



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

Introduction to Social Impact UPADM-GP 102

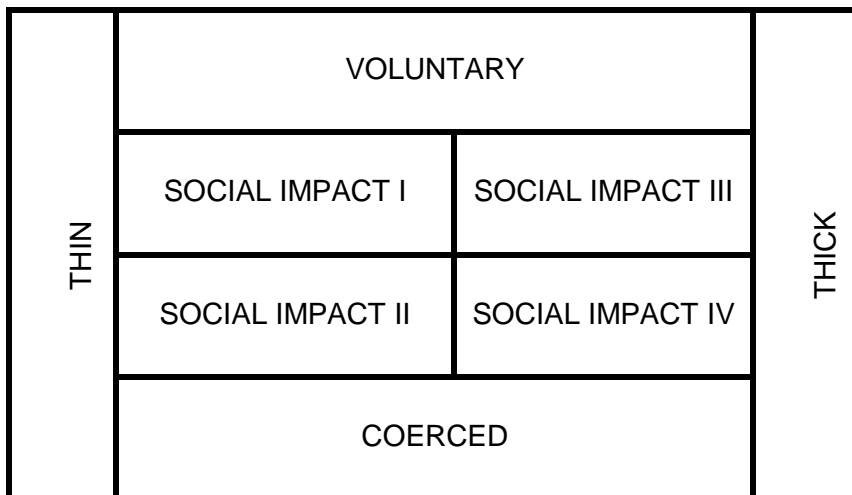
Fall 2019

Instructor Information

- Professor Light
- UPADM-GP 102-001
- Location: 60 Fifth Avenue, Room 110
- Class Times: Mondays/Wednesdays, 12:30-1:45
- Office Hours: Thursdays 10:00-12:00 or by Appointment

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.



The course is also designed to explore the range of alternatives for social impact—e.g., through traditional political participation (voting), personal volunteering and advocacy, careers in social impact, service on nonprofit boards, and social entrepreneurship and innovation. The course will argue that all citizens have the chance to create social impact during their lives—the question is how to improve the odds that they will both make and sustain their commitment.

Course Requirements

Students are required to attend all classes and complete all assignments on time. The class is built around a discussion of the readings and journal entries. Readings must be completed before class.

- 25% first memo on the problem you seek to solve
- 25% second memo on the solution to the problem you seek to solve
- 25% third memo on the threats to your solution and how you will address them
- 25% final exam (24-hour timed take home)

Memos

All written work will be graded both on content and writing. I believe that effective memos must combine persuasive content and accessible writing—good content without good writing is confusion, good communication without content is a waste of energy. All memos must be formatted in memo style (to: from: regarding: date), must start with the pronoun “I,” and must be based on five credible research sources. Webpages may be used for information and statistics, but will NOT be counted as credible research sources. Think tank reports, long-form articles from sources such as The New Yorker, Atlantic, etc. are fine, but not newspaper articles. All citations must be placed in endnotes to increase the speed and accessibility of your memos; all pages must be numbered at the bottom. The memo should be directed to a decision-maker. These are not opinion pieces for the New York Times; be serious throughout in making your case.

Papers will be graded on (1) persuasiveness, (2) clarity of argument, (3) writing quality, (4) sources, and (5) proofing. If your writing quality, sources, and proofing (endnotes, spelling, etc.) are fine, persuasiveness and clarity will account for all 25 points. If not, appropriate deductions will be made: 2 points for writing, 2 points for each missing source, and 1 point each for every major proofing error up to 4. In other words, you might have the most persuasive, clear memo in history, but could lose 8 points if you don’t pay attention to the quality of presentation.

Readings

All readings are available on NYU Classes.

Course Schedule

Week 1a: Norms and Expectations (Wednesday, September 4)

BRING A PHOTO OF YOURSELF ON AN 8 ½ x 11 SHEET OF PAPER WITH YOUR NAME PRINTED IN BOLD CAPS AT THE TOP (DO NOT COPY YOUR NYU ID; PICK A PHOTO THAT WILL HELP ME REMEMBER YOU.

