyCourses*.

3 Instructions and assignments

While assigned groups of students are expected to (virtually) meet up once before the workshop, all contact teaching (including lectures, class discussions, presentations, and teamwork sessions) will be organized as part of the **four-day course workshop** taking place from **April 19 – 22, 2022**. All course information, materials and assignments will be shared/submitted via *MyCourses*.

The course involves the following assignments:

Prior to the course, students are required to

1. choose and read at least *five articles* from a list of seminal academic papers in entrepreneurship provided by the teacher
2. submit an *individual paper proposal* (as PDF, between 1500 - 2500 words, including a maximum of 10 references) by **April 1, 2022** through *MyCourses*
3. (virtually) meet with another course participants (pre-selected by the teacher) and to discuss one scientific article provided by the teacher
 - a. prepare a short team reflection about the article (3-5 ppt-slides)

- b. submit the *PowerPoint-presentation slides* (as PDF) through *MyCourses* by **April 13, 2022**
4. read and comment on *two paper proposals* of other participants (assigned by the teacher)
 - a. submit *at least two broad ideas/suggestions* (100-200 words per proposal, as PDF) for how the assigned paper proposals might be improved through *MyCourses* by **April 15**

During the course, students are required to

- present their prepared team reflections (5 min)
- present their submitted paper proposal (5 min)
- to be prepared to engage in the discussion about paper proposals in-class by sharing some thoughts on the two assigned paper proposals

After the course, students are required to build on their paper proposals and

- submit a short academic paper (as PDF, minimum of 6000 words, excluding reference list!) by **May 31, 2022** through *MyCourses*
 - submit their work-in-progress paper by **10 May, 2022** IF they want to make use of a 20-min feedback session before the final paper submission on May 31, 2022

4 Assessment and grading

All assignments will be evaluated and graded by the main instructor.

The *Aalto writing rubrics* (see Appendix, Table 2) will be used to assess both the paper proposals and the short academic papers. The *Aalto presentation rubrics* (see Appendix, Table 3) will be applied to assess both the individual presentations and the team presentations.

The **grades range from 1-5** (sufficient, satisfactory, good, very good, or excellent).

- **75%** of the final grade is based on the short academic paper
- **15%** of final grade is based on the paper proposal submission and in-class presentation
- **10%** of the final grade is based on the team reflection/presentation in-class

Note! The four-day course workshop consists of 4 morning sessions (9:00-12:00) and 4 afternoon sessions (13:30 – 17:00). Participation in 6 out of 8 sessions is mandatory to pass the course.

5 Feedback to students and teacher

Throughout the four-day workshop, there will be several formal *and* informal opportunities for students to discuss and get feedback on their ideas from peers, the teacher, and other experienced scholars. About three weeks after the workshop (12 and 13 May) the teacher will offer a *virtual 20-min feedback session* for each student to discuss their (work-in-progress) academic paper to be submitted by 31 May. **Note!** Students who want to make use of the optional feedback session are required to submit their *work-in-progress paper* by *10 May* through *MyCourses*.

At the end of the four-day workshop, the teacher will also ask students to give feedback on several aspects of the course. Doing so, students will be asked to fill out a very *short feedback survey* (incl. about six closed and two open questions) as well as to *reflect on the course design and content in-class* as to help the teacher identify ways to further improve the course.

6 Example of a course workshop day

A typical course workshop day comprises of a morning session (9:00-12:00) and an afternoon session (13:30 – 17:00). Each session addresses one main theme emphasized in the course. The morning session starts at 9:00 with a 1:15 hour lecture by the teacher, followed by a 15min break. Between 10:30 – 11:15 student teams present and discuss their reflections of a specific research theme/problem with peers and the teacher. Then, the teacher gives a short lecture (30min) to introduce further ideas/concepts/aspects around the theme of the morning session. The morning session closes with a 15min Q&A session, followed by a 1:30h lunch break.

The afternoon session starts at 13:30 with a 30min (interactive) lecture by the teacher on the next main theme of the course, followed by a team discussion/exercise and a short Q&A session (30min). After a 15min break, between 14:45 – 16:00 students will present and discuss their short paper proposals in smaller groups (incl. peers and at least one senior researcher/professor). The day typically concludes with a short speech (20min) by, and Q&A session with, a guest professor who serves/has served as an editor of an academic journal which publishes entrepreneurship research. On one of the workshop days, the teacher will also organize a social event for participants.

