



Carleton
University

Sprott
School of Business



Creative Thinking: BUSI4117 B

FALL 2026

Instructor	Dr. Robert Smart
Email Address	robert_smart@carleton.ca
Class Times	Weds 11:35am – 2:25 pm
Modality	Lecture three hours a week.
Office Hours	Online by appointment
Office Location	7020 NI
TA Name/Email	TBA

Pre-Requisites & Preclusions:

Prerequisites: third-year standing, and BUSI 2101 or BUSI 2702 (with a grade of C- or higher in each), and permission of the Sprott School of Business.

Precludes additional credit for BUSI 3117B taken prior to 2020/21

Course Description/Instructor's Statement

Increases student skills in areas beyond technical expertise, with a focus on the importance of fluidity, risk taking, and idea generation. Emphasis on creativity and design as processes, with exposure to various techniques and concepts at multiple levels (individual, group, organization).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an interdisciplinary course that will challenge both your creative capabilities and challenge your assumptions about the creative process. All well-planned aspects of business involve a process of design. In this course, you may work with partners in Industrial Design and other faculties around the university depending on your creative project.

This is not a lecture-based course with final exam and standard project with PowerPoint presentation. It requires self-direction, the courage to both create and express ideas, the ability to work collaboratively, and significant effort on your part. Procrastination or leaving the bulk of work until the last minute is a guaranteed recipe for disaster.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

You will be in one of two groups in this section, “Tanzania – Courts for Change”, or “Northern Lights - Courts for Change”. Your project descriptions are as follows:

Northern Lights Courts for Change. This project also involves co-developing an Indigenous community-led program oriented towards sport and wellness. Projects in this category involve working with either the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun in Mayo, Yukon, or students in Masset, BC.

Tanzania Courts for Change. You will be taking forward one of several projects currently in development in the rural district of Longido, Tanzania. You will work closely with both the Industrial Design student originally behind the project, possibly the business student involved last year, and our representative on the ground in Longido. You will develop community engagement and diffusion strategies, a theory of change, funding strategies, and supervise prototype construction and testing, including cost and activity monitoring.

Ethics Training (Northern and Tanzania). In order to participate in the course, you will need to complete online ethics training offered by the Government of Canada. The training module is found here: <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome> . When you have finished the training, you will download the certificate and forward it to the instructor. This training is mandatory for us to obtain ethics clearance for the course.

As the feasibility of field trips becomes more defined, you will have the opportunity to raise funds on Carleton's FutureFunder crowdfunding platform to partially offset the cost of your field trip.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students taking this course will hone their creative skills in the context of a real-life project. They will also gain skills in problem definition, critical thinking, visual thinking and presentation, and entrepreneurship.

Required/Optional Materials & Prices

Materials that will be required for you to obtain will depend on the community in which you will be working.

Grading Scheme

<i>Grade Item</i>	<i>Proportion of Course Grade</i>	<i>Date due</i>
Quizzes	20%	Fall/Winter
BUSI 4117 Grant Writing Competition	15%	Fall/Winter
Weekly meetings, notes and community engagement	15%	Fall/Winter
Project Pitching & Fundraising	15%	Fall/Winter
Project Website & Progress Assignments	10%	Fall/Winter
Business Plan & Prototype	25%	Winter
Total	100%	

BUSI4117 Grant Writing Competition. The grant writing competition is designed to give you experience with the grant writing process and how it can enhance social entrepreneurship projects. You will be required to research your community and present your business idea clearly and concisely, following the requirements of the grant.

Weekly meeting and community engagement reports. This is a “real-life” project that will have an impact not only on your mark, but also both the community you are working with and the reputation of the school. Each week, you will identify and describe interactions with a) your interdisciplinary partner

and (b) community (if applicable). You will be expected to have meaningful contact with your co-creators every week. The report should also include your goals for the following week. You will upload this assignment to a folder in your project.

Fundraising and project pitch performance. Evaluation on this metric will be based on achievement of goals to be set in the first weeks of the term, as well as marketing efforts. You will also be graded on your ability to pitch your project to different stakeholders.

Project Website and Progress Assignments. Assignments will be used to help you progress toward your final deliverable. A major deliverable will be a project website that will be used to support your business pitch.

Quizzes. Quizzes will be based on lectures and relevant readings that impact your “real-life” project work. These quizzes will provide a theoretical connection for your work.

Business Plan and Prototype. Information on content and structure to be provided. Deliverables may be modified to fit the context of your project. Each year the final project deliverables will be determined through a process of community co-creation. You are responsible for developing a creative product or service and pitching your ideas to potential investors.

University Academic Calendar: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Policies & Accommodations

<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>

<https://carleton.ca/pmc/current-students/academic-accommodations/>



Stay updated with important notifications and announcements from Carleton University, by downloading the Carleton University App!

