



Course Syllabus

PPHA 33740 1: Business and Society

Autumn 2022

9 Week Session

Monday, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (In person)

Instructor: William W. Towns, PhD, MBA

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Teaching Assistant:

Introduction:

In our current society, how we measure the success of a business has changed as the expectations of consumers and investors continue to shift beyond the basic Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) of free cash flows, revenue growth rates and inventory turnover. Today's business leaders must not only navigate an increasingly competitive global market, but also navigate through increased amounts of data, political shifts, global pandemics and changing public perception. Whether they realize it or not today's business leaders are often looked upon to contribute towards solutions that seek to address many of today's most pressing social ills such as climate change, economic disparity, and structural discrimination.

Going forward to be competitive and attract top talent, all organizations must adopt policies that better align profit and purpose while acknowledging the full scope of their role in society. To move forward leaders across all sectors must look inward and recognize that while they fight to protect their organizations; they may simultaneously be contributing towards the very societal problems they claim to want to fix.

Course Description:

This course is designed to offer students an overview of the various roles businesses across the for profit, non-profit and governmental sectors play in improving the world. in real time. Pulling articles and stories in real time we will examine how companies are responding to social challenges using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies and gain an understanding of the role government and philanthropist play in helping/hindering positive societal change. Using the Socratic method, we will discuss how to create organizational shared value through a Corporate Social Innovation (CSI) framework, explore specific examples of both successful and unsuccessful attempts to compete using a social purpose agenda and look at the role the board of directors plays within an organization. Students



will also have a chance to hear first-hand from practitioners who are working at the forefront of business and societal change.

Course Objectives

- To familiarize students with various approaches to defining, measuring, and tracking social impact strategies and policies across the non-profit, for profit and governmental sectors.
- To enable students to better understand and appreciate the complexities involved at the intersection of profit, purpose, and people.
- To understand and appreciate the role empathy can play in finding commonality among conflicting viewpoints.

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction: Course and Concepts • The Crazy Times We Live • What is Innovation and Entrepreneurship • Areas of Innovation • Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Reading in Preparation

- [NA](#)

Week 2: Announcements • Questions • In the News • Corporate Social Innovation • Moving from CSR to Corporate Social Innovation (CSI) • Defining Shared Value • Building a Shared Value Organization • Challenges to Corporate Shared Value (CSV) • Now What?

Reading in Preparation

- [Creating Shared Value](#)
- [Contesting the Value of "Creating Shared Value"](#)
- [Innovating for Shared Value](#)

Skim the following:

[Goldman Sachs will stop doing IPOs for companies without at least one "diverse" board member](#)



Week 3: Orthodox vs Unorthodox approaches to Societal Issues • Competing on Social Purpose • Three Domains of Social Purpose • The Important Role of Stakeholder Acceptance • The rise and fall of the One for One strategy.

Reading in Preparation

- [Competing on Social Purpose](#)
- [Avoiding Unintended Consequences](#)

Week 4: When doing good goes bad • Why do corporations reinforce racial stereo types • How do we build courage to stand alone • The Community Desk: A Public Private partnership for change • Guest speaker

Reading in Preparation

- [Gucci and Prada aim for outrageousness, instead they get outrage](#)
- [Gucci Creative Head Says \\$890 Sweater Was Not Inspired by Blackface](#)
- [Prada Will Stop Selling \\$550 Monkey Figure Decried Racist](#)

Class Discussion

The class will discuss how can a company with numerous layers of staff, consultants and focus groups make culturally insensitivity products and statements.

Week 5: An unclear path to Impact • Investigating the Financing Eco System • If you want something done right do it yourself • Things to consider before starting your Impact Enterprise • Problem + Readiness = Opportunity • Understanding businesses reaction to your impact efforts • Business model vs. Business Strategy • Building the Business Plan

Reading in Preparation

- [Rethinking the Social Responsibility of Business:](#) A Reason debate featuring Milton Friedman, Whole Foods' John Mackey, and Cypress Semiconductor's T.J. Rodgers

Week 6: Helping those most in need • When Society gives up on a community • Making sense of the many kinds of Impact investing • Evaluating Impact • Benefit Chicago a Case Study • Where are the Opportunities in Opportunity Zones • Guest Speaker

Reading in Preparation



- [Bridging the Gap](#)
- [High Impact Investing Policy Memo](#)

Week 7: Impact of Millennials and Generation Z • The role business school play in structural racism • Can policy solve racism? • The role Artist play in helping us understand our short comings

Reading in Preparation

- [U.S. Deloitte 2016 Impact Survey](#)
- [Millennial Impact Report 10 year look Back](#)
- [True Gen Z and Its Implication for Companies](#)

Week 8: An Innovation is not always a major change • Making the case for your impact innovation • strategies for writing a pitch for your policy change • Creating a compelling policy change presentation

Reading in Preparation

- [How to Promote Racial Equity in the Workplace](#)
- [We're entering the age of Corporate Social Justice](#)
- [Attacks on Asian Americans Demand New Solutions](#)
- [Hate Crimes Against Asian Americans Are on the Rise. Many Say More Policing Isn't the Answer](#)
- ["Words matter" as Asian American leaders urge action against hate crimes](#)

Week 9: Final Presentations • Thank you.

