

# SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION (SEI)

## **SEI 23000 Introduction to Poverty Studies (3 Credit Hours)**

In this gateway course, we ask: Why are people poor? We take an interdisciplinary look at poverty to better understand the forces that maintain poverty and the forces that resist it. From sustainability to social entrepreneurship, from economics to creative writing, we explore a variety of mindsets and methods for understanding, representing, and assessing poverty. Through academic and experiential learning, we gain a deeper understanding of the public and private programs and institutions that address poverty on the local, national, and global level. We also gain a deeper understanding of what has worked and what hasn't in domestic and international efforts to reduce poverty. Finally, students consider how they are called to address poverty in their personal and professional lives, exploring individual actions and careers that align with their skills and interests related to poverty.

Satisfies the following University Core Requirements: WGIN - Core Integration, WRIT - Writing Intensive

## **SEI 30020 Human Rights, Global Trade and Power (3 Credit Hours)**

How do human rights intersect with trade in today's globalized world? To answer this question, this course explores concrete, recent examples from Europe's "fast-fashion-crazed" garment industry, which manufactures clothing, accessories, and home furnishings. Together we tackle key topics – such as living wages, workers' right to organize, and forced overtime – and evaluate the root causes of endemic violations. How are these linked to the way global supply chains are structured? What steps have been taken so far to redress the power structures that undergird injustice in supply chains around the world? And what solutions are still needed, especially in light of increased climate change risks and automation? Through seminar discussions, workshops and guest lectures by practitioners from Europe, this course equips students with the tools to calculate the cost of human rights as part of a product's price and to spot the differences between 'greenwashing' and authentic efforts for change.

## **SEI 30147 Media Entrepreneurship (3 Credit Hours)**

A generation ago, students interested in media were likely journalism, broadcasting, or FTT majors aspiring to work full-time for big TV networks or newspapers. Today, that's not usually true. Digital tools have blown open what it means to create and consume media. Whether you see yourself as a creative, a community organizer, an entrepreneur, or an influencer, you no longer have to launch your content through established channels, hoping to someday catch your big break. You could manage a YouTube channel with thousands of subscribers from your dorm room. Some of you probably already do. But how do you monetize such ventures? How do you turn a cool hobby or vision into a side hustle or career? In Media Entrepreneurship, we'll explore how you can combine your passion, skills, and awareness of social needs to capitalize on the media's exciting new frontier. You'll gain the knowledge, tools, and confidence to see creating your own digital media startup as a realistic possibility. And it's not just about you. When you hear the phrase "media entrepreneur," you might think of a tech bro pitching an idea to venture capitalists on Shark Tank. But, at its best, media entrepreneurship is an act of service. It's about identifying community needs, building trust with audiences, and expanding whose voices we hear as a society. In this course, you'll practice conceiving of a media project and working with a team to create a startup business plan. I look forward to working alongside you.

Satisfies the following University Core Requirements: WRIT - Writing Intensive

## **SEI 30500 The Economics of Poverty (3 Credit Hours)**

In this course, students will learn what poverty is, how it is measured, and how it is alleviated. We will cover the history and geography of poverty internationally, as well as the effectiveness of anti-poverty policies in the United States. Students will be introduced to modern economic research on poverty and anti-poverty policy. This is a required course for economics majors in the Evidence-Based Poverty Alleviation Concentration (EBPAC).

## **SEI 30552 Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation (3 Credit Hours)**

Social Entrepreneurship has sparked dialogue and debate for two decades. Its very definition is much debated, as well as its capacity to create sustainable, scalable, systems-changing impact. This course explores the theoretical concepts, practices and strategies associated with the dynamic discipline of social enterprise and innovation. For our purposes, social entrepreneurship is the landscape, of which paradigm-shifting solutions like microfinance, MSME (Micro-Small-Medium Enterprise) development, bottom of the pyramid, fair trade, impact investing, and the like, are components. This course will study many of these concepts, focusing on their opportunity for social impact, and as a vehicle for wealth creation in vulnerable and disenfranchised communities across the globe. Further, the course covers examples of various social enterprise models (for-profit, non-profit, hybrid), requiring students to analyze and devise strategies to improve the efficacy of these ventures. Finally, the course engages students in research seeking to advance the field of social entrepreneurship at the Keough School of Global Affairs and Notre Dame.

Students cannot enroll who have a program in Strategic Management.

