GBUS 8022 - TRANSFORMING SOCIETIES
Veronica Cacdac Warnock and Frank Warnock
2016 Quarter 1, Monday Tuesday 245-410pm

Managers, intrapreneurs, entrepreneurs and other leaders have important roles in improving the world. In this course we explore what it means to create and effect innovations that promote human development and transform societies across the world. We focus on cultivating approaches and skills to genuinely and deeply understand intractable socioeconomic problems that require our urgent attention and action. The steps we take are directed towards uncovering and identifying critical issues, problems and gaps that inform the design and conduct of market-oriented responses.

The course aims to apply fundamental economic and development concepts, tools and approaches in class sessions as well as in problem-focused roll-up-your-sleeves workshops. The areas we will study include urban development, food and agriculture, financial inclusion, education for employment, and sustainability. We will discover and examine practices, structures and systems that can be implemented in corporations, nonprofit organizations and communities. We will attempt to cover domestic, international, local and global matters.

We hope that this course prepares students to be transformational leaders in whatever field and expertise they pursue.

This course can also serve as a platform for social entrepreneurs and those who want to pursue and drive innovative work in the “nontraditional” or mission-driven professions and vocations. It provides a foundation for subsequent social ventures and global field courses.

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES

- To extend the scope of applications of business skills and tools to solving societal problems
- To deepen the understanding of poverty and inequity
- To develop analytical and problem solving skills for applications in unconventional contexts
- To stir creativity and channel students’ values into actions

COURSE FORMAT

The course consists of intensive reading, critical thinking, brainstorming, class discussions, roll-up-your-sleeves workshop sessions, and reflective writing. The goal in each session is for everyone to gain a deep and rich understanding of the topic at hand. Throughout we will draw on your diverse skills and perspectives, and we will emphasize learning and dialogic speaking/listening. Active engagement, idea generation, open mindedness and energy building are highly valued.

We are tackling complex and interwoven themes; students should strive to see the connections between class sessions and not treat each as standalone. Course materials include development reports, research articles and case studies.

GRADING SYSTEM

Students will be evaluated through three components: participation (40%), reflection essays (40%) and a final paper (20%).

IN THIS CLASS, LAPTOPS MUST REMAIN CLOSED AND MOBILE DEVICES MUST BE PUT AWAY.