



NYU

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

UPADM-GP 265

Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship Fall 2022

Instructor Information

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- Office Hours: by appointment.

Course Description

This course is about the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship but is ultimately about you. It's not a toolkit to launch businesses. It's an indoctrination into what it truly means to build and start something and an exploration of you and your goals so you can assess if this is really what you want to do. There are no textbooks and operating manuals. You won't learn any special skills. Instead, there is a lot of discussion about real life and how the world works and what your place in that world could be.

This course starts with the premise that individuals can have a meaningful impact on social issues through the vehicle of social entrepreneurship and that they can help shape and change the world. The course is applicable to multiple aspects of social enterprise including - for profit companies and start-ups, non-profit or self funding organizations and people who want to act more entrepreneurially from within larger NGO's, non-profits or socially oriented businesses. This course is for those who seek to learn and use an entrepreneurial approach to ameliorate major, global, social challenges and to think about changing the world in the process. No prior business experience is needed, just an open mind to learning new things and new ways to look at the world. In the end it's not required that people pursue a path of social entrepreneurship but more so that they have a new lens with which to see the world and how to solve problems in the world.

There are multiple definitions of social entrepreneurship and it is not the aim of this class to define a single path or to cover every single iteration. Instead the aim is to help students with a passion for social impact, start to think about and understand an entrepreneurial mindset, and how to apply it. It is important to understand that there are no hard skills of entrepreneurship,

merely a mindset of how to think about creating businesses, and this class focuses on the mindset. There is no startup handbook or ten step program that comes out of the class because every startup journey is personal and different. What matters more is what you learn about you and how you start to learn about the world around you.

There is debate about whether entrepreneurs are born or they are made. Either way, it is likely that their success was not learned by sitting in a classroom or listening to lectures.

Entrepreneurs succeed because they have a mindset for experimentation, and they have a passion and vision to change the world. Also, they are pretty good story tellers. Students taking this class will best learn when they embrace the class and the methods of learning in the class with an entrepreneurial mindset. In other words, I am biased towards the way that I learned to be both a social and a startup entrepreneur. I tried a lot of things. I asked a lot of questions. I read articles, books and watched videos and listened to podcasts. I asked for advice. I took meetings. I failed. I looked at my metrics. I hired people smarter than me. I took ideas from one vertical and applied them to another. And every day I tried to learn something new, made new experiments, cared nothing for the way it was supposed to be, tried to do too much, and thought, there must be a better way. To inculcate that through the class is the ultimate goal.

Students will be given multiple opportunities to develop and use their entrepreneurial mindset through

- Co-creating and shaping the curriculum, providing feedback ongoing about our learning
- Researching and finding articles, videos, podcasts and people to talk to that are not in the curriculum but support their learning and their final projects
- Learning and presenting in multiple modalities (video, presentations, papers)
- Questioning speakers, building business models, discussing and cooperating with classmates
- Assessing their own strengths and weaknesses and development over the course of the semester

Learning Assessment Table

Graded Assignment	Course Objective Covered
Team Paper	#2, #3
Final Exam	#1, #4

Required Readings

The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses

Eric Ries

https://www.amazon.com/dp/0670921602/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_dp_T2_J.oDzbR4T34Q4

Building Social Business: The New Kind of Capitalism that Serves Humanity's Most Pressing Needs

Muhammad Yunus

https://www.amazon.com/dp/1586489569/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_dp_T2_XbpDzbT49ZXZA

Assessment Assignments and Evaluation

- You must do the required reading
- In addition to reading I will assign videos and podcasts which you are required to watch or listen to
- I will ask you to do research to support the reading and share this research with the class
- Participation in class and presentations
- Everyone will work on an idea for a social enterprise and use that as the structure for applying what is discussed each week
- Help make our class the best class it can be, on a weekly basis

Grading

Participation and Attendance (20%):

Participation shows that you are engaged and have done the homework. It also reflects regular attendance in class. If you feel uncomfortable participating you have the option of emailing me additional thoughts after class. Given the virtual nature of the class this will be a work in progress. If it becomes too hard to participate over Zoom or in person, we will weigh this differently. Unexcused absences count against your grade (details below).

