Course Overview

This course has two main components: background on the political and social context in Guatemala, and the integration of Social Entrepreneurship theory and practice. The course encompasses two main parts: the first are pre-trip readings on Guatemalan society and Social Entrepreneurship, and specific assignments that accompany those readings; the second part is completed in-country, and includes weekly news analyses and the development of a business plan.

For over 15 years, Guatemala has struggled to overcome the legacy of a 36-year civil war – officially labeled as an “internal conflict”. Conditions that fueled the conflict continue to play a role in the country’s ability to establish a democracy today – economic inequality, marginalization of ethnic groups, violence, and weak political institutions. These factors are all important considerations when pursuing social entrepreneurship endeavors in Guatemala.

Social Entrepreneurship is a process of empowering people with the skills and resources to create and operate their own businesses and improve life in their communities. This course will include understanding the meaning of entrepreneurship, the essential requirements for success and the organization, marketing, funding, etc for sustainability. Prior to departing to Guatemala, the readings below will allow for better understanding of the entrepreneurship world for observing businesses already in place in Guatemala. In addition, these readings, along with your observations in Guatemala, will assist in developing recommendations for SolCom going forward to benefit those in need.

Course Requirements

Guatemalan Society Reading Summaries (20 points): In the first two weeks of the pre-trip phase, you will be required to complete readings on Guatemalan society and write a summary of them. These readings are available electronically in HuskyCT. Your summary should outline, in 400-600 words, the main points of each of the assigned readings, and contemplate how it impacts doing social entrepreneurship in Guatemala. Each summary is worth 10 points. These summaries are Assignments that are due in HuskyCT each Thursday of our pre-arrival program.

Social Entrepreneurship Reading Responses (24 points): In the second two weeks of the pre-trip phase, you will be required to complete readings on Social Entrepreneurship. Upon completion of the readings, you should answer the questions outlined below, and email your answers to Wynd Harris.

News Analysis (20 points): While in Guatemala, you should read local newspapers regularly. Each week, select a news article that is of interest to you and write an analysis that connects the article to at least one of the assigned readings for the course, and discusses a connection social entrepreneurship in Guatemala. These are due in HuskyCT by midnight on July 4, July 11, July 18, and July 25. Each news analysis is worth 5 points.

Business Plan (36 points): While in Guatemala, you will take notes and evaluate the SolCom social entrepreneurship business model. The evaluation should include the sustainability of the business concept, marketing plan (customers, competitors, target markets, segments served, products, prices), funding plan, organization, distribution plan, promotion and sales plan & future business additions, SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, and how well the organization meets certain UN Millennium Project goals (which ones and how effective). An initial draft of your analysis for comments should be e-mailed to Wynd Harris no later than July 25th. Suggestions/additions on the draft will be returned to you by August 1st. Once received, the final version can be e-mailed no later than August 8th.
June 1 - 6: The Civil War and Peace Accords
- The Case for Definition: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/social_entrepreneurship_the_case_for_definition

Posting Deadlines: Reading Summary due June 4

June 7 - 13: Crime and Corruption

Posting Deadlines: Reading Summary due June 11.

June 14 – 20: All Readings can be found on HuskyCT (web links given below)
- 10 Free Things Every New Entrepreneur Should Have: http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/10_free_things_every_new_social_entrepreneur_should_have
- Measuring Social Value: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/measuring_social_value
- Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_role_of_brand_in_the_nonprofit_sector
- Selling to the Poor: Forbes

Questions (to be e-mailed no later than June 15th)
A. Which of the above 4 articles were of greatest interest?
B. Why?
C. What significant new information was learned from these articles?

Week of June 21-27: Readings are on HuskyCT
- When Can Impact Investing Create Real Impact?: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/unpacking_the_impact_in_impact_investing
- Ten Nonprofit Funding Models: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/ten_nonprofit_funding_models
- Microfinance Misses Its Mark: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/microfinance_misses_its_mark/
- Micro consignment video by Greg Vankerk (on internet under Micro Consignment & Vankerk)

Questions (to be e-mailed no later than June 22nd)
A. Which of the above 5 articles/videos were of greatest interest?
B. Why?
C. What significant new information was learned from these articles/videos?

Grades to the above 6 questions — (24% of the total grade)

Business Plan evaluation tools (provided on HuskyCT read before going abroad):
- Non-Profit Business Plans
- SWOT Analysis Worksheet