Week 2a: The Case for Engagement (September 9)

DUE AT THE START OF CLASS: WRITE A ONE-SENTENCE MEMO ON THE PROBLEM YOU INTEND TO SOLVE THROUGH YOUR WORK IN THIS CLASS. LEARN MORE ABOUT WRITING A PERSUASIVE MEMO BY READING MY “MEMO ON WRITING MEMOS” ON NYUClasses.

HERE’S HOW IT SHOULD LOOK:

MEMORANDUM

To: Paul Light
From: Yourself
Regarding: The problem I seek to solve
Date: September 10

I seek/hope/want/wish/intend to solve the problem of.....

- Publius, “[Federalist, No. 10, The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection](#),” Yale University, Avalon Project
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- Robinson, “[Democracy: Probably a Good Thing](#),” Current Affairs, June 2017, available at

Week 2b: Paths to Social Impact (September 11)

- Pew Research Center, “[The Whys and Hows of Generational Research](#),” September 3, 2015
- Rauch and Wittes, “[More Professionalism, Less Populism: How Voting Makes Us Stupid, and What to Do About It](#),” Brookings Institution Issue Brief, May 2017

- Kalla and Porter, "[Politicians Don't Actually Care What Voters Want](#)," New York Times, July 11, 2019
- Vavreck and Tausanovitch, "[It May Not Seem that Way, but Politicians Often Do What Voters Want](#)," New York Times, July 17, 2019

Week 3a: Comparing Generations (September 16)

- Dalton, "[Citizenship Norms and Political Participation in America: The Good News Is...the Bad News is Wrong](#)," Center for the Study of Democracy, Occasional Paper, 2006,
- Roose, "[The Making of a YouTube Radical](#)," New York Times, June 8, 2019

Week 3b: Thinking about the Future (September 18)

- Light, *The Four Pillars of High Performance*, 2004, Chapter 1, not available online

Week 4a: Developing a Plan for an Uncertain World (September 23)

BEGIN THINKING ABOUT THE FOUR QUESTIONS YOU MUST ANSWER IN YOUR FIRST MEMO: (1) What problem do you seek to solve? (2) What is the size and recent trend in the social-impact problem? (3) What is the primary cause of the problem? (4) What are the consequences of the problem for society? READ MY MEMO ON MEMO WRITING ON NYUCLASSES BEFORE COMING TO CLASS.

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation, [Logic Model Development Guide](#), Kellogg Foundation, 2010, chapter 1

THE STATE OF SOCIAL IMPACT

Week 4b: Is Polarization the Problem? (September 25)

- Mann and Ornstein, "Finding the Common Good in an Era of Dysfunctional Governance," *Daedalus*, 2013
- Pew Research Center, "[Little Partisan Agreement on the Pressing Problems Facing the U.S.](#)," October 15, 2018

- Sahil Chinoy, "[What Happened to America's Political Center of Gravity](#)," New York Times, June 26, 2019

Week 5a: Are Millennials and Z's the Problem? (September 30)

- Henderson, "[When It Comes to the Baby Boomers: It is Still All about 'Me'](#)," Smithsonian, October 15, 2014
- Stein, "Millennials: The Me, Me, Me Generation," Time, May 20, 2013,
- Pew Research Center, "[Defining Generations: Where Millennials End and Generation Z Begins](#)," January 17, 2019
- Pew Research Center, "[Gen Z, Millennials and Gen X Outvoted Older Generations in 2018 Midterms](#)," May 29, 2019

Week 5b: Is Social Capital the Problem? (October 2)

- Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," Journal of Democracy, January 1995
- Putnam, "Bowling Together," American Prospect, February 11, 2002
- Sander and Robert Putnam, "Still Bowling Alone? The Post-9/11 Split," January 2010

Week 6a: Is Empathy the Problem? (October 7)

