



至善館
SHIZENKAN

Graduate School of Leadership and Innovation

Shizenkan University

Non-Degree Program Application Guidelines

Entrepreneurship and Business Start-up

2023 Academic Year



Purpose

Shizenkan University offers non-degree courses that allow those who are not enrolled in the Shizenkan MBA Program to take, on a course-by-course basis, some of the courses offered in the Shizenkan MBA Program and receive credit for them. For each course, applicants are screened and a small number of students are accepted; those who successfully complete the course will receive credit.

These guidelines describe the application process for the "Entrepreneurship and Business Start-up" course, which is offered in English. For information on other courses offered as a part of a non-degree program please refer to p. 6.

Outline of the Course

For the last two decades, startups have been attracting increasing attention worldwide with capital, talent, government support culminating into creating hundreds of “unicorns” (i.e. private companies that are valued over US\$ 1 billion). At the center of these highgrowth companies are the entrepreneurs that orchestrate the birth, growth, pivoting, and exiting of these organizations. Such entrepreneurs are not born during the classroom lectures but are nurtured through action: often theorizing, testing, iterating, and pivoting around multiple concepts.

The Entrepreneurship course focuses on the process of converting an opportunity into a profitable and sustainable new business. Addressing new markets and building an organization may seem challenging for participants whose professional experience is mostly with established firms. By placing participants in the role of the entrepreneur, the course enables students to learn how to apply and feel comfortable with a range of entrepreneurial ways of thinking and acting. The sessions will provide learnings and frameworks that participants can use in venture projects and their future careers.

(For details, please refer to the subject syllabus at the end of this document.)

Method and Dates of Classes

Session 1,2, and 3 will be held at the Shizenkan campus. Session 4 and 5 will be held online (using Zoom) or in person. Since Shizenkan campus is closed for the dates of session 4 and 5, it will be held outside of the campus (tentative). The dates and times of the classes are as follows (Japan Standard Time).

Session 1: Sunday, November 5, 13:00-17:30

Session 2: Sunday, November 15, 13:00-17:30

Session 3: Sunday, December 3, 13:00-17:30

Session 4: Saturday, December 9, 9:00-13:30

Session 5: Saturday, December 16, 9:00-13:30

Admission Process

(1) Overview

The admissions process is a two-stage process with document screening and an interview. In the interview, we will examine your motivation and readiness for taking the course, including what you indicate in the application documents.¹ As this course is offered in English, the admissions process is conducted in English.

(2) Interview

The interviews will be conducted online using the Zoom platform. At the time of application, please select the date and time of the interview from the list of options. Zoom link and other details will be provided at the time of the initial notification of selection results.

Applicant Eligibility

As an applicant, you are required to have a minimum of three years full-time work experience and to fulfill one of the following conditions at the time of application:

- (1) Obtain a university or college degree
- (2) Obtain a bachelor's degree from the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education of Japan
- (3) Complete 16 years of education in a foreign country
- (4) Being designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan
- (5) Are considered to have qualifications in education, knowledge, skills and aspiration to be admitted in the program by the Shizenkan Admissions Committee
- (6) A clear and keen interest towards Entrepreneurship, with a strong intention of being involved in entrepreneurship as a founder or member of a startup, an investor, or other relevant ways.

¹ It is not compulsory to submit your GMAT or GRE results to enroll in the program.

Application Process

The application process consists of the following steps.

Step 1: Submitting the application form

- Please submit your application via the application form below. Select your interview time/date as instructed in the form. Note that you are required to fill in the "Your personal statement" section of the application form in English.

<https://forms.gle/8AwrTRk84YGi3TccA>

Step 2: Document screening and confirming interview schedule

- Based on the submitted documents, we will conduct the document screening. Those who pass the document screening will be invited for an interview. The interview schedule and Zoom URL will be sent to the e-mail address provided in the application form.

Step 3: Personal interview

- The interview will be conducted online (via Zoom). It will take approximately 30 minutes.
- The interview will be in English.

Step 4: Admission

- The Admissions Office will inform you of the admissions result after the document screening and interview.
- Successful applicants are required to pay the enrolment fee and tuition fees by bank transfer. Upon completion of the enrolment fee and tuition fee transfer, the student will be officially accepted as a non-degree student.

Application Deadline

- October 10th, 2023 by 12:00pm

Interview Schedule (tentative)

Based on the preferences entered in the application form, the applicant will be scheduled for 30 minutes on one of the following dates.

Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 18:30-21:00

Wednesday, October 18, 2023, 18:30-21:00

Schedule for Notification of Admissions Result (tentative)

Shizenkan will send the results to the e-mail address provided in the application form.

October 18, 2023 (Wednesday)

Enrollment and Registration Procedures

Please follow the instructions provided with the notification of acceptance.

The deadline for completing the procedures is Friday, October 27, 2023.

Application Forms

Please fill out the following information when submitting your application. Your application will be officially accepted when all items are completed. If all items are not submitted by the deadline, your application will not be accepted.

1. Full name
2. Gender
3. Nationality
4. Date of birth
5. Address
6. Telephone number
7. E-mail address
8. Current employer
9. Education history
10. Your personal statement: Interests and motivation towards the topic; commitment to coursework.
(Please write in English)
11. Interview schedule preference
12. Copy of passport (for non-Japanese nationals)
13. Copy of residence card (for non-Japanese nationals)

Application Fee

No application fee is required for the academic year 2023.

Academic Fees

The following table shows the academic fees required for enrollment in the program.

Enrollment fee	JPY30,000
Tuition fee	JPY200,000
Total	JPY230,000

- (1) The tuition fees include costs for case materials used in the course; however, they do not include costs of textbooks and other optional academic materials.

Protection of Personal Information

All personal information that Shizenkan obtains from the applicant will be used solely for the purpose of admissions screening and the student registration subsequent to admissions. For more information on our personal information policy, please kindly refer to our website. By applying, you are considered to have agreed to the policy.



Notes

- (1) Credit will be awarded to those who meet the credit requirements for the courses taken and a certificate of credit will be issued upon request.
- (2) Neither a commuter certificate (for commuter passes) nor a student discount certificate will be issued to non-degree course students.
- (3) Being a student in a non-degree program does not qualify you for student residency status.
- (4) Please note that if for any reason the course is not offered, permission to enroll may be revoked.

Other Non-degree Courses Offerings

In addition to this course, Shizenkan plans to also accept non-degree course students for other courses. The following list indicates eligible courses for the period from November 2023 to March 2024. We will announce the start of the application as shown in the table.

Course Name	Language	Course Start Date	Announcement Period
Entrepreneurship and Business Start-up	English	November/December 2023	September 2023
Creating Impact Business and Ecosystems	Japanese	November/December 2023	September 2023
Platform Strategy	Japanese	November/December 2023	September 2023
Creating and Managing Social Impact	Japanese	January/February 2024	November 2023
Creating and Managing Social Impact	English	January/February 2024	November 2023
Leadership and Negotiation	Japanese	January/February 2024	November 2023
Leadership and Negotiation	English	January/February 2024	November 2023

Course Title: Entrepreneurship and Business Start-up
Year / Semester: 2nd year / 1st semester
Credit: 2 credits (elective course)
Faculty: Associate Prof. Shunsuke Nagao
Class Format: On campus (in person) and online

OBJECTIVE:

For the last two decades, startups have been attracting increasing attention worldwide with capital, talent, government support culminating into creating hundreds of “unicorns” (i.e. private companies that are valued over US\$ 1 billion). At the center of these high-growth companies are the entrepreneurs that orchestrate the birth, growth, pivoting, and exiting of these organizations. Such entrepreneurs are not born during the classroom lectures but are nurtured through action: often theorizing, testing, iterating, and pivoting around multiple concepts.

The Entrepreneurship course focuses on the process of converting an opportunity into a profitable and sustainable new business. Addressing new markets and building an organization may seem challenging for participants whose professional experience is mostly with established firms. By placing participants in the role of the entrepreneur, the course enables students to learn how to apply and feel comfortable with a range of entrepreneurial ways of thinking and acting. The sessions will provide learnings and frameworks that participants can use in venture projects and their future careers.

POSITIONING:

This course is intended for students who have a realistic image of the challenges of being an entrepreneur or an in-house entrepreneur (in other words, for students who have their own business idea although it might be vague). Students who do not yet have an idea of a business they would like to establish, can take the course as a key member of another student’s business idea as an early “co-founding member”, upon gaining approval from the student they wish to join.

Students will create their own business model, test their ideas out of the classroom, iterate their model, and practice pitching their business model to the class as well as to guest lecturers. Although it is a simulated experience, it is designed so that students can experience the actual entrepreneurial and business creation process as much as possible.

