

MGMT 2650

Culture and Institutions of the Tech Sector: Bridging Research and Practice

Fall 2022, Quarter 1 (Aug 30 – Oct 19, TR 3:30-5 pm, JMHH G65)

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Office hours (zoom): Tues 10 - 11 am ET and Thurs 7:30-8:30 pm ET

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Researchers and practitioners alike are fascinated by the culture and institutions of the tech sector – its people, practices, and organizations. In MGMT 2650, we explore this sector using a combination of academic research papers, popular press articles and alumni involvement. Live sessions feature panel discussions of key topics with Wharton/Penn alumni from the tech sector. Pre-session videos summarize research findings and introduce alumni panelists and researchers.

Learning objectives

- Understand the managerial, organizational, and regional institutions that characterize the tech sector, with particular emphasis on the San Francisco Bay Area
- Forge connections with our tech-focused alumni
- Build critical thinking skills by assessing the applicability of research findings across time, geography, industry, and practices

Session guide

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Nurturing new ventures
- 3 Product-market fit
- 4 Business experimentation
- 5 Finding the right investor
- 6 Group meetings with teaching team
- 7 Working time for groups
- 8 The geography of entrepreneurship
- 9 Serial entrepreneurship
- 10 Tech acquisitions
- 11 Group meetings with teaching team
- 12 Overcoming funding bias
- 13 Group presentations
- 14 Young alumni panel

TENTATIVE 8/20/22 --- see Canvas for updates

Required deliverables and grading (see Canvas for full details)

- Reaction papers (4) 16 points
- Discussion rounds - post one article and two replies (choose 2 of 10) 12 points
- Participation:
 - Guest question submissions (at least 6 sessions) 6 points
 - Session attendance (at least 12 sessions) 6 points
 - In-session activity (speaker questions / chat box) 6 points
- Group project – assess generalizability of research finding:
 - Interim progress reports (2) 8 points
 - Video highlighting findings 10 points
 - Feedback to another group’s video (2) 6 points
 - Final written report 30 points

Class policies

Add/drop: Since this class is only half a semester long, the add/drop period is abbreviated. No adds will be processed after the first week of class. Drops after week 3 will be issued a W for withdrawal.

Attendance: Our expectation is that you attend class sessions in person unless you have an excused absence as specified by University policy. If so, notify our teaching team with a Course Absence Report to attend remotely or watch the session recording. For other health or technology challenges, contact the teaching team to discuss accommodations. If you are not feeling well, please do not come to the classroom!

Electronics: Many of our sessions include virtual panelists. In these cases we will operate in “watch party” format – meaning that you will use your device for zoom only. Zooming allows the panelists to see you during the main session, helps the teaching team monitor remote attendance, gives us the opportunity to use the chat function simultaneously, and allows you to meet the panelists in smaller (voluntary) breakouts. When using zoom, we expect that your video will be on and your name clearly specified on your video screen.

Masking/food: Masks are strongly encouraged in the classroom. Eating is discouraged.