**SEI 30555 Human-Centered Design for Social Innovation (3 Credit Hours)**

This course introduces the foundational theories of human-centered design (HCD), its critiques, and the subsequent development of design principles, followed by a practical, hands-on exploration of HCD methods. It approaches design as a broadly applicable practice across multiple domains, including – but not limited to – social innovation and computing for social good. The course is organized into four modules. The first module examines the foundations of HCD, its critiques, and its evolution toward community-driven, value-aligned, and justice-oriented approaches. The next two modules provide hands-on experience in design research, prototyping, and reflection, where students learn to integrate technical, ethical, and social insights into actionable design strategies. In the final module, students will address real-world design challenges drawn from domains such as global development, sustainability, and public policy. The course welcomes students from the social entrepreneurship and innovation minor, global affairs, computer science and engineering, poverty studies, business, public policy, science-technology-values, and peace studies who are interested in designing for social impact.

**SEI 30903 Policy Lab: Sustainable Finance (1.5 Credit Hours)**

This course will explore the role of global business in reducing poverty, inequality and attending to the needs of all stakeholders. Students will be introduced to the rapidly growing fields of impact investing and sustainable finance which support socially conscious and environmentally friendly innovations. Students will gain a broad overview of the financial and economic tools available, beyond government assistance and philanthropy, to support broad based wealth creation, equality of opportunity and natural resource preservation. Students will be invited to participate in policy debates on certain topics and will read mini case studies on subjects such as microfinance, "place based" community investment and the role of CDFIs, and the issuance of green/blue sustainability bonds. Guest speakers/practitioners will be invited to engage the students in real world problem solving. The course will culminate in a small group project or paper to "reexamine business" as a force for good, which will be presented in class. It is open to students of all intended majors with no prerequisites, and should serve as a foray to several future areas of study such as global affairs, social entrepreneurship and sustainability.

**SEI 30905 Financing Social Impact (3 Credit Hours)**

This course examines the financial and economic tools that support sustainable solutions to social challenges, with a focus beyond traditional government aid and philanthropy. Students will explore the rapidly expanding fields of impact investing and microfinance, evaluating their roles in advancing social entrepreneurship, broad-based wealth creation, and equality of opportunity. Topics include emerging approaches to microcredit, the benefits and limitations of financial innovations, and the role of public policy in fostering effective initiatives. Through a combination of case studies, critical analyses, and applied projects, students will engage directly with real-world challenges such as poverty alleviation and inclusive economic development. No prior background in business or finance is required; the course is designed for students from all disciplines who bring curiosity, creativity, and a commitment to social problem-solving.

**SEI 30999 Poverty, Business, and Development (3 Credit Hours)**

The course adopts an entrepreneurial perspective in exploring the role of business in helping to address the poverty challenge in developing and developed economies. The multi-faceted nature of poverty and its implications when it comes to business and entrepreneurship are explored. Attention is devoted to venture creation as a pathway out of poverty, and to how the larger business community can be leveraged in poverty alleviation efforts. Students will examine case studies and meet low income entrepreneurs.

**SEI 34997 Entrepreneurship Field Experience (2 Credit Hours)**

This course provides interaction with township entrepreneurs over six weeks as part of structured consulting engagements. Consulting engagements start at the same time as the class meetings. Teams of five or six students are assigned to work with two entrepreneurial businesses. Team members must develop a relationship with the entrepreneur, establish trust, learn as much as possible about the entrepreneur and his/her venture, determine priorities, select problems that can be addressed within the time of the consulting engagement, perform the necessary research and analysis on possible solutions to these problems, design detailed solutions and related action plans, and most importantly, implement the solutions. Teams are mentored by three faculty members. A final consulting report summarizes the teams' assessment of each venture and the set of deliverables produced for the clients. Students must maintain journals of their experiences.

**SEI 34998 Supporting Emerging Enterprises (2 Credit Hours)**

This course introduces students to the South African context, poverty entrepreneurship, the basics of consulting, a process consulting approach, the SEE consulting model, a consulting toolkit, and creative yet practical approaches to addressing developmental issues in emerging small businesses.

**SEI 40090 Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Practicum (1-3 Credit Hours)**

Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Practicum is a culminating capstone course for students in the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation (SEI) Minor. Students will engage in a supervised experiential or research-related project that will advance their learning and involve the application of SEI principles. It is expected that the student's project will directly address a local, national or international social issue or cause and/or advance the field of social entrepreneurship.

