

MNO3811 / MNO3330 Social Entrepreneurship (Semester 1, AY2025-2026)

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Course Description

Social entrepreneurship presents an alternative approach to community development. It advocates the adoption of innovative solutions (often incorporating market mechanisms) to address social problems. This course discusses the concepts associated with social entrepreneurship, and examines the practices and challenges of social entrepreneurship in the Asian context. Topics to be covered include identification of social problems; marginalization and the poverty cycle; varied conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship and innovation; different types of social enterprises; sustainable social enterprises as an effective means of community development; developing a social enterprise business plan; establishing a social enterprise; scaling up a social enterprise; social impact measurement.

Learning Outcomes

After the course, the students will be able to

- Understand the causes and severity of social problems
- Appreciate the varied concepts, practices and challenges of social entrepreneurship
- Recognize the broad range of social enterprise types
- Understand the role sustainable social enterprises play in effective community development;
- Develop competence in writing social enterprise business plans
- Understand the steps involved in establishing social enterprises and scaling them up; and
- Recognize the complexities of measuring the social impact of social enterprises.

Topics

Global Social Problems

- Causes of social problems
- Impact of globalization
- Poverty and Social Exclusion

Community development

- Empowerment and poverty alleviation

Social Entrepreneurship (SE)

- How is it different from commercial entrepreneurship and other forms of social progress

Social Enterprises

- Social enterprises vs social businesses
- Work-integration social enterprises (WISE)
- Microfinance institutions

- Co-operative societies

Setting up a Social Enterprise: Designing solutions

- Seeing opportunities and understanding challenges
- Generating ideas, models and solutions

Setting up a Social Enterprise: Understanding Ecosystem

- Identifying and engaging stakeholders

Setting up a Social Enterprise: Business Plan, Strategies, Resources

- Value proposition and unique selling point
- Building a business model
- Developing a business plan

Running a Social Enterprise: Co-creation and Alliance

- Assessing stakeholders
- Community-driven research
- Creating collective capacity

Sustaining a Social Enterprise: Measuring Impact and Leadership

- Targeting success
- Metrics for different fields
- Baselining
- Creating resource dashboard
- Sources of funding
- Social impact investment approaches

Assessment

Individual Assessment		Group Assessment	
Class Participation	20%	Group Proposal: Business Plan	40%
Individual Assignment	30%	Group Presentation: Business Plan	10%
Total:	50%		50%

Class Participation (20%)

This course uses learning methods that require active involvement (e.g. in-class discussion, Canvas Discussion, etc.). Attendance is required for every class session. You are expected to join the class ready to discuss the assigned readings.

Individual Assignment (30%)

- Refer to “Individual Assignment” document in the [Canvas/Assignment](#) folder for details.

Group Proposal: Business Plan (40%)

The class will form teams for the group project. They will apply the concepts covered in the course to propose the setup of a new social enterprise that is based in Singapore or outside Singapore in the form of a business plan. In the business plan, the team should articulate the steps involved in establishing social enterprise, how it meets the needs of its target beneficiaries, how it differentiates itself from any other social enterprises operating in the same space, how it can be commercially

viable and scale up. The team is expected to use both secondary research (desktop) and primary research (interview) to substantiate its analysis, projections and recommendations using applicable frameworks and concepts covered in class. Read carefully “**Group_Project_Assignment**” document in the [Canvas/Assignment](#) folder for details.

Group Presentation: Business Plan (10%)

Project teams will present their new SE Venture business plan during Week 13 (10-15 minutes per project team depending on the number of teams).

Read carefully “**Group_Project_Assignment**” document in the [Canvas/Assignment](#) folder for details.

Readings and Lesson Preparation

Compulsory reading:

Cheah, S. (2019). Social Innovation: Asian Case Studies of Innovating for the Common Good. Routledge. Please refer to reading list on [Canvas/Course Readings](#).

Schedule

This course description and outline are subject to change. Changes will be announced in class.

Profile of Instructor

Refer to <https://discovery.nus.edu.sg/4518-lai-yin-sarah-cheah/>