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The Application of Creative Leadership Skills in the Education and Mentoring of Social Entrepreneurs: A Graduate Level Course

by
Maria J. Rivera-Ramos

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science

May 2011

Buffalo State College
State University

Yes, I *am* my brother's keeper

Dedication

For

My bonus father, Dr. Jaime Martinez-Tolentino for being a role model of persistence and excellence, for believing in me, and showing curiosity

My professor, Dr. Mary Murdock, for helping me see life in a new way at a time when I much needed a new perspective

My mother, Dr. Consuelo Ramos-Nadal for being a woman of courage and for making sure I ate well, while I was busy with this project

My father, Waldemar Rivera, for his humor and encouragement

My beloved Manuel Fernandez, for his patience and support

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I. Background of the Project

Purpose and Description

The purpose of this project is to fully comprehend the state of social entrepreneurship (SE) education through research, and consequently, to design a course on how to apply creative leadership skills to educate and mentor social entrepreneurs and to enhance their problem solving skills. The outcome of the project is a course proposal to build inter-disciplinary knowledge and skills.

In order to accomplish this, I shall examine the existing creativity and SE literature and interact with subject matter experts (faculty and practitioners) so as to identify frameworks, concepts, and skills that social entrepreneurs should apply in order to become more effective as leaders. In addition, I shall review SE syllabi from universities currently offering SE courses in order to examine approaches and identify “best practice” strategies that will be integrated into the course proposal resulting from this project.

More specifically, the course to be developed shall have as its purpose: a) to guide students towards understanding the SE space through research; b) to assist students in gaining a clearer understanding of themselves, their own passions, motivations, talents, strengths and aspirations, and to help them combine those elements with SE and “changemaking”¹; c) to understand the skills and mindset required for social entrepreneurs and “changemakers”; and d) to deliver a full suite of creativity and change leadership skills (both, hard and soft) that those

¹ Both “changemaking” and “changemakers” are terms coined by Ashoka U.
See <http://www.ashoka.org/changemakercampus> Accessed on April 30, 2011.

students can apply in planning and launching a new venture, in creating change within an existing enterprise, or in engaging to address problems in the local community.

The course is not about launching an SE venture. It is about gaining knowledge of key SE concepts, building self-awareness, and harnessing cognitive and critical analysis skills. It is intended to catalyze a self-discovery process among students and enable them to make a difference by teaching them to apply their creativity in a deliberate way.

Since a clear definition of SE is essential for this project, the next section of this report provides a definition of SE and introduces some of the thought leaders and pioneers in the field. It also explains the distinction between SE and social business since these two terms are often confused.

Thought Leaders and Pioneers of the FieldDr. Gregory Dees and Bill Drayton have both played a pioneering role and are referred to as Fathers of Social Entrepreneurship in the literature. I recently learned that their relationship dates back to their days at McKinsey and Company, where they both worked as management consultants earlier on in their careers. Dees has a Ph.D in Philosophy and has taught at Harvard, Yale and Stanford. He is Professor of the Practice of SE at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and co-founder of the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business.

Dees strongly believes that teaching how to solve social problems is beyond business schools – it's about integrating tools from other disciplines. He began to challenge the siloed bureaucratic university system and taught the first course on SE at Harvard in 1995. At the 2nd annual Ashoka U exchange held at Duke University in February 2011, he shared that even after the course was accepted, he was encouraged to change the name because “social” just did not

belong in the business school. Dees said that “changing events outside put pressure and the university realized that something needed to be done, so I brushed up the course proposal and it became something that needed to be done”. Quite obviously, as far as school officials were concerned, suggesting changes beyond the confines of the campus placed undue pressure on the university, and therefore, Dees was forced to “brush up” the course proposal until “social change” became something that needed to be done, instead of something that the proposal required to be done. Today, he is still interested in ways to enable change in universities and transforming universities into agents of innovation.

Dees and Drayton have partnered precisely at a time when social entrepreneurs and universities need to come together in order to help advance the field. They are challenging universities to live up to current and future generations’ expectations.

Drayton has built a global movement around the concept of SE through his Ashoka Foundation. As Bill Clinton’s nominee to receive a Nobel Prize, Drayton has been awarded recognition by prestigious institutions such as Yale University, the American Society of Public Administration, and the National Academy of Public Administration. Since its inception, Ashoka has created a global community that supports over 1,800 Ashoka fellows, innovative entrepreneurs with solutions to key social issues that are collectively sustainable and replicable across the world².

Besides working at Mckinsey and before he found his permanent footing, Drayton worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For four years, he was Assistant Administrator at this Agency, where he had responsibility for policy, budget, management, audit,

² <http://www.caseatduke.org/events/leadershipaward/07winner/index.html> Accessed on April 30, 2011.

and representing the environment in Administration-wide policy development, notably including budget, energy, and economic policy. He also served briefly in the White House, and taught both, law and management, at Stanford Law School and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Decades ago, Drayton “became convinced that creative, innovative thinking could be applied to solve seemingly intractable social problems. He was excited to see that many people around the world were doing just that, some of them without realizing that they fell into a very special group of people. One of the first initiatives Bill undertook was to find these people and to give them recognition by calling them Ashoka Fellows. Then, he upgraded his initiatives by organizing conferences, meetings and workshops to bring social entrepreneurs together, helping them learn from each other, supporting them with small grants, introducing them to donors, documenting their activities, and producing videos that portrayed their work and philosophies. Today, SE has become a recognized movement. Besides Ashoka, there are several other foundations dedicated to promoting SE, including but not limited to, the Skoll Foundation, founded by Jeff Skoll (the first employee and CEO of eBay) and the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, founded by Klaus Schwab (the founder of the World Economic Forum). They have made it their mission to find, support, and encourage social entrepreneurs around the world (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 31).” The Kauffman Foundation funded Dees until the leadership of the foundation changed, but earlier on, they were a big supporter of launching the field³.

³ Communication during 2nd Annual Ashoka U Exchange at Duke University.

Definition of Social Entrepreneurship (SE) and Social Business

Dees describes three different perspectives on SE and claims that all three approaches to SE have considerable utility⁴. In his essay, he explains these as follows:

- One perspective is “the combination of commercial enterprises to achieve social impact. In this perspective, entrepreneurs have used business skills and knowledge to create enterprises that accomplish social purposes in addition to being commercially viable (Emerson and Twersky, 1996). Not-for-profit organizations may create commercial subsidiaries and use them to generate employment or revenue that serves their social purposes, or for-profit organizations may donate some of their profits or organize their activities to serve social goals. These initiatives use resources generated from successful commercial activities to advance and sustain their social activities”.
- A second perspective is SE “as innovating for social impact, in which attention is focused on innovations and social arrangements that have consequences for social problems, often with relatively little attention to economic viability by ordinary business criteria (e.g., Dees, 1998b). In this perspective, social entrepreneurs are focused on social problems, and they create innovative initiatives, build new social arrangements, and mobilize resources in response to those problems rather than following the dictates of the market or commercial criteria”.
- A third perspective sees SE “as a way to catalyze social transformation well beyond the solutions of the social problems. In this tradition, SE needs to understand not only

⁴ <http://www.caseatduke.org/about/whatisocialentrepreneurship/> Accessed on December, 2010.

immediate problems, but also those that are the initial focus of concern. From this perspective, SE at its best produces small changes in the short term that reverberate throughout existing systems to catalyze large changes in the longer term (Ashoka Foundation, 2000). Social entrepreneurs in this tradition need to understand not only immediate problems, but also the larger social system and its interdependencies, so that the introduction of new paradigms at critical leverage points can lead to cascades of mutually-reinforcing changes that create and sustain transformed social arrangements. Sustainable social transformations include *both* the innovations for social impacts and the concern for ongoing streams of resources that characterize the two other perspectives on social entrepreneurship — and they also lead to major shifts in the social context within which the original problem is embedded and sustained”.

