

Reflections and Insights on Teaching Social Entrepreneurship: An Interview With Greg Dees

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Greg Dees is often referred to as the “Father of Social Entrepreneurship Education.” Over the past 20 years, he has taught social entrepreneurship courses in some of the United States’ top business schools, including Harvard, Stanford, and now at Duke. As interest in social entrepreneurship skyrockets and more universities engage in social entrepreneurship education, Professor Dees’ insights on teaching and building academic programs are valuable for others to learn from and build on. This interview captures Professor Dees’ reflections on the history of social entrepreneurship education, his insights into what works best, where we are still lacking in our teaching pedagogy, and what the future might hold.

In 2004, Laura D’Andrea Tyson, then dean of the London Business School, wrote, “Just a decade ago, there were virtually no B-school courses or student projects on social entrepreneurship. Today most top business schools have both” (Tyson, 2004). Since Tyson made that statement, the number of programs being offered and demand for those programs has continued to skyrocket. As of 2011, more than 148 institutions were teaching some aspect of social entrepreneurship on their campuses (Kim & Leu, 2011). Mainstream media is covering this growing trend (see Guttenplan, 2011; Murray, 2009; and others), social entrepreneurship business plan competitions are common, and demand from students is continuing to increase. As an example, Net Impact—a San Francisco-based nonprofit that manages a network of more than 30,000 “change-makers using their careers to tackle the world’s toughest problems”—now has more than 300 student and professional chapters worldwide, includ-

ing chapters at the world’s top business schools and undergraduate campuses (Net Impact, 2012).

These colleges and universities play a critical role in preparing the next generation of social entrepreneurs and social innovators who will use their skills to solve global issues. As the field continues to grow, reflecting on the past, learning from its lessons, and continuing to improve how we educate and prepare those future leaders will be critical. I can think of no one better than Professor Greg Dees—often referred to as the “Father of Social Entrepreneurship Education”—to reflect on the growth of social entrepreneurship education and those lessons learned.

Dees has been involved in the movement from the start. He has been studying and teaching social entrepreneurship for approximately 20 years and in 2007 was honored with the first Lifetime Achievement Award in Social Entrepreneurship Education by the Aspen Institute and Ashoka. Dees is widely recognized for his ground-breaking thought leadership, including his seminal article, “The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship,” which is likely one of the most cited in the field (Dees, 1998).

In addition to his research contributions, Dees developed and taught the first known social entrepreneurship course in the United States and helped to found some of the world’s premier aca-

I would like to thank Greg Dees for his willingness to participate in and help frame this interview. Even more importantly, my sincere gratitude to him for his ongoing mentorship and thought leadership. His passion and commitment to educating the next generation of social entrepreneurs and solving the world’s greatest challenges is an inspiration to me and countless others around the world.

democratic centers on social entrepreneurship. While on the faculty of Harvard Business School, Dees helped launch the Initiative on Social Enterprise and received the 1995 Apgar Award for Innovation in Teaching for his course, Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector. At Stanford University, he served as the Miriam and Peter Haas Centennial Professor and co-founder of the Center for Social Innovation and also developed and taught MBA and undergraduate courses on social entrepreneurship, an executive program, High Impact Philanthropy, and a law school seminar on nonprofit law, economics, and strategy. Finally, Dees moved to Duke University in 2001 and founded the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), a research and education center dedicated to promoting the entrepreneurial pursuit of social impact through the thoughtful adaptation of business expertise. Dees is now working on a forthcoming book tentatively entitled, *The Innovative Society: Harnessing the Power of Social Entrepreneurs to Make Societies More Resilient and Adaptive*.

I interviewed Greg Dees in August 2011 to learn from his deep experience and gather his insights on the teaching of social entrepreneurship. We began our interview by reflecting on the history and origins of social entrepreneurship education in the United States. We have much to learn from reflecting on the growth of other fields, for example, the growth of entrepreneurship (Stevenson, 2000), but there are also lessons to be learned in our own field's history. Professor Dees has a unique perspective, having taught some of the first classes on social entrepreneurship, and I was interested to know what the challenges were in those early days. As more faculty attempt to implement social entrepreneurship courses on their campuses and the academic field continues to grow, what can we learn from this history? Dees also identifies some early lessons that are still relevant today—for example, student demand being the driving force behind innovation and curricular change, aligning social entrepreneurship themes with other disciplines, including implementing social entrepreneurial case studies in a variety of courses, and casting a wide net in terms of the students that you are attracting and educating.

