Social Business for Public Health (GENM0520)

A new General Education course at UNSW to turn your ‘Big idea’ into action!

About the course

This course comprehensively grooms any UNSW undergraduate student with a creative and entrepreneurial mindset and fosters curiosity about and teaches how to make differences for better health. This course will not only enable students frame to their commitments towards the society as a responsible citizen but also back them up with enough opportunities to unlock entrepreneurial potentials to have real impacts in the society.

Health care is attracting creative and innovative thinkers from different disciplines to tackle some of its toughest problems including medical and social such as lack of access to clean water, education, energy, income/employment, technology, human right or anything that undermines health. People irrespective of the core disciplines such as engineers, scientist, business executives, social scientist, environmentalist and social workers, all are coming together to find new solutions for better health. The emerging field of social business comes against the backdrop of unleashing human ingenuity in which the entrepreneurial and market driven approach for solving social problem(s) stands as the primary objective. Social business that combines profit with social purpose is a natural fit for healthcare companies for promoting better health through discovery and innovation. For example, BASF (the world’s leading chemical company) produces and sells affordable mosquito net with the support of local partners for tackling ‘Malaria’, which is one of many mosquito-borne diseases, in Bangladesh.

Why join the course?

- In this course, we will develop the skills and perspectives that enable you to identify and understand healthcare challenges, generate creative ideas to address those, and to build a realistic social business plan in a professional way.
- This course will provide UNSW undergraduate students from any major, the opportunity to develop their knowledge in...
social business, its principles, applications and so on. More specifically, engineering students would learn implementing sustainable cost effective technical solutions for the community; business students would learn how to do business for a good and social cause and to collaborate with other organisations by offering affordable product/service without being compromised the quality; social science students would understand the complex social, environmental and economic problems while creating and providing innovative solutions for the local and global communities; and medicine/ public health students would learn how to explore, identify and bring clinical/medical solutions in resource poor settings i.e. aboriginal or indigenous communities,

This course will bring lessons, experiences from a Global ‘Yunus’ academic and give an opportunity to explore professional network of social businesses led by Noble Laureate Mohammad Yunus in 16 countries, 31 universities, 12 academic programs and bring experts from “UNSW Startup Programs”, UNSW Michael Crouch Innovation Centre - UNSW Sydney and Grameen Australia on moving your creative idea and innovation to ground.

Course Starts
Semester 1, 2018.

Contact information
For further information, enquiries or expression of interest, contact the course convenor.
Dr Md Mahfuz Ashraf
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Mahfuz Ashraf draws on a diverse academic backgrounds (i.e. business, marketing, information systems/technology) to address socio-business problems at the intersection of Information Communication Technology (ICT) adoption and its impact on socio-economic development in resource poor settings e.g. rural/urban and indigenous communities. He is researching the conceptual and practical understanding of social business principles and social enterprise in the precincts of sustainable health service delivery.

Three Steps of the Course
The focus in the class shifts from the theoretical understanding of social business, health entrepreneurship to the practical approach of planning, organising, leading and monitoring a social business. You will have to roll your sleeves up!