

SSES NEGOTIATIONS FOR STARTUPS
2026 Syllabus and assignment details
Current per March 16, 2026

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1. Overview

Negotiations and sales are here defined as the art and science of securing agreements between two or more interdependent parties. This course aims to (1) help students to understand the theory and processes of negotiations and sales in a variety of settings, (2) highlight the components of an effective negotiation, and (3) help students to analyse own behaviour in negotiations.

As this is a skills course without traditional course literature, it is important to attend sessions as active participation is a graded component.

It is possible to miss up to three (3) sessions and still pass the course but there is no way to make up for missed sessions, as the learning pedagogy builds on interaction with lecturers and the other students.

2. Schedule

Can be updated due to guest lecturer availability. Refer to <https://ssec.instructure.com/> for current schedule.

The course has two types of sessions that are only conducted live in classroom.

- Negotiations exercises. Applied negotiations exercises and discussions on learnings. Session length ca. 180 mins.
- Seminars and guest lectures. Due to the course emphasis on participation and focus on live interaction (Q&A) as well as requests by the guest lecturers these sessions will not be recorded.

There are also written assignments to be submitted at specified times throughout the course.

NB it is the responsibility of course participants to ensure that course requirements are understood and to request clarifications or additional information at the beginning of the course.

3. Assessment and grading

Please note that the relationship between the grade weighting and time/effort required per assignment/grading component might be perceived as nonlinear.

1. Active participation (20%)
2. Interview assignment (40%)
3. Reflection assignment (40%)

Active participation (20% grade weight) – weighted assessment of attendance, preparation assignments and guest lecture interactions/seminar contribution.

It is possible to miss up to three (3) session and still pass the course, but this will most likely affect the Active participation grade. Please note that as this is a skills course there is no way to make up for missed sessions, as the learning pedagogy builds on interaction with lecturers and the other students.

Assignment deadlines (early submission possible at any time):

1. Assignment 1 – Self assessment (pass/fail) – March 31 @ 17:00
2. Assignment 2 – Gender (pass/fail) – April 14 @ 17:00
3. Assignment 3 – Tactical use of biases (pass/fail) – April 16 @ 17:00
4. Assignment 4 – Investment negotiations (pass/fail) – May 5 @ 17:00
5. Interview Assignment 5 (40% grade weight) – Thursday May 12 @ 17:00
6. Reflection Assignment 6 (40% grade weight) – Tuesday May 19 @ 17:00

Grading of the course components and overall course grade is conducted and calculated according to the current SSE/SSES academic policies in the [SSE Master Handbook pg. 19-20](#).

Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship (SSES) is a collaboration of six schools in the Stockholm area. In order to harmonize the SSE grading scale with that of the other participating schools and to adapt to the pedagogical design of the courses, SSE has decided to use the following grading scale:

(from Fall 2020): Component (assignment) grading & point conversion:

Pass = 55
Good = 67.5
Very good = 82.5
Excellent = 95

At the end of the course, the grade points are summarized and translated to overall course grade:

<u>SSE:</u>		<u>Other schools:</u>	
90-100:	Excellent	90-100:	A
75-89:	Very good	80-89:	B
60-74:	Good	70-79:	C
50-59:	Pass	60-69:	D
0-49:	Fail	50-59:	E
		0-49:	F

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4. Plagiarism

It is important to clarify that this course operates under SSE academic guidelines. This specifically means that;

- Plagiarism of any kind (course literature, other student assignments, unreferenced sources) is not allowed,
- Submissions are assessed with a plagiarism checker,
- Any instances of plagiarism will lead to failing both the specific assignment and the course as a whole and also be subject to disciplinary procedures through SSES and will be reported to the student's home school.

5. Assignment instructions

All literature for the course is available online and listed under the respective assignment below at <https://ssec.instructure.com/>.

