

**APS 1015H: Social Entrepreneurship**  
Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering  
University of Toronto

### Course Overview

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This course is designed for students interested in applying their existing knowledge and skills toward addressing pressing social or environmental issues. Using the principles of entrepreneurship, this course provides students with an understanding of the systems within which wicked challenges emerge, sample a variety of different solutions being applied and learn how to leverage market-based tools to respond to these important issues.

This course will engage students independently and in groups. Lectures will blend key principles of business modelling into interactive sessions with subject matter experts and social entrepreneurs. Students will have the opportunity to apply these lessons in designing a business solution to addressing a real-world social/environmental problem. Individual and group assignments progressively build on each other through the course of the semester, culminating in a “pitch” of a proposed business innovation at the end of the term.

### Course Objectives

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Social entrepreneurship is attracting growing amounts of talent, money, and attention. Along with its increasing popularity has come wide diversity in understandings of what social entrepreneurship is, and how it can be applied in practice. In this course, you will:

1. **Learn the principles of social entrepreneurship and systems analysis:** You will be introduced to examples and best practices, successes and failures, and opportunities and constraints, in the field of social entrepreneurship.
2. **Apply entrepreneurial principles to address gaps in a social system:** Using tools and conceptual frameworks presented in class, you will learn how to identify gaps in a social system and construct a social entrepreneurship solution to address these gaps.
3. **Apply your engineering knowledge to advance societal outcomes:** You will be provided with new perspectives on the opportunities for leveraging an engineering education to positively impact social and environmental change.

### Pedagogy

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We will use a variety of teaching methods to encourage intellectual understanding and a personal connection to the subject matter. Lecture sessions will be coupled with experiential techniques such as case studies, simulations, exercises, and group discussions. Guest speakers will also be a key component to student learning.

The "live case" method is one way that we make the lecture real. Instead of using a written case study, real social entrepreneurs will be invited to class to present a high level description of their business (mission, motivation, goals, etc). We then pose questions to the students related to the entrepreneur's venture.

**Your active contribution in class is an important aspect of the course and will enhance our learning experience.**

## Course Texts

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### **Recommended Course Texts**

Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur. "Business Model Generation", Self Published, 2009.

IDEO, "Field Guide: Human Centered Design: Toolkit". 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2015. Download at: <http://www.designkit.org/resources/1/> (sign up and login first)

## Course Instructors

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### **Alex Kjorven**

Email: [alexa.zhang@utoronto.ca](mailto:alexa.zhang@utoronto.ca)

Office Hours: By appointment (preferably via Zoom, Google Hangout or phone)

## Course Grading

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### **Major Assignment – Building a Business Case for a Wicked Social Problem (40%)**

The best method of learning what it means to be a social entrepreneur is to pretend being one in the face of an existing social problem. In this vein, students will be challenged to identify an enterprising solution to a wicked social problem

Students will be asked to form groups of 4-5 and in Class 3 will have the opportunity to brainstorm solutions to the challenge statements provided. As a group, they will examine the system within which the problem exists and evaluate models or solutions currently offered. By class 9, students will have designed a compelling, new value proposition (i.e. a new proposed business model) for addressing the problem from the lens of a social entrepreneur.

Students will work in groups to identify and design their business cases and have the opportunity to engage guest lecturers throughout the course who represent subject matter experts or related social entrepreneurs.

The grading scheme for this assignment:

- Part 0: Group members identified (no grade)
- Part 1: Problem statement with Proposed Solution & Impact Intentions (due class 4) – 5%
- Part 2: Value Proposition Map (due class 6) – 10%
- Part 3: Business Model Canvas (due class 10) – 15%
- Part 4: In-Class Presentation: The business case (due class 12) – 10%

Specific details for the assignment (key deliverables, expectations and timelines for submission) will be provided in **class 1**.

