GOVT 353: Social Entrepreneurship  
Spring 2018

Draft Syllabus 11/22/2017

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

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Telephone: I will provide my cell phone number to all registered students

Class Meetings:
Mondays 4:30 – 7:10pm
Innovation Hall 137

OVERVIEW
Social entrepreneurship aims to identify, analyze, innovate and enact effective approaches to realizing sustainable social benefit. In the field, many social entrepreneurship projects achieve narrowly defined metrics but either fail adequately to solve the challenges for which they were designed, or create significant new and unforeseen challenges or side effects. This course seeks to equip students with perspectives and tools that will not only enable them to minimize these pitfalls but will also support their capacities to create contributions that sustainably, holistically and authentically advance wellbeing. Students will analyze complex social realities, think creatively, engage in responsive self-reflection, and evaluate diverse effects of possible social entrepreneurship interventions, including both intended and possible unintended consequences. Students will have the opportunity to identify and design their own social entrepreneurship project.

I. Knowledge and Understanding
- Understand a variety of ways in which social entrepreneurship can be conceptualized and enacted
- Understand building blocks for creativity such as the ‘innovation sandbox’
- Analyze complex systems, including various effects of proposed or enacted interventions and the role of context, perspective, social location and structural power dynamics in shaping people’s diverse experiences and interpretations of the “same” events/interventions/etc.
- Investigate blind spots, unintended consequences, and disparate effects/outcomes
- Engage in self-awareness and self-reflection regarding one’s assumptions, constraints, motivations, values, etc, and how those may converge or diverge with those impacted by a social intervention

II. Professional Development
- Empathic listening, learning and dialogue across differences
- Understanding context
- Increased ability to identify blind-spots and excavate assumptions, including one’s own

III. Skills
- Presentation and oral skills
- Writing skills
- Creative skills
- Analyzing complex systems, including with awareness of the effects of one’s own biases
READINGS

Books: (feel free to get any edition as long as you take responsibility for bridging differences yourself)

Aristide, Jean-Bertrand. (2002) *Eyes of the Heart: Seeking A Path for the Poor in the Age of Globalization*
Ashoka (20aa11) *Ashoka’s Leading Social Entrepreneurs*

Macy, Joanna & Chris Johnstone. *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We’re in without Going Crazy*


Additional articles, book chapters, and other materials:

Articles, book chapters and other materials to be assigned will be listed by class date and topic in the detailed syllabus distributed on the first day of class (or posted ahead of time on blackboard/emailed to registered students). You will have free access to these materials through blackboard or other university resources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

The course requirements include the following (fuller descriptions of assignments will be handed out in class at appropriate times):

1) Engagement in class, preparation, and mutual support of classmates: 10%
2) Short written assignments on readings and on identifying and applying social entrepreneurship, and short presentations in class: 35%
3) Final Presentation (related to final paper): 20%
4) Final Paper: 35%
5) Journaling is recommended but is neither required nor graded (see below).

Please note that full attendance and participation in class meetings is essential. Missing more than three class periods lowers your grade, as do additional missed classes thereafter. Three instances of coming late or leaving early will count as a missed class. Appropriate effort and participation means that the use of cell phones, text messaging devices, email, web-browsing, computers and so on are NOT permitted to be used in class, unless being used publicly to support the collective class work or for officially approved special needs. If you must use your text messaging device, etc. for an emergency, please take it outside of the classroom.

CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN OUR CLASSROOM

As part of creating a valuable learning experience for everyone in the classroom, let’s attend to the quality of how we talk with each other, support our own and each other’s learning, and help each other (including helping me!) when we forget. This includes: An emphasis on inquiry rather than advocacy in class conversations, support for multiple different forms of interaction and participation guided by a foundation of mutual valuing and respect, and practicing ways of being in class that are less well developed for you. For example, let’s go beyond the content of what we want to contribute, by attending actively to how we are listening to and conversing with each other in class. Let’s focus on the quality of listening, efforts to build on the contributions of others and on the substance of the readings, asking questions, reflection, thoughtfulness of comments, and other contributions made to the creation of a mutual learning space.