- De Waal, "The Antiquity of Empathy," Science, 2012
- Decety, et al., "[Empathy as a Driver of Prosocial Behavior: Highly Conserved Neurobehavioural Mechanisms across Species](#)," Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, December 2015
- Konrath, et al. "Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students Over Time: A Meta-Analysis," Personality and Social Psychology Review, 2011
- Bloom, "[The Baby in the Well](#)," The New Yorker, May 20, 2013

THE FIRST QUADRANT OF SOCIAL IMPACT (VOLUNTARY/THIN)

Week 7a: Voting as Impact (October 9)

- U.S. Census Bureau, "[Characteristics of Voters in the Presidential Election of 2016](#)," September 2018, skim
- Harder and Krosnick, "[Why Do People Vote? A Psychological Analysis of the Causes of Voter Turnout](#)," Journal of Social Issues, 2008
- Root and Kennedy, "[Increasing Voter Participation in America](#)," Center for American Progress, July 11, 2018, read 1-11 and skim options for increasing participation from 12-46

NO CLASS OCTOBER 14: FALL RECESS

- Week 8a: Volunteering as Impact (October 16)

FIRST MEMO DUE

BEGIN THINKING ABOUT THE FOUR QUESTIONS YOU MUST ADDRESS IN YOUR SECOND MEMO: (1) What is your proposed solution to the social-impact problem you seek to solve? (2) How will your solution address the causes of the problem as outlined in your first memo? (3) What are the short-term outputs of your solution that will reveal its success? (4) What makes your solution different from other solutions to this problem?

- United Nations, [The Thread that Binds: 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report](#), 2018, chapter 1
- Batson and Ahmad, "Four Motives for Community Involvement," Journal of Social Issues, Fall 2002
- Perry, Brudney, David, and Littlepage, "What Drives Morally Committed Citizens? A Study of the Antecedents of Public Service Motivation," Public Administration Review, May/June 2008

Week 9a: Giving as Impact (October 21)

- Rooney, "[The Growth in Total Household Giving Is Camouflaging a Decline in Giving by Small and Medium Donors: What Can We Do about It?](#)" Nonprofit Quarterly, June 2019
- Behavioral Insights Team, "[Applying Behavioral Insights to Charitable Giving](#)," May, 2013
- MacLaughlin, "[The End of the Beginning of Online Giving](#)," npENGAGE, March 4, 2019

THE SECOND QUADRANT OF SOCIAL IMPACT (COERCED/THIN)

Week 9B: Service Learning as Impact (October 23)

Jamieson, "The Challenges Facing Civic Education in the 21st Century," Daedalus, 2013

Kawashima-Ginsberg, "[Harry, Hermione, Ron and Neville—Portraits of American Teenager's Extracurricular Involvement, and Implications for Educational Interventions](#)," Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement, CIRCLE, March 2014

Week 10a: Restoring Civic Health as Impact (October 28)

- Atwell, Bridgeland, and Levine, "[Civic Deserts: America's Civic Health Challenge](#)," CIRCLE, October 2017

THE CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Week 10b: Corporate Social Responsibility as Impact (October 30)

- Doane, "The Myth of CSR: The Problem with Assuming that Companies Can Do Well While Also Doing Good Is That Markets Don't Really Work That Way," Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2005
- Chouinard, Ellison, and Ridgeway, "The Sustainable Economy," Harvard Business Review, October 2011

Week 11a: Corporate Social Responsibility in Action (November 4)

- Aguinis and Glavas, “Embedded Versus Peripheral Corporate Social Responsibility: Psychological Foundations,” *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Winter 2013

THE THIRD QUADRANT OF SOCIAL IMPACT (VOLUNTARY/THICK)

Week 11b: Careers in Impact (November 6)

- The Millennial Impact Project, “[Inspiring the Next Generation Workforce: The 2014 Millennial Impact Report](#),” review the charts and skip the text, Case Foundation, 2014, available at
- The Millennial Impact Project, “[Cause, Influence & the Next Generation Workforce: The 2015 Millennial Impact Report](#),” read the executive summary and key statistics, Case Foundation, 2015
- Winograd and Hais, “[How Millennials Could Upend Wall Street and Corporate America](#),” Brookings Institution, 2014

Week 12a: What Could Go Wrong? (November 11)

SECOND MEMO DUE

BEGIN THINKING ABOUT THE FOUR QUESTIONS YOU MUST ANSWER IN YOUR THIRD AND FINAL MEMO: (1) What are three important assumptions that will affect its impact? (2) What is the most important assumption that is the most vulnerable to a breakdown? (3) What are your signposts of impending breakdown of this important, vulnerable assumption? (4) What will you do to hedge if the assumption begins to fail?