Weekly assignments + Midterm Project (40%):

As a start-up, every month you report to your board of directors and keep them updated on your progress, your metrics and key developments. Likewise each week you must update me via email before the next class. An update email* or slack message gives me a brief overview of what you've been learning, questions you might have, other resources, feedback on the class and progress on your idea. In other words, every week you send me an email which consists of three parts: 1) A brief overview of what you learned (this is not a book report so no need to reflect back what's in the reading). 2) Your thoughts, reactions, feelings. 3) Questions you had (you can just list these). If you do not submit a summary email each class before the class starts, you will lose points from your final grade.

(40%): Your final product

- 1) You will create a social venture as a group project in this class. You will build a plan and present it ongoing and at the end to your peers for feedback. It will not be perfect. It may never launch. But it's the process of structuring and doing this that will lay the groundwork for your next venture and the one after that.

- 2) You will write a 3 - 5-page letter to yourself about what you learned and advice on how to be a successful social entrepreneur.

Overview of the Semester

Below you will find an outline of what we plan to discuss, on a weekly basis. The exact topic in each class is subject to change before the semester begins and as the semester goes along depending on how much we are able to cover and what questions arise in the process of our learning. Changes will be reflected on this document.

Class 1: Can you learn how to be an entrepreneur?

Class 2: How do organizations think about solving the world's problems?

Class 3: What goes wrong when trying to save the world?

Class 4: How to start, by thinking really small

Class 5: How to develop products

Class 6: How entrepreneurs use a market driven approach Part 1

Class 7: How entrepreneurs use a market driven approach Part 2

Class 8: How to think about what to measure

Class 9: What is strategy and positioning?

Class 10: Target population and All the Parts of the Project

Class 11: How do we get money for our idea?

Class 12: What they say about you when you're not in the room

Class 13: Final Presentations

Class 14 Final Presentations

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Points
A	4.0 points
A-	3.7 points
B+	3.3 points
B	3.0 points
B-	2.7 points
C+	2.3 points
C	2.0 points
C-	1.7 points
F	0.0 points

Student grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

- (A) Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.
- (A-) Very good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.
- (B+) Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. This is the graduate student grade that indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of the course.
- (B) Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but shows some indication that understanding of some important issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches used are adequate but student has not been thorough or has shown other weaknesses or limitations.

- (B-) Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would not suffice to sustain graduate status in “good standing.”
- (C/-/+) Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.
- (F) Fail: Work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with serious limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limits are pervasive.

A	> 93.0	4.0
A-	> 90.0	3.7
B+	> 87.0	3.3
B	> 83.0	3.0
B-	> 80.0	2.7
C+	> 77.0	2.3
C	> 73.0	2.0
C-	> 70.0	1.7
F	< 70.0	0.0

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.

Class Policies

1. Absences: Attendance will be taken for each class. As active participation is an important element of your grade, so is attendance. Any more than three absences will result in a zero for the attendance (and participation) portion of your grade. Please notify me by email prior to any class in which you will be absent or late. There will be no make-ups due to excused or unexcused absence or lateness.
2. Group Work: One of the course deliverables and many of the in-class discussions will involve group work. You are expected to work cooperatively in such groups and to be an individual contributor to the group process. Group dynamics will be observed and will also contribute to the class participation portion of your grade.

3. Preparation: As stated in the syllabus, this course involves reading the assigned materials and completing the assignments. Therefore, coming prepared to class is absolutely required. Students may be asked questions whether or not they offer to participate so please make sure you are prepared.

4. Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Participation in cheating, forgery and plagiarism are subject to disciplinary action.

5. Wagner School Policies: The course will be subject to all Wagner School policies