**SEI 40110 Business and Peace: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly (1 Credit Hour)**

Could business be an instrument of peace or is it more likely to be an agent of division that foments conflict? While the course will touch on questions of whether trade and economic development as well as different economic systems impact causes of violence, the class focuses specifically on the role of for-profit and non-profit institutions within the context of current economic systems. This course draws upon three perspectives to undertake a 360-degree assessment of this question about business's role. First, it will examine the ways in which the actions of business exploit populations, profit from war-making, and sometimes actively engage in the promotion of violence. Second, it looks at an area of academic inquiry sometimes called Business For Peace, in which the ways in which businesses can be instruments of peace have been explored. The ways businesses might do this include being more actively involved in peacemaking and peacekeeping in zones of conflict as well as more general, incremental forms of peace building that could occur both in and outside of zones of conflict. Third, the course looks at newer, nuanced theories from political theorists that assess the positives and negatives of the role of business in engagement in peace.

**SEI 40409 Peace, Ecology, and Integral Human Development (3 Credit Hours)**

A major source of conflict - increasingly so - is environmental issues; both climate change-related conflicts about (more and more scarce) resources as well as secondary conflicts (conflicts that arise because of the resource conflict, i.e. climate migrants) pose a major challenge to the planet. Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si has offered ways to think about an "integral ecology" that takes the environment, life on the planet, the human condition and culture seriously. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor cannot be separated. Laudato Si has to be read against the background of the concept of "Integral Human Development." This concept, inspired by the works of Joseph Lebret, OP, was introduced by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical Populorum Progressio (1967). It refers to "the development of the whole person and the development of all persons." The course explores the connection (intersectionality) between peace, (integral) ecology, and (integral human) development. It will do so with in-class room teaching sessions and working with select case studies on integral ecology.

**SEI 40834 Marketing of Social Initiatives Causes, and Ventures (3 Credit Hours)**

This class explores the use of marketing principles and concepts to support initiatives, causes and ventures that are social in nature. Attention is devoted to the marketing and communication challenges involved when attempting to do good, and how these issues can be overcome without spending large amounts of money. Sample topics include identifying and understanding target markets for social initiatives, constructing a value proposition, developing positioning approaches, designing communication programs, use of guerrilla techniques, the roles of price and place, and how to set goals and measure performance.

**SEI 40923 Case Studies in Computing-Based Entrepreneurship (3 Credit Hours)**

The purpose of this course is to Inform, Introduce and (hopefully) Inspire you. You will become Informed about computing-based entrepreneurship case studies across a wide variety of areas: computer software, computer hardware, healthcare technologies, databases, web services, data analytics and more. You will also become Informed about different aspects of the entrepreneurship challenge. You will be Introduced to guest speakers who are, or who have been, principals in developing technology, founding companies, running companies, selecting technologies for venture capital investment, etc. As a result, you will hopefully be Inspired to consider pursuing computing-based entrepreneurship opportunity.

**SEI 40999 Consulting and Development (3 Credit Hours)**

Students, in a structured format, are involved in assessing, prioritizing and creatively solving problems encountered by low-income and other disadvantaged South Bend entrepreneurs. A process consulting approach is employed and a number of useful tools and frameworks are introduced. Students work with both for-profit and non-profit enterprises, producing tangible deliverables that help clients launch, grow and sustain their ventures. In addition to class time, students will meet with clients on a weekly basis at a Notre Dame facility located downtown. Assistance with transportation will be available for students needing it. Class will meet on Tuesdays. On Thursdays, students will consult with local entrepreneurs in one hour blocks during the hours of 5p to 9p at the Center for Civic Innovation. This consulting time is flexible with students' schedules and based on appointments made by local entrepreneurs.

**SEI 41500 Idea Discovery Lab (3 Credit Hours)**

The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab is an active learning environment that offers students an opportunity to apply entrepreneurial thinking in a real world setting. Teams will immerse into problem discovery and validation through a process used by industry experts. Teams will iteratively test their ideas, document results, incorporate feedback from key stakeholders, and present their outcomes.

**SEI 44090 Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Practicum - London (3 Credit Hours)**

Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Practicum is a culminating capstone course for students in the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation (SEI) Minor. Students will engage in a supervised experiential or research-related project that will advance their learning and involve the application of SEI principles. It is expected that the student's project will directly address a local, national or international social issue or cause and/or advance the field of social entrepreneurship. This practicum capstone is intended for students studying abroad at the University of Notre Dame London campus who will be completing their capstones under the remote supervision of either Professor Melissa Paulsen or Dr. Mike Morris.

**SEI 46600 Directed Readings (1-3 Credit Hours)**

This course provides the opportunity for independent study through readings on specific topics in social entrepreneurship, global business, poverty and development. Readings are chosen with the advice of the supervising instructor. Students may not register for more than three credits per semester.