I then wanted to explore more deeply the evolution of his teaching pedagogy and the similarities and distinctions between teaching commercial and social entrepreneurship. This topic has been studied in several academic inquiries. For example, Tracey and Phillips note: "Social entrepreneurs therefore encounter the same challenges as more traditional entrepreneurs—opportunity recognition, the marshalling of resources, and the cre-

ation of the new venture (Kourilsky, 1995)—with the added complexity of defining, building support for, and achieving social outcomes" (Tracey & Phillips, 2007: 266). They go on to identify three key challenges that are unique to social entrepreneurs: managing accountability, managing the double bottom line, and managing identity (Tracey & Phillips, 2007). Dacin, Dacin, and Matear focus on the unique nature of social entrepreneurs regarding the processes and resources used (relational, cultural, institutional), and the primary mission and outcomes leveraged (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010). Finally, Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006) conducted a comparative analysis of commercial and social entrepreneurship, finding distinctions for social entrepreneurs around four main areas: market failure, mission, resource mobilization, and performance measurement. What does Dees see as the distinctions between commercial and social entrepreneurs and how does this play out in terms of course content or pedagogy?

Finally, we concluded the interview by discussing a few of the trends that are being seen in the field today which will have a large impact on the evolution of social entrepreneurship education. This includes the trend of social entrepreneurship programs shifting from their original home within business schools, to becoming prevalent in undergraduate and a variety of graduate programs, including engineering, law, public policy, social work, and many more. Notably, although Dees has spent his career teaching mainly within the business school context, he questioned whether business schools are the "right place" for social entrepreneurship education. We also discussed the challenge of measuring impact and the promise of social entrepreneurship as learning laboratories for society, issues that deserve special attention going forward.

You have the unique perspective of having been involved in the social entrepreneurship education movement from the beginning. That movement started at business schools and is now expanding to other programs. Why do you think business schools were such a natural breeding ground for social entrepreneurship education, instead of public policy schools, or social work schools, or others?

Actually, I am not sure business schools as institutions were such a natural breeding ground. In my experience, there was a lot of resistance in the beginning. It was often the students who really pushed the agenda and eventually got social entrepreneurship courses included in their schools.

My own first experience with social entrepreneurship education was actually in a kind of hybrid setting that was more naturally accepting of this type of education.

What do you mean a “hybrid setting”?

I am talking specifically about the Yale School of Management in its early days, before it gave an MBA. Back then, it mixed business, government, and nonprofit in one program and awarded a master’s in public and private management (MPPM).

I have an MPPM from Yale and, after working for McKinsey for several years, returned to Yale to embark on my teaching career in the mid-1980s. My first exposure to teaching social entrepreneurship happened by accident shortly thereafter. It wasn’t even called social entrepreneurship at the time. A colleague of mine went on leave and so the school asked me to take over his course on “Managing Smaller Organizations,” a course in which students would work with small for-profits or nonprofits in the community. But I didn’t have the network and could not come up with the clients quickly enough. So I turned it in to a course on new ventures and had the students develop business plans for their own organizations, for-profits or nonprofits, whatever they liked. Courses at Yale blended all kinds of organizations.

It turned out that within the group of students, there were quite a few that were interested in what, in effect, were social ventures. Of course, Ashoka was in its early years at the time, and some of us were watching it with great interest, but even Bill Drayton was not consistently using the term “social entrepreneur” to describe the folks Ashoka was supporting. They were “innovators for the public.” So in the course, we didn’t frame things around social entrepreneurship versus business entrepreneurship, we just talked about building a new venture regardless of your end goal. Sometimes, I miss that way of framing things. I liked the openness—starting out with what you want to accomplish and then deciding how to best do it—not bothering so much with labels.

You mentioned that there was resistance in business schools in the early days; can you tell me more about that?

After Yale, I moved to Harvard Business School and was teaching “Entrepreneurial Management”—a traditional business entrepreneurship course. I immediately proposed a new course on social entrepreneurship in the 1989–1990 academic year, but it was flatly rejected. At that time, it was

seen as too far outside of the focus of the business school, and I was basically told “that is not the type of thing that we do here, we are the graduate school of Business Administration.” I was reminded that I was not at Yale anymore.