### **Individual Assignment – Analysis and Critique of an Established Social Venture (25%)**

The focus of this assignment is for students to select a social enterprise from a list of enterprises, and prepare a report analyzing the enterprise using the tools and concepts presented in this course. The report should address the following:

- System Understanding – 10%
- Enterprise Analysis and Impact Critique – 10%
- Conclusion – 5%

Specific details for the assignment are provided in the Group Assignment outline (separately attached). Examples of social enterprises you may choose to study will be provided; any other examples must be approved by instructors before Class 9.

**Due Date:** One week after the final class (can be handed in any time earlier in the semester).

### **Live Cases and Speaker Feedback (15%)**

A number of guest speakers are scheduled to be present in lectures throughout the semester. Each guest speaker will present unique examples and case studies throughout their presentation. It is expected that students will have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in deep discussion with the speakers during lecture as part of Class Participation (see below). In addition, students will be required to submit brief notes (max 300 words) following each guest lecture that addresses any of the following:

- Most interesting learnings or ideas presented, as it relates to class concepts
- Critique or reflection on key messages
- Specific answers to questions posed by the instructor or guest lecturer during class

#### **Previous guest speakers have included:**

*Suzanne Tyson - CEO & Founder, HigherEdPoints Inc.*

*Daniel Bida – CEO & Founder, Zooshare*

*Sheena Russell, Founder & CEO - Made with Local*

*Mathu Jeyaloganathan, Head of Investments, Unltd UK*

*Emily Bland, CEO & Founder - Sucseed*

*Jessy Wang - Director, Activator Growth, SheEO Inc.*

## **Class Participation (20%)**

Participation grades will be based on the quality of participation during in-class discussions, in-class group exercises, and questions for guest speakers. Obviously, attendance in class is a prerequisite!

## **Submitting Assignments**

All assignments are due, in soft copy, at the **start** of the class (3:00pm) in which they are due. After class starts, a late penalty will be assigned (10%/day). No hard copies will be accepted.

All assignments are to be submitted via Quercus.

By request only, email to [alexa.zhang@utoronto.ca](mailto:alexa.zhang@utoronto.ca)

Group members and numbers will be finalized by the end of class 2. *Please cc all group members when submitting an assignment.*

For simplicity, please use the following format for the Subject line of the email:

**“APS1015 - Group (#) – Part (#)”**

## **Inclusivity, Accommodations and Mental Health Support**

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### **Inclusivity**

All students and faculty at the University of Toronto have a right to learn, work and create in a welcoming, respectful, inclusive and safe environment. In this class we are all responsible for our language, action and interactions. Discriminatory comments or actions of any kind will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to acts of racism, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism. As a class we will work together to create an inclusive learning environment and support each other's learning.

If you experience or witness any form of discrimination, please reach out to the Engineering Equity Diversity & Inclusion Action Group [online](#), an [academic advisor](#), a [U of T Equity Office](#), or any U of T Engineering faculty or staff member that you feel comfortable approaching.

### **Accommodations**

If you have a learning need requiring an accommodation the University of Toronto recommends that students immediately register at Accessibility Services at [www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as).

Location: 4th floor of 455 Spadina Avenue, Suite 400

Voice: 416-978-8060

Fax: 416-978-5729

Email: [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca)

The University of Toronto supports accommodations of students with special learning needs, which may be associated with learning disabilities, mobility impairments, functional/fine motor disabilities, acquired brain injuries, blindness and low vision, chronic health conditions, addictions, deafness and hearing loss,

psychiatric disabilities, communication disorders and/or temporary disabilities, such as fractures and severe sprains, recovery from an operation, serious infections or pregnancy complications.

### **Mental Health**

As a university student, you may experience a range of health and/or mental health issues that may result in significant barriers to achieving your personal and academic goals. The University of Toronto offers a wide range of free and confidential services and programs that may be able to assist you. We encourage you to seek out these resources early and often.

Health & Wellness Resources: [undergrad.engineering.utoronto.ca/advising-and-wellness/health-wellness/](http://undergrad.engineering.utoronto.ca/advising-and-wellness/health-wellness/)

U of T Health & Wellness Website: [studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc](http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc)

If, at some point during the year, you find yourself feeling distressed and in need of more immediate support, visit the **Feeling Distressed Webpage**: [www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed), for more campus resources.