Muhammad Yunus, Professor of Economics and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, helps to define the space further by adding that social business and SE are not the same thing. He says that SE is a very broad idea. As it is generally defined, any innovative initiative to help people may be described as SE. The initiative may be economic or non-economic, for profit or not for profit. The distribution of medicine to the sick, for example, can be an example of SE. So can setting up a for profit health care center in a village where no health facility exists or launching a social business. In other words, Yunus sees social business as a subset of SE. This means that all those who design and run social business are social entrepreneurs, but not all social entrepreneurs are engaged in social business. Until very recently, the movement around SE had not showcased the issue of social business because that concept did not exist (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 32).

“Entrepreneurs will set up social businesses not to achieve limited personal gain but to pursue specific social goals (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 21).” A social business is also different from philanthropy. “First, the business one creates with social business is self-sustaining. There is no need to pump in money every year. It is self-propelling, self-perpetuating, and self-expanding. Once it is set up, it continues to grow on its own. You get more social benefits for your money. Second, investors in a social business get their money back. They can reinvest in the same or a different social business. This way, the same money can bring more social benefits. Since it is a business, businesspeople will find this an exciting opportunity not only to bring money to social business but to leverage their own business skills and creativity to solve social problems. Not only does the investor get his money back, he still remains an owner of the company and decides its future course of action. That’s a very exciting prospect on its own (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 24-25).”

“Social business also provides an outlet for the creativity that millions of people harbor within themselves. *Creativity* doesn’t have to mean something grand. It can be as simple as noticing a local problem and thinking, I wonder whether anyone has tried to solve the problem by doing *this* – and then trying it. A small local solution can become the seed of a global solution (Yunus, *Building Social Business*, p. 27).

Some students of social business wonder whether a hybrid version – combining characteristics of a profit-maximizing business (PMB) with those of social business is possible. According to Yunus, it is possible in limitless ways, but in the real world, it can be very difficult to operate businesses with the two conflicting goals of profit maximization and social benefits. PMBs are driven by the profit motive — that is, the desire for personal gain — and social business is driven by the desire to do good for people and for the planet — that is, the selfless

concern for others. If the two are mixed, the business will gradually inch toward the profit-maximization goal no matter how the company's mission is designed (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p.33). In, *Creating a World*, Yunus explains that there are many reasons for this:

1. CEOs become confused as to which part of the instruction is the main one. They will wonder how their success will be judged — on the basis of the money they earn for the investors, or on the basis of the social goals they achieve.
2. The existing business environment focuses on profit maximization because all current tools of business are related to judging whether or not a business is maximizing profit (accounting practices and standards are clearly established for that purpose so that profit can be measured in very precise financial terms). Measuring the achievement of social objectives, on the other hand, has conceptual complications. For example, if the goal is to improve the nutrition of poor children, how does one measure just who is “poor”? And, what biological standards will be used to measure their nutritional standards before and after? Moreover, how reliable will the information thus obtained be? These are difficult questions to answer precisely. Since, social problems are inherently complex, information related to social goals would suffer from greater time lag than profitability data.

Yunus simply does not believe in a hybrid business model, or in a double, triple, or even quadruple bottom line. He says:

“Let’s be very honest. The profit motive is extremely powerful. Once it gets its nose under the edge of the tent, it soon takes over the entire dwelling space. This is the problem with traditional capitalism which is such a creative and effective force for good in so many ways. Capitalism has created poverty by focusing

exclusively on profit. It built a fairy tale of prosperity for all — a dream that was doomed never to come true. That's why many European countries decided to empower their governments to take care of social needs, such as poverty, unemployment, education, and healthcare. They were smart enough to figure out the inability of traditional capitalism to solve these problems. In the developing world, however, government lacks the managerial ability and material resources to create the kind of welfare state Europeans enjoy. In some other countries, such as the United States, cultural and political norms prevent government from addressing social problems. For these and other reasons, a new mechanism is needed. Social business can be that mechanism — provided that it is kept completely free from the complication of profit-seeking. Being in social business is like being in a no-smoking zone — even a tiny little puff spoils the whole concept (Yunus, Building Social Business, p. 17)."

Yunus advocates for social business with no profit maximizing goal and zero dividend payout to its investors. These social businesses are self-sustaining businesses that support themselves through earned income. Investors of a social business only get in return what they invest in the business — no more and no less.

Among the similarities between Yunus and Dees is the fact that both are interested in the SE perspective that emphasizes SE as a catalyst for social transformation; that is, SE that leads to significant changes in the social, political and economic contexts for poor and marginalized groups. Undoubtedly, Dees, Drayton, and Yunus are the most recognized thought leaders in the field, and I have focused on their work in order to learn about the SE landscape.

Rationale for Project Choice

First, in recent years, social entrepreneurs have exhibited an increased willingness to look beyond the traditional philanthropic and charitable approaches in order to find more effective solutions to social problems. Several trends are opening the doors to new forms of entrepreneurial behavior that require creative leadership skills in the social sector.

Second, there has been an increased interest among students in issues related to the interaction between business and society, and in jobs in the social sector. This is evident in the comprehensive body of resources that have been created to help students understand the different categories of socially responsible jobs and narrow down their options. Fifteen years ago, it seemed virtually impossible to find out what socially responsible jobs were available, and most graduates flocked to the traditional business jobs in consulting, banking, manufacturing, etc. However, today, many professionals in traditional business jobs and recent business graduates who want to pursue a socially responsible job, may find that strong cultural norms in the social sector can work against the kinds of changes that they would want to make. Therefore, these individuals would benefit from an understanding of these sector differences and from developing creative thinking and change leadership skills.

Third, over the past few years, the number of universities interested in social entrepreneurship has skyrocketed. In 2004, very few courses were offered about social entrepreneurship; only 20 universities in the world had such courses. This was due to the lack of a strong base of theory or empirical research on which to ground course work (Ashoka U, p. 13, Unpublished). The combination of business-inspired methods, creative leadership, and social purposes is relatively new, so the literature was still in very early stages of development. The

few courses that were offered were in high demand, but were restricted to students enrolled in the MBA, MPP, or MSW programs. Today, 100 academic institutions in the U.S. and 122 internationally, offer courses on social entrepreneurship (Ashoka U, p. 13, Unpublished).

In light of the dramatic growth in the number and range of courses, the present project is timely and represents a promising contribution to the field. Despite the increased interest in the discipline, a global syllabi review project conducted in the summer of 2010 revealed that relevant and innovative SE curricula and teaching resources remain scarce. The curriculum reviewers who participated in the study, found that SE is much like entrepreneurship was in the early stages, in that there is much work ahead in order to bring SE into legitimacy as an academic discipline. Like entrepreneurship, SE stretches across a range of disciplines and applications, and the field is changing rapidly (Ashoka U, p.13, Unpublished).