In the process, it is required from students to integrate the knowledge and skills they obtained in their 1st year through the NUMBERS, FINANCE, MARKETING, ENVISION, DESIGN, STRATEGY courses, as well as the BUSINESS PLAN course in the 2nd year.

This course aims at accelerating the realization of individual business concepts partially by being held simultaneously with the 2nd year individual research projects (seminars).

In addition, this course will be held at the same time as the "Corporate Sustainability Innovation and Intrapreneurship" course. These courses differ in their focus, with the Entrepreneurship course being business-oriented and geared towards offering practical startup skills, while the Corporate Sustainability Innovation and Intrapreneurship course will focus on gaining insight into the philosophy and tools of a new generation of emerging sustainability intrapreneurs.

LEARNING APPROACH:

This course's primary objective is not to create a beautiful business plan on paper, but to have students go through the process of identifying a viable business idea and transforming that into an organizational entity through which people can channel their resources, energy and creativity to create economic value. Instead of taking a position of a critic, each student is required to think and act as an entrepreneur or as a founding team member of a startup. In particular, students are required to demonstrate not only logic but also passion and drive necessary to inspire and encourage people. In addition, during the classes, students will receive feedback on their business plans for concrete actions that will lead to commercialization, so that students can further brush them up beyond this course should they choose to do so.

WHO SHOULD TAKE THIS COURSE:

This course is for:

Students who will start and manage their own businesses at some point after graduation

Participants who want to understand how new business ventures are created and managed. This includes participants who plan to be involved with startups as employees, investors, customers, consultants, or business development managers in large enterprises. For careers such as these, it is useful to understand the venture creation process from the viewpoint of the entrepreneur

LANGUAGE:

The course will be conducted in English.

READINGS and LISTENINGS:

“A Strategy to meet the challenges of entrepreneurship”, Donald Sull, Financial Times, 2002
--- to be distributed via SOS before the first class

“Before the Startup”, Paul Graham Lecture at the Y-Combinator Startup Class, 2014.

Lecture transcript online here

<https://genius.com/Paul-graham-lecture-3-counterintuitive-parts-of-startups-and-how-to-have-ideas-annotated>

Lecture recording online here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ii1jcLg-eIQ>

“Do Things That Don't Scale”, Paul Graham, 2014.

Blog online here

<http://paulgraham.com/ds.html>

EVALUATION:

- Submission of 3 post-session assignments (after sessions #2/#3/#4)	30%
- Class participation and contribution	20%
- Final pitch deck and delivery*	50%

CODE OF CONDUCT:

The general policies outlined in the Code of Conduct apply.

In addition to these general policies, we are adding the following extra policies to this course:

First session participation is mandatory (whether the course would be conducted online or offline).

Students have the option to withdraw from the course within 72 hours after the conclusion of the first session.

During the first session, each student will share her/his business idea to the class. Students that decide not to work on their own business idea for this course, either before or after the first session, may still take this course by joining another classmate's idea as a value-adding team member. The student that wants to join a fellow classmate's business idea should clearly state and communicate to that classmate how (s)he will contribute (e.g. financial modeling, potential user interview, app development, recruiting, etc)

Students that receive an offer from a fellow student to join their business idea should assess the fit of that student with their business idea, and either accept or reject the offer. The maximum number of offers a student can accept is capped at two.

Within 72 hours after the conclusion of the first session, students pursuing their business idea are asked to submit by email a brushed-up business idea using the "Business Model Canvas" framework, and b) the name of the student that is joining with the pledged contribution. Similarly, students who have been accepted to join another student's business, will turn in a) the name of the student they are joining, and b) the contribution to that business they have pledged.

After 72 hours of the conclusion of the first session, we will drop any student who do not turn in either one of the above from the course.

Please note students are allowed/encouraged to invite their outside collaborators to join and contribute to their business ideas and participate in the course sessions as a team.

SESSION OVERVIEW:

Introduction to the Entrepreneur Course and the Entrepreneurial Journey (Nagao) [4.5 hours]

Fostering an Entrepreneurial Mindset and Core Skills (Nagao) [4.5 hours]

Your first 90 Days and How to Prepare for it (Nagao) [4.5 hours]

Brushing Up your Venture Pitch (Nagao) [4.5 hours]

Final Venture Pitch (Nagao) [4.5 hours]

Contact us



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