So, I cut a deal. If I taught my section of “Entrepreneurial Management” in the spring term (when my colleagues did not want to teach), I could change up to 25% of the cases, as long as I covered all the same substantive topics. So I inserted some of my earliest social entrepreneurship cases—one on Steve Mariotti and the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), one on Rainforest Crunch, one on Leeway (an AIDS nursing home in New Haven). The protagonists in the latter two cases were former students of mine at Yale. Then when I got promoted to associate professor, I developed a new course called “Profits, Markets, and Values.” It wasn’t social entrepreneurship, but it was dealing with innovative ways to bring values into markets and [it] allowed me to develop some other new cases, such as a case on Shorebank Corporation.

Then, 4 years after my first attempt, HBS was approached by an alumnus, John Whitehead, with a promise of major funding for a program on not-for-profit management. Interestingly, the school did not immediately jump at this opportunity. The dean would not commit without senior faculty (full professors) agreeing to take the lead. Fortunately, Jim Austin and Kash Rangan stepped up. Even more fortunately, they invited me to be involved, and they agreed not to focus simply on “not-for-profits,” as our benefactor wanted. The new program would be called an Initiative on Social Enterprise, even though John Whitehead did not care for that term.

Why did Mr. Whitehead not care for the term “social enterprise”?

John’s main mission was to improve management practices in nonprofits. He is a wise man and recognized that business schools were well-positioned to do that. In fact, that idea was probably an easy sell in business schools. The neat division of labor between business, government, and nonprofits was ingrained.

When you reframed it around social purpose ventures, including for-profits, it took people out of their comfort zone and we needed to fight that. Jim Austin and Kash Rangan were persuasive in convincing John that the Initiative would be more successful with students and more intellectually interesting if it were framed more broadly. This opened the door for me to dust off my old course proposal.

So with a new initiative focused on social enterprise, I imagine that resistance to such a course was no longer an issue?

Unfortunately, not quite. Every faculty member had a research director who had to approve their new projects, including the development of new courses. My research director thought it might be “career suicide” to go down this road. Fortunately, Jim, Kash, and a couple of the senior associate deans were very supportive. They were able to persuade him otherwise, but it did take some persuading. It was agreed that I could teach the class, but I was strongly advised to change the title to “Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector”—lead with entrepreneurship, rather than social. That remained the title of the course for a long time, even after I left. In fact, when Jim Austin (who took over the course when I left), Jane Wei-Skillern (who taught it later), and others developed a case book based on the course, they used that as the title of the book (Wei-Skillern, Austin, Leonard, & Stevenson, 2007).

Looking back, that title change was probably good advice. That title represented a lot of the feeling at the time—things were shifting to be more inclusive of social impact in the graduate school of “Business Administration,” but it was still important to lead with entrepreneurship to make it more palatable and interesting to both students and faculty. We wanted to attract students who would not necessarily take a course focused on social issues, but those that were simply intrigued by new kinds of entrepreneurial opportunities.

I think that is still true for those of us that teach social entrepreneurship today. We should always want to serve the students that come to school specifically to learn about social entrepreneurship, but we should also attract the set of students that are more “traditional” in their goals. It is useful to cast a wide net. It enriches the discussion in class and empowers more students to be informed and engage in these issues after they graduate.

The title also allowed the course to be housed in the entrepreneurship group at HBS, which was good for the course and for me. I learned a great deal from my colleagues in that group and it put the course in a traditional business school area, which was important for credibility.

With the course housed in the entrepreneurship group, did you approach it the same as you would for a traditional entrepreneurship course, or did you follow a different approach?

When I first developed the course, I approached it pretty much as I did my straight entrepreneurial management course, with some alterations. All ventures still need to attract resources, need to be economically viable, and need to have sound business models and business plans. So, basically I structured the class around the question of “how do you launch and grow a new venture?” I wanted the students to be thinking about it from that perspective—from opportunity recognition, to developing a business model and plan, to attracting resources (human, financial and others), to launching the venture, growing and developing it over time, assessing impact, deciding when to scale or exit, and so on.