Off campus, immediate help is available 24/7 through **Good2Talk**, a post-secondary student helpline at 1-866-925-5454.

All students in the Faculty of Engineering have an Academic Advisor who can advise on academic and personal matters. You can find your department's Academic Advisor here: [uoft.me/engadvising](http://uoft.me/engadvising)

SUMMER 2022

## Session Schedule

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### **Class 1: Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship and Social Systems**

*This introductory class provides an overview and brief history of social entrepreneurship, and the motivations for wanting to be a social entrepreneur. Students will also be exposed to the basics of social systems in preparation for the class 2 systems mapping exercise.*

Readings:

- “Zebras fix what Unicorns Break”, Jennifer, Mara, Astrid & Aniyia  
<https://medium.com/@sexandstartups/zebrasfix-c467e55f9d96>
- Case Study: Greyston Bakery:  
[https://www.stern.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/assets/documents/Greyston\\_Van%20Wert\\_08.2018.pdf](https://www.stern.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/assets/documents/Greyston_Van%20Wert_08.2018.pdf)
- “Investing for Impact: How social entrepreneurship is redefining the meaning of return”, Credit Suisse and Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship. Research Institute, January 2012.  
[http://www.weforum.org/pdf/schwabfound/Investing\\_for\\_Impact.pdf](http://www.weforum.org/pdf/schwabfound/Investing_for_Impact.pdf)

### **Class 2: Deep Dive into Social Systems**

*This lecture focuses on the dynamics within systems, how to identify and analyze gaps as well as evaluate how change takes place within more complex systems. Students will use cause and effect mapping to analyze a specific social system. Students may apply the lessons from this lecture to the preparation of their major assignment, which will be introduced in this class.*

Readings:

- Article: “Like sending bees to war: the deadly truth behind your almond milk obsession.” The Guardian, January 7, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jan/07/honeybees-deaths-almonds-hives-aoe>

### **Class 3: Social Enterprise Idea Jam**

**Guest Speaker:** Dylan Cunanan, Community Manager @ Ourboro + Professor UX Design @ Ryerson University

*The first part of this class focuses on design-thinking and understanding how to use human centered design principles in evaluating solutions to everyday problems.*

*The second half of this lecture will be structured workshop-style, beginning with a short presentation on the social challenge/opportunities framing the major assignment. Students will be introduced to the Ideation Stage of Human-Centered Design, and will participate in an “Idea Jam” session where they openly brainstorm and present early-stage ideas for business model concepts.*

Suggested Prep:

Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 75-111

## Useful Resources

- “Design Thinking for Social Innovation” by Tim Brown and Jocelyn Wyatt, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2010,  
[http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/design\\_thinking\\_for\\_social\\_innovation/](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/design_thinking_for_social_innovation/)

### **Class 4: Intervening in Social Systems (Part 1)**

**Assignment Due** – Problem statement with Proposed Solution & Impact Intentions

*Students will be led through tools used for solutions design including the Value Proposition Map required for Assignment #2. The second half of the class introduces students to the “right side” of the Business Model Canvas.*

#### Readings:

- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 29 – 68.
- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 113-117
- TedxSMU Kate Canales on Empathy in Design  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aYD6fBPC3c>

#### Useful Resources:

- OpenIDEO Challenges: <http://www.openideo.com/open>
- Ashoka Changemakers: <http://www.changemakers.com/>
- TED Talks Series on “Not Business as Usual”:  
[http://www.ted.com/themes/not\\_business\\_as\\_usual.html](http://www.ted.com/themes/not_business_as_usual.html)
- TED Talks Series on “Design That Matters”:  
[http://www.ted.com/themes/design\\_like\\_you\\_give\\_a\\_damn.html](http://www.ted.com/themes/design_like_you_give_a_damn.html)