Yasmeen Mohiuddin, Director of the Social Entrepreneurship Education (SEED) Program, Ralph Owen Distinguished Professor of Economics at Sewanee University of the South, and the first woman in Pakistan to earn a Ph.D. in economics, said that “SE is a growing field, both as a business model and a course of study in higher education; [it’s] an emerging field of study that is becoming increasingly important in academia and the corporate sector. The field of SE and SE education are undergoing continuous development and research, keeping it dynamic and offering opportunities never seen before.”⁵

This project has reinforced my interest in SE as a field of intellectual endeavor. I am specifically interested in applying creativity and change leadership to the academic discipline of SE, and deploying existing tools from the field of Creative Studies in a new way so as to effect

⁵ <http://news.sewanee.edu/life/2010/11/08/sewanee-selected-to-participate-in-new-social-entrepreneurship-program> Accessed on April 30, 2011.

change. I believe that teaching these tools is one of the most important acts for influencing a generation of change agents who are needed to solve the world's most pressing social problems.

My hopes for this project are:

- to build on this experience by developing a course that educators can reconfigure so as to introduce SE into other disciplinary contexts;
- to inspire students across disciplines to use the knowledge and skills acquired within their major and profession to act as social entrepreneurs and changemakers; and
- to convey my material in a manner that allows participants gain valuable practical knowledge, but also to acquire a deeper understanding of the “new” social sector and how to best contribute to it.

II: Pertinent Literature

SE Literature Commentary

I engaged in a review of SE literature to help me understand the field and it included several books, articles, papers, case studies, internet links, and a recent unpublished study by Ashoka U on effective curricula and teaching practices in SE. Ashoka U's willingness to grant me confidential access to the results of an unpublished study, has allowed me to take these results into consideration in this project and to gain a broad view of the opportunities that lie ahead for educators in the field of SE. It has also put me in a position to learn what schools are doing better than anyone else in the country in terms of teaching approaches and to leverage their best practices in my course design.

When I contacted Ashoka U to present the background of this project and explore opportunities for collaboration, I explained that I was about to embark on a review of the current state of curricular offerings within SE in order to explore trends and develop an innovative course, and I was pleased to find that Ashoka U had just recently conducted a syllabi review within SE. Over the summer of 2010, Ashoka U sent out a call to professors of SE, and collected 50 syllabi from over 34 universities around the world. The syllabi were reviewed by a panel of experts representing professors, a former university provost and president, funders of early stage social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneur practitioners, and a current student. This panel identified key themes and insights, as a first step toward improving and aligning the curricular offerings within SE.

The literature used in SE courses was also reviewed as part of the scope of Ashoka U's project and the reviewers' findings validated my own assessment of the literature that I had reviewed up to that point. My literature review was based on a random sample of textbooks on

SE and I was well into my readings when I came across the Ashoka U study. Because I already had a foundation, I immediately concurred with the assessment of the reviewers that among the areas for growth and innovation in the SE academic space is the development of great works in SE. The reviewers noted “the inconsistency in quality and use of required texts in SE courses” and highlighted “the need for the field to develop a ‘canon’ for SE, a set of texts and case studies that students who have achieved a mastery of SE have read and analyzed and that serve as a common body of knowledge (Ashoka U, p. 33, Unpublished)”.

Creativity and Change Leadership Literature Commentary

The review of creativity and change leadership literature focused on several books. A particular emphasis was placed on *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change*, by Gerard Puccio, Mary C. Murdock, and Marie Mance.⁶ Two of the authors, G. Puccio and M. Murdock, were my professors and have directly influenced my thinking through their teaching and the knowledge contained in this text. Although *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change* did not appear in any of the lists of suggested texts for social entrepreneurs, it is an excellent supplemental text for students of SE who seek to learn and hone changemaking and leadership skills. The authors demystify leadership and characterize it as the process that leads to change. They explain the link between creativity, leadership and change, and delve deeply into Creative Problem Solving (CPS) and the Thinking Skills Model (a theoretical framework of the Creative Problem Solving process developed by Puccio,), as well as thinking tools associated with the different stages of CPS.

⁶ Puccio G. J., Murdock, M.C., & Mance, M. (2007). *Creative leadership: Skills that drive change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Social entrepreneurs would benefit from an understanding of leadership as a process, and from harnessing the process and necessary skills to apply it in a deliberate way, while they are at the university level and possibly incubating ideas for social ventures. This would be in line with the following insightful observation made by Lara Galinsky, Senior Vice President of Echoing Green:

“In the past few years we have seen that Echoing Green applicants are younger and most of them are coming out of universities. They have incubated their idea in the university space, where they have the room to experiment. There is something there that can be harnessed (Ashoka, p. 13, Unpublished).”

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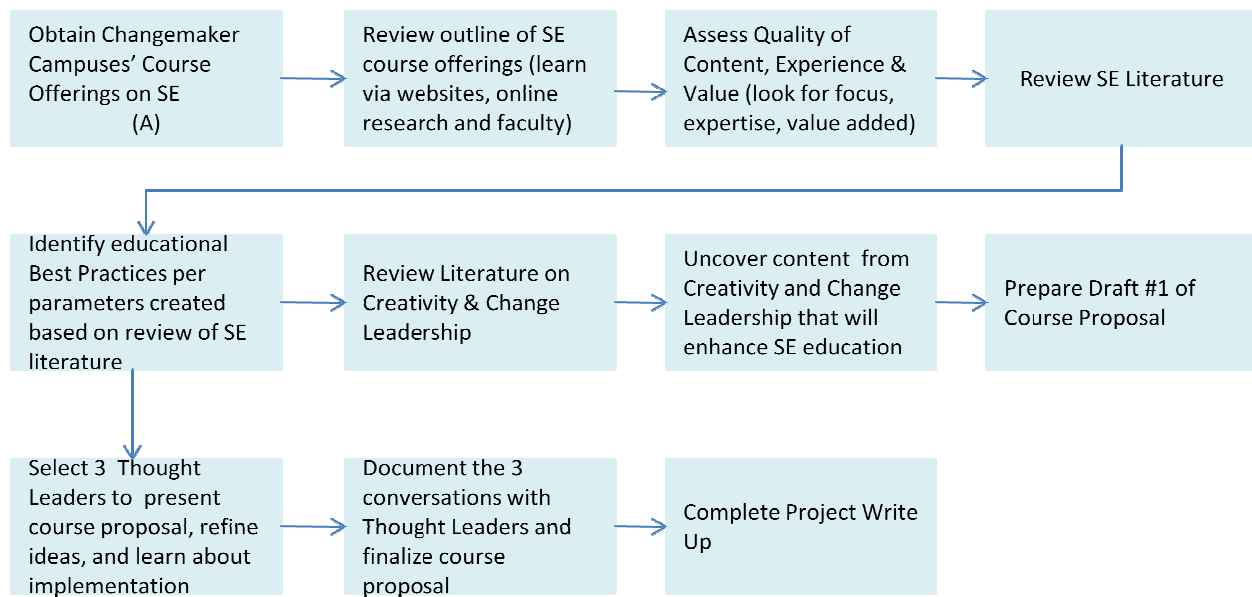
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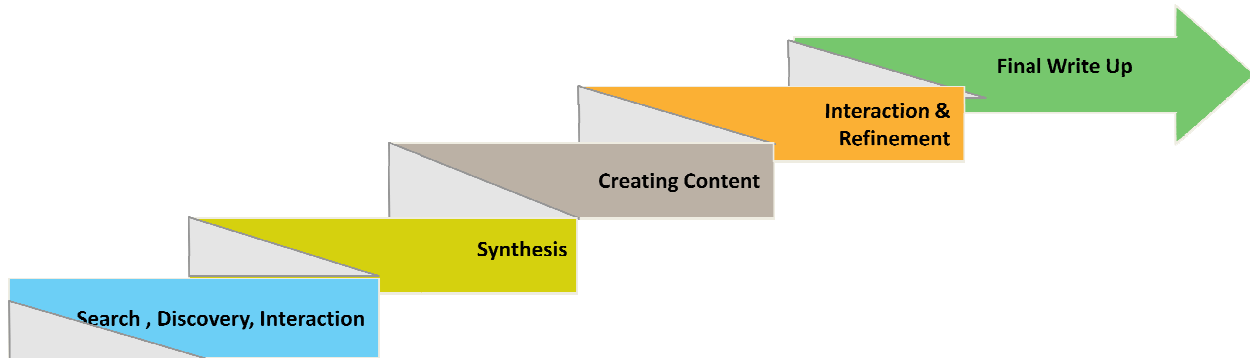
III. Process Plan

