



PPAI1910: Social Entrepreneurship | Spring 2014
Salomon 202 | Tuesdays + Thursdays: 9:00-10:20am

[Faculty]

Alan Harlam
Swearer Center (410) 480-1190
alan_harlam@brown.edu ([office hours sign-up](#))

William J. Allen
Taubman Center (401) 225-8827
bill_allen@brown.edu ([office hours sign-up](#))

[Teaching Assistants]

Brett Anders
(703) 408-4833
brett_anders@brown.edu

Ivy Sokol
(305) 439-7455
ivy_sokol@brown.edu

Course Description

PPAI 1910, Social Entrepreneurship, introduces students to social innovation and social entrepreneurship and engages them in identifying significant global problems and innovative solutions that drive social change. The course helps students understand some of the strategies that social entrepreneurs employ to create high-impact enterprises, highlighting unique models of social enterprise that offer bold solutions to enormous and complex social problems.

Social enterprises address problems where the government, private sector, and traditional non-profit sector fail. The course considers the full spectrum of such enterprises, including strictly non-profit organizations, enterprises developing revenue-generating products or services for a social goal, and socially responsible for-profit companies. The course takes a global perspective, including organizations from Providence, around the US, and abroad.

Students will learn about real organizations and entrepreneurs. Case studies, complemented by articles and guest speakers, will show different approaches to social entrepreneurship and illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of various models and strategies. The course demands active participation from each student, and written assignments help students identify patterns within the course material. Through a final project, students apply the concepts of the class to a consulting project with a team at Ashoka, a leading social entrepreneurship support organization.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce students to the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship and to its potential as a transformative model of social change.

2. Introduce students to the characteristics of successful social entrepreneurship and the people who make it happen.
3. Equip students with the skills to constructively critique an organization's strategies and assess related challenges, barriers and opportunities to realize its goal.
4. Help students to develop "an entrepreneurial imagination."¹

Required Course Materials

Required case studies are contained in a Harvard Business School Course Pack, linked here: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/24525323> Additional required and suggested readings are available through the module section of Canvas.

Structure of the Course

The course framework features four modules, each of which describes a set of approaches/strategies that social entrepreneurs use to achieve systems change. These modules are: (1) Restructuring Institutional Norms and Changing Market Dynamics, (2) Starting Social Movements & Shaping Policy Change, (3) Advancing Full Citizenship, and (4) Cultivating Empathy. Each module contains three to five case discussions, plus introduction and conclusion classes. The introduction class provides a more theoretical introduction to the strategy for achieving systems change, while the conclusion class connects the dots on issues related to impact, scale and sustainability.

Course Requirements

Class Participation (30%)

This class requires active participation and engagement by each student, both during in-class discussion and online in Canvas discussion forums. Good questions are sometimes better than good answers. Taking ideas to the next level is important for deepening your understanding of concepts and practices. We will assess both the quantity and quality of your participation.

[In-Class Discussion Questions]

Most classes will be structured as discussions about a case, readings, or an outside speaker. Students are expected to come to class prepared to respond to any of discussion questions based on the information in the assigned readings. Be prepared to be "cold-called" to respond to any of the questions to launch a discussion about a case.

[Online Take-Aways]

Students are asked to post questions or particular points of interest following each class by 9AM (next morning). Students must post at least six take-aways for the semester, with at least one take-away per module in order to receive full participation credit. Those who do not fulfill this take-aways for each class and post questions, comments, and/or alternative points of view that might feed discussion in the concluding session of each module.

¹ Nitin Nohria, Dean, Harvard Business School, in New York Times, July 24, 2012.

[Optional Online Discussion Questions]

Before class, students may email to the faculty questions they would like to be addressed during class either by faculty or visiting speakers. Please email these questions by 5PM before the next day's class.

[Optional Online Article Posting]

We have established a discussion forum on Canvas where students can post articles that are relevant to the definition and understanding of social entrepreneurship. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss the article online.

In-Class Module Conclusion Presentations (15%)

Goal: improve students' competency in analyzing and comparing similar organizations' strategies for systems change

For each of the four module conclusions, ten students will divide into three groups to make three presentations -- one each about scale, sustainability, and systems change. Each presentation should draw on the required theoretical and analytical readings (Bradach, Meadows, etc.) specific to that part of the framework to supplement the discussion of specific cases. The presentations will be 8-10 minutes long and each will be followed by 15 minutes of discussion. The presentations should build on in-class discussions and take-aways to draw connections between cases and highlight effective strategies for enacting systems change while also explaining why certain strategies may not be effective. For the latter, students should recommend different, more effective strategies.