7 Prerequisites

The course is designed as cross-disciplinary and accessible to doctoral students from diverse backgrounds and in different stages of their PhD journey. However, it might be especially useful for 1st or 2nd year doctoral students interested in doing conceptual or empirical research in the field of entrepreneurship, and those interested in applying entrepreneurship (theories, contexts or cases) to adjacent fields such as organization and management studies, international business, economics, marketing, business ethics and business history.

8 Overview of estimated workload (hours/credits)

Main task	Task examples	Hours	Credits
Reading	Reading (a) five assigned scientific articles, (b) two paper proposals from peers, (c) one further article for group reflection work (see below); (d) around 10 scientific articles for paper proposal and final paper	42,00	1,6
Writing	Writing (a) a paper proposal between 1500 - 2500 words (including a maximum of 10 references) and (b) a short academic paper (minimum of 6000 words, excluding reference list!)	82,00	3,1
Contact sessions	Morning/afternoon lectures, individual/group presentations, group discussions & exercises, guest speakers' presentations, Q&A sessions, social networking, etc.	30,00	1,1
Group work	(a) Discussing one assigned scientific article in a group pre-contact session and (b) joint preparation of a presentation summarizing the group's main reflection points	6,00	0,2
		160,00	6
		<i>hours of work</i>	<i>study credits</i>

9 Instructor's contact information and short bio

Associate Professor, Dr. Ewald Kibler, Aalto School of Business, Ekonominaukio 1, PO Box 21210, Aalto, 00076, Finland, Email: ewald.kibler@aalto.fi, Tel.: 0403538442, AaltoWebsite: [ewald kibler](#); Publications: [GoogleResearchProfile / ResearchGateProfile](#)

Ewald Kibler is Professor (Associate) at Aalto School of Business (BIZ) and serves as Academy of Finland Researcher (until 2023). He received his M.A. in Sociology from the University of Graz, Austria, and his Ph.D. in Economic Geography from the University of Turku, Finland. Ewald's research combines quantitative and qualitative methods and is pronouncedly multi-disciplinary, applying theories from psychology, sociology, and geography. His research interests include new venture formation and legitimation; entrepreneurial imaginations and failure; social and sustainable business venturing, regional and institutional embeddedness of entrepreneurship; entrepreneurship in crisis and extreme settings, late-career entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial wellbeing; entrepreneurial discourse and narratives; cultural entrepreneurship and institutional work. Ewald's research has been published in a number of top-tier academic journals, such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, *Research Policy*, *Human Relations*, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *Regional Studies*, and *Journal of Economic Geography*. Ewald is Editorial Review Board Member of the leading entrepreneurship journals *Journal of Business Venturing*, *International Small Business Journal*, and *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*. He is also Editorial Review Board Member of *Academy of Management Discoveries*, and regularly serves as a peer-reviewer for established management journals, such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Management Studies*, and *Organization Studies*, and frequently collaborates with policymakers, including advising ILO, the OECD, and the European Commission on entrepreneurship matters.

Teaching assistant: Bernadetta Ginting-Szczesny, Aalto University School of Business, Ekonominaukio 1, PO Box 21210, Aalto, 00076, Finland, Email: bernadetta.ginting@aalto.fi

Bernadetta is a PhD candidate in the Entrepreneurship unit at Aalto University School of Business. She has received an MA in Human Rights and Conflict Management from Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, an MSocSc in Social Psychology from University of Helsinki, and a Bachelor of Psychology from Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. Bernadetta's research explores the socio-psychological dimensions of entrepreneurship and the transformative potential of entrepreneurship for individuals in constrained contexts. Her current research interests include prospective entrepreneurial engagement in planned economies, narrative identity work under gendered constraints, and team entrepreneurial passion. She also has an interest in advancing visual methodologies in entrepreneurship research. Her research has been published in *Academy of Management Discoveries* and *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*.