Many of the skills needed were similar, even if the cases were different. However, as we discussed each stage of the process, new and fascinating challenges were raised. Some of the questions that I would—and still do—have my students grapple with included “what does an ‘attractive’ social venture opportunity look like?” Unprofitable business opportunities are usually not attractive, unless you are independently wealthy and want to subsidize your hobby. But what about a venture with high social impact potential that will require ongoing donor support? Many now large and successful nonprofit organizations (once new ventures) have sustained themselves on donor funds. Think of the Nature Conservancy with its large membership base. So, what does it mean to have a viable business model? When should a social venture focus on earned income versus philanthropic support or other funding sources? How does the choice of business model and legal form affect long-term impact and scalability? What are the alternative paths to scaling social impact? How should social ventures measure success? When should they declare victory or declare failure and close up shop?

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As you can see, learning how to be a social entrepreneur can be incredibly complex since you must be economically viable as well as socially impactful. I recall one of my students saying that

was part of the attraction to her—it was like playing a video game at a higher level of difficulty. As Sally Osberg, president of the Skoll Foundation, points out, social entrepreneurs and business entrepreneurs remind her of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire—Ginger had to do everything Fred could do, but dancing backwards and in high heels!

Was this the same course structure that you taught when you moved to Stanford and then to Duke?

That was the basic design that I used for a long time—build on a traditional business entrepreneurship course but layer on additional tools and frameworks to address the primacy of the social mission. My colleagues at Stanford, Dave Brady, Dan Kessler, and Shirley Heath added some new material, including some social philosophy. But basically the structure was the same. And it worked very well—students liked it, it made sense to them, and more and more students starting coming to business schools to learn about these topics.

You mentioned that the course design was one you used “for a long time.” Has your thinking evolved since then?

Yes, it started evolving while I was at Stanford, where I helped to build the Center for Social Innovation. Again, the name was very important. Instead of social entrepreneurship, we used the term, *social innovation*, to cast a broader net and bring in more people who were interested in innovative approaches to social change. This allowed us to build a diverse base of support and to put social entrepreneurship into the broader context of social innovation and social change. For instance, we engaged with Stanford’s Pulitzer Prize winning historian David Kennedy, who had written about social movements, including the career of Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, and MacArthur Award winning English professor Shirley Brice Heath, who was doing fascinating work on the role of the arts in helping inner city youth.

The point that is crucial here is that social entrepreneurship should always be thought of in the larger context of social change. It is not just about starting new ventures. It is about achieving social impact. That is one of the major insights that have changed the emphasis of my teaching in recent years. I now focus more on the art of creating social change.

Could you say more about that? What do you mean by the “art of creating social change”?

One of the things that I believe business schools are weak on, and is very important in teaching social entrepreneurship, is understanding how you really achieve social change in a meaningful and sustainable way and without creating unintended consequences. That is what I call the art of creating social change.

There is just not a lot of expertise on that topic, especially within business schools—it is not a field that we have honed and is a more complex intervention that your typical student or faculty member are used to thinking about. Most of us have been trained in business disciplines and we know how to run organizations—how to attract capital and build organizations. So, we tend to emphasize the things that we do well and think about things with more of a consultant’s mind-set, in more of a linear way. If I do A, B will happen, then C, then D, and so on. But social change is often not linear. It is more complex. It is more like a many player game with complex environmental factors, such as dynamic political and economic conditions.

So, one of the things that we need to think about when we are teaching is how do we bring in the skills that relate to effective social change and the knowledge about how that is done most effectively. How do you really move the needle on getting people out of poverty or changing a complex system with many intricate parts? This is about action under complex uncertainty.

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Fortunately, there is some good research that has been done or is going on now that we can use. The first I’d mention is the concept of ecosystem analysis that Paul Bloom and I have worked on. It helps you think about the multitude of different players and the dynamics involved in working within a complex and interrelated ecosystem (Bloom & Dees, 2008). There is also a line of work in the entrepreneurship literature called “discovery-driven planning” by Ian MacMillan and Rita McGrath that is very helpful (McGrath & MacMillan, 2011). There is work on strategy as a portfolio of options. More specifically in the area of social change, there are interesting efforts developed by economists to bring rigor to evaluating

interventions—Innovations for Poverty Action led by Dean Karlan and the Jmael Poverty Action Lab at MIT led by Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Dufflo are two examples. Both have published books recently looking at microfinance and microinsurance and various health interventions in developing countries and are running rigorous analytics about when these are having their intended impact and when they are not (Banerjee & Dufflo, 2011; Karlan & Appel, 2011). This type of work is so important—we need the same kind of knowledge and rigor around understanding social impact that we have around the financial and managerial side of social ventures.