Overview of Process Steps

The following flowchart depicts the planned process steps required to develop the course. The first three steps, which are related to performing a review of curricular offerings on SE, were conducted to some extent, since this approach led me in a serendipitous way to an unpublished study (Ashoka U's study conducted in the summer of 2010) which consisted of a thorough review of curricular offerings on SE by experts in the field. The study revealed the current state of SE syllabi, courses, and teaching and it became an invaluable tool for this project.



IV. Project Phases



The diagram above describes the five phases of this project. The first phase is “Search, Discovery, Interaction” and refers to the initial steps required to explore the field of SE. This includes online research, literature review, and phone interviews to learn and explore areas of interest. During this phase, I chose my topic and also decided to delve deeply into the work of Yunus to learn about his Creative Problem Solving process. The second phase “Synthesis” refers to summarizing selected readings, extracting the main lessons learned, generating personal ideas and insights, and creating an initial course outline. The third phase, “Creating Content” refers to the writing of this report, which evolved from many drafts. The fourth phase “Interaction and Refinement” refers to the process of interacting with SE educators and social entrepreneurs to validate assumptions, identify best practices in SE education, and gauge the level of interest in Creativity and SE. Finally, the last phase involved incorporating in this report what I learned from my interactions and completing the final write up.

V. Outcomes

Course Design

In the proposed course, Creativity is the framework within which SE is nestled. However, because both, SE and creative leadership skills are considered specialized, very narrow areas of study, one promising approach is to teach these skills within a larger field, such as Business, Law, Engineering, etc. The course can be offered as an extracurricular course for graduate students.

The syllabus incorporates best practices around instructional strategies used in three of ten SE syllabi recognized as exemplary per the syllabi review conducted by Ashoka U. It specifically draws on these three syllabi's best practices related to approaches for fostering personal connection to SE and for connecting classroom to real world problem solving.

In addition to reviewing exemplary syllabi from ten universities, I attended an SE Course Portfolio "Best Practices" panel discussion as part of the 2nd Ashoka U exchange held at Duke University in February 2011, where SE faculty discussed how they design and deliver courses, and what has worked or not worked for them.

Moreover, the syllabus incorporates teaching strategies and content from a course offered at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at State University of New York College at Buffalo, which delivers Advanced Cognitive Tools for CPS. The steps associated with CPS, the key thinking skills associated with CPS, and the key affective skills that support CPS can be found in *Creative Leadership*.

Studies at the International Center for Studies in Creativity have shown that individuals who study and apply CPS, learn to embody the principles behind the Thinking Skills Model and

are more likely to engage in actions that clearly demonstrate their ability to engage in creative thinking. They will stand out as people who are flexible-minded innovators able to uplift themselves and others by developing novel solutions to open-ended challenges and opportunities.

Finally, the syllabus design not only draws from some of the most effective teaching approaches from two disciplinary areas (Creativity and SE), but also from the work of Yunus, as well as, others who specialize in social innovation.

Course Learning Outcomes

My course is designed to achieve the Learning Outcomes for Social Entrepreneurs and Changemakers drafted by Ashoka U in the “Curriculum and Teaching Resource Guide”. They classified learning outcomes into 4 areas:

1. Ways of Knowing
2. Ways of Thinking
3. Ways of Interacting
4. Ways of Being

The following table provides a definition of the learning outcomes under each of the four areas.

<p>I. Ways of Knowing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the field of Social Entrepreneurship. How it differs from traditional nonprofits and charities, social enterprise, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) philanthropy and service projects. Know the major players, how the field has changed and where it is headed. 2. Know the community through engagement. Through engagement with social entrepreneurship organizations and their leaders, get to know the root cause of a problem, the constraints, community conditions and entrenched interests at play.
<p>II. Ways of Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Think in systems. Possess the ability to analyze a problem in the context of a system and to think about why the system doesn't work. Be able to make hypotheses about what would be required to make the system work at the scale of the problem. 4. Identify problems and define and design solutions. Be able to define a problem and identify and design solutions that take into account both intended

and unintended consequences.

5. **Think creatively.** Possess the ability to think creatively, to push thinking beyond today, the text, the book, the classroom, and to envision a world as it should be.
6. **Think with a focus on results.** Possess the ability to map activities and tactics toward short and long-term measurable, tangible results, and to learn continuously from diverse places and from failures along the way.

III. Ways of Interacting

7. **Communicate clearly and convincingly.** Be able to create and deliver crisp, concise communication of a problem and its solution and why one should care and act.
8. **Build coalitions and teams.** Be able to build strong coalitions and teams through effective vision-setting, negotiation and communication.

IV. Ways of Being

9. **Understand oneself.** Awareness of personal passions, motivations, aspirations, abilities and limitations, paired with a commitment to work on improving oneself as a changemaker.
10. **Sense of purpose and self-permission.** Awareness of change one wants to see in the world and self-permission to take risks to pursue it.

My course addresses *ways of knowing* and the two learning outcomes that this area addresses, through team research to map out the SE space and build an understanding of the field, and through exposure to the community through social project engagement.

The Thinking Skills Model is positioned as the framework for addressing the other three areas: a) *ways of thinking*, b) *ways of interacting*, and c) *ways of being*. These three areas cover 8 out of the 10 learning outcomes that are considered essential for a robust curriculum program on SE, and all 8 can be accomplished by learning and applying CPS. This is an important finding as it demonstrates that Creativity should be an essential component of the SE curriculum and this course should meet the standard learning outcomes for SE education as defined by Ashoka U.

Course Outline

The course is broken up into 4 parts/modules. In the first module, students learn the definition of SE; explore the SE space through research and learn about the key players; they become familiar with a wide range of definitions and terms; they learn what motivates people to engage in social change, and they gain awareness of social movements taking place in the world at large.

