SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

B65.2128.30 -- 1.5 credits
Spring 2012

Instructor: Associate Adjunct Professor Sivan Nemovicher
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Office Hours: Mondays 5-6pm by appointment
Prerequisite: None

Course Overview:

Social Enterprises (as defined by Wikipedia) are social mission driven organizations which apply market-based strategies to achieve a social purpose. The movement includes both non-profits that use business models to pursue their mission and for-profits whose primary purposes are social. Many commercial businesses would consider themselves to have social objectives, but social enterprises are distinctive because their social or environmental purpose remains central to their operation.

This course focuses on the challenges faced by social entrepreneurs and the critical elements needed to create a sustainable social venture. In each session, we will address a topic of relevance for creating successful social ventures by engaging in a case discussion relevant to the particular topic and by hearing from thought leaders and practitioners about their own experiences in the field. The course will conclude by asking you to combine the lessons and insights from each of the sessions into a proposal for your own social venture.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify best practices, successes, failures, opportunities and constraints in developing new social enterprises
2. Demonstrate use of tools and conceptual frameworks to support launching a new social enterprise or making funding decisions
3. Acquire new perspectives on the opportunities for leveraging your MBA or advanced degree to impact the social sector

**Course Outline:**

Note: The order of topics covered in each session is based primarily upon the availability of our guest speakers. Reading assignments are deliberately lighter towards the end of the course to allow ample time to prepare for the final project.

**February 6th:**

*This session focuses on how social entrepreneurs can best prepare the strategic foundation for their ventures as well as how they can ask the right questions to keep their plans focused. We will also discuss potential funding models a social entrepreneur might choose and how these choices impact the venture’s sustainability.*

- Course overview and final project plan
- Thinking about strategy as it relates to social missions
- Money matters – thinking about funding models
  - Peter Kim – The Bridgespan Group
  - Readings (posted on Blackboard):
    - William Foster, Ben Dixon and Matt Hochstetler, “In Search of Sustainable Funding: Is Diversity of Sources Really the Answer?” The Nonprofit Quarterly, Spring 2007

**February 13th:**

*We will begin this session by discussing innovation in the social sector. We will then focus on a particular social enterprise, Recyclebank, discussing both elements of innovation, as well the question of for-profit versus non-profit models.*

- The need for innovation
- For profit or nonprofit?
  - Speaker – Andrew Korman: Recyclebank
  - Readings (posted on Blackboard):
    - Should Nonprofits Seek Profits? William Foster, Jeffrey Bradach
• Fear of Profit: David Bornstein, New York Times, October 29, 2010

February 20th: No class

February 27th:

This session deals with the fundamental questions of how you structure your organization to address a social issue.

• How to start a social enterprise
  o Speakers – Evan Stone and Syndey Morris – Educators 4 Excellence
  o Readings:
    ▪ Watch “The Lottery” directed by Madeleine Sackler and released in 2010 (Currently available on Netflix download)

• Evolution of a social enterprise:
  o Case: Teach Plus: Mobilizing a New Generation of Teacher Leaders: David A. Thomas; Stephanie J. Creary: HBS

March 5th:

This session focuses on the question of long-term sustainability, including thinking about what will drive others to invest in your venture.

• Investment: The key to sustainability
  o Case: New Schools Venture Fund: Jeffrey L. Bradach, Nicole Tempest: HBS
  o Speaker – TBD: Acumen Fund
  o Readings (posted on Blackboard):

March 12th: No class

March 19th:

This session focuses on the life-cycle of a social venture from conception, and formation to scaling growth.

• Meeting market needs
  o Speakers – Margot Brandenburg, Rockefeller Foundation
  o Readings:
    ▪ IRIS Taxonomy - http://iris.thegiin.org/files/iris/IRIS%20Taxonomy%202.0_0.xls
• Scaling and growth
  o Case: Burt's Bees: Balancing Growth and Sustainability (In class multimedia case – no prior reading required)

March 26th:

• Final presentations

**Course Grading:**

1. Participation (50 points)

   Since there will be no weekly written assignments, students are expected to be actively engaged in classroom discussions around the case and with guest speakers. Your participation grade will be based on the quality (not quantity) of your contributions to class discussion, and on the insights and original thinking that you bring to the discussion.

2. Final group presentation (50 points)

   Details of this assignment will be provided during the February 6th class but the grading breakdown is as follows:
   • Group presentation (40 points)
   • Group team assessment of your contribution (10 points)

**Additional Information:**

• Since this is only a six week course, attendance is mandatory. A written assignment may replace your participation grade for any one missed class and needs to be emailed to me prior to the start of the next class.
• No more than one excused absence is permitted; two or more absences will result in an incomplete for this course.
• If you are familiar with a case introduced in class, please do not discuss your prior experience with other students.