You mentioned that the “art of creating social change” was one major insight that has changed the emphasis of your teaching. Have there been other insights that you can share?

One of the most important has to do with humility, respect, and empathy—emotional intelligence. Let me tell you a personal story to illustrate my point. One of the most powerful experiences I have had on this journey happened outside of the classroom. I took a leave of absence between Harvard and Stanford and went to Appalachia to do work on economic development. My mother’s family has its roots in eastern Kentucky, and so I went to work with a community development corporation, the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, on how to develop entrepreneurship in central Appalachia. While I was there we worked really hard and thought we came up with a very clever idea to help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses —“Business First Stop” a comprehensive information portal and on-line learning community for local entrepreneurs. But, despite our best efforts, it failed in implementation due to a variety of factors. This reinforced the insight I mentioned earlier about the complexity of effective social change. It was a very humbling experience, actually one of the most eye-opening experiences of my career. It was powerful to play something like that out and to learn from the failure. It is something that I would recommend to any academic—do work in the field and get a taste for how hard it is.

I was also struck by the emotional challenges I faced. I was initially surprised to find some resentment to my even being there. I went in with an enthusiastic invitation from my host organization and the best of intentions, but there were a lot of people that reacted very negatively to my presence—the idea that “here’s this guy from Harvard that is coming to save us.” Even though I had roots

in the area, that didn’t matter. Coming from Harvard, immediately I was different and suspect. I quickly understood that over the years they had a lot of people “parachuting” in to “help” and it was offensive, kind of demeaning. It took considerable time to build trust with some people, to show that I was listening, not pontificating and not being condescending or arrogant. With some, I am not sure I ever succeeded in nearly 2 years. Many people in the region have been working on poverty and development issues there for decades. Suspicions of outsiders can be very high. Doing this work well requires a high degree of emotional intelligence.

So what does this mean for how we teach social entrepreneurship?

I have had the good fortune of teaching at some of the top universities and business schools and we attract very smart, impressive, and oftentimes privileged students. The students have great intentions and are moved to help those in poverty or work on environmental issues or education issues or many other topics. This is great, but it can lead to culture clashes. And business school values often do not help.

One of the possible sources of conflict is that we encourage our students to be confident, assertive, analytic, action-oriented problem solvers. This confident and analytic approach is great for consulting or pitching a business plan. But when dealing with a community in need, it can also look like just the opposite of listening, empathy, and humility. It can come across as a kind of cold arrogance. So we need to be careful to teach a balance—sometimes going into a CEO’s office with confidence and a set of analytically supported recommendations is optimal; other times, especially in dealing with social issues, it is critical that you work with all stakeholders, listen respectfully and actively, and be humble enough to change perspectives based on what you are hearing. And don’t assume that you need to do for them what they can do for themselves.

That is so important and often very difficult to teach. How do you intervene socially in a way that is respectful, that engages and helps people but that is not demeaning, not too paternalistic, doesn’t come across as if you—in all your glory—are trying to “save them”?

In your experience, what are the best ways to teach these skills and sensitivities?

Here we need to draw on the growing literature around emotional intelligence. Fortunately, we have learned that effective managers, even in mainstream business, need to be empathetic, listen, and engage on that level. And I think that universities, and business schools in particular, have gotten savvier about the importance of the soft skills and how to work those into the curriculum. This shows up in leadership courses and workshops, and in organizational behavior courses that involve teamwork exercises, to name a few examples.

We have to figure out how to integrate this in to our social entrepreneurship pedagogy, which is something that does not come up naturally in a business entrepreneurship class. In addition to readings and student role-playing exercises, this can be done through fieldwork with client organizations, as long as there are opportunities for candid feedback from the client on these issues. It can be done by observing community meetings or task-force meetings in a community to address issues, then debriefing the dynamics. It can be done by interviewing different stakeholders about a particular issue.

What it cannot be is just a token experience, spending a couple of hours serving meals in a soup kitchen and thinking you truly understand a poor person's situation. The learning comes from more authentic, engaging experiences around a problem, with opportunities to listen and hear and get some pushback. What we are trying to teach is how students can interact effectively across cultural, class, and wealth divides while maintaining their own identity.

