Zero to One
Social Innovation Incubator | Spring 2019
March 24 - June 16, Sundays 3pm - 6pm

Background/Context

Social entrepreneurship seeks to build innovative, effective, and economically sustainable solutions to social problems around the world. This is a class designed for those who aim to make real and sustainable impact on a social problem you care about, through sowing the seeds for your own social enterprise (SE).

Objectives

The primary objective of the class is to obtain mastery of the skills and concepts needed to both understand and build an effective SE, that is, a viable business with social or environmental objectives. You will learn how to identify social problems, develop effective solutions, and employ proven and innovative business strategies to create lasting impact. In the process, you will develop the skills and know-hows needed to contribute and lead effective teams. At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to receive funding and further mentorship to effectively launch your venture.

Teaching method

The course is based on two core teaching methodologies: "project based"- and "blended"-learning. The *project based* approach actively engages participants in course concepts by challenging you to apply them to real-life projects. At the start of the course, you will form, or enter with your existing, tean. With close mentorship from an instructor, skills and knowledge acquired during the course is oriented towards successfully launching your team's project in a collaborative environment.

Blended learning combines access to online lectures by leading professors in social entrepreneurship from the University Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business and +Acumen, together with the best of offline in-class interactions. During course sessions and small-group mentorship discussions with instructors, the you will be guided to discuss and apply the concept and ideas learned online to your own ideas and projects. In addition, you will study and interact with Beijing-based social enterprises to understand how they operate day-to-day and generate social benefit.

Instructors & Leadership

The course will be held in parallel at two different locations, BFSU and CAFA and each student will attend one of two courses. Throughout the course, your team will also have an assigned professor to support your project and its development through weekly 1-hour long 1:1 sessions. The professor team consist of;

Sean Qin graduated from Harvard University with a master's degree in statistics and a bachelor's degree in economics. He has worked for McKinsey, private equity fund Grove Street Advisors and

other Fortune 500 companies. He served as the president of Tencent Gaopeng Jiangsu, Anhui and Yunnan after returning home. In 2012, he created Koala Ministorage (迷你考拉) and serves as the CEO, creating smart storage rooms throughout more than 500 cooperation outlets across the country.

Mikael Hveem holds a master's degree in political science from Oxford University and a bachelor's degree from the University of Political Science in Paris and the University of Oslo. He studies machine learning and public data and is the founder of Opn, a smart portal for publishing and accessing public archives, expanding access to information for city dwellers and institutions. Before founding Opn, Mikael worked at the Norwegian Embassy in China.

Charlene Ren is the founder of MyH2O Water Information Network, a crowd-based platform that connects clean water resources to rural communities. Water and sanitation data from over thousands of villages have been collected since 2015, and solutions have been delivered to over thousands of beneficiaries. She received her B.A. in Physics from Vassar College and dual M.S. in Environmental Engineering & Technology and Policy at MIT, with a thesis focused on the water and sanitation monitoring policy structure in rural India. She's also a 2016 Echoing Green Fellow (33 out of over 2000) and Forbes "30 Under 30" Class of 2019 in the Social Entrepreneur category.

Sam Waldo is the co-founder and CEO of Mantra, an eyewear brand whose mission is to provide vision care for under-resourced rural Chinese students while paving the way for social enterprise in China. Originally from Houston, TX, Sam moved to China after graduating from Columbia University in 2010, spending two years as one of the first Teach For China fellows in rural Yunnan province. Sam was named to the 2018 Forbes 30 Under 30 for Asia for his work in Social Entrepreneurship. His writings on business in China have been published in the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business' "Knowledge" magazine, Forbes India and Caixin.

Curriculum Structure
The course is divided into two phases. **Phase 1** of the course is dedicated to *understanding* the elements and characteristics of a SE. Having understood the real life workings of a SE, **Phase 2** will equip you with the skills and know-how to *build and run* your own SE.

PHASE 1: Understanding a Social Enterprise

In this phase, class readings and online lectures will introduce you to the features that help determine whether a social enterprise can simultaneously have a sustained impact, and be financially sustainable.

Online
Social Entrepreneurship by University of Pennsylvania:
https://www.coursera.org/learn/wharton-social-entrepreneurship

For the online part of Phase 1, you will be following University of Pennsylvania Professors James D. Thompson Director and Ian MacMillan as they teach you the core framework and elements to understand a social enterprise based on their years of research and experience teaching and working with social entrepreneurs. Upon successful completion of the online materials, you will have the opportunity to earn a certificate from Wharton School of Business via Coursera.

Offline

During the offline part of the course, you will learn from field practitioners and visit with a Beijing based social enterprise to combine theory with practical application. Through case study discussions with local entrepreneurs, you will explore the business' structure and apply concepts learned in online materials to complete a Social Enterprise Lean Canvas for each enterprise. The discussions and field visits will be supplemented with class activities and 1:1 group meetings with instructors tailored to kick-start your own projects.