In the second module, students begin to work individually on a portfolio that addresses their past, present and future, as a tool to experiment, gain better understanding of themselves, and discover their intrinsic motivation. They work on this portfolio throughout the remainder of the course, turn it in at the end for evaluation, and deliver a presentation for evaluation. During the second module, they also learn about the link between change, leadership and creativity; they define and describe what is meant by thinking skills and cognitive tools; examine the Thinking Skills Model as a theoretical framework of the CPS process; and they begin to learn the CPS steps. The CPS steps are: Assessing the Situation, Exploring the Vision, Formulating Challenges, Exploring Ideas, Formulating Solutions, Exploring Acceptance, and Formulating a Plan (Puccio et al., *Creative Leadership*, p.50). These steps and the tools associated with each phase of CPS are learned and practiced in the classroom and applied in community project work outside the classroom.

In the third module, students are exposed to additional factors that affect leadership and reflect on their community project experience through class participation.

The course culminates with submission of the portfolio, submission of community project case study, portfolio classroom presentation, and two project presentations to community of interest sponsoring the project and the classroom.

Below is the outline of the topics that will be covered in the course, as well as the goals, procedures for assessing students, and the resources that will be used to support the learning (i.e. books, articles, video websites, etc.).

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Introduction to the Course and its principles	Provide overview and purpose of the course.	Address course assignments and expectations.	<p><u>Handout:</u> Syllabus</p> <p><u>Essay:</u> <i>“Death to the Syllabus”</i></p> <p><u>Video:</u> <i>Hear Our Voices</i></p>
MODULE 1: SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AND THE SE LANDSCAPE			
Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
<p>Why do people engage in social change?</p> <p>Yunus’ origin and the origins of social entrepreneurs and</p>	Understand what motivates social entrepreneurs, their characteristics, and the “moments of obligation” that launched them on	Class participation	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Be Bold</i></p> <p><i>How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas</i></p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
<p>innovators. Who is Yunus? What motivated him? – examine key questions students in class might have about strengths, talents, experiences, and interests of social entrepreneurs</p>	<p>their journeys</p>		<p><i>Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
<p>SE Space: Definitions, Thought Leaders, and other Key Players</p>	<p>Understand the current SE landscape</p> <p>Practice effective research strategies</p>	<p>Teams of 3-4 conduct research on who are the thought leaders in the field, what are the leading organizations, innovative methods for generating funds, and latest trends. Each team will give a 15 minute presentation.</p>	<p>Online research</p> <p>Handout on effective research strategies</p>
<p>New Paradigms toward effective social change: Transformative Action</p>	<p>Build awareness of the less adversarial, more collaborative, and more solution-oriented approaches to social change and the series of trends and movements currently taking shape in higher education and the world at large.</p> <p>Explore an SE topic of interest.</p>	<p>Reflecting on presentations by guest speakers, write a 2-3 page report on one social problem discussed by presenters toward which you have affinity or would want to solve, the key points addressed by the presenter as it relates to that social problem, and why it interests you.</p>	<p>Guest speakers: Dr. Frederico Cintron, Anthropology & Dr. Lynn McBrien, Education (researchers and specialists in social movements)</p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
MODULE 2: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR LEADERS			
Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Understanding Oneself/Personal Leadership	Clarity of dreams, visions, strengths, weaknesses, contributions to make in the world, and identities	Portfolio	<p><u>Websites:</u></p> <p>Blurb.com Lulu.com</p> <p><u>Handout</u> with Instructions for Creating Your Portfolio</p>
Change, Leadership, and Creativity: The Powerful Connection			<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
<p>Creative Problem Solving: Background and Introduction to the Thinking Skills Model</p> <p>The Thinking Skills Model vs. The Four Core Elements that will Help a Person be Bold in Life and</p>	Framing the CPS model as an organizer for thinking skills	Portfolio	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Be Bold</i></p> <p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Career – Compare and Contrast			
Identifying Complex Thinking Skills Associated with the Creative Problem Solving Model	Purpose of each step in the model Thinking skills definitions	Portfolio	<u>Texts:</u> <i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i> <i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i>
Transforming your Thinking: Principles for Divergence and Convergence		Portfolio	<u>Texts:</u> <i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i> <i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i>
Throughout Part 3 of the Course, students will be examining the most successful case in SE (Yunus’ Grameen Bank) from the perspective of the Thinking Skills Model, practicing thinking skills and tools through classroom exercises, as well as, involved in a community project for social transformation outside the classroom. They will work in groups of 4-5 on concrete projects.			
Assessing the Situation: Tools for Diagnostic Thinking	Demonstrate an understanding of diagnostic thinking and apply it with a select number of tools to social change project outside the classroom.	Class participation, group activity, written report	<u>Texts:</u> <i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i> <i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i>
Synthesize, Elaborate and Internalize the Thinking Skills Model	Demonstrate an understanding of visionary thinking and apply it with a select number of tools to social change	Class participation, group activity, written report	<u>Texts:</u> <i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i> <i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
	project outside the classroom		
<p>Formulating Challenges: Tools for Strategic Thinking</p> <p>Review some of the best ideas on the subject and how the principles of strategic planning have begun to transform grassroots strategies for change</p>	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of strategic thinking, and application of this skill, through the use of a variety of thinking tools to social change project</p> <p>outside the classroom</p>	<p>Class participation, group activity, written report</p>	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
<p>Exploring Ideas: Tools for Ideational Thinking</p>	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of ideational thinking, and application of this skill, through the use of a variety of thinking tools to social change project</p>	<p>Class participation, group activity, written report</p>	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
<p>Formulating Solutions</p>	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of evaluative thinking, and application of this skill, through the use of a variety of thinking tools to social change project outside the classroom</p>	<p>Class participation, group activity, written report</p>	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Exploring Acceptance	Demonstrate an understanding of contextual thinking, and application of this skill, through the use of a variety of thinking tools to social change project outside the classroom	Class participation, group activity, written report	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
Formulating a Plan	Demonstrate an understanding of contextual thinking, and application of this skill, through the use of a variety of thinking tools to social change project outside the classroom	Class participation, group activity, written report	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
MODULE 3: ADDITIONAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LEADERS			
Psychological Diversity		Class participation	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
Creative Climate		Class participation	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Putting together an effective team		Class participation	<p><u>Texts:</u></p> <p><i>Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change</i></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p>
Storytelling for Social Change		<p>Workshop</p> <p>Redo the 30 second elevator speech using storytelling to better communicate who you are, your overall vision, and why we should care</p>	
Resilience, Optimism, and Overcoming Setbacks	<p>Awareness of challenges that social entrepreneurs face and that any movement for social change is inevitably going to face. Examine what constitutes resilience and what we do when things fall apart.</p>	<p>Discuss the obstacles, setbacks and failures faced by Yunus and how he has overcome barriers to progress.</p> <p>Discuss skills necessary to be a proficient change leader</p>	<p><u>Text:</u></p> <p><i>Creating a World Without Poverty</i></p> <p><u>Webinar</u> Gerard Puccio and Jonathan Vehar discussing the latest version of the Creative Process/Creative Problem Solving</p>

Topics to be Covered	Learning Outcomes	Procedures for Assessing Students/Assignments	Resources to Support Learning
Social transformation project experience	Enable students to demonstrate contextual application and mastery of the ways of thinking, interacting, and being reflected in the Thinking Skills Model.	Final Presentations on community project Case study for community of interest	
Inhumanity and humanity discussion Philosophical Discussion on Happiness Conclusions	Awareness that innovations can be used by others for unintended purposes. What is happiness? Confidence that ordinary people can solve the challenges that face us today and in the future.	Class participation	<u>Cases:</u> 1. The microfinance crisis 2. Facebook

Rationale for the Resources Selected to Support Learning

A. *Hear Our Voices* Video

Not having personally witnessed extreme poverty in a developing country should not prevent students from being aware of the experience of others living there. Since students may or may not coming into the course with an understanding of the current state of poverty in the world, this video introduces them to the landscape and the base of the pyramid (i.e.

those living with \$2 or less per day). The intent is to actually look at one of the areas that they will be learning about during the course.

