Social Entrepreneurs and Changemakers

Class #: 19021
Section 001
Silver, Room 507

October 27- December 16 2011
Thursday 6:45-8:25 PM

Professor: Stuart Yasgur, Managing Director, Ashoka
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**Course Description:**

NYU Reynolds, Ashoka, and NYU Wagner are happy to announce “Social Entrepreneurs and Changemakers.” This class is a preamble to the graduate level concentration NYU Reynolds hopes to launch in Spring 2012. This course will provide students from a wide variety of disciplines, and NYU schools, the opportunity to discover and develop their own roles in realizing and/or contributing to social change. It will provide students with:

1. A comprehensive introduction to the field
2. An understanding of some of the specific skills and networks needed to be successful in their pursuit
3. An opportunity to work on and develop a social change project

The course is designed around the following series of subject matter modules:

- Module 1: Introduction
- Module 2: Changemaking Skills
- Module 3: Media
- Module 4: Markets
- Module 5: Hybrid
- Module 6: Looking Ahead

Modules will generally combine the complementary focus on the power of pattern-change new ideas with the potential of using top-tier professional skills to bring about change.

**Professor: Stuart Yasgur, Managing Director, Ashoka**

Stuart Yasgur is Managing Director of Ashoka and the head of Ashoka’s Social Investment Entrepreneurs Initiative. Earlier in his career Stuart was the Managing Partner of a New York based consultancy and has more than a decade of experience working with start-up and growth stage companies. Stuart received his Bachelors from Cornell University, Masters from Columbia University and is completing his PhD at the London School of Economics.

**Course Grading and Assignments:**

At its core this course is about becoming a Social Entrepreneur or Changemaker. Since this requires experiential learning the practicum will consist of an exercise in changemaking.

- Milestone 1: Team Formation—Class 1
- Milestone 2: Project Proposal—Class 2

Between classes one and two students will be asked to form teams and set a changemaking goal to accomplish over the course of the semester. Students are
encouraged to think creatively about the goals they set. While the entrepreneurial case studies we will read during the course will offer students a rich set of changemaking activities to consider, students may also think of addressing issues within their own communities and institutions.

- Milestone 3: Change Strategy and Stakeholder Map- Class 3
  To accomplish their changemaking goal, students will need to think through each of the key stakeholders and identify why the proposed change is a key win for each party involved. This process naturally informs the development of the team’s change strategy; and the time limitations will naturally focus teams on pursuing approaches with maximal leverage.

- Milestone 4: Progress Update – Class 5
  As they pursue their change strategy, students will offer a mid-term progress report including milestones achieved, challenges addressed and key changes, if any, to team strategy.

- Milestone 5: Final Report – Class 7
  At the end of the semester students will report on their progress towards their changemaking goal. The final report will likely include a description of goal, strategy, progress to date, impact, and reflections on their own growth as Changemakers.

To support each student’s growth as a Social Entrepreneur and Changemaker, this course is designed to provide students with the most powerful resources possible – an opportunity to learn more about (and perhaps engage with) leading social entrepreneurs.

As a result, in addition to the practicum the course will consist of a series of lectures, and case discussions. To ensure a rich experience for all participants students are expected to attend each class prepared and ready to make significant contributions. Each week a group of students will be asked to prepare and lead the group discussion for the following class. This will represent a portion of your class participation grade.

Coursework will be assessed based on course participation and the changemaking reflected in the milestones based on the following percentages:

- Class participation: 15%
- Milestone 2: 15%
- Milestone 3: 15%
- Milestone 4: 15%
- Milestone 5: 40%

**Participation, Attendance and Assignment Policy**
Class attendance and participation is mandatory. Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency.
REQUIRED READINGS:

Additional readings will be placed on blackboard prior to each class session.
FALL SEMESTER

Module 1: Introduction

Week1: A Historic Moment/ Defining the Field

October 27, 2011

As the emerging field of social entrepreneurship has gained more attention, people have begun to apply the term to a variety of activities including for profit businesses with true social missions, innovative non-profits that employ profit generating strategies (social ventures), innovative approaches to philanthropy (strategic philanthropy, MRI), or any number of sustainable and scalable social change efforts. Acknowledging the ongoing terminological debates in the field, this class will introduce the notion of social entrepreneurship by discussing the 5 criteria Ashoka uses to identify leading social entrepreneurs:

1. A new idea
2. Creativity
3. Entrepreneurial Quality
4. Social Impact
5. Ethical Fiber

These criteria offer a multidimensional continuum students can use as a guide through this emerging field. It also offers students a concrete tool to assess their own changemaking capabilities, and a guide to assess their own changemaking orientation.

Milestone 1- At the end of class students will form changemaking teams for their class project.

Readings:
1. Chapter 1, Restless People. How to Change the World, David Bornstein

2. Chapter 5, A Very Significant Force- Bill Drayton. How to Change the World, David Bornstein

Suggested Reading:
1. Chapter 1 of Driving Social Change: How to Solve the World's Toughest Problems by Paul Light
Module 2: Changemaking Skills

Week 2: Theory

November 3, 2011

Changemaking requires distinctive sets of skills. Over 700 of the world’s leading social entrepreneurs focus on helping young people master these skills around the world. While there is great variety in the form this takes in different cultural contexts, 4 important themes shine through: 1) Empathy, 2) Teamwork, 3) Leadership, and 4) Changemaking. Class discussion will focus on these themes with a special emphasis on the role of empathy.

Additionally, Roots of Empathy and the work of Mary Gordon provide a compelling example of the power of social entrepreneurship. Starting as a kindergarten teacher, she gave herself permission to address the problem of rising societal aggression. Developing a remarkably accessible curriculum, Mary Gordon has had a lasting impact on over 370,000 children worldwide.

This example illustrates two key characteristics of social entrepreneurship: 1) social entrepreneurs give themselves permission to address seemingly intractable problems; and 2) powerful ideas can often be conveyed with simplicity and elegance.

Implicit in this story is the invitation for each of us to stand up, change the world and address the problems around us.

Milestone 2- With discussion of Mary Gordon’s work as the backdrop, the class will move on to review student’s proposed projects.

Readings:

1. Child Finance: Changing an EcoSystem to Achieve Social Impact. The Center for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), Fuqua School of Business, Duke University


Suggested Reading:

2. “Roots of Empathy: Changing the World Child by Child” by Mary Gordon


Module 3: Media

Week 3: From Media to Movement

*November 10, 2011*

Guest Speaker: To Be Confirmed

Advances in technology have simultaneously created dramatically new possibilities for organizing social change while undermining the economic model of journalism as an institution. As a result there are not only dramatic new possibilities for unleashing social change, but also a pressing need to create new models to serve vital societal functions of providing access to high quality reliable information. Class discussion will focus on the current state of innovation and the areas of greatest opportunity.

Milestone 3- In the last section of this class we will discuss teams change strategies and stakeholder maps.

Readings:
2. The Revolution Will Be Tweeted. Blake Hounshell. Foreign Policy
   [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/06/20/the_revolution_will_be_tweete](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/06/20/the_revolution_will_be_tweeted)
3. Dowser Website About: [http://dowser.org/about/](http://dowser.org/about/)
4. The New York Times, Fixes:

Module 4: Markets

Week 4: Social Finance

*November 17, 2011*

Business activity has financial, social and environmental impact. Traditional business approaches focus on the first of these to the exclusion
of the others. Jed Emerson originated the concept of Blended Value which provides the conceptual foundation for investors and practitioners to seek to maximize more than merely financial returns. Building from Jed Emerson’s published work; class discussion will seek to draw out lessons learned and his thoughts on areas of greatest opportunity.

Reading:
1. Social Finance Case Study (Forthcoming)

Suggested:
1. "Blended Value Executive Summary", by Jed Emerson and Sheila Bonini, October 21, 2003

Week 5: Impact Investing

*December 1, 2011*

As social entrepreneurs turn to market forces to address social problems, they are increasingly able to offer financial as well as social returns on investments. The emergence of these social enterprises has been paralleled and reinforced by the emergence of investing activity, Impact Investing, which also seeks social and financial returns. While still in its early stages, Impact Investing has been viewed as having tremendous promise, possibly representing an emerging asset class with a $500 billion market. It has already started to reshape the landscape with new actors and institutions emerging daily. Class discussion will seek to provide students with an overview of this emerging trend and identify key areas of opportunity.

Milestone 4- In the last section of the class we will take time to discuss each team’s progress updates.

Reading:
1. “Investing for Social & Environmental Impact: A Design for Catalyzing an Emerging Industry” by the Monitor Institute, January 2009

2. "Impact Investing: Harnessing Capital Markets to Solve Problems at Scale" by Antony Bugg-Levine and John Goldstein, Community Development
   INVESTMENT REVIEW, Vol. 5, Issue 2, 2009 pg. 30- 41

3. “Impact Investments: An Emerging Asset Class” by J.P. Morgan, November 2010

Module 5: Hybrid

Week 6: New Alliances for Social Change
We are witnessing a sea change in the way society’s problems are solved, work is performed, and businesses grow. Collaborations between corporations and social entrepreneurs can create and expand markets on a scale not seen since the Industrial Revolution. These markets will reach everyone, but especially the 4 billion people who are not yet part of the world’s formal economy. They will offer new and remarkable products and services in sectors as diverse as education, transportation, and finance.”

Reading:
2. Hybrid Value Chains: Case Study in Columbia (Forthcoming)
3. ‘Healthpoint Services Global:’ Case Study (Forthcoming)

Module 6: Looking Ahead

Week 7: Changing the World

Creating change in the world requires a degree of courage, conviction and commitment. In the last class students will present the results of their project to the class (Milestone 5). Class discussion will focus on the impact of each project, challenges encountered, strategies used, and lessons learned. It will also offer students the opportunity to reflect on their own growth as Changemakers and Social Entrepreneurs.