External Organization Case Write-up (25%)

Goal: apply the toolkit for analyzing organizations in the field of social entrepreneurship to an organization we have not discussed in class

Students will choose an organization that they consider a social enterprise to analyze within the established framework. This entails a discussion of why the organization qualifies as social entrepreneurship (and perhaps where it does not) as well as an analysis of its strategies for achieving scale, impact, and sustainability. Like the in-class conclusion presentations, the paper should draw on required theoretical and analytical readings (Bradach, Meadows, etc.) to address how and if the organization enacts systems change. This paper should be 8-10 pages.

Ashoka Consulting Group Project (30%)

Goal: To provide students an opportunity to apply the course framework to a real world example of social entrepreneurship.

Projects are designed to challenge students to use both primary and secondary research sources and to apply their analytical skills. These will address current changemaker priorities of Ashoka, a leading global social entrepreneurship support organization, that are related to topics

covered in the four modules. Projects run from early March to late April (~six weeks). Clear benchmarks, products, and deliverables are set: two interim milestones and one final deliverable. Teams of five students each will be appointed for a total of eight teams. Two teams can work on the same project, if appropriate. Teams will be in regular contact with their Ashoka partner. Assessment of this assignment will be based on the quality of students' professional approach, research, analysis, preparedness and written and verbal presentations.

Policies

Assignment Submission

Assignments are due at the prescribed time listed on the syllabus. Documents should be uploaded to Canvas. Late assignments will be accepted up to three days after the deadline, only with prior approval from the instructors, but the grade will be adjusted (10%) to reflect the missed deadline. Assignments submitted more than one week from the due date/time will not be accepted.

Absences

If you won't be in class, please let us know ahead of time and submit any required assignments that may be required in advance of the class. Excessive absence or lateness or failing to notify the faculty about illness or absence in advance will impact your attendance / class participation assessment.

Laptops/Cellphones

Laptops are welcome, but cellphones are not. Don't be distracted by other tasks. We expect you to be actively engaged and single tasking.

Course Outline

PLEASE NOTE: This is a work in progress, subject to additions, adjustments and other change. Please consult Canvas Modules for updates and adjustments in this outline.

Course Introduction

January 23, 2014 | Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship (Definition) and Course Overview (Harlam and Allen)

January 28, 2014 | Social Entrepreneurship and Systems Change (Harlam; Guest: Karabi Archarya)

January 30, 2014 | Scalability and Sustainability (Allen)

First Module: Institutional Norms and Market Dynamics

February 4, 2014 | Introduction (Harlam)

February 6, 2014 | Runa (Allen; Guest: Tyler Gage)

February 11, 2014 | Case: Embrace = d.light (Allen)

February 13, 2014 | Equitable Origin (Allen; Guest: David Poritz)

[February 18, 2014 | NO CLASS]

February 20, 2014 | Komaza (Harlam; Guest: Tevis Howard)

February 25, 2014 | One Acre Fund (Harlam; Guest: Matt Forti)

February 27, 2014 | Conclusion to Module | **Assignment:** Module Conclusions Team Presentations (Teams; Harlam; Allen)

Second Module: Advancing Full Citizenship

March 4, 2014 | Introduction (Allen; Guest: Scott Warren)

March 6, 2014 | Year Up (Allen; Guest: Meghan Hughes)

March 11, 2014 | Capital Good Fund (Allen; Guest: Andy Posner)

March 13, 2014 | City Year (Harlam; Guest: TBD)

March 18, 2014 | Conclusion to Module | **Assignment:** Module Conclusions Team Presentations (Teams; Harlam; Allen)

Third Module: Social Movements and Policy Change

March 20, 2014 | Introduction (Harlam; Guest David Schwartz)

[March 25 + 27, 2014 | SPRING BREAK]

April 1, 2014 | 350.org (Allen)

April 3, 2014 | Eye to Eye (Allen; Guest: David Flink)

April 8, 2014 | Pencils of Promise (Harlam; Guest: Adam Braun)

April 10, 2014 | Conclusion to Module | **Assignment:** Module Conclusions Team Presentations (Teams; Harlam; Allen)

Fourth Module: Cultivating Empathy

April 15, 2014 | Introduction (Harlam; Guest: Laura White)

April 17, 2014 | Roots of Empathy (Harlam; Guest: Mary Gordon)

April 22, 2014 | Girls on the Run (Harlam; Guest: Juliellen Simpson-Vos)

April 24, 2014 | Playworks (Allen; Guest: Nathaniel Foster)

April 29, 2014 | Conclusion to Module | **Assignment:** Module Conclusions Team Presentations (Teams; Harlam; Allen)

Course Wrap Up

May 1, 2014 | Course Wrap-up (Harlam; Allen)

Final Group Project Presentations

May 6, 8, & 13 (Exam time)