Dr. Alan Abramson  
George Mason University  
Course: PUAD 658-001  
Fall 2017  
Tuesday, 4:30 - 7:10 pm  
Room: Arlington Campus, Founders Hall, Room 311  

DRAFT  

COURSE SYLLABUS  

Social Entrepreneurship and Nonprofit Enterprise  

Course Description  

This course will explore the use of innovative approaches to address difficult social problems. Spurred by their belief that they can design new kinds of programs that outperform traditional public and nonprofit initiatives, “social entrepreneurs,” like Nobel Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, are developing novel strategies for achieving significant social change. Many new “social ventures” (i.e., an organization formed by a social entrepreneur) use hybrid, “social enterprise” approaches that combine aspects of business and nonprofit activities. After introducing students to key concepts, the course is organized largely around the steps in the entrepreneurial process: identifying an opportunity or social need, formulating a strategy to address the social problem, choosing a sector home, mobilizing resources, scaling up, managing growth, tracking results, and maximizing impact. We will conclude by considering what public policy should be toward social enterprise and social entrepreneurship: What infrastructure – or support system – is needed to help develop and sustain the new activities and organizations? The course will explore these and other issues and questions through discussion, cases, and guest speakers. Overall, this course will feature high levels of student participation. The course will focus mostly on U.S. activities, with some reference to international experiences. No prior knowledge of the subject matter is expected or assumed.  

Learning Objectives  

Through this course, students will:  
- Understand what is meant by the terms “social entrepreneurship” and “social enterprise” and be aware of overlaps and differences between the two concepts (readings, class sessions, current events).  
- Increase their knowledge of the essential steps in the process of social entrepreneurship (readings, sessions, case studies, papers).  
- Sharpen their social entrepreneurship skills (case studies, papers, readings, class sessions).  
- Improve their written and oral communications skills (papers, class discussions).
Course Requirements

There are two major types of requirements for the course:

1. **Active Engagement**: Students are expected to engage actively in the course in the following and related ways:
   - **Regular Attendance**: Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to arrive in class on time. Attendance will be noted. If at all possible, students should email the instructor beforehand when they expect to miss class because of illness or another reason.
   - **Completion of Reading**: Students are expected to complete all assigned reading before class. It is especially important that case studies receive a close reading. In fact, if at all possible, cases should be re-read just before class.
   - **Active Participation**: Students are expected to participate actively in all class sessions. In addition to contributing to regular class discussions, students may be asked to make a presentation or lead a discussion on a relevant issue. The instructor will occasionally cold call on students. To facilitate active engagement, cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices should be turned off during class.
   - **News Briefs**: Students will sign up at the beginning of the semester to lead a 5-minute discussion about one relevant news article on social entrepreneurship or social enterprise that they have identified. Ideally, the article will address the topic of the week. In their presentations, students should summarize their article and also pose several questions for class discussion. Students should hand in a copy of their article with a short write-up (1-2 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced). These write-ups, including a link to the selected article, should also be submitted on BlackBoard.

Student engagement, incorporating all the elements above, will count for 20% of the course grade.

2. **Written Assignments and Presentations**: Students are expected to complete the following:
   - **Short, Reaction Papers**: To enhance learning of important material and prepare for class discussions, students will complete a series of short (1-2 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced), reaction papers. Strong papers will connect (multiple) course readings to the issue being addressed. For example, if a reaction paper focuses on an analysis of a particular case, a good paper will reference some of the other readings for the week. Reaction paper assignments will generally be given one week before they are due. For example, in session #1, students will receive the assignment due at session #2. These papers should be submitted on BlackBoard and handed in at or before class, and will generally not be accepted late. Students who miss class for any reason have the option of submitting these papers before the class session for which they are assigned. The two lowest grades will be dropped. The reaction papers will count for 25% of the course grade.
• **Report and Presentation on a Social Venture**: Students will sign up at the beginning of the semester to write a paper on a social venture, which is an organization or program established by a social entrepreneur. Parts of the report may be descriptive, detailing, for instance, how the social venture works, including its programs, finances, and “theory of change.” However, a significant portion of the report must be analytic, giving the student’s judgments, interpretations, and critiques. This could be accomplished, for example, by describing not only how the venture is working well, but also by discussing what about the venture is not working and why. Reports (5-7+ pages plus attachments, double-spaced, 12-point font) are due on **October 17**. Students will make presentations and lead discussions based on their memos during class on **October 17**. Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint, handouts, and other tools to make their presentations as interesting and informative as possible. Students should identify the subject of their reports no later than **September 19** by sending an email to the instructor and their classmates. Students may select one of the social ventures listed in Appendix A of this syllabus or another of their choosing. The report and presentation will count 25% of the grade.