Dewar, [Assumption-Based Planning: A Tool for Very Uncertain Times](#), summary, chapters 1-6 (for Third Memo)

Week 12b: Social Entrepreneurship as an Impact Career (November 13)

- Landström, Åström, and Harirchi, “Innovation and Entrepreneurship Studies: One or Two Fields of Research?” *International Entrepreneurship Management Journal*, December 2013; a quick review of the two terms and how to use them
- Seelos and Mair, “Innovation Is Not the Holy Grail,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Fall 2012

Week 13a: Social Entrepreneurship Realities (November 18)

- Fleming, “Breakthroughs and the ‘Long Tail’ of Innovation,” MIT Sloan Management Review, Fall 2007
- Audia and Rider, “A Garage and an Idea: What More Does an Entrepreneur Need?” California Management Review, Fall 2005

Week 13b: Creating Friction (November 20)

- Frank R. Baumgartner, “[Some Thoughts on Reform Miracles](#),” paper presented at the Reform Miracles International Seminar, May 27-28, 2005

THE FOURTH QUADRANT OF SOCIAL IMPACT (COERCED/THICK)

Week 14a: National Service as Impact (November 25)

- Yuengert, “[America’s All Volunteer Force: A Success?](#)” Parameters, Winter 2015-2016
- Lutz, “[Who Joins the Military? A Look at Race, Class, and Immigration Status](#),” Journal of Political and Military Sociology, 2008, read pages 167-179 and skip to pages 184-185
- [National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service](#), Interim Report, January 2019, pages 1-19

Week 14b: Thanksgiving review (November 27)

Week 15a: Genetics and Impact (December 2)

- Edsall, “[Are Our Political Beliefs Encoded in Our DNA?](#)” New York Times, October 1, 2013
- Wihbey, “[The Genetics of Political Orients: Review of the Evolving Field of ‘Genopoitics’](#),” Journalist’s Resource, August 2013, very short literature review

- Hatemi and McDermott, "[The Genetics of Politics: Discovery, Challenges, and Progress](#)," Trends in Genetics, 2012; skim to get a sense of the main argument

V. DELIVERING ON THE PROMISES YOU MAKE

Week 15b: Scaling Up (December 4)

- Swabb, Schaer, Ronay, and Galinsky, "[The Too-Much Talent Effect: Team Interdependence Determines When More Talent Is Too Much or Not Enough](#)," Psychological Science, 2014
- Bardach and Grindle, "Transformative Scale: The Future of Growing What Works: Nine Strategies to Deliver Impact at a Scale that Truly Meets Needs, Stanford Social Innovation Review, February 2014

Week 16a: Investing in Success (December 9)

THIRD MEMO DUE

Shore, "[Great Ideas and Great Execution Require Different Skills](#)," Stanford Social Innovation Review, June 3, 2014

Grant and Crutchfield, "[Creating High-Impact Nonprofits](#)," Stanford Social Innovation Review, Fall 2007

Light, "[Vision + Action = Faithful Execution](#)," Volcker Alliance Issue Paper, December 2015, skim to get through quickly

Week 16b: Endurance (December 11)

Complete the "[grit scale](#)", and remember your score

Duckworth and Gross, "[Self-Control and Grit: Related but Separable Determinants of Success](#)," Current Directions in Psychological Science, October 2014

Schneider, "[Teaching Kids 'Grit' Is All the Rage. Here's What's Wrong with It](#)," New Republic, May 6, 2014

TIMED TAKE-HOME EXAM

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 Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (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.