



**JINDAL GLOBAL  
BUSINESS SCHOOL**  
INDIA'S FIRST MULTI-DISCIPLINARY GLOBAL BUSINESS SCHOOL



**O.P. Jindal Global University**  
*A Private University Promoting Public Service*  
**NAAC Accreditation - 'A' Grade**

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Jindal Global Business School  
*Course Outline*

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Course Title	Learning from Failure: Strategic Insights from Startups
Core or Elective	Elective
Program and Batch	BBA 2023, BBA-BA 2023, BBA-FB 2023, BBA-FM 2023
Semester & Academic Year	Fall 2026
Credits	3
Discipline/Area	Strategy and General Management
Name of the Faculty Member/Course Instructor	Dr. Shreya Sharma
Contact Details of the Faculty Member	<a href="mailto:shreya.sharma@jgu.edu.in">shreya.sharma@jgu.edu.in</a>
Contact Details of Support Staff	<a href="mailto:jgbs-ec@jgu.edu.in">jgbs-ec@jgu.edu.in</a>
Faculty Member's Open Office Day/s & Time	TBA

### **Introduction to the Course**

This course examines start-up failure through a strategic and psychological lens rather than an operational one. Using a mix of global and Indian case studies, the course explores how misjudgements around ideas, timing, customer understanding, and competitive dynamics lead to failure across the start-up lifecycle. Students will engage with research-backed concepts, real-world narratives, and interactive discussions to systematically analyze why start-ups fail, recognize early warning signals, and develop sharper strategic thinking. The course emphasizes pattern recognition, decision-making under uncertainty, and the ability to apply cross-industry insights to build more resilient and thoughtful start-up strategies.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

**At the end of the course, students should be able to**

1. CLO1- Identify and analyze key non-operational causes of startup failure across different lifecycle stages.
2. CLO2- Evaluate startup ideas and strategies by applying psychological and strategic frameworks.
3. CLO3- Diagnose early warning signals of failure in real-world startup scenarios.
4. CLO4- Critically assess founder decisions, market timing, and competitive dynamics using case-based reasoning.

5. CLO5- Develop structured approaches to avoid common startup mistakes and build more resilient venture strategies.

### Programme Competency Goals

BBA Programme Competency Goals (PCGs)		BBA Programme Learning Objectives (PLOs)	
		Students will be able to	
1	<b>Responsible Global Citizenship:</b> Ability to understand the interplay between local and global issues and to act with sensitivity towards ethical and social issues	1. Understand local business issues	
		2. Understand global business issues	
		3. Demonstrate sensitivity towards ethical issues	
		4. Demonstrate sensitivity towards social issues	
2	<b>Effective communication:</b> Ability to effectively exchange ideas and information	5. Present their ideas with clarity	
		6. Write in a coherent manner	
		7. Use technology for communication	
3	<b>Critical Thinking:</b> Ability to identify, analyze business problems and propose effective solutions	8. Identify main issues of business problems	
		9. Examine information from different sources	
		10. Draw inferences from analysis	
4	<b>Teamwork:</b> Ability to work and contribute effectively in group -settings	11. Understand the factors to work effectively in groups	
		12. Contribute effectively in groups	

### PLO-PCG Assessments Mapping Matrix

Program Learning Objectives (PLOs)	Program Competency Goals (PCGs)	Course Assessment Item
This course helps you to develop the following Program Learning Outcomes:	This course helps you to develop the following Program Competency Goals:	This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items
PLO5	PCG2	A1, A2, A4
PLO6	PCG2	A2, A4
PLO8	PCG3	A3, A4
PLO9, PLO10	PCG3	A2, A3, A4, A5

## Evaluation Schema

The course grade will be determined based on:

Assessment Task	Weightage (Percentage)	Nature (Individual/Group)	Week of Assessment	PLOs to be Assessed
A1 Class Participation	10%	Individual	Throughout the course duration	PLO5
A2 In-Class Assessments	20%	Individual	Throughout the course duration	PLO5, PLO6, PLO9, PLO10
A3 Assignment	15%	Individual	Submission based	PLO8, PLO9, PLO10
A4 Presentations and Report	25%	Group	Last week of the course duration	PLO5, PLO6, PLO8, PLO9, PLO10
A5 End term Examination	30%	Individual	In the JGU Examination period/week	PLO9, PLO10

### Description of Assessments:

**A1 Class Participation-** Evaluation is based on students' consistent presence and the quality of their engagement in discussions, activities, and in-class exercises.

