

**FALL 2024**

**EW MBA/MBA 295T.1 - Bay Area Innovation and Entrepreneurship (2 units)**

## Course Description

**BerkeleyHaas**  
EVENING & WEEKEND MBA

### **CLASS DATES AND TIMES:**

Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM PT

October 14 - 18

**ABOUT THE COURSE:** This course is a full immersion into the Silicon Valley Innovation Ecosystem bringing together the determination and professionalism of its entrepreneurs and the sophistication of its investors. The content will cover both sides of what makes that ecosystem work, entrepreneurship and investing, providing the perspective of the mutualism that exists here.

We will also move through the innovation and entrepreneurial cycle to provide experiences of what the activities of entrepreneurs are like here in Silicon Valley. We will help you understand how you fit in the mindset of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Participants will experience the community through one or two company visits that represent leading-edge technologies and business models as well as through panel discussions with entrepreneurs and investors.

There will be considerable teamwork required and full participation will be critical for this. Participants will work in teams to quickly produce two deliverables that apply class learning. First, they will develop and pitch a new idea. The pitches will be used on the final day to illustrate the nature of the commitment an entrepreneur makes at the start of a new company. Second, they will make an investment selection and create a term sheet that would be presented to the company. That investment decision will also be presented on the final day. These two experiences will cement the overall learning from the content, the visits, and the speakers.

This class aims to deepen understanding of entrepreneurship in Silicon Valley from both the entrepreneur's and investor's perspectives. It is a particularly good fit for anyone wishing to be an entrepreneur or investor, but it is also valuable for anyone who might like to acquire some of the mindsets and skillsets of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and investors.

[Sample Syllabus from 2021](#)

**PREREQUISITES:** None

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**REQUIRED READINGS:** Readings will be assigned electronically through our learning management system known as bcourses. The required readings before class will be extensive. There is no textbook but we will make several recommendations for related books.

*This course is dual listed between the EW MBA and FT MBA programs. It is also listed as a GNAM Global Network Week offering.*

**INSTRUCTORS:** [David Charron](#), [Vivek Rao](#)

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**ABOUT:**

*DAVID CHARRON* has been a member of the professional faculty at UC Berkeley since 2003. He teaches courses in innovation and entrepreneurship including Business Model Innovation and Entrepreneurial Strategy, Growth Hacking for Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship, Applied Innovation/Design Thinking, and Venture Capital Investing.

Dave actively works with scientists through the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health's I-Corps programs where he is Lead Faculty and trains others to teach its rigorous curriculum through the Lean Launchpad Educators program and also directly for the government. He also works as an innovation instructor and consultant to the Defense and National Security Technology Accelerator where he works to change the mindsets of large governmental organizations to enable rapid innovation and culture change. He is also Faculty Director for the California Healthcare Foundation's Leadership training program.

Mr. Charron has held several leadership positions at Berkeley's Haas School of Business School, including Executive Director of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program (formerly known as the Lester Center) and Executive Director of the Berkeley Innovative Leadership Development Initiative (BILD). He was Executive Director of the Berkeley Entrepreneurship Lab, an incubator/accelerator, that produced three venture-backed startups per year (including Revolution Foods, CommandCad, TubeMogul, Indiegogo, Aurora Biofuels, Silicon Clocks, Alphabet Energy and others).

Mr. Charron is an entrepreneur, having been a founder of Scientific Learning Corporation, the first successful neuroplasticity company. He has also started several other ventures and advises startups, inventors, entrepreneurs, and companies. He is an angel investor in several companies (World of Good, sold to eBay; Yardbarker, sold to Fox Sports; Magoosh; donut.io, Neurotrainer, Cadence Health and others) and is on several Boards of Directors (Impact Carbon, a non-profit improving health, reducing poverty, and improving local environments while slowing climate change; Think-now, focused on disorders of human attention).

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He has worked in and studied the field of technology commercialization and entrepreneurship for over 30 years. Mr. Charron's experience in this field has been at corporations such as Xerox PARC, academic institutions including MIT, Stanford, UC Berkeley and UCSF, and the national labs such as LBNL, LLNL, and Sandia.

Dave holds a B.S. degree from Stanford University and an MBA from UC Berkeley.

*Vivek Rao* has been a lecturer at UC-Berkeley's Haas School of Business since 2018, teaching courses on design, innovation, entrepreneurship and foresight methodologies across the three MBA programs. In addition to his work at Haas, he leads research on design theory and methodology at UC-Berkeley's Department of Mechanical Engineering and serves on the admissions and educational committees of the new Masters of Design program at UC-Berkeley's Jacobs Institute for Design Innovation, where he co-developed and has co-taught the degree's foundational course, "Technology Design Foundations," for three semesters. His research has received support from the National Science Foundation, Center for Long-term Cybersecurity, and the Odebrecht Foundation, and has earned multiple awards, including the 2020 ASME IDETC Best Paper Award in the Design Theory and Methodology track. His industry-academic collaborations include publications with Autodesk Research and service on Figma's inaugural Educational Advisory Board (2021-22). He regularly consults with industry and government clients, ranging from early-stage startups to leading SaaS firms to the US Department of Defense.

He earned a BS, MS and PhD, all in Mechanical Engineering, from UC-Berkeley, and conducted research as a Fulbright Scholar at the Vienna University of Technology (Austria) at the Institute for Sensor and Actuator Systems (Electrical Engineering). Prior to returning to academia, he worked as an engineering designer and strategist at global innovation consultancy IDEO, and a plant process R&D engineer in the wastewater enterprise at the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

**PRIVACY AND RECORDING NOTICE**