• **Term Paper and Presentation**: Students should also complete a term paper on a subject of their own choosing. Possible topics include: developing a business plan for a new social venture; writing a business plan for a significant modification of an existing program; addressing one of the issues we cover in class in much greater detail; or there are other options as well. Students may work in teams if they want, but a greater level of effort will be expected from a group effort. Proposals for term papers are due by **October 3**. Term papers (approximately 10 pages plus attachments, double-spaced, 12-point font) are due on **November 28**, and students will make presentations and lead discussions based on their papers on that day. The term paper and presentation will count for 30% of the grade.

All papers should be submitted both in hard copy and on-line on BlackBoard. **Please note that unexcused late submissions on any assignment will be marked down.**

All students are welcome to talk with the instructor about possible alternative assignments if they are interested. Any Ph.D. students in the class should discuss with the instructor how to tailor the course to their particular needs.

**Grades**
All assignments will receive numerical grades from 0-100, although grades above 95 will be extremely rare. For final grades, numerical grades will be converted to letter grades without rounding as follows:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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**Contacting the Instructor:**  
Please feel free to set up an appointment to talk with the instructor either in-person or on the phone. Dr. Abramson can be reached at the following:  
- **Office phone:** 703-993-8189  
- **Office address:** George Mason University – Arlington Campus, Founders Hall, 3351 Fairfax Drive, Room 608, Mail Stop 381, Arlington, VA 22201.  
- **Office e-mail:** aabramso@gmu.edu (Note that the instructor also sometimes uses the email: alan.abramson@aspeninst.org)  
- **Cell phone:** 202-262-5204

**Readings and Other Resources**  
Course readings are available on-line, on Blackboard, or in the following books which are available for purchase through GMU’s Arlington campus bookstore:  

Students will also be asked to purchase copies of case studies during the semester.

Students are encouraged to consult the resources on the nonprofit sector and social entrepreneurship and social enterprise listed in Appendix B of this syllabus and to use information on nonprofit organizations available through the GMU Library at: [http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/112/28684/NonProfitMgmtRG.pdf](http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/112/28684/NonProfitMgmtRG.pdf).

**Academic Integrity**  
GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously, and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt of any kind, please ask for guidance and clarification.

**GMU Email Accounts**  
Students must activate their GMU email accounts to receive class-related information.

**Office of Disability Services**
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS: http://ods.gmu.edu

**Other Useful Campus Resources**
- Writing Center: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
- University Libraries “Ask a Librarian”: http://library.gmu.edu/ask
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; http://caps.gmu.edu

**University Policies**
The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

**Course Outline and Reading Assignments**
Please note that case study and other material will be added during the course of the semester.

1. **AUGUST 29**: Overview of Course and Introduction to Key Concepts: Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise

Suggested:

2. **SEPTEMBER 5**: Examples of Social Entrepreneurship, Identifying a Need/Opportunity, Developing an Innovative Theory of System Change

**SIGN UP FOR NEWS BRIEFS**


Suggested:


3. SEPTEMBER 12: Overview of Business Planning and the Lean Startup Model


Suggested:


--Cynthia W. Massarsky, “How to Build a Business Plan.” Available at: [http://www.socialreturns.org/docs/howtobuild.pdf](http://www.socialreturns.org/docs/howtobuild.pdf)


4. SEPTEMBER 19: Finding a Sectoral Home, Overview of Potential Funding Sources, and Accessing Philanthropic Funding: Venture Philanthropy

STUDENTS IDENTIFY SOCIAL VENTURE THEY WILL WRITE ABOUT

--Kickul and Lyons, *Understanding Social Entrepreneurship*, chs. 6-7.


Suggested:
--Michael Edwards, Just Another Emperor?: The Myths and Realities of Philanthrocapitalism. Demos and the Young Foundation, 2008.
--“Tomorrow’s Philanthropist,” Barclays Wealth in co-operation with Ledbury Research, 2009. Available at: www.genevaglobal.com/download/65
--Peter Frumkin and Suzi Sosa, “Toward a Theory of Sector Selection,” Nonprofit Quarterly (Fall 2015).

5. SEPTEMBER 26: Accessing Government Funding: Funding for Growth, Social Innovation Fund, and Social Impact Bonds

Suggested:

6. OCTOBER 3: Accessing Earned Revenue and Market-Oriented Funding: Social Enterprise and Social Impact Investing

STUDENTS SUBMIT PROPOSAL FOR TERM PAPER


Suggested:


OCTOBER 10: No class; Monday classes meet on Tuesday

7. OCTOBER 17: Social Entrepreneurs and Their Social Ventures

REPORTS DUE ON SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AND THEIR SOCIAL VENTURES – STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

8. OCTOBER 24: Managing Partnerships


Suggested:

**10. OCTOBER 31: Managing Marketing and Communications: Social Media**


Suggested:


**11. NOVEMBER 7: Measuring Results and Managing Impact**


Suggested:


**9. NOVEMBER 14: Managing Growth**


12. NOVEMBER 21: Managing Social Intrapreneurship
--Kickul and Lyons, Understanding Social Entrepreneurship, ch. 10.

13. NOVEMBER 28: Student Presentations

TERM PAPER DUE AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

14. DECEMBER 5: Developing a More Supportive Infrastructure for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise

Suggested:
--“Developing the Field of Social Entrepreneurship,” A Report from the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), Duke University, The Fuqua School of Business, June 2008. Available at: http://community-wealth.org/content/developing-field-social-entrepreneurship

DECEMBER 12: Hold for Make-Up Session If Needed
Appendix A

Selected, Mostly U.S.-Based, Social Ventures

- Acumen Fund
- Ashoka
- Better Life Bags
- Bonnie CLAC/More Than Wheels
- Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI)
- Charity: Water
- Citizen Schools
- City Year
- Civic Ventures/Encore.org
- College Summit
- Development Innovation Ventures
- d.light
- Food Recovery Network
- Freelancers Union
- Genesys Works
- Girls on the Run
- Habitat for Humanity
- Harlem Children’s Zone
- Heifer International
- Honest Tea
- Honey Care Africa
- Hope Lab
- Jump Start
- KaBoom
- KIPP Schools
- Kiva
- New Schools Venture Fund
- Nurse-Family Partnership
- OPower
- Public Allies
- Teach for America
- Toms Shoes
- Udacity
- Year Up
- Youth Build
- Youth Villages
Appendix B

Resource Guide: Nonprofit Sector, Social Entrepreneurship, and Social Enterprise
(Selected Resources)

I. Nonprofit Sector

Newspapers/Journals – Practitioner-Oriented
- *Chronicle of Philanthropy*
- *Nonprofit Quarterly*
- *Nonprofit Times*
- *Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR)*

Journals – Research-Oriented
- *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ)*
- *Nonprofit Management and Leadership (NML)*
- *Nonprofit Policy Forum*
- *Voluntas*

E-Newsletters - National
- *Blue Avocado*
- *IS Daily Media Digest* (Independent Sector)
- *NPQ’s Nonprofit Newswire* (Nonprofit Quarterly)
- *Philanthropy News Digest* (Foundation Center)
- *Philanthropy Today – Daily Update from the Chronicle of Philanthropy*

E-Newsletters – Local
- *The Daily WRAG* (Washington Grantmakers)

National Organizations
- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)
- Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)
- BoardSource
- Council on Foundations
- Foundation Center
- Independent Sector
- International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR)
- National Council of Nonprofits
- Nonprofit Finance Fund

Local Organizations
- Center for Nonprofit Advancement (CNA)
• Foundation Center Library – Washington, DC
• Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation
• Venture Philanthropy Partners (VPP)
• Washington Grantmakers
• Young Nonprofit Professionals Network – DC (YNPNdc)

Statistics on the Nonprofit Sector
• Foundation Center
• Giving USA
• GuideStar
• Listening Post Project at Johns Hopkins University, Center for Civil Society Studies
• National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute
• Nonprofit Almanac

Job Openings
• Chronicle of Philanthropy
• The Daily WRAG
• Idealist.org
• PND (Philanthropy News Digest) Job Alerts (from the Foundation Center)
• YNPNdc

Indexes to Nonprofit Research
• Catalog of Nonprofit Literature (Foundation Center):
• The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook, second edition
• Philanthropic Studies Index (Indiana University Center on Philanthropy)

Blogs
• A Fine Blog – Allison Fine
• Huffington Post – various contributors
• Philanthropy 2173 – Lucy Bernholz
• White Courtesy Telephone – Albert Ruesga and others

II. Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise

National/International Organizations
• Americans for Community Development (L3C)
• Ashoka
• Aspen Institute: Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE), Business and Society Program, Program on Philanthropy and Social Innovation
• B Corporation
• Community Wealth Partners
- Democracy Collaborative (http://community-wealth.org/)
- Draper Richards
- Echoing Green
- Fourth Sector Network
- **Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)**
- Schwab Foundation
- **Skoll Foundation**
- Social Enterprise Alliance

**E-Newsletter/Blogs**
- Beth’s Blog – Beth Kanter
- CasePlace.org (Aspen Institute – Business and Society Program, Center for Business) Education
- Change.org – social entrepreneurship
- Changemakers.com (Ashoka)
- Dowser.org
- **Social Edge**

**Journals**
- *Good Magazine*
- *Innovations*
- *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*

**Conferences**
- Global Philanthropy Forum
- **Skoll World Forum**
- Social Capital Markets (SOCAP)
- World Economic Forum (Davos)