### **Class 5: Intervening in a Social System (Part 2)**

**Guest Speaker:** Cindy Warner-Beck, former VP Commercial Finance @ RBC. Fractional CFO at Lightbulb Finance

*This class will focus on the remaining 2 elements of the system intervention process: financial modeling and target setting. Students will be led through the process of understanding how to build and plan around assumptions, determine a viable business margin for their venture, and how to set reasonable yet motivating business targets that guide business model execution.*

#### Readings:

- Doblin’s 10 Types of Innovation available via:  
[https://www.doblin.com/dist/images/uploads/Doblin\\_TenTypesBrochure\\_Web.pdf](https://www.doblin.com/dist/images/uploads/Doblin_TenTypesBrochure_Web.pdf)
- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 29 – 68.
- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 123-125.

## **Class 6: Validation of Market-Based Solutions**

**Guest Speaker:** Daniel Bida – CEO & Founder, Zooshare

**Assignment Due** – Value Proposition Map

*Students will be introduced to LEAN start-up methodology and how to pivot business ideas as part of rapid prototyping. Specifically, the lecture will cover data collection methodologies and evaluate some of the challenges associated with synthesizing market data and applying this data to business decisions.*

Readings:

- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 133-149.
- “Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything” by Steve Blank, Harvard Business Review, May 2013: <https://hbr.org/2013/05/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything>

## **Class 7: Business Considerations for Social Enterprises**

**Guest Lecture:** TBD

*This class will cover some of the key considerations social entrepreneurs face when launching and growing their social enterprise. Emphasis will be placed on marketing social enterprises where students will be provided an overview of theories around cause marketing and sustainable marketing. Operational, human and legal considerations are also reviewed which include understanding various legal forms applicable to social businesses. Students will also engage in basic financial analysis for their enterprise to determine the financial feasibility of their proposed solution.*

## **Class 8: Business Case Development Check-in**

*This class will give students the opportunity to focus on building their social venture business cases and receive feedback from peers, the instructor, and external industry participants as may be available.*

Readings:

- Human Centered Design: Toolkit, pages 152-157

## **Class 9: Financing Social Enterprises**

*This class will provide an overview of social finance and impact investment, the challenges in financing social enterprises, and innovative new investment vehicles designed specifically for the sector.*

Readings:

- “Business Planning and Financial Forecasting: A Start-Up Guide”, published by Western Economic Diversification Canada and Small Business BC, Pages 13 – 32: <http://public-files.prbb.org/intervals/docs/16760815-Business-Planning.pdf>
- “What do Funders and Investors Want From Social Enterprises?”, by MaRS Discovery District. <http://www.marsdd.com/mars-library/what-do-funders-and-investors-want-from-social-enterprises/>



## **Class 10: Scaling a Social Enterprise and Managing for Sustainable Impact**

### **Assignment Due** – Business Model Canvas

*Growing a social enterprise that maximizes both business and social impact potential is not always straightforward, and includes a different set of considerations than starting a traditional enterprise. In this class, students will learn about some of the key management challenges involved in running a social enterprise, some potential pitfalls down the road as well as how to measure social impact.*

#### Readings:

- Measuring Social Impact: Theory of Change: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpb4AGT684U>

#### Useful Resources:

- Ontario's Social Enterprise Progress Report 2015  
<https://dr6j45jk9xcmk.cloudfront.net/documents/4468/making-an-impact-ontarios-social-enterprise.pdf>

## **Class 11: Emerging Issues in the Field of Social Entrepreneurship**

### **Guest Speaker: TBD**

*This class focuses on understanding some of the emerging issues and opportunities currently facing the field of social entrepreneurship. The lecture will also provide students with a sense of the career opportunities available to them.*

#### Suggested Prep:

Visit Back Country Wok website: <https://backcountrywok.com/>

## **Class 12: Final Presentations**

### **Assignment Due** – In-Class Presentations

*Student teams will present their proposed business model concepts.*

No readings for class 12.