Late Assignments:

Students are expected to behave professionally, including meeting deadlines. However, we understand that sometimes, despite an individual's best efforts and for good reason, deadlines may be missed (e.g., illness, family emergency, etc.).

Please note that submission after the posted deadline will usually result in a delay in grading and feedback.

Work must be submitted by the deadline posted.

Beyond this point, late deductions will incur increasing penalties of 10 percentage points per day. Submissions that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted and will incur a grade of 0.

For example, if an assignment earns a nominal grade of 45/50 (i.e., 90%) but is received 2.5 days late, the actual grade assigned will be 25/50 (i.e., 70%).

Risk management is an essential part of business. To avoid penalties, we encourage you to work ahead whenever possible.

New Deferred In-Term Examination System (Monday mornings @ 7:15am)

We've implemented a NEW centralized System for Deferred In-Term Exams.

☐ **Scheduled Time and Location:** Deferred midterms will now be held on Monday mornings at 7:15 am in Room 4030. **Each course instructor will select Monday(s) to hold their deferred midterm.**

☐ **Include in Course Outline:** Please include this deferred midterm date in your course outline to ensure all students are aware. Each midterm can only be deferred once, and this will be the single opportunity for students who defer their original midterm.

☐ **Tracking and Support:** The team on the 7th floor will manage a schedule and database of all deferred exams and student attendance.

COURSE AGENDA

COURSE SCHEDULE (Fall)*

Week / Dates	Topic	Readings/Assignments
Week 1	Introduction to Creative Thinking	
Week 2	Community Co-Creation & The Creative Process	
Week 3	Design Thinking & Human Centered Design	Project Funding #1 - Set up future funder. (1%)
Week 4	Problem Identification and Teambuilding	Assign #1 - Basecamp Set up (1%)
Week 5	Building your Ideation Toolbox #1: Tools for Inspiration	Assign #2 - Meeting Notes (1%)
Week 6	Social Entrepreneurship & the Theory of Change	Assign #3 - Project website set up (1%)
Week 7	Paradigms, Biases, & Empathy (Research for design)	Assign #4 - Problem Statement (1%)
Fall Reading Week		
Week 8	Building Your Creative Toolkit #2: Tools for Ideation	
Week 9	Funding prototypes and marketing your project	
Week 10	Pitching your Creative Project	Project Pitch #1 (2%)
Week 11	Building a Business Plan	Project Funding #2 – Funding targets (2%)
Week 12	Prototype, Prototype, Prototype	Grant Application Part 1 (7%)
Week 13	Work week & Trip Planning	Weekly meeting reports #1 (5%)
Carleton Exam Period		

* unforeseen circumstances may necessitate modifications throughout the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Winter)*

Week / Dates	Topic	Readings/Assignments*
Week 1	Creative Problem Solving: Convergent/Divergent Thinking	
Week 2	Building Your Creative Toolkit #3: Tools for Implementation	Project website Test #1 - Live Test (2%)
Week 3	How to Critique Creative Solutions	Project Pitch #2 (2%)
Week 4	Creative Confidence and Barriers to Creative Thinking	
Week 5	Systems Thinking & Measuring Social Impact	Grant Application Part 2 (5%)
Week 6	Implementing your solution (Work Week)	Community & Class Engagement
Reading Week		
Week 7	Costing and Resourcing your Project	Project Funding Final (2%) Project Pitch #3 (2%)
Week 8	Implementation your solution (Work Week)	Project website Live Test #2 (2%)
Week 9	Theory of Change #2 – Changing Behaviour and Gaining Support	Final Business Plan Rough Draft (5%)
Week 10	Strategic Planning and the Iterative Development Process	Weekly meeting reports #2 (5%)
Week 11	Final Pitch Day	Final Project Pitches (4%) Guests: Project Supporters
Week 12	Final Business Plan & Course Wrap up.	Final Business Plan & Prototype (15%)
Carleton Exam Period		

* unforeseen circumstances may necessitate modifications throughout the semester.

COURSE WEB PAGE: The URL for the course web page is <https://brightspace.carleton.ca>

BUSI4117
BUSINESS PLAN CHECKLIST

- ☐ Executive Summary
- ☐ Project Description
 - Mission, Values & Vision
 - Community research
 - Project team description
 - Problem Statement
 - Project description of Operations
 - Project Costing
 - *Process Map*
 - Business Canvas Map
- ☐ Marketing Plan
 - PESTEL
 - SWOT
 - Shopify site
 - Funding Strategy
- ☐ Outcome Measurement Plan
- ☐ Grant proposal
- ☐ Theory of Change
 - Change Narrative
 - Logic Model
 - Outputs and Activities Matrix
- ☐ Final Pitch Deck

