

## NPLD585. Penn Social Impact Lab: Acadia National Park

School of Social Policy and Practice  
University of Pennsylvania  
Spring 2019

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### Course description

NPLD585 is a 5-day, off-site, intensive service-learning course in social innovation in and around Acadia National Park. Students will learn how innovation and entrepreneurship play a central role in public problem solving. We will explore how social entrepreneurs co-develop new ideas with key stakeholders, articulate problems and solutions, define intended impact, understand competition, and collaborate with other actors. At the end of the course, students will have mastered a set of conceptual tools and strategies that will allow them to be effective problem solvers in diverse settings throughout their careers. Bring your purpose, passions, and pet societal challenges to share. We will also have two required on-campus sessions, 3 hours each, before the trip to prepare us for success in Acadia National Park.

**Course Objectives.** The course has five main objectives:

1. To introduce students to the concepts and practices of social entrepreneurship;
2. To introduce students to the components of a successful social enterprise;
3. To train students to view the world from a perspective of social innovation;
4. To encourage and empower students to develop their own innovative solutions to different social problems around the world.
5. To introduce students to real social issues and social innovations in a real-world setting.

**Eligibility and Application.** This course introduces social innovation to undergraduate juniors, seniors, graduate, and professional students. Students must apply no later than January 13, 2019 at 5pm to be considered for the class. The online application can be accessed through the Center for Social Impact Strategy webpage: <http://socialimpactstrategy.org/residential/impactlab/> . If there is high demand, we will select a class from a diversity of schools and majors throughout Penn. Students must be open-minded and have an appreciation for different worldviews and opinions. Maximum enrollment is 25.

### Summary of Dates and Deadlines:

**Application:** Apply [here](#).

Early Decision: December 10, 2018 (decisions before winter break)

Regular Decision: January 13, 2019 (decisions before add period closes)

**Notification and Registration.** Students will be notified whether they have been accepted into the course. Accepted students will have until January 16, 2019 to commit to the course, and pay a non-refundable \$500 program fee. Accepted students will receive course registration instructions from the Registrar. **Prior to departure, students will need to submit a Health Review Form (with a health professional's signature) and a Liability Form.**

**Costs and Fees.** This course is part of the **Spring 2019** schedule and will be billed accordingly. An additional \$500 program fee, due January 16, 2019, will cover accommodations, a shuttle bus from the airport to Acadia National Park, and all food during our time in Acadia. The fee is non-refundable after January 29, 2019 even if a student withdraws from the course after that time and does not travel to Acadia. Students will pay for on their own roundtrip airfare to Portland.

### Determination of Grade

2 Preliminary Course Assignments	30 points
Lab Deliverables	40 points
Service	10 points
Active Participation	20 points
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	<b>100 points</b>

**Progress during course.** Students will receive feedback on the two preliminary course assignments before the Acadia trip. Because this course is condensed into three sessions, doing well depends on attendance, active listening, and engaged participation.

**Attendance:** This is an experiential course. Students will not pass without attending all three sessions (on-campus April 12 and May 3, and 22-31 in Acadia). If you must miss a class due to illness or other emergency, please be prepared that we may ask you apply for the course in another semester.

#### Class Meeting Dates and Locations:

On-campus. Friday, April 12. 5:30-8:30pm

On-campus. Friday, May 3. 5:30-8:30pm

[Schoodic Institute](#), ME. May 22-31, including 2 travel days and 5-6 learning days.

Final travel dates will be announced [here](#) December 1.

**Active Participation.** Students should participate actively throughout this course. The social innovation methods taught in this class depend on respectful and continuous engagement with stakeholders. Successful solutions to social problems are co-developed with those who experience the problem. Class participation will constitute practice in collaborative idea-generation and project implementation with these experts in their own experience. Active listening to facilitators and peers creates a supportive learning environment for everyone. Learning entrepreneurial skills, including productive brainstorming, failing forward, building creative confidence, and understanding stakeholders depends on a learning environment where everyone pays attention and is actively committed to practicing those skills.

This 5-day residential learning experience will be fun and intense. Students will have frequent opportunities for quiet and individual reflection. There will also be optional daily pre-breakfast activities such as hiking or meditation, and evening community-building activities.