**A2 In-class assessment-** Students will be evaluated through in-class assessments provided during the class. These could include assessment based on factual data shared in the class, and application of conceptual knowledge to demonstrate students' understanding.

**A3 Assignment-** Students will prepare a submission (video/audio/podcast) engaging with a founder of any startup. The details of this assignment will be shared closer to the schedule.

**A4 Presentations and Report-** Students are assessed on their ability to understand course concepts and effectively apply them to real-world situations. Detailed guidelines will be shared closer to the schedule.

**A5 End term examination-** The end term examination will be of **30 marks of 1.5 hours duration**. This will be an invigilated exam according to the mode, modalities and process as decided by CoE.

### Rubrics for Assessments

#### For A2: In class assessment

Dimension	1 mark	2-3 marks	4 marks
Conceptual Clarity ( <b>5 Marks</b> )	Incorrect or vague understanding; major gaps	Basic understanding; some inaccuracies	Clear, accurate, and precise understanding of concepts
Application ( <b>5 Marks</b> )	Unable to relate to real-world contexts	Basic or generic examples; limited relevance	Strong, relevant, and insightful real-world application

Articulation ( <i>5 Marks</i> )	Unclear, disorganized, hesitant	Understandable but lacks structure or confidence	Clear, structured, and confident communication
Engagement ( <i>5 Marks</i> )	Rarely participates	Occasional Participation	Active Participation

### For A3: In class assessment

Dimension	10–30%	31–60%	61–100%
Conceptual Clarity ( <i>5 Marks</i> )	Incorrect or vague understanding; major gaps	Basic understanding; some inaccuracies	Clear, accurate, and precise understanding of concepts
Application ( <i>5 Marks</i> )	Unable to relate to real-world contexts	Basic or generic examples; limited relevance	Strong, relevant, and insightful real-world application
Articulation ( <i>5 Marks</i> )	Unclear, disorganized, hesitant	Understandable but lacks structure or confidence	Clear, structured, and confident communication

### For A4: Group Presentations and Report

Marks	0-10%	11-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
<b>1. Focus and Clarity</b> ( <i>Weightage 5 marks</i> )	Is vague and loosely related to the presentation task	Somewhat covers the required content/details of the task	Fairly clear and match the task	Closely match the task	Develops fresh insights to the details inquired
<b>2. Content Understanding &amp; Knowledge</b> ( <i>Weightage 10 marks</i> )	Had little to no understanding of the content addressed in the presentation.	Had only a superficial understanding of content. Several mistakes were made during the presentation/Q&As	Had somewhat clear understanding of the content. Content had few errors/ could not address few of the Q&As	Had fairly good understanding of the content. Minor errors in content/ addressal of the Q&As	Had a strong hold on the content and Q&As were thoroughly addressed.
<b>3. Practical evidence &amp; Support</b> ( <i>Weightage 10 marks</i> )	Offers simplistic, undeveloped, or cryptic support for the ideas. Inappropriate or off-topic generalizations, faulty assumptions, errors of fact	Offers somewhat obvious support that may be too broad. Details are too general, not interpreted, irrelevant to topic, or inappropriately repetitive	Offers solid but less original reasoning. Contains some appropriate details or examples	Frequent demonstration of concrete and original ideas and evidence	Substantial, logical, & concrete development of ideas. Details are germane, original, and convincingly interpreted

## Teaching Method

The course will have a judicious mix of lectures, storytelling, experiential exercises, and cases. Here the onus of learning will be with the student, and the instructor will be a facilitator. Instead of learning ‘what to do’, the cases will also be used as examples of real-world phenomena where issues arise, and good and bad practices are seen. The key to learning this way is to see many examples and situations and learn inductive as well as deductive ways from students’ and managers’ different experiences.

## Textbook / Other Readings:

Respective Class Readings/Articles have been mentioned in the session plan.