DATE	THEME	CLASS
03/24/2019	Introduction to the Course and Social Entrepreneurship.	Introduction to course, organization and teaching method. + Team Formation Exercise
03/31/2019	Understanding a Social Enterprise: Problem, Segment, Channels ,Solution and Unique Value Proposition.	Entrepreneur Talk*: The concepts learned online will be used to interview a visiting entrepreneur and to understand their business. + Ideation Exercise
04/07/2019	Understanding a Social Enterprise: Key Metrics, Channels, Required Resources & Costs, Revenue Streams and Defining Success.	Entrepreneur Visit*: The concepts learned online will be used to interview a visiting entrepreneur and to understand their business. + Group meeting with Professor
04/12/2019 (Friday)	Understanding a Social Enterprise: Alternatives and Sociopolitical Landscape.	Entrepreneur Talk*: The concepts learned online will be used to interview a visiting entrepreneur and to understand their business. + Interview Workshop + Group meeting with Professor
04/21 & 04/28	Research Period	*[Schedule and conduct customer & beneficiary interviews]*

*One of these will be a field visit to the organization in question. Information on organizations can be found on Blacboard.

PHASE II: Building Your Own Social Enterprise

At the core of Phase 2 are 'l*ean methods*': a framework to help you test, validate, and adapt your vision of change to optimize impact and ensure you are meeting the needs of your beneficiary. The core tenants of 'running a lean' enterprise involves getting et your idea or product out to the customer and beneficiary as soon as possible and learn from how they receive it;
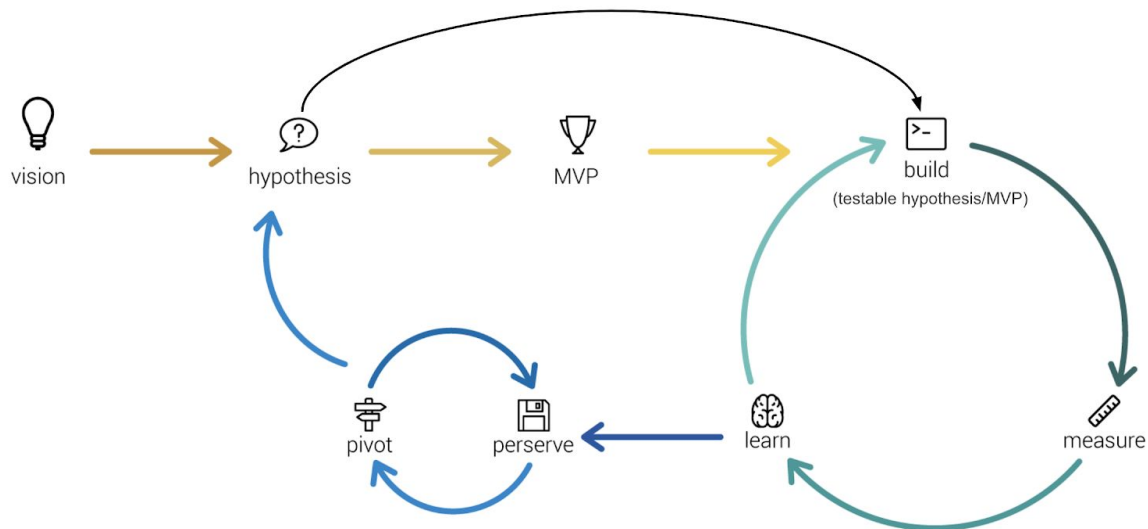
Throughout Phase 2, you will continue to use the **lean canvas** to track your team progress. From the assumptions and literature review in Phase 1, Phase 2 will lead you to a canvas that is built on metrics and measurements as a result of customer interviews and your MVP. Students will be asked to present the canvas findings on Demo Day at the course completion.

Phase II of this course is self-paced and there are therefore no specific dates associated with the specific steps. Instead, Phase 2 is separated into 3 **stages**, each stage representing a step closer to the realization of your social enterprise. Within each stage, we have listed a set milestones associated with that stage. Once all milestones within a stage have been completed, your group can move on to the subsequent stage. Note that the milestones within a stage do not have to be completed in the listed order.

In **Stage 1** of Phase 2, you will be assisted to learn about your beneficiary by turning your ideas and assumptions into concrete and falsifiable hypotheses that can be tested through customer interviews and data.

Once you and your group have have confirmed your assumptions and completed the associated milestones, you will move on to **Stage 2** and start building your Minimal Viable Production (MVP).

The MVP is the minimal offering to satisfy your early beneficiaries/customers, while simultaneously providing you with feedback and learning for further development.

Stage 3 consist of achieving initial scale of your offering. While each team are encouraged and supported to reach this stage within the time of the course, it is equally important to be diligent with the learning you have acquired and constantly assess whether to progress to the next stage or if you need "pivot", i.e. slightly changing the project direction after new learning.