B. *Be Bold*

In *Be Bold*, Dorsey and Galinsky share the stories of twelve Echoing Green Fellows that are leaders in the nonprofit world and are changing their communities, their nations, and the world for the better. The stories outline four core elements that will help individuals be bold in their life and in careers in the nonprofit sector: moment of obligation (identifying what means most to you and committing to carrying out your dreams), gall to think big (believing you can take on the world and developing a clear and expansive vision for change), new and untested (questioning the status quo and creating new solutions to address seemingly intractable social problems), and seeing possibilities (identifying solutions when others can't and having hope when others don't).

Each of the four core elements in *Be Bold* align with the appropriate stage(s) within the CPS process and the affective skills that underlie CPS.

C. Social Entrepreneurship Texts

The course will utilize two standard texts in the field: “*Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*” and “*How to Change the World*” Both of these are seminal works in SE. It will also utilize Yunus’s text “*Creating a World Without Poverty*”, which deals more closely with the application of the social entrepreneurship process.

The course will explore the Thinking Skills Model in the context of one of the most successful cases of SE, the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, founded by Yunus. Yunus applied, essentially the principles set forth in Puccio's, Murdock's and Mance's *Creative Leadership*. The main questions students will try to answer are: What are the characteristics of Yunus as a social entrepreneur? What led him to get involved in social change? How did he apply CPS to respond to the challenges that emerged initially and over time as his initiative grew?

I chose Yunus for several reasons:

1. Reading about his work and learning how he applied his creativity to solve extreme problems transformed my thinking, and raised my ambitions about what is possible, which I hope students are also able to do through this course. Yunus became involved in the poverty issue by accident. In "*Creating a World*" Yunus says:

"I originally became involved in the poverty issue not as a policy maker, scholar, or researcher, but because poverty was all around me, and I could not turn away from it. The year was 1974. I had returned home, in June 1972, to Bangladesh after resigning my position as assistant professor at Middle Tennessee State University in the US. My decision to return was stimulated by the battle for Bangladeshi independence, and I was eager to do my part to help build a free and prosperous new nation. I joined the Economics Department at Chittagong University and became chairman of the department. I enjoyed teaching, and I was looking forward to an academic career. But something happened that made this

impossible — the terrible Bangladesh famine of 1974-75. As the famine wore on, hundreds of thousands died, while the world looked on in seeming indifference (Yunus, Creating a World, p. 44).

He felt a deep connection to the issue and adds:

“I have come to see that my innocence about banking helped me a lot. The fact that I had never even taken a course on bank operations meant that I was free to think about the process of lending and borrowing without preconceptions. If I had been a banker I would have probably never tried to explore how the banking system could serve the poor. And if I had, I would have almost certainly gone about it the wrong way (Yunus, Creating the World, p.77)”.

As an outsider who first and foremost, cared about the problem, he began “to look closely at the poor themselves, to understand their problems, their needs, their skills, and their abilities” (Yunus, Creating the World, p.77), as well as, the culture, the religion, the politics and the geography. In order to address the problem, he focused on learning every aspect of it including supporting data. Once he had gained comprehensive knowledge of the problem, he began to develop a vision grounded in practical strategies. Then, he began to “build a system around them, until one day he woke up and discovered he had become a banker, although a very unconventional banker (Yunus, Creating the World, p.77)”.

2. An observable critical component of Yunus’s creative process is rapid decision making and iteration, and the story of the Grameen Bank shows that this approach is

particularly instrumental when trying to solve extreme problems. Yunus's approach seemed similar to Design Thinking, a methodology for practical, creative resolution of problems or issues that looks for an improved future result which does not require deep analysis to determine the optimal solution, but rather consists of rapid prototyping and iteration encouraging maximum input in the ideation and prototyping phases⁷. Yunus developed many businesses and their succession is based on his discovery of the interconnectedness of social problems and the timing of his discoveries. One problem (i.e. poverty) was inevitably linked to other problems within the community that he was trying to serve, so he found the need to engage in addressing those issues in parallel with his initial goal of extending microloans (a loan without interest or collateral required) to the poorest of the poor and primarily to women, so that they could keep or start their business and get out of poverty. I thought students would benefit from this example of extreme creativity applied to extreme problems, requiring much iteration.

3. Yunus' character traits include compassion and resiliency. These affective traits are not included in the Thinking Skills Model, and I thought it would be valuable for students to recognize these and elaborate on other affective traits that are not part of the model.
4. Yunus states that: "The first and foremost task of development is *to turn on the engine of creativity inside each person*. Any program that merely meets the physical needs of a poor person or even provides a job is not *a true development program* unless it leads to the *unfolding of his or her creative energy*. (Creating a World,

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_thinking Accessed on April 30, 2011.

- Yunus, p. 56)” This is exactly what learning the Creative Process/Creative Problem Solving helps students do. Through classroom learning and hands-on application of the Thinking Skills Model students leverage tools to facilitate their personal creativity and others’ to solve complex problems.
5. Yunus also states that “on the contrary, my observations among the poorest people of the world suggest — and decades of experience by Grameen Bank and other institutions confirm — that entrepreneurial ability is practically universal. Almost everyone has the talent to recognize opportunities around them. And when they are given the tools to transform those opportunities into reality, almost everyone is eager to do so (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 54)”. The experience and research of the faculty at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at the State University of New York’s Buffalo State College supports this and the notion that by studying and learning CPS students can deliberately apply creativity to today’s new, complex, and ill-defined problems.⁸ By learning CPS, students learn to deliberately apply their creative energy, so the Thinking Skills Model has many practical applications and one of them is in the realm of development programs to bring about change.
 6. Yunus’ mission is poverty alleviation and by studying his book I was able to get a better understanding of the dynamics of poverty. I also found that by learning about a variety of social problems in the context of the developing world, I gained insight into the strengths and weaknesses of our own system in the United States. I believe that in the Western world, insight into the developing world can lead to better solutions to problems of the Western world.

⁸. <http://innovationblogsite.typepad.com/newandimprovedinnovation/2011/01/download-our-free-webinar-the-latest-thinking-about-the-creative-process.htm> Accessed on April 30, 2011.

7. I am able to grasp the concept of social business, its complexities, and its competition (the PMB world) after my experience working in the PMB world, where after having learned and applied a variety of problem solving methods to complex business situations, I acquired an understanding of the power of creativity and the importance of developing human capital.

D. Service Learning

Developing an understanding of Yunus's process can serve as reinforcement that the process of problem solving and innovation cannot be taught solely through lectures or case studies; it must be learned by doing. This is why the course calls for a study of Yunus's work under the perspective of a creativity framework (the Thinking Skills Model) and also, engagement in a community project throughout the course.