10 Appendix

Table 1. An analytical overview of the course's intended learning outcomes (ILOs) with regards to academic knowledge, professional skills, and curiosity/mindset

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	Academic knowledge	Professional Skills	Curiosity/Mindset
<i>After this course, doctoral students will...</i>			
ILO1 - gain an overview of the main research traditions and current themes in entrepreneurship research	Essential to acquire		
ILO2 - learn about the different theoretical perspectives commonly applied in the entrepreneurship literature	Essential to acquire		
ILO3 - be able to critically discuss and identify research problems and under-explored phenomena in the entrepreneurship literature	Essential to acquire	Important to gain	
ILO4 - be better equipped to develop and present a theoretically motivated hook, framing and research question		Important to gain	
ILO5 - learn to approach entrepreneurship as a multifaceted phenomenon and pronouncedly multi-disciplinary field of research	Essential to acquire		Useful to develop
ILO5 - learn to reflect on and use theories from other disciplines in the social sciences, such as psychology and sociology		Important to gain	Useful to develop
ILO6 - gain deeper insight into the process of publishing different types of (single-authored and co-authored) entrepreneurship research	Important to know		
ILO7 - better understand how to make and present a novel theoretical contribution to a literature, discourse, or debate	Important to know		
ILO8 - learn to and openly and collectively brainstorm about potential ways to advance their ongoing research		Essential to gain	Important to develop
ILO9 - be able to discuss their research ideas with peers and experienced entrepreneurship scholars		Important to gain	Useful to develop
ILO10 - be able to build and strengthen their research network and collaborations		Important to gain	Useful to develop
ILO11 - be able to move from generating research ideas to writing a short academic paper of topical interest	Essential to acquire	Important to gain	

Table 2. Business Writing Rubrics
Business writing rubric
Aalto University School of Business

	0	1-2	3	4	5
Reader focus	The writing is not suitable for the context, lacks a reader focus and / or much of the content is unsuitable for the given objective. Audience composition, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are overlooked.	Some of the content is context-specific, reader-focused and in line with the overall objective. However, key aspects such as audience composition, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are largely overlooked.	Content is to a large degree context-specific, suitable for the readership and aligned with the communication objective. However, there may be some information which fails to take into consideration audience composition, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude or motivation.	Content is context-specific (internal and external use), and mostly appropriate for the reader and the communication objective. Audience composition, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are all addressed.	Content is context-specific (internal and external use), appropriate for the reader and aligned with the communication objective. Audience composition, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are fully addressed.
Content development	<p>The message is fragmented and there is no sense of a meaningful whole. Message requires rereading; many sections remain unclear.</p> <p>The text is difficult to read. Ideas are not divided into logical units and the central idea is unclear. No reader-friendly devices are used.</p> <p>The text fails to follow the conventions specific to a particular genre (e.g. press release).</p> <p>In persuasive writing, claims are unclear and unsubstantiated.</p>	<p>Although some passages hold together, there is little overall sense of a meaningful whole. Frequent rereading of passages may be necessary; some sections may still remain unclear.</p> <p>Little attention is paid to paragraphing and ideas are vague and lack appropriate support. Reader-friendly devices are not used.</p> <p>The text fails to follow the conventions specific to a particular genre (e.g. press release).</p> <p>In persuasive writing, claims may not be substantiated by suitable evidence.</p>	<p>Message forms an overall sense of meaning around a central idea and has a generally logical progression throughout. However, occasional rereading is necessary.</p> <p>Content is not always divided into clear logical units and the central idea may be inadequately developed. Reader-friendly devices are used to some extent.</p> <p>When necessary, the text mostly follows the conventions specific to a particular genre (e.g. press release).</p> <p>In persuasive writing, a number of the claims might lack solid, compelling evidence.</p>	<p>Message forms a meaningful whole to a very large degree and there is a controlling idea that is logically developed throughout the text. Rereading is rarely necessary.</p> <p>Content is divided into clear logical units and the idea is almost always sufficiently presented and adequately developed. Reader-friendly devices are used but they are not always as effective as they could be.</p> <p>When necessary, the text follows the conventions specific to a particular genre (e.g. press release).</p> <p>In persuasive writing, most claims are supported by solid, compelling evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) from relevant and respected sources.</p>	<p>Message forms a meaningful whole with a controlling idea that is logically developed throughout the text. Rereading is unnecessary, even when content is complex.</p> <p>Content is divided into clear logical units consisting of a central idea which is very well developed. Reader-friendly devices (headings, listing, bulleting) are used very effectively throughout the text.</p> <p>When necessary, the text follows the conventions specific to a particular genre (e.g. press release).</p> <p>In persuasive writing, claims are always supported by solid, compelling evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) from relevant and respected sources.</p>
Language	The number and frequency of grammatical and vocabulary inaccuracies makes it difficult to understand the text. Inappropriate tone.	Meaning often unclear. Many grammatical and vocabulary inaccuracies. Tone frequently inappropriate for the given readership. The reader might be confused or offended by some of the language used.	Meaning might not always be clear. Some inappropriateness of style and tone. Frequent grammatical inaccuracies and vocabulary slips which may hamper understanding from time to time.	Competent handling of the language. To a large degree, conveys ideas with clarity and fluency. Almost no inappropriateness of style and tone. There may be some grammatical inaccuracies and vocabulary slips.	Confident handling of the language. Conveys ideas with clarity and fluency. Meaning always clear. Style and tone are ideal for the context and given readership. There may be some minor grammatical inaccuracies and vocabulary slips.