Contribution to Learning Goals of the Program ([BCom](#), [BIB](#)):

Program Learning Goal	Competencies Not Covered	Competencies Introduced (only)	Competencies Taught But Not Assessed	Competencies Taught and Assessed
BC1 Knowledge Graduates will be skilled in applying foundational business knowledge to appropriate business contexts.				X
BC2 Collaboration Graduates will be collaborative and effective contributors in team environments that respect the experience, expertise and interest of all members.				X
BC3 Critical Thinking Graduates will be discerning critical thinkers, able to discuss different viewpoints, challenge biases and assumptions, and draw conclusions based on analysis and evaluation.				X
BC4 Communication Graduates will be effective and persuasive in their communications.				X

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

AI use in this course varies by assignment.

Track 1 — AI-Open (the project). On your team project you may use AI freely: for research, drafting, idea generation, prototyping, coding, design, and translation aids. We will treat AI as a normal part of the creative toolkit. Project work is graded on the quality of the team's output and process. You are expected to use AI critically and ethically, to verify what it produces, and to keep ownership of your decisions. When AI materially shapes a deliverable, note how you used it.

Track 2 — AI-Restricted (your own learning). A portion of your grade comes from instruments that measure your individual learning, and these are AI-free by design because they happen in the room, in real time: reading quizzes and the Switch quiz (taken in class on Brightspace under a locked-down browser — no other tabs, apps, notes, or AI); weekly creativity exercises (completed in class, by hand or on locked-down devices); and reflection paper(s) (personal and experience-grounded, tied to your own fieldwork and your own exercise artifacts).

Resources on citing generative AI are on the [MacOdrum Library website](#). Additional resources are available on Carleton's [Artificial Intelligence Hub](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course Sharing Websites

Materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Recommended Calculator for Examinations

If you are purchasing a calculator, we recommend anyone of the following options: Texas Instruments BA II Plus (including Pro Model), Hewlett Packard HP 12C (including Platinum model), Staples Financial Calculator, Sharp EL-738C & Hewlett Packard HP 10bII

Group work

The Sprott School of Business encourages group assignments in the school for several reasons. They provide you with opportunities to develop and enhance interpersonal, communication, leadership, followership, and other group skills. Group assignments are also good for learning integrative skills for putting together a complex task. Your professor may assign one or more group tasks/assignments/projects in this course. Before embarking on a specific problem as a group, it is your responsibility to ensure that the problem is meant to be a group assignment and not an individual one.

Grading

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 34), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

Grades entered by Registrar:

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

DEF = Deferred

Academic Regulations

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

Requests for Academic Accommodation

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the *Academic Consideration Policy for Students*

in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

Pregnancy Accommodation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please review the [pregnancy academic accommodation process](#).

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please review the [religious academic accommodation process](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, see the [Senate Policy on Accommodation for Student Activities \(PDF, 25 KB\)](#).

Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfil the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The university supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their

academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented. Students may request Academic Consideration for Coursework or Other Academic Deliverable. For further information please review the [Procedure for Academic Consideration](#) and the [FAQ page](#).

Scheduling and Examination Support

Scheduling and Examination Services provides various supports for both in-term and end-of-term tests and exams. Details can be found on the [Exam Support website](#).

Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are a serious academic offence. Violations of academic integrity – presenting another’s ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student – weaken the quality of the degree and will not be tolerated.

Process: If an alleged violation occurs, all relevant documentation will be forwarded to the Dean. If the allegation proves true, the penalties may include; a grade of Failure on the submitted work and/or course; academic probation; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; suspension from full-time studies; suspension from all studies at Carleton; expulsion from Carleton, amongst others. **For a first offence, at a minimum, the penalty assigned will normally be a zero on the submitted work and at least a minimum full grade reduction of the final course grade. For a second offence, at a minimum, the penalty assigned will normally lead to a suspension from studies.**

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy which is available, along with resources for compliance at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

Sprott Student Services

The Sprott Undergraduate Student Services Office offers program advising and overall student success support. Our team is available to discuss your academic goals and your program progression plans. We can also work with you to develop strategies for success, including study skills for Business. If you experience any difficulty this term or if you would like to access support, please contact our team at academicadvising@sprott.carleton.ca.

Centre for Student Academic Support

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a centralized collection of learning support services designed to help students achieve their goals and improve their learning both inside and outside the classroom. CSAS offers academic assistance with course content, academic writing and skills development. Visit CSAS on the 4th floor of MacOdrum Library or online at: carleton.ca/csas.

Important Information:

- Students must always retain a copy of all work that is submitted.

- All final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.

- For us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid CARLETON address. Therefore, in order to respond to your inquiries, please send all email from your Carleton CMail account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting <https://carleton.ca/its/get-started/new-students-2/>