Online
Supported by Sasha Dichter, Acumen's Chief Innovation Officer, readings and lectures from Steve Blank and others will guide you through the pillars of the "lean startup" methodology. Note that online materials are organized by stages and can be found on Blackboard under Phase 2. As your team reaches each stage, you can take advantage of these resources to help navigate the various milestones.

Lean Startup Principles for the Social Sector by Acumen
https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/lean-for-social-impact

Offline
Offline, the majority of your time will be spent on working on building the foundation for your SE. Throughout, each group will spend time weekly time with their assigned group professor to push forward the project and address any challenges and issues. Our weekly meeting time will be;

Sunday, 3pm-6pm. Meeting time includes:
- 1h individual sessions with instructor
- 1h self-study group work
- 1h skill workshop session (overview listed below)

Stages Overview

Phase II of this course is self-paced and there are therefore no specific dates associated with the specific steps;

DATE	STAGE	MILESTONES
[No Date] *Each group is self-paced*	**Stage 1** Achieving Problem/Solution Fit: Getting out of the building and talking to customers	- ▢ Problem hypothesis backed up by interviews (15+) - ▢ Solution hypothesis backed up by interviews (15+) - ▢ Completed evidence based Canvas - ▢ Formed an advisory group - ▢ Defined performance metrics and framework to measure targets; - ▢ Performed an initial revenue / cost analysis - ▢ Completed a 'Pivot or Persevere'-assessment
[No Date] *Each group is self-paced*	**Stage 2** Achieving Product/Market Fit: Create a MVP and test it in the real world	- ▢ Completed an Experiment Grid and ran an Experiment - ▢ Minimum Viable Product Design - ▢ Created Summary Deck - ▢ MVP created and deployed - ▢ Achieved first unit of social impact - ▢ Achieved first sale/customer - ▢ MVP tested, along with report of results and takeaways
[No Date] *Each group is self-paced*	**Stage 3** Achieving initial scale	- ▢ Key partnership established - ▢ Secured operationional funding or income - ▢ Planned out next steps for expansion, including relevant deliverables and specific targets / goals / milestones - ▢ Multiple units of social impact achieved - ▢ Clear roadmap for achieving "success" (i.e. how to achieve minimum number of social impact)

Workshop Schedule:

In addition to the group work, during Phase 2 we will offer workshop on important skills needed by entrepreneurs;

04/12/2019	Effective Interviewing	*Learn to schedule and conduct interviews to falsify/confirm your hypotheses.*
05/05/2019	Introduction to Phase II; Lean Startup Principles	*Run a project based on lean principles.*
05/12/2019	Budget & Financial Projections	*Create probably financial projection to assess your business' financial sustainability.*
05/18 & 05/19	MVP Weekend	*Build your actual offering, minimal version.*
05/26/2019	Sales 101	*Understanding your customer*
06/02/2019	Pitching 101: Creating Beautiful Pitch Decks	*Structure a compelling story about your business and the problem you are trying to solve.*
06/09/2019	Pitching 101: Oral Presentation	*Tell a compelling story on stage*
06/16/2019	Competition & Ceremony	*Here.we.go!*

The course will culminate in a pitch competition for all participating groups on **June 16.**

Class work and participation

As a course participant, you are required to prepare for each class session by watching and reading the assigned material for that class session on Blackboard, as well as the assigned case studies/entrepreneur visits. In addition, every other week, each team should be prepared to present for the class how that week's learnings apply to their own project.

Course and project evaluation criteria

The course is pass/fail, but each student is given a final indicative grade that represents their mastery of the skills and concepts taught in the course. Your grade will based on your proficiency of the skills and concepts taught in the course and is measured through

- (a) your contribution and work on your team project (50%),
- (b) general attendance and participation (25%), and
- (c) weekly assignments (25%).

You will receive grades on assignments through the course that you should understand as feedback on your progress towards mastery. If you receive a grade that is lower than full mastery of a concept, you are encouraged to improve and then identify a future opportunity to demonstrate your mastery to your instructor.

Attendance is mandatory, and any unexcused absences will have a significant impact on your grade.

Literature
- [Book] MacMillan, Ian C. and James D. Thompson (2017). The Social Entrepreneur's Playbook

Additional Resources and Readings
- Maurya, Ash (2012). Running Lean: Iterate from Plan A to a Plan That Works
- Wood, J. (2009). Leaving Microsoft to change the world: an entrepreneur's odyssey to educate the world's children. Harper Collins.
- Yunus, M. (2007). Banker to the Poor. Penguin Books India.
- Ries, E. (2011). The lean startup: How today's entrepreneurs use continuous innovation to create radically successful businesses. Crown Books.
- Prahalad, C. K. (2006). The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid. Pearson Education India.