**Course Assignments.** Students will submit the first two course assignments via Canvas. Because students must demonstrate preparedness for participating in the experiential aspects of the course, these two assignments must be submitted and reviewed prior to participation in the offsite portion of the course. All other work will be produced during class time in Acadia (see Lab Deliverables and Service).

## Assignments

There will be two assignments that students must complete outside of class time. The first assignment will be assigned during on-campus Meeting 1 and due before on-campus Meeting 2.

**Assignment 1.** In addition to the readings the instructor shares, the first course assignment will require that students identify additional reading specific to the social impact landscape in the Acadia area. Students will be living, learning, and helping outside of our home environment. It aligns with the principles and methods of human centered design and all five learning objectives to have students take ownership over the work they need to do in order to be respectful and informed.

Each student will individually or in pairs make a list of readings, including research and news articles, annual reports, and available books about a topic of their choice that relates to innovations in Acadia, National Park Service, Portland, and indigenous communities. Suggested topics include social business, nonprofit innovations, government innovations, corporate social responsibility, and social justice initiatives that relate to substantive issues such as environmental preservation, water management, land use, tourism. Each student's list should include at least 1-3 items that relate to each:

- Local history of that topic
- Public problems that local residents are trying to solve
- Innovative attempts to address those problems
- At least one social enterprise attempting to address one of the identified problems

Students will upload their list to Canvas 36 hours before Meeting 2. During on-campus meeting 2, students will present to their peers their curated lists and their findings about social enterprise in the Acadia area.

**Assignment 2.** The purpose of Assignment 2 is to give students some tools to understand, articulate, and analyze the key aspects of an existing social project. After on-campus meeting 2 and completing this assignment, they should be able to articulate a venture's theory of change, and understand who the venture's stakeholders are and how they experience the venture's offering. Finally, they should be able to understand that venture's solution in context – in an ecosystem of other social challenges as well as in an environment where multiple organizations are tackling similar problems in different ways with varying degrees of success.

**Part 1.** Students will draft a logic model, customer journey map, competitive landscape, and stakeholder segmentation matrix about the organization with whom we will be doing service in Acadia (either a project of the National Park Service or a local social enterprise). Submit Draft 1 to Canvas by May 6, 11:59pm. Bring prints/drawings of Draft 2 to Acadia

**Part 2.** Students will select and read 5 readings from one of their peers' reading lists. Submit the list of readings you chose by Canvas by May 6, 11:59pm, with a 3 sentence summary of each. Come to Acadia with an understanding of that topic.

**Lab Deliverables.** In Penn Social Impact Lab, students will learn tools and frameworks for social innovation. Students will produce these deliverables in class through active participation.

## Lab Deliverables.

We will conduct a design thinking crash course, and then delve deeply into the methods, practices, frameworks, and skills required to use Human Centered Design in service of inspiring ideas that could

result in a successful social venture. Students will produce these deliverables in class through active participation.

Subsequently, students will expand their understanding and practice of the Design Thinking process and method, and workshop question formulation, ideation, and brainstorming. Students will be expected to draft questions and ideas, and practice methods to do so individually and collectively. Students will explore and develop their practice of empathy, the key skill of human centered design. Students will practice how to identify, acknowledge, and discuss issues of history, power, structures, culture, needs, wants, and assets for the potentially vulnerable populations and groups who they care about. Students will also practice specific techniques (check your baggage, asset mapping, mind mapping, interview, media, storytelling) for documenting prior assumptions as well as the research and empathy tasks that are so critical for designing new ideas intended to help a specific group of people.

Finally, the class will feature a Scenario Planning workshop, in which students will practice envisioning alternative futures, and produce multiple scenarios for their own careers, a social enterprise, and a public problem. Students will learn tools and develop practices for envisioning multiple, and radically different, positive outcomes, and working backwards from those visions to develop a plan to create the circumstances in which they could come to pass.

Students will receive a lab book that will help facilitate their movement through each of exercises throughout the course. The lab book will have space for informal journaling, drawing, and reflection; for practicing the tools individually; and developing the tools collaboratively. By the end of the week, students will have documented their production of many frameworks about real ventures, and practiced how to develop their own.

**Service.** This trip will feature a service component that includes articulating the key components of a social sector organization's business model, and performing tasks that that organization has identified as useful for their work. We will do this service together during our time Acadia. Students should participate actively and respectfully.

