INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

- Ashley Zwick
- Email: az230@nyu.edu
- Office Hours: By appointment.

COURSE INFORMATION

- Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 6:20 pm to 8:50 pm
- Class Location: 194 Mercer, Room 306b

COURSE PREREQUISITES

- None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to give students an introduction to the tools of social impact—what it is, how we produce more, what you can do to create it. Having defined social impact as "any action of any duration in any sector by any actor to solve a public problem," students will explore the major barriers to achieving social impact today, examine different forms of social impact, and develop their own proposals for increasing the amount and effectiveness of efforts to create social impact in the future.

COURSE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The class is built around a discussion of the readings and core concepts. Students will also be asked to reflect on their learning in class and small-group conversations during the week.
1. Memos: Students will present three 500-word written memos during the semester. Each will be graded for content, clarity, and care. Each must also be grounded in at least three research-based sources that support the case for impact.

2. Attendance: Attendance is required and participation is essential. In the unlikely event that we’ll have to return to Zoom at some points in the semester, all sessions will be recorded and stored on Brightspace. All PowerPoint slide decks will be available on Brightspace, too.

3. Contact: I will hold regular online and in-person office hours during the semester and will always be available for coaching at your request. I will provide as much support as possible, including examples of memos, question-and-answer sessions, and regular messages.

**Required Readings**

All of the readings are available on Brightspace. You’ll also find links in the syllabus if you wish to find the readings online. The midterm and final exams will be based in part on the readings and in part on class lectures. Unless otherwise noted in my emails or in advance of class, all readings are required.

**Assessment Assignments and Evaluation**

Below is a brief overview of the assignments and elements that factor into a student’s final grade.

**Individual Assessment**

- Contribution to discussion & learning, 20%
- Three 500-word memos, 60%
- Final exam, 20%

Further details will be provided in class and in the assignments tab in Brightspace.

**Late Submission Policy for Assignments**

Extensions on assignments will be granted only in case of emergency or special circumstances. This policy is adopted out of respect to those who abide by deadlines despite equally demanding schedules. Assignments handed in late without authorized extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per day.

**Overview of the Semester**

- Week 1
  - Date: September 5
  - NO CLASS: LABOR DAY
- Week 2
- Date: September 12
  - Topic: Introduction + The Case for Engagement
- Week 3
  - Date: September 19
  - Topic: Paths to Social Impact
- Week 4
  - Date: September 26
  - Topic: Paths to Social Impact
  - NO CLASS: ROSH HASHANAH
- Week 5
  - Date: October 3
  - Topic: Comparing Generations
  - Deliverable: One Sentence Problem Memo Due
- Week 6
  - Date: October 11 (NOTE THE DAY CHANGE)
  - Topic: Motivations for Impact
- Week 7
  - Date: October 17
  - Topic: Polarization
- Week 8
  - Date: October 24
  - Topic: The Social Capital Deficit
- Week 9
  - Date: October 31
  - Topic: The Empathy Deficit
- Week 10
  - Date: November 7
  - Topic: Volunteering/Giving as Impact
- Week 11
  - Date: November 14
  - Topic: Learning as Impact
  - Deliverable: Policy Memo Two Due
- Week 12
  - Date: November 21
  - Topic: Living a Civic Life as Impact
- Week 13
  - Date: November 28
  - Topic: Careers in Impact
- Week 14
  - Date: December 5
  - Topic: Social Entrepreneurship as Impact
- Week 15
  - Date: December 12
  - Topic: Scaling Up: Building High Impact Organizations
  - Deliverable: Policy Memo Three Due
Detailed Course Overview

WEEK 1: LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)

WEEK 2: INTRODUCTION: THE CASE FOR ENGAGEMENT

Readings/Viewings Due (found on Brightspace)

1. Watch this 8-minute video that asks “Can we still trust polls” at https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/05/14/can-westill-trust-polls/ and ask yourself when we should and shouldn’t trust polls, especially during this election season;
2. Watch the 3-minute video that you’ll also find at Pew that asks “How can a survey of 1,000 people tell you what the whole U.S. thinks?” at https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/12/methods-101-random-sampling/ about how a sample of just 1,000 people can be used to measure the opinion of 300 million Americans.
3. Publius, “Federalist, No. 10: The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection,” Yale University, Avalon Project; read it closely and ask what the founders feared most; available on Brightspace and online at https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp

WEEK 3: PATHS TO SOCIAL IMPACT & ODDS AGAINST IT

2. Frank Baumgartner, “Some Thoughts on Reform Miracles,” unpublished paper, 2005; read pages 1-4; make sure you take a look at Baumgartner’s drawing of the decisionmaking process on page 6; on Brightspace and available online at https://fbaum.unc.edu/papers/Baumgartner_Reform_Miracles.pdf
4. Watch this short summary from NPR on how the 2020 Census worked [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/2020-censusprocess_l_5e603ab5c5b6bd126b75520a](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/2020-censusprocess_l_5e603ab5c5b6bd126b75520a), and then watch the Census Bureau’s advertisement directed to Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander artists at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWCySrYxov0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWCySrYxov0)

5. Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship, Our Common Purpose, 2020; a summary of what's wrong with American democracy; browse pages 1-9 and ask whether any recommendations might make a difference in your life, pro or con; on Brightspace and available online at [https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/publication/downloads/2020DemocraticCitizenship_Our-Common-Purpose_0.pdf](https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/publication/downloads/2020DemocraticCitizenship_Our-Common-Purpose_0.pdf)

**WEEK 4: NO CLASS (ROSH HASHANAH)**

**WEEK 5: COMPARING GENERATIONS**

1. Fisher, “Generational Cycles in American Politics, 1952–2016,” *Society*, January 13, 2020; every generation has its day, but ask whether and how generations shape history; also ask why some generations such as the Greatest Generation and the Silent Generation so visible; available on Brightspace


4. Spend a few minutes watching this Pew video on generation Z: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVkag8kUIHE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVkag8kUIHE). Make sure you listen to the conversation about how Pew names generations and ask whether it makes sense.

5. Turn next to the Morning Consult report on Generation Z at “Understanding Generation Z: How America’s Largest, Most Diverse, Best-Education, and Most Financially Powerful Generation Will Shape the Future,” December 2019; pay particular attention to the seven trends presented at p. 3; then turn to personal values and life outlook at p. 7 and political identity at p. 15; be prepared discuss one trend in more detail in a small group; available on Brightspace and online at [https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Morning-ConsultUnderstanding-Gen-Z.pdf](https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Morning-ConsultUnderstanding-Gen-Z.pdf)

WEEK 6: MOTIVATIONS FOR IMPACT


5. Watch this 8-minute video that looks at racial disparities in health and that asks how race contributed to the COVID-19 pandemic at [https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/14/how-covid-19-exacerbated-americas-racial-healthdisparities.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/14/how-covid-19-exacerbated-americas-racial-healthdisparities.html) and think where race fits in the logic model of health

6. Moss, “In Defense of Logic Models,” *Huffington Post*, December 6, 2017; an introduction to a very popular method for charting the future, make sure you read the pros and get ready to draw your own logic chain; think about this class as (1) an input, (2) an activity, (3) an output, or (4) an outcome; available on Brightspace and online at [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/in-defense-of-logic-model_b_1633676](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/in-defense-of-logic-model_b_1633676)


WEEK 7: POLARIZATION


4. Ferguson and Freymann, “The Coming Generational War,” Atlantic, May 6, 2019; a deep analysis of that generational tensions that will shape the future; available on Brightspace and online at https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/05/coming-generationwar/588670/

5. Henderson, “When It Comes to the Baby Boomers: It is Still All About ‘Me,’” Smithsonian, October 15, 2014; ask what makes the baby boomers distinctive, if they are distinctive at all; available on Brightspace and online at https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/when-comes-baby-boomersstill-all-about-me-180953030/

WEEK 8: THE SOCIAL CAPITAL DEFICIT

1. Watch this 7-minute video that features Robert Putnam at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACve-N_6KJc, and ask whether Port Clinton is the place to be for everyone, then measure your own social capital at https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/social_capital


WEEK 9: THE EMPATHY DEFICIT + VOTING AS IMPACT

1. Watch this https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw, and ask yourself how much empathy and sympathy you have and why generations might vary in their level of empathy; then take the quiz at https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/empathy

