New ventures “happen” because specific persons—entrepreneurs—take action to convert their ideas, energy, knowledge, and ingenuity into something that, they believe is new, useful, and better than what currently exists. In essence, they take action to convert possibilities into reality, and in so doing, are the “human engines” of entrepreneurship. Recognizing this fact, and reflecting a growing volume of research in the field of entrepreneurship focused on the entrepreneur, this seminar focuses on the central role of individual entrepreneurs in new venture creation—and in entrepreneurship generally, wherever it occurs and in whatever specific form.

To accomplish this goal the seminar examines both theories and research relating to many aspects of human behavior and cognition, considering each from the perspective of how and why they are related to gaining the full understanding of this complex process. The course outline below provides detailed information on the many topics and issues to be considered, and will address many different questions, including these:

1. Where and how, do ideas for new products, services, etc. originate? In other words, what is the role of individual creativity in entrepreneurship?
2. What motivates entrepreneurs? In other words, why do specific persons choose this role?
3. Why do some individuals but not others recognize opportunities for new products or services? What is the role of basic perceptual and cognitive processes in this process?
4. Do entrepreneurs think differently than other persons? And if so, how—and why?
5. What is the role of entrepreneurs’ emotion and affect? And how entrepreneurs they deal with failure when they experience it?
6. What skills, competencies, knowledge, and personal characteristics do entrepreneurs need to succeed?
7. Do entrepreneurs function as leaders? And if so, how do they exert influence over and motivate others—key tasks for all leaders?

Requirements for the seminar, and grading criteria are outlined below.

**Grades:**
- Active Participation in class discussions: 20%
- Discussion leader sessions: 25%
- Term Paper and Presentation: 35%
- Final exam: 20%
Active Participation involves:

1. Reading assigned articles, chapters, and other materials
2. Active participation in class discussion of all articles, chapters, and materials
3. Regular attendance

Serving as a Discussion leader involves:

1. Providing an organized summary of each assigned reading
2. Providing a synthesis of the assigned readings and thoughts for future research
3. Initiating class discussion of the assigned readings

Final paper and presentation involves:

1. Writing a paper examining entrepreneurship-related phenomena in a format tailored to a specific journal (i.e., the paper should be prepared in correct journal format)
2. Presentation of this paper to the class.

The final exam will be an essay exam.

Course Outline

Readings will be posted on the D2L site for the course.

Week 1 Theory—and the Question, “Do entrepreneurs matter?”


Week 2: Personality, Individual Differences, and…Genetic Factors (?)


**Week 3: Motivation and Intentions**


**Week 4: Cognition—Basics**


Dew, N., Read, S., Sarasvathy, S.D., & Wiltbank, R. 2009. Effectual versus predictive logics in entrepreneurial decision-making: Differences between experts and novices. *Journal of Business Venturing, 24*: 287-309. (And then also read the following critique of this work!)

Baron, R.A. (2009). Effectual versus predictive logics in entrepreneurial decision making:


**Week 5: Cognition: Opportunity Recognition**


**Week 6: Creativity and Innovation**


**Week 7: Affect**


**Week 8: Skills, Competencies, Knowledge**


**Week 9: Learning, Improvisation, Effectuation**


**Week 10: Subjective Well-Being—the Non-economic side**


**Week 11: Leadership and Influence**


**Week 12: Overcoming our “Split Personality”: Integrating Micro and Macro Perspectives—Can We Do It? And How?**


And more to follow….

**Weeks 13, 14, 15**

Presentation of Papers; Final exam