The students will decide what organization they will support and they must decide this by the third week of class. They will be encouraged to leverage contacts and organizations that they know. Some colleges have service learning offices established to engage students in community service and students could be connected to projects via this office.

The course will be limited to 20 students in order to provide them with the proper level of support with their work with outside organizations and team-building skills.

Because this course will demand commensurate amount of time doing assignments and meeting with communities of interest outside of the classroom, enrollment in the course may be limited to those students who apply specifically to this course and are able to demonstrate their motivation and commitment to complete the course successfully. Selected students must exhibit

at least some potential for catalyzing transformations on behalf of the poor and the marginalized communities.

E. Case Study Writing

At the Ashoka U exchange held at Duke University, one professor pointed out that the outcome from the service learning course component does not have to be a project report with recommendations. Case study writing is not quite as intense, and engaging students in case study writing is an effective way of demonstrating applied learning. It can also sometimes be more appealing to project sponsors than reports, as they can use them to market their products and services. The following time the course is offered, students could be offered the option to do consulting projects and they could leverage the prior class's case studies to design consulting projects with the same organizations. To make the service learning component a total success, all work produced in one semester could be reused the following semester.

A workshop on case study writing will be offered during the course. Students will also receive guidelines for writing their case studies.

F. Guest Speakers

While engaged in this project, I attended a panel discussion on social movements and natural resources; governance; current movements in response to neoliberal capitalist policies; human rights; education and youth at the Patel Center for Global Solutions within the University of South Florida. Leading scholars talked about on-the-ground issues that really make a difference in the lives of the poor. The panel discussed wide-ranging social movements in the Americas and although SE was not addressed, the discussion helped me put the field of SE and

its application into a larger context. Furthermore, I attended the Ashoka U exchange at Duke University, in which I had the opportunity to meet several Ashoka Fellows.

Guest speakers such as the individuals that I met, would provide students with the opportunity to learn about various social change efforts, and also provide them with the necessary inspiration and fuel to create their personal visions, which they will develop as part of their portfolio.

Guest speakers will provide the perspective of both, scholars and practitioners, and also help students become aware of the risks and challenges posed by being both, a researcher and a practitioner or an entrepreneur, within the same area of interest.

Through this activity students will learn and gain confidence about where solutions to pressing social problems can come from.

G. Classroom Research Activity

The field of SE is changing rapidly and social entrepreneurs need to develop effective research skills to collaborate and keep up with the evolution of the field, organizations, new sources of funding, and regulations among other topics critical to social entrepreneurs. The students will have an opportunity to practice basic research skills by working in teams to map out the SE space and begin to explore this field of study. Guidelines will be provided for this activity, as well as, a template for mapping out the field.

H. *Creative Skills that Drive Change*

Creative Skills that Drive Change was published in 2007 and is based on ___ of years of research. It well demonstrates “how creative thinking is an essential element of leadership,

especially when bringing about change (Puccio et al, backcover).” The nature and purpose of the seven steps involved in CPS are well researched. Barbero-Switalski tested the proposed thinking skills that are part of the Thinking Skills Model through an analysis of the literature and feedback received via a focus group of CPS experts (Puccio et al., p.49). Thus, the Thinking Skills Model is a proven framework.

The intended audience for this text also meets the needs of the intended audience for this course.

I. Webinar

G. Puccio and J. Vehar have put together a high quality free webinar about the latest thinking concerning the creative process. Students will be treated to a fascinating discussion via this webinar. The classroom discussion following the webinar will focus on the latest thinking about CPS, how knowledge evolves rapidly and, in some cases, even becomes dated no matter how well-intentioned, and how the benefits they gain from personal transformation and keeping up with learning will endure.

J. Resources for Grading

At the beginning of the course, students will apply principles described in “*Death to the Syllabus*”. As a class, they will review the class deliverables in detail and determine how they will be graded. They will decide the weight allocated to each class deliverable. They will also decide the criteria by which some of their assignments will be graded by themselves, their classmates and the instructor.

To ensure that grading for written assignments does not appear subjective to the students, the grading scale for written assignments will be based on guidelines derived from the work of Dr. Bill Ingram, a professor at the University of Michigan. Dr. Ingram has developed a remarkable grading scale to determine what grade a paper deserves for this type of course (Ashoka U, p. A-81, Unpublished).

VI. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, SE continues to gain momentum and the Ashoka U study examined during this project further supports that SE education is a fruitful area for study, research, and applied innovation. As I mentioned earlier, in February, 2011, I joined the 2nd annual Ashoka U exchange which hosted SE education innovators and practitioners from around the world at the Center for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University. The exchange was intended to fuel quality, growth and innovation in SE education; push disciplinary boundaries and promote interdisciplinary connections; boost applied research agendas; enhance educational returns, both in and out of the classroom; create new career paths; and develop partnerships. The conference hosted over 400 participants.

While concepts and skills related to social innovation are being taught at various colleges under various disciplines, a set of courses built around the inter-disciplinary knowledge and skills required to achieve the SE learning outcomes established by Ashoka U, does not exist yet. However, Ashoka U is facilitating this effort by building a community of faculty changemakers who will address the strategic challenges that must be addressed in order to reach a point where SE becomes a legitimate field of in depth study. At the Ashoka U exchange it was discussed that whether a university uses “social entrepreneurship” vs. “social innovation” or some other name as a focusing concept for the set of courses needed to get SE teaching right, will depend on each university’s framework. At a senior level, a university needs to clarify where SE fits in terms of disciplines and a broader relevance to its educational and research agenda. In addition, course titles need to be clearly understood by students. One professor from Tufts University commented that when a course to infuse civic engagement was introduced, it had few enrollments. When the same course’s name was changed to “Innovating Non-Profits”,

enrollments increased. This highlighted the importance of “following students” and the trajectory of their interests. Social media and research on trends can help educators to keep abreast of this.

The syllabus created during this project exemplifies the close connection between Creativity, Change, Leadership and SE. The field of Creative Studies has much to contribute to SE education. Universities teaching Creativity and SE, can benefit from forming partnerships with Ashoka U to advance Ashoka U’s initiative aimed at developing an SE curriculum and setting global standards for SE education. Universities can also benefit from forming partnerships with each other to further innovation in approaches to teaching SE within another discipline. For example, the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY College in Buffalo is creating a concentration in social innovation, and a course that introduces SE could be offered to its students as an elective.

Social innovation and SE are closely related. One thought that was exchanged among SE and social innovation faculty from universities throughout the US and with whom I gathered at Duke to discuss SE curriculum development, is that SE is one tool to achieve social innovation, and in some universities the idea of creating a major in SE may be perceived as a disservice. Several faculty members believe that students need to understand the discipline and then figure out how they fit in it. In a nutshell, SE responds to problems, and in order to be able to respond effectively to a problem, one needs to understand it. Therefore, self-knowledge and Creative Problem Solving are “core competencies” that students must have in order to apply SE as a tool for social innovation. An idea exchanged during the previously mentioned dialog was that a social innovation concentration could possibly address at least three core competencies: a) SE, b) Technology, and c) Leadership.