2. De Waal, “The Antiquity of Empathy,” Science, 2012; be ready to talk about the sources of empathy and how we can turn empathy on and off; available on
3. Konrath, et al. “Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students Over Time: A Meta-Analysis,” *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2011; ask if the Z’s have lost empathy, too, and whether you are on the empathy scale; available on Brightspace and online at https://faculty.chicagobooth.edu/eob/edobrien_empathyPSPR.pdf

4. Watch this 3-minute video on ranked-choice voting at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Rgo-eJ-D_s&feature=emb_logo


8. Shattuck, Huang, and Thoreson-Green, The War on Voting Rights, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, February 2019; a broad introduction to recent efforts to constrain voting rights; skim pages 2-11 to understand the recent trend toward tighter laws, then pick one tool from the “Toolbox of Voting Regulations” on pages 24-33 and be prepared to discuss the tool in class; available on Brightspace and online at https://carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu/files/cchr/files/ccdp_2019_003_war_on_voting_fin_al.pdf

**WEEK 10: VOLUNTEERING/GIVING AS IMPACT**


2. Grimm and Dietz, “Where Are America’s Volunteers? A Look at America’s Widespread Decline in Volunteering in Cities and States,” Do Good Institute, 2018; 1-18; available on Brightspace and online at
3. Heller, “Is There Any Point to Protesting?” New Yorker, August 14, 2017; think about your interest in protesting and ask whether it was effective; available on Brightspace and online at https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/08/21/is-there-any-point-to-protesting

4. Watch this 5-minute video on “impact investing” at https://www.marketwatch.com/video/explainomics/how-to-build-an-investmentportfolio-that-supports-racial-justice/9D3C74B8-19AD-46FB-8583-F2A812EA24D0.html on how build an investment portfolio that supports racial justice and think about how you’d invest $1 billion from NYU's $4.35 billion endowment fund for racial justice;

5. Faculty of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indiana University, “Eight Myths of US Philanthropy,” Stanford Social Innovation Review, Fall, 2019; read this quick inventory of misconceptions and trends in giving” and ask yourself why you give; available on Brightspace and online at https://ssir.org/articles/entry/eight_myths_of_us_philanthropy


WEEK 11: LEARNING AS IMPACT

1. Watch this 7-minute introduction to service-learning at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTAfHBww2mk, then visit http://learnandserve.gov/ and see what’s happening these days.


3. Hauslohner, “Trump administration planning changes to U.S. citizenship test, Washington Post, July 19, 2019; take the practice test at https://www.washingtonpost.com/howwould-you-do-on-the-us-nationalization-test/0c5948b8-15be-46a7-a26ba86b5760428_quiz.html, then read the article on proposed changes; available on Brightspace and online at https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/trumpadministration-planning-changes-to-us-citizenship-test/2019/07/19/34bdd65e-a9bc-11e9a3a6-ab670962db05_story.html

WEEK 12: LIVING A CIVIC LIFE AS IMPACT
1. Watch this 8-minute video from PBS about the decline in religious engagement among the Millennials and Z’s at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib4Z30Qb5Oc and think of your own connections to civic life.

2. Atwell, Bridgeland, and Levine, *Civic Deserts: America’s Civic Health Challenge*, CIRCLE, October 2017, entire; a useful summary of the decline of civic connection over the decades, but you should ask whether they have it right; look at the trends and think about the underlying definition of “civic health” is biased; available on Brightspace and online at https://tischcollege.tufts.edu/research/civic-deserts-americas-civic-healthchallenge

3. Watch this 8-minute video on last summer’s Facebook boycott at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6N7GbOzfGes and ask yourself whether it matters and why you did or didn’t know about it

4. Weber Shandwick and KRC Research, *Battle of the Wallets: The Changing Landscape of Consumer Activism*, January 30, 2018; roll through the slide deck and ask yourself where you’re a boycotter, boycotter, both or neither and be ready to talk about the choice; slidedeck available on Brightspace and online at https://www.webershandwick.com/wpcontent/uploads/2018/05/Battle_of_the_Wallets.pdf


6. Gordon Clark, Andreas Feiner, Michael Viehs, *From the Stockholder to the Shareholder*, September 2014, skim pages 11-18 to find a case for corporate social responsibility—doing good and doing well, etc.; available on Brightspace and online at https://arabesque.com/research/From_the_stockholder_to_the_stakeholder_web.pdf