## Session Plan

Session Details	Topics	PLOs Covered
<b>Session 1-3</b>	<b>Introduction to the Course: Why Startups Fail?</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6, PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To create a basic understanding of why ‘good ideas’ fail in real markets	
Subtopics to be covered	Categories of start-up failure, Psychological vs Structural causes, Strategic misalignment, Idea and Insight, Narrative fallacy in start-ups, Founder conviction vs Market reality	
Readings	<a href="https://www.cbinsights.com/research/report/startup-failure-reasons-top/">https://www.cbinsights.com/research/report/startup-failure-reasons-top/</a> <a href="https://hbr.org/2011/04/why-most-product-launches-fail">https://hbr.org/2011/04/why-most-product-launches-fail</a> <a href="https://medium.com/the-launch-path/the-launch-path-a-case-study-f3f72f141845">https://medium.com/the-launch-path/the-launch-path-a-case-study-f3f72f141845</a>	
Case Title & Number	(180) Days of Quibi, 722377-PDF-ENG <a href="https://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/722377-PDF-ENG">https://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/722377-PDF-ENG</a>	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion/ Case study	
<b>Session 4-6</b>	<b>Misreading the Customer</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To understand failures caused by incorrect assumptions about potential users	
Subtopics to be covered	False customer proxies, Over-reliance on stated preferences, Behavioral gaps vs declared intent, Jobs-to-be-done misinterpretation	
Readings	<a href="https://hbr.org/2016/09/know-your-customers-jobs-to-be-done">https://hbr.org/2016/09/know-your-customers-jobs-to-be-done</a> <a href="https://www.blueoceanstrategy.com/blog/segway-case-study-avoiding-fate-of-segway-electric-scooter/">https://www.blueoceanstrategy.com/blog/segway-case-study-avoiding-fate-of-segway-electric-scooter/</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 7-8</b>	<b>Timing is Strategy</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To understand how timing mismatches lead to failure	
Subtopics to be covered	Too early vs Too late, Market readiness and Technological readiness, Ecosystem dependencies, Adoption curve	

	misjudgment	
Readings	<a href="https://medium.com/gabor/the-4-scenarios-of-startup-timing-26bc66d4be8b">https://medium.com/gabor/the-4-scenarios-of-startup-timing-26bc66d4be8b</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 9</b>	<b>Overestimating Market Size</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To evaluate errors in market sizing and opportunity perception	
Subtopics to be covered	TAM illusions, Top-down vs Bottom up fallacies, Venture narrative inflation, Addressable vs accessible market confusion	
Readings	<a href="https://www.antler.co/blog/tam-sam-som">https://www.antler.co/blog/tam-sam-som</a> <a href="https://www.inc.com/jeff-haden/bottom-up-or-top-down-market-analysis-which-should-you-use.html">https://www.inc.com/jeff-haden/bottom-up-or-top-down-market-analysis-which-should-you-use.html</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 10</b>	<b>The Psychology of Founders</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To explore cognitive biases influencing early-stage decisions	
Subtopics to be covered	Overconfidence bias, Confirmation bias, Founder identity and attachment, Illusion of control	
Readings	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20191104-constantly-late-with-work-blame-the-planning-fallacy">https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20191104-constantly-late-with-work-blame-the-planning-fallacy</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 11</b>	<b>In-class Assessment-I</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6</b>
Objective of the session	To understand and present factual analysis based on instructions shared in the class.	
Subtopics to be covered	Life Cycle of Start Ups that existed	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Class Discussion and In-class activity	
<b>Session 12-13</b>	<b>Early Team Conflict Signals</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To identify early-stage team dysfunction and its consequences	
Subtopics to be covered	Co-founder misalignment, Equity vs Contribution conflict, Role ambiguity, Early cultural signals	
Readings	<a href="https://review.firstround.com/looking-for-love-in-all-the-wrong-places-how-to-find-a-co-founder/">https://review.firstround.com/looking-for-love-in-all-the-wrong-places-how-to-find-a-co-founder/</a> <a href="https://hbr.org/2025/07/how-to-identify-the-perfect-cofounder">https://hbr.org/2025/07/how-to-identify-the-perfect-cofounder</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	

<b>Session 14</b>	<b>Guest Lecture</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6, PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To gain an understanding about real-world perspectives shaping failures associated with start-ups.	
Subtopics to be covered	Experiences from the industry	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 15</b>	<b>In-class Assessment-II</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6</b>
Objective of the session	To understand and present factual analysis based on instructions shared in the class.	
Subtopics to be covered	Life Cycle of Start Ups that existed	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Class Discussion and In-class activity	
<b>Session 16-17</b>	<b>The Innovation Trap</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To analyze over-innovation without market need	
Subtopics to be covered	Technology push vs demand pull, Innovation without adoption, Complexity vs usability, Misreading consumer readiness	
Readings	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-27585766">https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-27585766</a> <a href="https://hbr.org/2015/01/google-glass-failed-because-it-just-wasnt-cool">https://hbr.org/2015/01/google-glass-failed-because-it-just-wasnt-cool</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 18</b>	<b>Guest Lecture</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6, PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To gain an understanding about real-world perspectives shaping failures associated with start-ups.	
Subtopics to be covered	Experiences from the industry	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 19-20</b>	<b>Competitor Myopia</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To understand strategic blindness toward competition	
Subtopics to be covered	Ignoring incumbents, misreading competitive response, Underestimating substitutes, over-focusing on direct competitors	
Readings	<a href="https://wgaconsulting.com/new/2015/06/25/competitive-myopia-nearsighted-view-competition/">https://wgaconsulting.com/new/2015/06/25/competitive-myopia-nearsighted-view-competition/</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/class discussion/ Case Study	

<b>Session 21-22</b>	<b>Scaling Too Early</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To understand premature scaling decisions	
Subtopics to be covered	Growth before validation, hiring ahead of need, capital misuse signals, false confidence from funding	
Readings	<a href="https://medium.com/swlh/premature-scaling-why-it-kills-startups-and-how-to-avoid-it-500677f45024">https://medium.com/swlh/premature-scaling-why-it-kills-startups-and-how-to-avoid-it-500677f45024</a> <a href="https://hbr.org/2024/10/research-when-should-startups-scale">https://hbr.org/2024/10/research-when-should-startups-scale</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 23</b>	<b>Losing the Core</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To examine dilution of original value proposition	
Subtopics to be covered	Over-expansion, Diversification risks, Identity dilution	
Readings	<a href="https://medium.com/thebeatenroad/the-only-rule-for-expansion-of-your-startup-0a8c8e602abc">https://medium.com/thebeatenroad/the-only-rule-for-expansion-of-your-startup-0a8c8e602abc</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 24</b>	<b>When Decline Begins</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To identify early signs of inevitable failure	
Subtopics to be covered	Denial and delayed reaction, Leading vs Lagging indicators, Internal awareness gaps, External perception mismatch	
Readings	<a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/lbsbusinessstrategyreview/2013/09/25/blackberry-forgot-to-manage-the-ecosystem/">https://www.forbes.com/sites/lbsbusinessstrategyreview/2013/09/25/blackberry-forgot-to-manage-the-ecosystem/</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 25</b>	<b>Shutdown Decisions</b>	<b>PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	To understand when start-ups should shut down	
Subtopics to be covered	Sunk cost fallacy, timing of exit, strategic shutdown vs forced closure, emotional barriers to closure	
Readings	<a href="https://medium.com/@nareshnavinash/the-tough-decisions-of-a-business-when-to-keep-going-and-when-to-shut-down-1fd1693ec532">https://medium.com/@nareshnavinash/the-tough-decisions-of-a-business-when-to-keep-going-and-when-to-shut-down-1fd1693ec532</a>	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture/ class discussion	
<b>Session 26-28</b>	<b>Student-Led Presentations</b>	<b>PLO5, PLO6, PLO8, PLO9, PLO10</b>
Objective of the session	NA	
Subtopics to be covered	NA	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	

Pedagogy	NA	
<b>Session 29</b>	<b>Reading &amp; Revision Week/ Examination Week*</b>	
Objective of the session	NA	
Subtopics to be covered	NA	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	NA	
<b>Session 30</b>	<b>Reading &amp; Revision Week/ Examination Week*</b>	
Objective of the session	NA	
Subtopics to be covered	NA	
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	NA	

\*Elective Endterm Examinations may take place in the last week of classes.

#### Guest speakers:

1. **Dr. Disha Bose** (Associate Scientist, ICRISAT)
2. **Mr. Awnish Kumar** (Program Manager, Amazon)

#### Disability Support

JGU endeavours to make all its courses accessible to students. The Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall wellbeing. These include physical and mobility-related difficulties, visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental health conditions, and intellectual/learning difficulties, e.g., dyslexia and dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC) by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee/>

Students who need support may register any time during the semester up until a month before the end semester exam begins. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester, must re-register within the first month of a semester. Last-minute registrations and support might not be possible as sufficient time is required to make the arrangements for support.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of the student and the nature of their disability and the same is requested from faculty members and staff as well. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent and disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability.

All general queries are to be addressed to [disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in](mailto:disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in)

***Disclaimer: This course outline including assessments, mode, nature and weightage of assessments, sessions, sequence of sessions and/or readings may be revised during the semester if such need arises.***