

College of Management of Technology (CDM)

Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship

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COURSE OVERVIEW AND PROCEDURE

This class is designed for Bachelor students who are interested in understanding the concept of social entrepreneurship and who want to acquire the skills and knowledge to create transformative societal change. In this course, a social new venture is defined as an innovative start-up firm, which utilizes market-based solutions as a tool for addressing social and environmental problems.

The purpose of this course is to explore new venture creation beyond creating economic profit. By adopting a process perspective – from initial problem recognition all the way to establishing an impactful social venture – this course offers a holistic overview of the steps involved in creating businesses for societal change. Given the systemic nature of many sustainability-related challenges, this course combines insights from various theoretical approaches, coupled with practical techniques and methods for analyzing and evaluating social business opportunities, crafting impact-oriented strategies, and developing creative approaches to utilize technology for social good.

TEACHING APPROACH AND CLASS ATTENDANCE

A Socratic style of teaching will be adopted to stimulate discussions and to appeal to students' critical thinking abilities and problem solving skills. To steer this active learning experience, the course will combine classical lectures with several interactive teaching methods, including group work, student presentations, individual reflection exercises, case studies, as well as guest speaker experiences. Accordingly, a major focus of the course is students' group work on a new venture proposal, i.e. students are asked to identify social and environmental problems, generate solution ideas, analyze and evaluate alternatives, and develop plans to implement their solution. Thereby students apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom - through lectures, discussions, case studies, and guest speakers - and will be able to experience the early stages of social new venture creation first hand.

MATERIALS/READINGS

Course materials and readings will be provided on Moodle

GROUP ASSIGNMENT: SOCIAL VENTURE PROJECT

Early in the course we will form student groups who will work during the semester on a social business project proposal. Team changes will not be allowed during the semester.

Each team is expected to discuss social and environmental problems (on a local or global scale) and to creatively identify 2 to 3 potential business solutions to address these problems entrepreneurially. The alternative solution ideas are presented in class in the form of elevator pitches (full presentation: max. 5 minutes). For the most promising idea, a business concept proposal is developed. The team will give a presentation in class on the strategy/marketing part of the proposal at approximately mid-term (full presentation: max. 5 minutes, max. 5 slides). The team will present their final social business proposal in the final session of the class (full presentation: max. 7 minutes, max. 7 slides).

In line with the definition of “social new ventures” which we have adopted for this course, the team is expected to come up with business ideas that are innovative (e.g., new product or service, new business model, new market, new value chain processes) and that offer a real solution for addressing the grand societal challenges of our time. The venture ideas should be an original effort of the team, not a copy or reworking of someone else’s concept.

- Deliverables:*
1. Three presentations as detailed above
 2. Social business project proposal of *maximum* 10 pages

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT: Reflection Paper

The goal of this assignment is to encourage students to express their personal opinion about social entrepreneurship and to critically reflect about their experiences gained during the course of this class. For the individual assignment, students will be asked to focus on a social entrepreneur of their choice and critically reflect about this person’s role as society’s change agent. Doing so, students are expected to discuss the potential and limits of individual entrepreneurs in realizing systemic transformations, thereby demonstrating their abilities in critical thinking and inductive reasoning.

- Deliverable:* Written report of maximum 4 pages

GRADING

- The business project 40%
Within the business project, the parts count as follows
 - Idea presentation 20%
 - Strategy/ Marketing presentation 20%
 - Final presentation 30%
 - Project Proposal Document 30%
- Individual assignment 40%
- Peer-to-Peer Feedback 20%

COURSE SCHEDULE – SESSIONS OUTLINE

Session		Topics
1	19.2.	Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship
2	26.2.	Reframing Global Issues into Entrepreneurial Opportunities
3	5.3.	Project Team Formation & Guided Group Work
4	12.3.	Design Thinking for Social Innovations
5	19.3.	Presentation of Social Venture Ideas
6	26.3.	Transforming Systems: Social Entrepreneurs as Change Agents
7	2.4.	Social Business Model Design
8	9.4.	Marketing in Social New Ventures
9	16.4.	Managing (and Communicating with) Multiple Stakeholders
10	30.4.	Presentation of Social Venture Strategy/ Marketing Plan
11	7.5.	Impact Funding and Resource Acquisition for Social Ventures
12	14.5.	Measuring and Reporting the Impact of Social Ventures
13	21.5.	Scaling Social Ventures
14 & 15	28.5.	Presentation of Social Venture Final Business Concepts

** The syllabus may be subject to change, with prior announcements, to accommodate guest speakers.