The dialog was consistent with ideas that I had previously read in the article called “How to Bring Our Schools Out of the 20th Century”⁹ by Wallis and Steptoe. Like many educators and business policy leaders, Wallis they reached the key conclusion that students need to learn how to leap across disciplines because that is how breakthroughs now come about. “It’s interdisciplinary combinations – design and technology, mathematics and art – that produce YouTube and Google, says Thomas Friedman, the best-selling author of *The World is Flat* (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 52).” I would also add Facebook. “Some analysts believe that in order to achieve the right balance between such core knowledge and what educators call “portable skills” — critical thinking, making connections between ideas and knowing how to keep on learning — the US curriculum needs to become more like that of Singapore, Belgium and Sweden (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 54) .” Nonetheless, some US schools already are leaping across disciplines. “At the Henry Ford Academy, a public charter school in Dearborn, Mich., 10th graders in Charles Dershimer’s 2006 science class began a project that combines concepts from earth science, chemistry, business and design. After reading about Nike’s efforts to develop a more environmentally friendly sneaker, students had to choose a consumer product, analyze and explain its environmental impact and then develop a plan for re-engineering it to reduce pollution costs without sacrificing its commercial appeal (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 54).” The Academy aims for depth over breadth and the ability to leap across disciplines. Another excellent example is “suburban Farmington High in Michigan, where the engineering-technology department functions like an engineering firm, with teachers as project managers, a Ford Motor Co. engineer as a consultant and students working in teams. The principles of calculus, physics, chemistry,

⁹ Wallis C. and S. Steptoe, “How to Bring Our Schools Out of the 20th Century”, *Time* (December 19, 2006): 52-56.

and engineering are taught through activities that fill the hallways with cacophony of nailing, sawing and chattering. The result: the kids learn to apply academic principles to the real world, think strategically and solve problems (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 56)". These lessons also teach students other critical skills. Today's economy demands not only a high level of competence in the traditional academic disciplines but also what might be called 21st century skills" and these are as follows (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 52-53) :

1. Knowing more about the world – sensitivity to foreign cultures, being conversant in different languages
2. Thinking outside the box – seeing patterns where other people only see chaos, thinking across disciplines
3. Becoming smarter about new sources of information – how to manage overflowing information, interpret it, validate it, and how to act on it
4. Developing good people skills – emotional intelligence since most innovations today involve large teams of people, communication skills, ability to work with people from different cultures

Moreover, research has emphasized the importance of teaching students "to show respect for others as well as to be punctual, responsible and work well in teams. Those skills were badly missing in recently hired high school graduates, according to a survey of over 400 human-resource professionals conducted by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (Wallis and Steptoe, *Bring Our Schools Out*, p. 56)".

At the Ashoka U exchange, Drayton also discussed the importance of people skills, specifically, the importance of developing *empathy*. He spent considerable time on the topic. He

said that in the new paradigm, “changemakers” are created before they become adults. Any child that does not learn empathy is going to be marginalized. In light of the speed of change today, social innovation demands collaboration, and a high level of empathetic skills is required to know what is going on in the world around each of us. The teaching of empathy must start early (by first grade) and both, parents and educators, must learn how to teach this. Children must grasp empathy as early as possible. Drayton says that “elementary school principals will have failed if one second grader hasn’t grasped empathy.” He is an advocate of methodologies that help children connect with their feelings and studying poverty to understand the history of this era. Listening to him led me to think that empathy should be included as an affective skill in the Thinking Skills Model. After Drayton, Dees underscored that empathy is not enough. He said that “empathy has biases and limits. We must have it also for those less like us and stretch it out even further. When you love thy neighbor — how do you define your backyard?”

I believe that students who come into the graduate level course that I am proposing with the core skills and “portable skills” mentioned, as well as, the intrinsic motivation to become “changemakers”, may have a higher likelihood of transforming their social innovation ideas into practical applications. The course can certainly enhance previous training, but it can also provide students not possessing previous experience, with the necessary skills to become changemakers.

Finally, during this project, world events have continued to reinforce the relevance of a course such as the one developed through this project. Political unrest is present in too many corners of the world, the US remains at war with Iraq and Afghanistan, and economists continue to debate whether the US is still in a recession or in recovery. Most recently, there have been several popular uprisings in Egypt, Lybia, Oman, Yemen, and the USA. These uprisings

correspond to people's reactions to unsolved social and economic problems. In some parts of the world, people are barely surviving on two dollars or less per day, while in other parts of the world people are mourning the loss of jobs, demanding access to opportunities and hoping for improvement in their quality of life. The conditions are such that in less than a month people in several parts of the world have shown the rest of the world that they are ready to hang on to any perceived solution to bring down governments and bring about change. Unfortunately, the bottom-up approach so far is adversarial and more often than not, relies on violence. Yunus makes it clear that not everyone is benefitting from thriving capitalism. He says that "global income distribution tells the story: ninety-four percent of the world income goes to 40 percent of the people, while the other 60 percent must live on only 6 percent of the world income. Half of the world lives on two dollars a day or less, while almost a billion people live on less than one dollar a day (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 3)". "Even in the US, with its reputation as the richest country on earth, social progress has been disappointing. After two decades of slow progress, the number of people living in poverty has increased in recent years. Some forty-seven million people, nearly a sixth of the population, have no health insurance and have trouble getting basic medical care. After the end of the Cold War, many hoped for a "peace dividend" — defense spending could decline, and social programs for education and medical care would increase. But especially since September 11, 2001, the U.S. government has focused on military action and security measures, ignoring the poor (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 4)."

With regard to globalization, Yunus asserts that "as a general business principle, [it] can bring more benefits to the poor than any alternative. But without proper oversight and guidelines, globalization has the potential to be highly destructive (Yunus, *Creating a World*, p. 5).

The world is changing at an astonishing pace, new technologies are being rapidly developed and deployed (although these are not being directed sufficiently to areas where they are most needed such as the developing world), and information is available more readily than ever before. It seems as if there is nothing one can think today that someone else isn't already thinking about also. Certain industry jobs and fields of study are becoming obsolete, and new fields of study such as SE and others are being created. Therefore, my hope is that by learning about poverty in the developing world, SE, and the connection between creative thinking, change, and leadership, students will gain sufficient understanding of the less adversarial, more collaborative, and more solution-oriented approaches that can be applied to better manage change in their personal lives and to affect social change. With that understanding, they will, hopefully, choose to become part of the solutions that are most needed and become contributors to social innovation. Nonetheless, they must understand that the experiment of SE does pose potential problems for social entrepreneurs. With this regard, Yunus says that "like any other idea, that of social business is subject to being used and perverted. A few powerful people will look for ways to distort the concept and twist it for their own benefit — just as some misguided people have applied the term "microcredit" to describe companies that are really just loan sharks in disguise. Well intentioned people will need to be on guard against those who would abuse the good name of social business (Yunus, Building Social Business, p. 30)".

In March 2011, it was published that Yunus has been in a tug of war within his own country for several months and has been the target of many accusations intended to dismiss him from his role at Grameen Bank, the world's best known microfinance institution created by the Nobel peace prize-winner and "banker to the poor". He has appealed the supreme court of Bangladesh's decision to remove him from the position of managing director of Grameen Bank.

The Yunus experiment may confirm the Spanish proverb that says that “no one is a prophet in his own land” and could be used to disparage the concept of SE, but I propose that what it really shows is that this field is still novel and the challenges that it presents are still not well known; therefore, the principles of creativity will need to be further applied by social entrepreneurs.