**Readings.** All course readings will be available on Canvas. We will be using many articles, and refer to the following books

- Social Entrepreneurship. What Everyone Needs to Know. Bornstein and Davis.
- Enterprising Nonprofits: A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs. Dees.
- Strategic Tools for Social Entrepreneurs: Enhancing the Performance of Your Enterprising Nonprofit. Dees.
- Business Model Generation. Osterwalder and Pigneur.
- Social Impact: Adventures in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Frumkin and Sosa.

#### **Electronic Devices.**

**On-campus meetings:** There is a **NO CELL PHONE RULE** in effect at all times, and **NO LAPTOPS** during lectures and discussions. All class materials will be posted on Canvas, so detailed electronic note taking will not be linked to successful completion of the class. There may be exceptions to the no laptop rule during specific identified in-class activities.

**Acadia trip:** we strongly suggest that you leave your laptop home. The no cell phone rule holds for all required activities.

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit Penn's Code of Academic Integrity website at <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>

**House Values.** This course was inspired by, based on, and depends on the facilitation of staff at the Center for Social Impact Strategy (CSIS), based at the School of Social Policy and Practice at the University of Pennsylvania. CSIS teaches methods that support the following principles:

- **Believe in a Better World**, a future-oriented value optimistic that change is possible
- **Lead with Empathy**, a human-centered value demanding listening and collaboration
- **Establish Intention**, a purpose-driven value for goal-oriented, evidence-based action
- **Create Every Day**, a practice-oriented value for learning to inspire ideas, become comfortable with failure, and to use failure to spur continuous improvement.
- **Make it Happen**, an action-oriented value encouraging testing ideas rather than ruminating on problems
- **Build Community**, a practical and justice-based value acknowledging that solutions must be addressed together.

**House Rules.** During experiential learning experiences CSIS students and staff adhere to a set of rules intended to preserve a respectful and safe learning environment for all. As we learn in an environment that others live and work in, represent UPenn during our service work, and support each others' learning, all participants agree to:

- Preserve human safety.
- Preserve space for learning, inclusivity, vulnerability, creativity
- Adhere to UPenn's [drug use policy](#).
- Preserve CSIS values, culture, and tone.

## Course Schedule

(subject to adjustment based on conditions in the park and needs of the class)

### **On-campus Meeting 1.** 3 hours. Friday, April 12. 5:30-8:30pm

- Why do we need new techniques for address social problems? Mindsets for change
- Challenges to the solo entrepreneur and human-centered design

**Administrative Goals.** Understand course requirements, trip logistics, house rules

**Assignment.** Innovations in Acadia, National Park Service, Portland, Indigenous communities. Submit to Canvas 36 hours before on-campus meeting 2

### **On-campus Meeting 2.** 3 hours. Friday, May 3. 5:30-8:30pm

- Exploring Acadia, National Park Service, Portland, Indigenous communities
- Identifying community assets, stakeholders, priorities. Framework for building alliances
- Introduction to assessing/describing/building an organization:  
stakeholder segmentation, journey mapping, logic model, competitive landscape

**Administrative Goals.** Travel and on-site logistics, site-specific safety

**Assignment.** Service-Learning x Organizational assessment tools. Submit Draft 1 to Canvas by May 6, 11:59pm. Bring prints/drawings of Draft 2 to Acadia

### **On-site Day A. Friday, May 24.** Arrival

- Shuttle from airport to Schoodic Institute, arrival, unpacking, and facilities tour
- Optional hike / meditation (daily)
- Welcome Dinner

### **On-site Day 1. Saturday, May 25.** Assessing an existing project

- Tools for collaborative decision-making and project articulation
- Most Important Sentence in the World

### **On-site Day 2. Sunday, May 26.**

- Tools for collaborative decision-making and project articulation
- Give & Get
- Service

### **On-site Day 3. Monday, May 27.** Human Centered Design Crash Course

- Design Thinking process and method: How Might We, Ideation, Brainstorming

### **On-site Day 4. Tuesday, May 28.** HCD deep dive and critical practices for social innovation

- Service
- Empathetic HCD Issues (history, power, structures, culture, needs, wants, assets)
- Empathetic HCD Techniques (Baggage, asset mapping, interview, media, storytelling)

### **On-site Day 5. Wednesday, May 29.**

- Scenario Planning. Plan AAA for organization, profession, self

### **On-site Day 6. Thursday, May 30.** Departure

- Shuttle from Schoodic Institute center to airport