This course is designed to explore the basic components of effective social change. The course will concentrate on organizational design, but this design will be set into context as but one ingredient for addressing the urgent threats of the future. Its primary focus is on how to achieve social change—while organizations are certainly important to the equation, they are but one input to the “breakthrough cycle” that puts action into context:

I believe that organizations can be designed to produce social change more naturally. We tend to believe that social change (and the innovation that sometimes drives it) require a heroic leader and a constant struggle against the odds. This image of the beleaguered change agent who struggles mightily against the odds and works 24/7 is quite familiar in
the literatures on innovation and entrepreneurship more generally, but is not the only model for effective change. There is an emerging model of sustainable change that focuses on what I call the “natural innovation” built into organizational life and leadership strategies. There is new work on the enormous potential of “catalytic collaboration” in both producing breakthrough proposals and the value of networks in aggregating pressure for change. There is also new work on the need to protect past breakthroughs from erosion—it hardly makes sense to create a new prevailing wisdom if it collapses through complacency, neglect, hubris, and counter-attack. We must simultaneously create pressure for solving urgent threats such as inequality, deprivation, intolerance, and a host of other global challenges while protecting, expanding, fine-tuning, and celebrating the breakthroughs already in hand. Otherwise, threats of the past simply return as threats of the future.

Much of this work is contained in my own work, which is why this syllabus contains a number of my own pieces. However, I have recommended just one of my books for purchase. Students who buy my book will receive a royalty rebate on their purchase; students who do not want to buy the books will find it in an admittedly muddy draft on blackboard.

The required books are as follows:

- Bornstein and Davis, *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*
- Light, *Sustaining Innovation: Creating Nonprofit and Government Organizations that Innovate Naturally*
- Porta and Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction*
- Shane, *The Illusions of Entrepreneurship: The Costly Myths that Entrepreneurs, Investors, and Policy Makers Live By*
- Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*

All other readings for the course are available on blackboard.

There are only two assignments for the course, though participation counts for 20% of the final grade. Because of the class size, students will be broken into two person teams to develop a formal plan for solving an urgent threat. Students will pick a specific problem, follow the breakthrough cycle week to week, and produce a final breakthrough proposal, a strategy for agitating the prevailing wisdom, aggregating pressure, and changing the prevailing wisdom. The final paper should be at least 5,000 words (20 pages) with presentations due at the end of the semester. Every team will present its plan as if it is seeking seed funding for actual implementation.

Full participation in the class (including attendance at all classes) is assumed. I need to be informed any time that you will not be able to attend. All memos must be completed
on time. Any memos that are received after 5:00 each Monday will result in an automatic 2 point deduction from the final grade.

Final grades will be distributed as follows:

- 20% Weekly memos
- 80% Plan

I hope to include several funders in the panel of observers who will participate in the presentations. The plan must be crisp (an executive summary, the body of the proposal, and an initial budget). In a sense, the class is designed to produce venture funding for the change effort. However, not all plans will involve entirely new combinations of ideas. Social entrepreneurship is a critically important driver of change, but far from the only way to achieve social change.

The paper will be in the form of a venture plan. It will be organized around the nine steps of the breakthrough cycle. Every team will present a short memo (no more than 1,000 words each week examining the specific stage of the cycle. These memos will form the basis of the final paper and will be graded. The memos will form the basis for the class discussion and are designed to explore the specific components of each stage. They will be due by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the MONDAY before each class.
COURSE STRUCTURE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

Davis and Bornstein, Social Entrepreneurship, chapter 1
Della Porta, Social Movements, chapter 1

WEEK 2: THE BREAKTHROUGH CYCLE

Light, Driving Social Change, chapter 3, on Blackboard

Memo on your view of the most important stage in the cycle.

WEEK 3: COMMITTING

Shane, Illusions of Social Entrepreneurship, chapters 1-3, 6-7
Light, Sustaining Innovation, chapters 1 and 2
Porta, Social Movements, chapter 4
Davis and Bornstein, Social Entrepreneurship, part 1

Memo on your view of the most important drivers of commitment.

WEEK 4: ASSETS AND OBSTACLES: MYTHS AND REALITIES

Shane, Illusions of Social Entrepreneurship, chapters 8 and 9
Light, Sustaining Innovation, chapter 8
Light, Driving Social Change, section of chapter 3 on evaluating assets
Light, appendix on indexes of governance, on Blackboard

Memo on your view of the most important assets and/or obstacles in creating social change.

WEEK 5: ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Tarrow, Power in Movement, chapter 1
Della Porta, Social Movements, chapter 6
Shane, Illusions of Entrepreneurship, Chapter 4
Davis and Bornstein, Social Entrepreneurship, Chapter 2

Memo on your view of the most important organizational characteristic for social change.

WEEK 6: SOCIAL CHANGE, NATURALLY

Light, Sustaining Innovation, chapters 3 through 6
Light, The Search for Social Entrepreneurship, chapter 4, section on organizations
Davis and Bornstein, Social Entrepreneurship, Part II
Grant and Crutchfield, “Creating High Impact Nonprofits, on Blackboard

Memo on your view of the most important recommendation for creating more natural innovation.

WEEK 7: DESIGNING

Della Porta, Social Movements, chapter 7
Tarrow, Power in Movement, chapters 5 through 8
Shane, Illusions, chapters 4, 7, and 10
Damanpour, Size and Organization, on Blackboard

Memo on your view of the most important tool of social change.

WEEK 8: SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP I

Light, Driving Social Change, chapter 1
Light, “Reshaping Social Entrepreneurship,” on Blackboard
Martin and Osberg, “Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition,” on Blackboard

Memo on your definition of social entrepreneurship.

WEEK 9: SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP II

Light, The Search for Social Entrepreneurship, chapters 4 (sections on ideas, opportunities), 5 and 6, on Blackboard
Davis and Bornstein, Social Entrepreneurship, Part III

Memo on your view of the most important assumption about social entrepreneurship.

WEEK 10: SOCIAL SAFEKEEPING, EXPLORING, ADVOCACY

Light, Driving Social Change, chapter 2

Memo on your view of the most important job in social change.

WEEK 11: AGGREGATION

Della Porta, Social Movements, chapter 5
Tarrow, Power and Social Movements, chapters 9 and 10

Light, Sustaining Innovation, chapter 7

Light, Driving Social Change, chapter 3 (section on aggregating action/breakthrough networks)

Memo on your view of the most important participant(s) in an effective social network.

WEEK 12: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS II

Della Porta, Social Movements, chapters 2 and 3

Tarrow, Power and Social Movements, chapters 2 and 4

Memo on what you think is/was the most important social movement in recent history.

WEEK 13: DISRUPTION

Light, Government’s Greatest Achievements, chapters 1 and 2, on Blackboard

Light, The Four Pillars of High Performance, chapters 3 and 4, on Blackboard

Memo on what you think is the most effective disruption tactic for creating social change?

WEEK 14: ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH

Della Porta, Social Movements, chapter 9


Memo on whether you think we are in a punctuation period and what indicators we might use to spot one.