Assignment format:

- PDF format
- The doc should be named "AssignmentNR_Yourname_2026"
- Font Times New Roman 12, single spacing, normal margins.
- Assignments need to be uploaded in the correct folder on the courseweb before the respective deadline.
- Late hand-ins are given 50% grade deduction, feel free to submit assignments earlier as you can start the assignments at any point so there is no time constraint.
- All assignments need to be submitted before the end of the course.
- Submitted assignments are valid only for 2026.

Assignment 1 (pass/fail), 1 page max.

Answer the following questions:

1. How would you describe negotiations using a metaphor?
2. On a scale 1-7, how experienced in negotiations do you consider yourself? (1 = little experience, and 7 = very experienced)
3. On a scale 1-7, how good negotiator do you consider yourself to be? Where 1 = much room for improvement and 7 = very skilled.
4. Please indicate how you would classify your negotiations style on a scale 1-7, where 1 = soft approach and 7 = hard bargainer.
5. What are your expectations on what you will learn during this course.
6. Please briefly describe what topics you find most challenging and what areas you would like to improve in with regards to negotiations.

After uploading Assignment 1 as PDF, read the instructions for Assignment 5: Individual reflection paper.

Assignment 1 is the first page in your course learning log.

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Use the Assignment 1 Word document (the one on your computer, not the uploaded one) as a log and update it with brief reflections before, during after each session as preparation for the final assignment.

Example bullet points to help you structure the reflection notes after each session:

- Before the session: What are your expected outcomes or insights from this session?
- During/after the session: Please summarize your 1-3 main takeaways from the session.

Assignment 2 (pass/fail) Gender in negotiations, 1 page.

1. Use generative AI to summarize the article on one page.
2. Fact check the summary against the article.

[Bowles, H. \(2012\) Psychological Perspectives on Gender in Negotiation, Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Research Working Paper Series](https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/9830358/RWP12-046_Bowles.pdf) (30 pg.) Link for download https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/9830358/RWP12-046_Bowles.pdf

3. List 1-3 questions for [Pia Engholm](#) (can but do not have to be focused on gender).

Assignment 3 (pass/fail) Tactical use of biases, 1 page.

1. Use generative AI to summarize the article on one page.
2. Fact check the summary against the article.

[Rhode et al. \(2014\) The Tactical Utilization of Biases in Negotiations, Berlin School of Law and Economics Working Papers](https://www.berlin-professional-school.de/fileadmin/portal/Dokumente/IMB_Working_Papers/WP_80_TheTacticalUtilizationofCognitiveBiases.pdf) (20 pg.) Link for download https://www.berlin-professional-school.de/fileadmin/portal/Dokumente/IMB_Working_Papers/WP_80_TheTacticalUtilizationofCognitiveBiases.pdf

3. Based on the assignment, list 1-3 questions for [David Frykman](#).

Assignment 4 (pass/fail) Investment negotiations, 1 page.

1. Read up on venture capital terms and use generative AI to summarize what are the most important ones/create a one-page cheat-sheet. The purpose of this assignment is that you should be able to understand and have a conversation with Creandum on negotiating investments and term sheets.
 - [100+ Venture Capital Terms – the Ultimate VC glossary](https://medium.com/rb11/100-venture-capital-terms-the-ultimate-vc-glossary-71a08b938b7a) (ca. 25 min read) Link <https://medium.com/rb11/100-venture-capital-terms-the-ultimate-vc-glossary-71a08b938b7a>
 - [Series A, B, C Funding: How it works](https://www.investopedia.com/articles/personal-finance/102015/series-b-c-funding-what-it-all-means-and-how-it-works.asp) (ca. 20 min read) Link <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/personal-finance/102015/series-b-c-funding-what-it-all-means-and-how-it-works.asp>
 - [Pre-Money vs. Post-Money: What's the difference?](https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/difference-between-premoney-and-postmoney/) (ca. 20 min read) Link <https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/difference-between-premoney-and-postmoney/>
2. List 1-3 questions for [Johan Brenner](#) and [Filip Mark](#).

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Assignment 5 (40%) Expert interview, 6 pages strict.

This assignment aims to deepen your understanding of how negotiation works in real-world startup environments by helping you to you:

- Learn from experienced negotiators
- Identify negotiation strategies used in startup ecosystems
- Connect industry insights to negotiation concepts discussed in the course

Interview Requirement

You will conduct an interview with a person who regularly engages in startup-related negotiations. Please note that the assignment requirement is a live interview (meeting, call), not via text/mail. You should record the interview and be able to provide a recording on request.

Possible interviewees include:

- Entrepreneurs or startup team members
- Angel investors
- Venture capitalists

Note: Interviewees have to be pre-approved by the course director and cannot be guest lecturers from the course. You need to have found and submitted an interview person in Canvas by April 21.

You have to provide the following information for verification purposes:

- Full name
- Role and organization
- Professional background
- Contact information

You may structure the interview around the following themes.

1. Negotiation experience
 - What types of negotiations do you most frequently engage in?
 - What makes negotiations difficult in the startup ecosystem?
2. Preparation strategies
 - How do you typically prepare for negotiations?
 - What information is most important before negotiating?
3. Strategies and tactics
 - What strategies or tactics do you commonly use?
 - How do you balance cooperation and competition?
4. Challenges and conflicts
 - Can you describe a particularly difficult negotiation?
 - What made it challenging?
5. Lessons learned
 - What have you learned about negotiating effectively?

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- What advice would you give to someone learning negotiation?
- Students are encouraged to adapt questions based on their interests.

Students should submit a structured interview report that includes:

1. Introduction of the Interviewee
 - a. Background and role.
 - b. Relevance of the interviewee's negotiation experience, i.e. why did you choose to interview them. Please note that you must submit full information about the interviewee, including full name, position/role and contact information. This is important so that we can verify the identity of the person you interview.
2. Summary of the Interview
 - a. Description of the interview discussion
 - b. Key insights and observations
3. Key Themes and Lessons
 - a. Important negotiation strategies mentioned
 - b. Challenges highlighted by the interviewee
 - c. Lessons for effective negotiation in startup environments

Relevant excerpts from the interview may be included. Irrelevant parts of the conversation may be omitted.

Assessment Criteria

1. Relevance and Quality of Interview
 - a. Appropriateness of interviewee
 - b. Depth and relevance of questions
2. Insights and Analysis
 - a. Identification of key negotiation themes
 - b. Quality of interpretation of the interview insights
3. Connection to Negotiation Concepts
 - a. Ability to link interview insights to course concepts
4. Structure and Clarity
 - a. Clear organization and presentation

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Assignment 5 (40%) Individual reflection paper, 6 pages strict + learning log as appendix

Course memo and individual reflection paper.

Based a reflection of your initially submitted Assignment 1. and your notes from the course compose a personal reflection in narrative format on what and how you feel the course has contributed to developing negotiation insights and skills according to the course intended learning outcomes (ILOs):

- *Understand the process of human decision-making*
- *Discuss common psychological heuristics and biases*
- *Explain negotiation frameworks e.g. BATNA & reservation price*
- *Better prepare, plan, and act in negotiation and sales situations*
- *Understand the dynamics of bilateral and multiparty negotiation*
- *Identify usage of different negotiation strategies and approaches*

This is not a course evaluation so the personal opinion and feedback on the course as such is not important and will not be graded. It's also not a course description summary of everything that was included (that's this document).

Rather, the paper is a free-form exercise that should demonstrate how and to what extent the participant has assimilated personal insights from the readings, lectures, and negotiations exercises, and is graded according to similar criteria as the other assignments. This means that some sessions and/or assignments might have been more valuable than others, which should then be reflected in the text.

To students unused to reflection assignments the task might initially seem a bit unclear and ambiguous – just like life and real-world negotiations. It is also a proven format with great pedagogical value that is used extensively in advanced management programs.

Assessment Criteria

1. Insights and analysis
 - a. Identification of key negotiation themes
 - b. Quality of interpretation of the interview insights
2. Connection to negotiation concepts
 - a. Ability to link interview insights to course concepts
3. Structure and clarity
 - a. Clear organization and presentation

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