Assignments



Grading

Grading will be based on four inputs: team presentation, team conduct policy, thought paper and class participation. The rationale for grading is as follows: Success in this field is a function of analytical skills, supportive policies, subject matter expertise and the ability to advocate for a position. The group project incorporates each of these. Thought papers test analytical skills and applied concepts, and class participation demonstrates subject matter mastery and strategic thinking and consideration of the topics of the course.

Assignment(s)	Points
Team Presentation	30
Team Conduct Policy	10
Thought Paper	25
Class Participation	35
Bonus: Peer Evaluation	10

Team Presentation

With your team members, you will develop a for profit business idea that seeks to balance profits and purpose addressing a social need utilizing the concepts discussed during the course. This business idea could be an existing standalone business or a new business partnership that connects existing expertise and assets between two or more businesses to address a society need. A successful presentation will have/address the following components.

A Clear and through understanding of the context and problem landscape

Supportable and information-based assumptions

The concept will be amendable to financing (internal or external)

The proposed solution is viable



Strength of the proposed solution or approach (likelihood of happening)

Innovativeness of the idea

Potential of the Business(es) to execute effectively

Strategic fit of the concept

Alignment with Brand

Social impact potential

Team Conduct Policy

For innovative organizations to be successful each member must be committed to the success of not just themselves and their team, but to the success of the organization overall. To meet this commitment, all involved must pledge to work together as a team in a professional manner and with a unity of purpose. Each team member vows to respect the other team members, to value their input, and to participate in a helpful, open-minded manner. The team will recognize and celebrate the success of other teams as well as its members. In order to have a clear understanding or expectation each team will create a Conduct Policy that lays out the behaviors and attributes that will be expected from each team member in the conduct of the daily project business.

Thought Paper

In addition to the team presentation each student will turn in a 3-5 page thought paper based on your overall believe that businesses can and will innovate to address a social issue(s) as an intentional part of their business strategy. This assignment should take into consideration both your personal experiences as well as the readings, class discussion and great speakers. The paper should be in the following format:

Margins: Left margin 1.5 inches; all others 1.25

Spacing: Double space all text

Font: Times New Roman 12

References: Should be done in *The Chicago Manual of Style* and does not counts towards the body of the paper.

In grading the following will be taken into consideration:

-The level of synthesis between personal experience and readings from class



- Engaging, insightful and relevant thinking
- Applicability of insights to business and policy leaders
- Overall quality and organization of writing

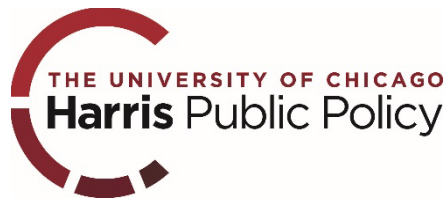
Peer Evaluation

Each member within the team will assess every other member's contributions to the group assignment including their own, with a confidential peer review form that considers each member's intellectual contribution, initiative, workload, and overall adherence to the teams conduct policy.

Academic Integrity

All University of Chicago students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic Integrity and honesty. Among other things, this means that students shall not represent another's work as their own, use un-allowed materials during exams, or otherwise gain unfair academic advantage.

- The University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty are described [here](#). It is worth explicitly stating the University's approach here: "It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work. To do so is plagiarism or cheating, offenses punishable under the University's disciplinary system. Because these offenses undercut the distinctive moral and intellectual character of the University, we take them very seriously."
- The Harris School's policies are available in the *Harris Student Handbook* Canvas site.
 - The *Academic Honesty and Plagiarism* section expresses the main principles.
 - Detailed guidelines for more specialized student work (e.g., problem sets including computer code) are offered in the section titled *Harris Integrity Policy for Problem Sets Involving Code*.
 - Harris's specific procedures for handling suspected violations of these policies are available in the section *Harris Procedures for Allegations of Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Dishonesty* and are also re-produced as an Appendix to this document.
 - All students suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Harris Dean of Students for investigation and adjudication. The disciplinary process can result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University.
 - Other penalties for violations could be imposed instead, alone or in combination. For example:



- Students will receive a grade of 0 on the exam or problem set in question as well as the next lowest problem set grade. This will often result in the student earning a failing grade in the course.
- The student will receive a grade of 0 on the exam or problem set in question and cannot earn higher than a B- in the course, regardless of their performance on other assignments and exams.
- At the instructors' discretion, the student may receive a failing grade for the course regardless of their performance on elements of the course.
- Students found in violation of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course.
- The student will receive a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam in question (subject to the discretion of the instructor).
- The student may be asked to re-do the assignment or retake the exam (without credit) to ensure that the student has learned how to properly cite sources or demonstrate that he or she has command of material covered.

Disability Accommodations

The University's policies regarding students with disabilities are available [here](#). Students who have disability accommodations awarded by the University Student Disability Services Office should inform the Harris Dean of Students office by the end of the first week of class. The Harris Dean of Students

Office will work with the student and instructor to coordinate the students' accommodations implementation.

Harris students are not required to submit their accommodations letter to the instructor. Students from other divisions in the University must submit their accommodations letter to either the instructor or the Harris Dean of Students Office.

Students who do not yet have formal accommodations in place but who feel they need accommodations on a temporary or ongoing basis should contact the Harris Dean of Students Office or Student Disability Services.

It is also worth noting that teaching in a remote environment may generate other questions and issues related to providing accommodations to students with disabilities. Some suggestions are available [here](#).

Diversity and Inclusion



The Harris School welcomes, values, and respects students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, and we believe that rigorous inquiry and effective public policy problem-solving requires the expression and understanding of diverse viewpoints, experiences, and traditions. The University and the Harris School have developed distinct but overlapping principles and guidelines to insure that we remain a place where difficult issues are discussed with kindness and respect for all.

- The University's policies are available [here](#). Specifically, the University identifies the freedom of expression as being "vital to our shared goal of the pursuit of knowledge, as is the right of all members of the community to explore new ideas and learn from one another. To preserve an
- environment of spirited and open debate, we should all have the opportunity to contribute to intellectual exchanges and participate fully in the life of the University."
- The Harris School's commitments to lively, principled, and respectful engagement are available [here](#): "Consistent with the University of Chicago's commitment to open discourse and free
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expression, Harris encourages members of the leadership, faculty, student body, and administrative staff to respect and engage with others of differing backgrounds or perspectives, even when the ideas or insights shared may be viewed as unpopular or controversial." We foster thought-provoking discourse by encouraging community members not only to speak freely about all issues but also to listen carefully and respectfully to the views of others.

[Appendix: Full Harris Academic Integrity Procedures](#)

Harris Procedures for Allegations of Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Dishonesty

[First Violation](#)

If a student is accused by an instructor or teaching assistant of plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty, the student will be summoned to meet with the Dean of Students and the instructor. In the meeting, the student and instructor both present information about the situation. If it is determined by the instructor and the Dean of Students that the student has, in fact, plagiarized or cheated, the following sanctions will be imposed for the first violation:

- The student will generally receive a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam in question. Please note that grading decisions are fully at the discretion of the instructor, who may decide to impose harsher grade penalties.
- The student may be asked to re-do the assignment or retake the exam (without credit) to ensure that the student has learned how to properly cite sources or demonstrate that he or she has command of material covered.



- A formal letter of finding is sent to the student stating that the student has been found in violation of the code of academic honesty and what the sanctions were. The letter, along with any evidence presented, is archived in Harris Student Affairs records until the student graduates if the student has no other violations.
- Students found in violation of the academic honesty policy are not permitted to withdraw from the course to avoid grade penalties from the instructor.
- In cases where plagiarism or academic dishonesty is egregious, the case may be referred to the Area Disciplinary Committee even on a first offense. The Dean makes all decisions about which cases will go before the Area Disciplinary Committee.

Second Violation

If a student who has already been found in violation academic dishonesty is again accused of academic dishonesty, the case will be sent to the Harris Area Disciplinary Committee. Details about the Area Disciplinary Committee procedures can be found in the [University Student Manual](#). Information about the first violation, including the formal letter of finding any evidence, will be presented to the Area Disciplinary Committee, along with evidence of the current allegation. If the student is found in violation of academic honesty a second time, the Area Disciplinary Committee can assign sanctions including transcript notes, disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University.

Academic Dishonesty Appeals

If a student has been found in violation of academic honesty and does not believe that either the finding or the sanction is fair or correct, the student has the right to appeal the finding by requesting a hearing from the Area Disciplinary Committee. More information about the Area Disciplinary Committee is available [here](#).