Let’s all try to work on whatever is hardest for us: For those who speak up often, try focusing on receptive listening; for those who rarely speak, try to add your voice even when it’s not comfortable. Most of all, let’s each of us take responsibility for creating a caring and respectful space where everyone is truly heard and valued. From this foundation, class discussions will promote your ability to understand, contextualize and interpret class materials and the world around you.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

GMU Writing Center. I would encourage you to make use of the GMU Writing Center while you’re here (regardless of how well you write), since getting feedback on writing is often a great learning opportunity and one that’s harder to come by once you leave school. The writing center info can be found online at http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/. For updated information please check for their hours on their website.

New Voices in Public Policy is a journal designed to disseminate student work in SPGIA to a broader audience. It is reviewed by a combined panel of students and faculty. You may self-submit online at: http://journals.gmu.edu/index.php/newvoices. If you would like me to consider nominating your course paper for publication in New Voices in Public Policy you may let me know.

SPECIAL NEEDS: If you are a student with special needs that require academic accommodations, please see me and contact Disability Services at 993-2474 or www.ds.gmu.edu as early as possible. All academic accommodations must be arranged through Disability Services and must be prospective rather than retrospective.

Class Meetings and Missed Classes. If you find you have to miss class, please communicate with me. If you find you will have to miss more than two classes during the semester, you may need to complete additional assignments designed to help you assimilate the information and classroom experiences you have missed. Missing a substantial number of classes may jeopardize your grade. I am willing to work with you through difficult situations, especially when you can alert me in advance or as soon as possible, to make it possible to complete the course successfully.

Honor Code: GMU has an honor code and all students are required to know and abide by it. The information is located at: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/

PLAGIARISM: All submitted work must be your own, and it is imperative that you accurately cite all sources in your work.

- GMU has an official university policy on plagiarism that can be found at: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/
- Please note that violations of plagiarism policies can result in expulsion from the university.
- Note that ignorance of the policies is not a defense, so please familiarize yourself with what plagiarism is and how to ensure that you don’t commit it. If you have any questions about what constitutes the appropriate use and citation of sources, please talk with me.
- To quote from GMU’s policy as emailed to me on 3/20/08 by the SPP office:

  “The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

  “Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal

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responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

“Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

“The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

“To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.”

Note that most cases of plagiarism are unintentional, but are plagiarism nonetheless and carry all the consequences. Here are a few tips to help you avoid making such a serious mistake:

- As a rough guide, if you use three or more consecutive words from a source, use direct quotation marks around the text and cite it (see a style manual for citation guidelines). Direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks, with references to the corresponding source and page number(s). Images, data and charts must also be cited and referenced.
- If you use ideas, data, or other material from a source but put it in your own words (paraphrasing), then you must reference the source materials with in-text citations.
- All direct quotations and all paraphrased ideas and data need to be cited in the text where they appear (can be with footnotes, endnotes, or in-text parentheses depending on your manual of style), with a bibliographic entry at the end.
- These requirements apply to all forms of submission or presentations (including oral presentations), and all kinds of sources, including material drawn from the internet.
- IN YOUR NOTES AND ALL WRITING/PRESENTATIONS, to protect yourself from unintentional plagiarism, ALWAYS 1) take the time when copying notes to put quotation marks around direct quotations (and then copy the quoted material accurately – you can use ellipses (…) to skip parts of the quotation and brackets ([ ]) to change specific words such as replacing “He” with “[The informant]” to clarify references, etc.); 2) clearly distinguish direct quotations from paraphrases in your notes so that it’s clear what is your language and what isn’t; 3) clearly distinguish paraphrases of others’ ideas and data from your own original ideas and data so it’s clear in your notes what are your original ideas and what is drawn from others – this is easy to forget over time.
- In sum, always make clear which language and ideas come from which sources, vs. which are your own original ideas, & cite all direct quotations & all paraphrases clearly, fully & appropriately.