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WEEK 13: CAREERS IN IMPACT

1. Watch this 7 minute video on the 80,000 Hours Project at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xsR0XBwyo4 and ask yourself how you’ll spend the 80,000 hours of your career

2. MacAskill, “Don’t Follow Your Passion,” *Doing Good Better*, Chapter 9, 2016; skim through and be ready to tell us what you intend to do with the 80,000 hours you’ll spend in your career; available on Brightspace and online at https://80000hours.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/07/Doing-Good-Better-Chapter-9.pdf

3. 80,000 Hours Project, “Our Current List of Especially Pressing World Problems;” available on Brightspace and online at https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/-whatis-this-page-based-on; scroll down through the list from “especially pressing global issues” to “other important global issues” to “long lists of potentially pressing
global issues beyond our current priorities,” and “other longtermist issues,” and ask whether the effort makes sense as you imagine the future—e.g., what’s missing, what’s really important?

4. Watch the U.S. Army’s newest recruiting advertisement, “what’s your warrior” commercial at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TprgnuYfyQ, compare it with the Norwegian military’s 2018 ad at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4B_TlHJq1-4; next review the benefits available to military veterans at https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/military-benefits-overview.html; and 10 benefits many veterans miss at https://militarybenefits.info/10-veterans-benefits-youmay-not-know-about and be ready to talk about how the appeals work.

5. Yuengert, “America’s All Volunteer Force: A Success?” the big question here is whether we have an all-volunteer force at all; ask yourself how anyone could be coerced to volunteer for an all-volunteer force; Parameters, Winter 2015-2016; available on Brightspace but not online.

6. “Interim Report,” National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, 2019, skim pages 1-28 and spend a few minutes on the eight recommendations for elevating public service of all kinds; ask whether you think any will work and what you would add or subtract from the list, and be ready to make your own recommendation; available on Brightspace and online at https://www.volckeralliance.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Final Report - National Commission.pdf

WEEK 14: SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS IMPACT

1. Watch this 4 minute video on why New York Times columnist Nick Kristof said 2017 was the best year in human history at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1l5ecwXR10 and ask yourself what he should write in his annual holiday column this year


3. Seelos and Mair, “Innovation Is Not the Holy Grail,” Stanford Social Innovation Review, Fall 2012; a classic warning to all of us to be careful about bright and shiny things when we already know the answer; be ready for a quick quiz about the article in class; available on Brightspace and online at https://ssir.org/articles/entry/innovation_is_not_the_holy_grail

4. Fleming, “Breakthroughs and the ‘Long Tail’ of Innovation,” MIT Sloan Management Review, Fall 2007; a deep study of innovators (meaning people, organizations, companies, etc., who own patents); go back to week 4 to consider heropreneurship again and ask yourself why we are so focused on heroes; available on Brightspace and online at http://sloanreview.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/saleable-pdfs/49114.pdf

about the famous garages; available on Brightspace and possibly online at https://mba.tuck.dartmouth.edu/pages/faculty/pino.audia/docs/garage_myth_CMR.pdf

WEEK 15: SCALING UP: BUILDING HIGH IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS

1. Watch as much of this 2-minute video as you wish at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GqJna9hpTE, then flip to this 6 minute on bragging at https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/to-brag-or-not-when-it-pays-when-it-backfires/, and finish up with this 2-minute video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSONAnEUIrg and think about whether and when compliment-rejecting and humblebragging might represent the too-much-of-a-good thing effect.


4. Watch this 7-minute video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gELZnORV4U&feature=emb_logo for an introduction to how nonprofit organizations raise money.


Brightspace

All announcements, resources, and assignments will be delivered through the Brightspace site. I may modify assignments, due dates, and other aspects of the course as we go through the term with advance notice provided as soon as possible through the course website.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by Wagner's Academic Code. All Wagner students have already read and signed the Wagner Academic Oath. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is
unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

**Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Student Accessibility**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website and click the “Get Started” button. You can also call or email CSD (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

**NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays**

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

**NYU’s Wellness Exchange**

NYU’s Wellness Exchange has extensive student health and mental health resources. A private hotline (212-443-9999) is available 24/7 that connects students with a professional who can help them address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns.