

Syllabus

PUBA 3910: Social Innovation & Enterprise

Instructor: Professor Chengxin Xu

Seattle University

Winter 2022

Course Information:

Class Hours: Tue/Thu 3:45-5:50pm

Classroom: Bannan Building, 413 (via Zoom when needed)

Contact Me:

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Office Hours: By appointment via [Bookings](#)

Course Description

Our society is calling for more solutions for growing social problems, and social enterprises—new venture creation that profitably confronts social problems such as poverty and inequality, lack of access to healthcare and education, and climate change—are considered as an innovative approach to make effective and sustainable impact. This course will enable you to build you a sense of social entrepreneurship and to inspire you ideas for social problems particularly of your interest. We will start with identifying social problems, understanding their underlying mechanisms. Then, we will explore different approaches of social innovation, including social enterprises, B-Corporations, social impact bonds, and their fundamental principles and logics. Finally, we will take a critical perspective to re-examine social enterprises to understand unique challenges against such innovative approach.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify, understand and communicate social problems and their underlying mechanisms.
2. Have a working knowledge of the concepts, opportunities and challenges of social entrepreneurship.
3. Demonstrate the role of social entrepreneurship in creating innovative and sustainable responses to critical social needs (e.g., hunger, poverty, inner city education, global warming, etc).

Required Textbook and Materials

There is no required textbook in this class. But, there are a number of reading materials, such as journal articles or book chapters. Any required reading materials other than textbooks will be available on Canvas.

Social Venture Teams

In this class, you are a founding member of a social enterprise. With your teammates (classmates), your team will identify a social problem of your interest and incorporate a social enterprise (or a similar type of organization) to address the problem through the Social Venture Project. You are expected to work closely with your teammates.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to keep up with assigned readings and to participate actively in class discussions. Grades will be based on the following:

- Class participation — 10%
- Sharing a Social Enterprise/Social Venture — 20%
- Social Venture Project Part I — 20%
- Social Venture Project Part II — 20%
- Oral Presentation of Social Venture Project — 20%
- Team Contribution Ratings — 10%

Class participation (10%): The successful completion of this seminar is on the basis of discussion and interactions among students and the instructor. Students are expected to attend every class meeting, read assigned materials carefully, and bring constructive opinions and questions to the class. Sharing personal working experience is strongly recommended.

Sharing a Social Enterprise/Social Venture (20%): Each student is required to find a social enterprise (e.g., an organization listed on <https://bcorporation.net/> or <https://skoll.org/>) or a social innovative project (e.g., [Zomba Prison Project](#)), and introduce it to the class through an oral presentation. During the presentation, students are expected to show the mission of the social enterprise/innovative project, the content of its main program, its stakeholders and beneficiaries, the way it is funded, and its social impact.

Social Venture Plan (70%): The Social Venture Plan is the major project for completing this course, and hopefully a seed for your own social venture. In this project, you will team with your classmates and identify a social problem in the greater Seattle area and design a social venture to alleviate the problem. Consider this plan as a real proposal for potential funders such as the Gates Foundation. To keep your work on track, the plan was assigned into three parts as follows. *For all writing assignment, you are encouraged to submit a draft at least 3 days before the deadline.*

- **Part I: Social Impact Theory (20%):** This is the leading part for your social venture plan. Begin with a name for your venture. From there, you are to articulate the social problem/opportunity you will address, the potential significance of the outcome, and the underlying unique “magic” of your venture for this problem/opportunity (i.e., how the venture will achieve its desired impact). This assignment is not to exceed 15 pages but no less than 10 pages.
- **Part II: Venture Plan (20%):** In this part, you are to demonstrate how your organization will implement the “magic”. Please keep in mind that you are creating an opportunity/solving a current problem that will manifest in a fully developed plan of action. Therefore, you need to detail following points in this part (This assignment is not to exceed 20 pages but no less than 15 pages, including tables, charts, and figures):
 - **Go-to-Market Plan:** Explain how you are going to reach your target beneficiaries.
 - **Management Team and Advisory Board:** Describe the key players of your management team as well as any planned donors, grant providers, or equity investors if applicable.
 - **Finance:** Explain how you would fund your social venture and make it financially sustainable in long term.
 - **Social Impact:** Articulate how you are going to evaluate the impact of your venture.
- **Part III: Oral Presentation (20%):** Your team is going to present both the Social Impact Theory and your Venture Plan at the last session of the class. The presentation will be 20 minutes long, followed with a 20-minute Q&A session. Please prepare for critical questions that challenge your venture.
- **Team Contribution Ratings (10%):** You will be asked to complete a team member evaluation form to rate the contribution of each of the team members by assigning a percentage effort score to that member. These scores will be used to calculate the weight that will be applied to the individual’s teamwork. Individual grades will therefore vary within teams, based on peer-assessment of your contribution to team effort.

APA (see a [guidance](#) here) is required in terms of writing style of your assignments. In-text citations are preferred to footnotes or endnotes. Writing clarity and quality are considered in

grading. Please use a standard font such as Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman. Pages should use 1-inch margins, double-spaced, with 12 point fonts. If you think you need help with your writing, talk to the professor. There are resources on campus to help you. Also feel free to seek for services of the [Writing Center at Seattle University](#).

Due dates of all assignments are listed on the Course Schedule and your Canvas Calendar.

Grading Policy

Students' final grades will be calculated as follows:

A	94-100	A–	90-93	B+	87-89	B	83-86
B–	80-82	C+	77-79	C	73-76	C–	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D–	60-62	F	59 or less

Any students who want to challenge their course grade shall follow the Academic Grading Grievance Policy at Seattle University. The detail of the policy can be found [here](#). An agreement to receive an Incomplete (I) grade may be negotiated if your circumstances do not allow you to finish the course on time. The Incomplete Grades Policy of the university is available on the Office of the Registrar [website](#).

Course Policies

General Expectations: This a graduate-level course and so students are expected to be motivated to read and study the assigned textbooks and other materials carefully before class. This includes doing exercises from the textbook on your own to test your understanding of key concepts and methods. Regular attendance and keeping up with all readings and assignments is essential to doing well in this course.

Submitting Assignments: Assignments should be submitted via Canvas rather than e-mailed unless being required by the professor. Canvas optimizes the grading process and student-professor communication.

Late Submission: It is very important in this course to keep up with assignments and to hand them in on time. Grades will be reduced for late assignments, and the later the assignment, the greater the grade reduction. Students should expect a penalty for late assignments (not be graded higher than 8.5/10). Assignments that are submitted two or more weeks late will only be accepted for credit at the discretion of the professor and will not be graded higher than 7.5/10.

If you find that you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please communicate with me in advance. I do understand that life happens and can sometimes get in the way. I'll do my best to be flexible; for that to happen, we need to keep in dialogue so that I know where you are in your learning and how I can best support you.

Revising and Resubmitting Assignments: Students who receive a grade of less than 8/10 for an assignment AND who hand in the original assignment ON TIME will be given an opportunity to revise and resubmit the assignment. A change of grade will be made only for assignments that demonstrate a significant improvement through the student's own effort (making only minor corrections or edits in response to the professor's written feedback on the initial assignment will not be sufficient for a change of grade).

***IMPORTANT:** When resubmitting an assignment, students must attach a copy of the original assignment and grade sheet to the revised assignment. Resubmissions must be made within one week after the initial graded assignment has been returned to the student. The maximum grade possible for a resubmission is 8.5/10.

Keeping Your Assignments: Students should keep all of their completed assignments, including those graded and handed back, until well past the end of the term. Your original assignment with the grade on it is your evidence that you completed the assignment and received the grade that you earned.

The syllabus serves as a general outline. I reserve the right to deviate from any part of the plan as necessary. Students will be notified of any such modifications.

Academic Integrity Policy

Students must follow the school's [integrity policy](#). Please be aware that plagiarism and any forms of cheating will never be excused under any circumstances – **I will check each assignment carefully using plagiarism detection software**. Violation of these policies leads to immediate failure of the course. If you are not familiar or clear about the school's academic integrity policy, please refer to the tutorial [here](#).

Health and Safety Protocols

Safe Start Health Screen. Each day before coming to campus or class, all of us – students, faculty, and staff – need to complete [the Safe Start Health Check](#) screening and should be prepared to show the screening result upon request. We are expected to stay home if we are unable to pass the health screening. If you live on campus in the residence halls and do not pass the health screening, you should stay in your room. In addition to completing the daily health screening, all of us in the SU community – students, faculty, and staff – must continuously monitor for symptoms of illness throughout the day and take appropriate steps to isolate from others if we become symptomatic.

Face Coverings. We will all wear face coverings consistent with SU's [COVID-19 Face Covering Policy](#) (or as amended). Removing face masks indoor should be maintained at the minimum level. Eating is not allowed in the classroom.

Seating. Students should be seated to keep appropriate social distance in the classroom. For the rest of the quarter, please stick to the seat you have chosen in our first meeting.

Contact Tracing. It is the student's obligation to track and record other individuals in the classroom, including students and faculty, with whom they have been in close contact.

Change in Delivery of Instruction. SU and I reserve the right to change the delivery of instruction for courses without prior notice due to COVID-19 or other events.

Disability Services

Seattle University is committed to providing students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in its classes and activities. This goal is fundamental to its belief in social justice. To achieve this goal, faculty and staff work together to remove barriers in physical access, communication, attitudes, and policies that can prevent students from taking part in programs. In addition, the University provides supplemental support services through the Disability Services Office.

Students who are requesting academic, housing, and meal plan accommodations for the first time are required to complete the new student application via the myDS New Student Application link and meet with **Disability Services before receiving services**. During the intake meeting, the student will discuss their goals at Seattle University, the assistance they may need in reaching them, and the creation of a personalized accommodations plan. Students must also provide documentation from a qualified diagnostician that:

- Establishes the nature of their disability.
- Provides evaluative data with test names and scores supporting their current need for specific accommodations.
- May list services recommended for the student.

Documentation is confidential and will not be released or discussed with the student's permission. For more information, please see the Documentation page and Requirements for Documentation of Disabilities.

If the student needs, or expects to need, an accommodation not supported by their documentation, the student should discuss options for additional evaluation with DS Staff.

For more information regarding disability services, please see: <https://www.seattleu.edu/disability-services>.

Statement of Diversity

Seattle University celebrates educational excellence achieved through diversity. In the meanwhile, diversity is a central topic in the field of public and nonprofit administration. In this class, we will frequently face opportunities and challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will have discussion of the normative and pragmatic value of diversity and learn how to embrace it.

Students are encouraged to honor the uniqueness of themselves and peers, and to appreciate the opportunities we have to learn from each other. In particular, students are welcomed to share their personal experience regarding diversity policies and management. Students have to demonstrate respect to others' opinions and refrain from personal attacks, hatred language, and personal judgments.

Policy on Religious Accommodations

Consistent with Washington State law (RCW 28.10.039), it is the policy of Seattle University to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program.

A student seeking accommodations under this policy must provide a written request to the student's faculty member: (i) within fourteen (14) calendar days from the first day of classes of the academic quarter in which the student is requesting accommodations; and (ii) identifying the specific dates the student requests accommodations.

For more details about the policy on religious accommodations for students, please see [here](#).

Course Schedule

Week 01, 01/03 - 01/07: Introduction ¹

Week 02, 01/10 - 01/14: Innovation, Innovation, Innovation?

Week 03, 01/17 - 01/21: Causes of Social Problems

Week 04, 01/24 - 01/28: Do Government and Nonprofits Fail?

Week 05, 01/31 - 02/04: Social Venture, for What?

No class on Feb 1 (Tue), Happy Chinese New Year

Due: Social Venture Project Part 1

Week 06, 02/07 - 02/11: Funding Your Mission

Week 07, 02/14 - 02/18: Measuring Social Impact

Week 08, 02/21 - 02/25: Scaling Up Your Social Enterprise

Week 09, 02/28 - 03/04: Marketization for Social Missions?

Week 10, 03/07 - 03/11: Oral Presentation

Due: Social Venture Project Part 2

¹Readings other than textbook chapters are listed on Canvas