Table 3. Presentation Rubrics
Business presentation rubric
Aalto University School of Business

	0	1-2	3	4	5
Audience orientation	The presentation lacks an audience focus and much of the content is unsuitable for the given objective. Audience background, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are completely overlooked.	Only some of the content is suitable for the audience and the objective might be unclear. Key aspects such as audience background, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are largely overlooked.	Content is mostly targeted at the audience and aligned with the communication objective. However, there may be some information which fails to take into consideration audience background, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude or motivation.	Content is targeted at the audience and aligned with the communication objective. Audience background, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are all addressed.	Content is clearly targeted at the audience and aligned with the communication objective. Audience background, knowledge, needs and concerns, attitude and motivation are fully addressed.
Organisation	The presentation is fragmented. It lacks any clear structure and overall sense of coherence, which makes it difficult to follow. There may not be an introduction and / or conclusion. Claims are unclear and, in the main, unsubstantiated.	The presentation is not well organised and lacks overall coherence and cohesion, which means that key ideas remain unclear. There may not be a clear introduction and / or conclusion. Claims may not be substantiated by suitable evidence.	The presentation is clearly and logically organised. However, the core message could be more clearly stated and presented throughout in a more memorable way. The message is coherent and cohesive overall but the introduction and / or conclusion could be more impactful. Some claims might lack solid, compelling evidence.	The presentation is clearly and logically organised. The core message is clearly stated but could be better highlighted during the presentation. The message has three discernible parts: an introduction, body and conclusion. The body has a coherent structure but the introduction and /or the conclusion could be more impactful. Most claims are supported by solid, compelling evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) from relevant and respected sources.	The presentation is clearly and logically organised. The core message is clearly stated and highlighted throughout. The message has three discernible parts: a highly impactful introduction; a body with a coherent structure and clear transitions; and a strong conclusion, which repeats core messages and calls to action. Claims are always supported by solid, compelling evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) from relevant and respected sources.
Delivery	Delivery is not engaging as it does not do any of these things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capturing and maintaining audience interest and attention - offering opportunities for audience interaction - providing interesting facts and figures, examples, illustrations, analogies, quotations, stories to support the message - using nonverbal techniques (body movement, gesture, eye contact) to make the presentation compelling - varying voice quality and pace 	Delivery is not particularly engaging as it fails to do many of these things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capturing and maintaining audience interest and attention - offering opportunities for audience interaction - providing interesting facts and figures, examples, illustrations, analogies, quotations, stories to support the message - using nonverbal techniques (body movement, gesture, eye contact) to make the presentation compelling - varying voice quality and pace 	Delivery is somewhat engaging by doing some of these things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capturing and maintaining audience interest and attention - offering opportunities for audience interaction - providing interesting facts and figures, examples, illustrations, analogies, quotations, stories to support the message - using nonverbal techniques (body movement, gesture, eye contact) to make the presentation compelling - varying voice quality and pace 	Delivery is relatively engaging by doing most of these things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capturing and maintaining audience interest and attention - offering opportunities for audience interaction - providing interesting facts and figures, examples, illustrations, analogies, quotations, stories to support the message - using nonverbal techniques (body movement, gesture, eye contact) to make the presentation compelling - varying voice quality and pace 	Delivery is engaging by doing all of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capturing and maintaining audience interest and attention - offering opportunities for audience interaction - providing interesting facts and figures, examples, illustrations, analogies, quotations, stories to support the message - using nonverbal techniques (body movement, gesture, eye contact) to make the presentation compelling - varying voice quality and pace