It is interesting to note that Bill Drayton and Ashoka have been pushing hard on their new "Empathy Initiative." It is wonderful to have a concerted focus on this in our education system, and empathy is something that all teachers should work to incorporate. But again, we have to be careful. There is a kind of empathy that I think is superficial, where people are moved by someone else's suffering to act in a way that can actually be harmful to that person. Charity can be an example of this—as Muhammad Yunus talked about in his book, *Banker to the Poor*, we often default to charity when we think about helping the poor, but that rarely solves the underlying problem (Yunus & Jolis, 1999). So, in some cases, a superficial kind of empathy can be more destructive than constructive. Empathy is only part of a total balance of emotional intelligence that is needed. Feeling someone else's pain is just a start to figuring out how to respond to it in a respectful, intelligent, and constructive way.

When our students want to fight poverty, they

believe they are doing it out of empathy. But true empathy is really about trying to understand what is ultimately in the best interest of the person involved and is much more difficult to teach. How do the "poor" you want to help define their own well-being? What do they want out of life? How do they feel being treated as a charity case? What can they do for themselves that you should not be doing for them?

This is an underdeveloped area of social entrepreneurship education. I confess that I am behind the curve on integrating this into my own courses.

You mentioned that developing authentic, field-based experiences is a best practice, but certainly that is not always possible in those situations, what else can a teacher do?

You are right—you can't include all these things in every course, it's just not feasible. So when you think about teaching social entrepreneurship, you need to think about a balanced program where students can get the full set of skills. There should be courses that teach frameworks, look at case studies, focus on analytic elements on both the business and social sides, and some that have experiential components.

To give an example, we can look at the program that we offer here at Fuqua. The Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), has a suite of classes that are intended to emphasize different skill-sets for students interested in social entrepreneurship. For example, our core social entrepreneurship class, taught by my colleague Cathy Clark, focuses on the key frameworks and is based around lectures and case studies. There is no fieldwork, but there are assignments like "shadow a social entrepreneur," where the students get to talk with a leading social entrepreneur throughout the term and learn about some of the day-to-day challenges that they face and how they have dealt with them. We also have a course called the "Global Consulting Practicum in Social Entrepreneurship" where teams of MBA students work with social ventures in developing countries—this is a true field experience where students work on "real-world" problems and travel to the field to engage deeply and meaningfully with stakeholders. And then in my class—a small, seminar style format—we focus on poverty alleviation and bring the experiential part in to the classroom by having a guest each week that has lived these challenges and can talk about the complex ecosystems and what works and what doesn't. Social entrepreneurship is placed in a broader context of social change strategies.

And of course, we are always bringing in speakers to expose students to a range of ideas and examples (of things that have worked and some that have not), getting students varying experiences through internships, volunteer programs, board fellowships, business plan competitions, and mentorships. Teaching social entrepreneurship effectively is all about developing a balanced program that blends theory and practice and uses different teaching methods to develop the entire suite of skills (financial, social, and soft skills) that students will need to succeed.

Your examples and experience have been focused on business schools. Do you believe that business schools are the right place to teach social entrepreneurship?

Do you believe that business schools are the right place to teach social entrepreneurship?—Worsham

Yes and no. If I have to pick one place to house the social entrepreneurship curriculum, I would choose the business school because we are good at teaching the fundamental business skills that are so important whether you have a nonprofit or a for-profit. And we are becoming better at teaching the soft skills. With the art of social change, we don't have all the answers, but we are used to dealing with complex issues in other business disciplines. For example, in our strategy and entrepreneurship courses, we are used to teaching about portfolios of options, analyzing intertwined market forces, and testing and evolving strategies over time.

But as we talked about earlier—we don't have all the answers when it comes to social change. So, I think the optimal answer is that business schools are just part of the mix. To get the full mix, you need to bring in people from other disciplines that are outside of business schools that better understand social dynamics and social change, psychological dimensions.

Some of those are in business schools, for example, organizational behavior, but we are still missing other key experts.

Where do those key experts reside?

Unfortunately, in multiple places—behavioral economics, some parts of sociology, public policy, political science, anthropology, and more. All of these can help us better understand social and

cultural change, and the whole ecosystem. So, since we are not housed in those departments, we need to make sure we bring in those perspectives and frameworks to help our students understand how to create social change and change complex systems.

Ideally, we would also incorporate the sciences and engineering—places that develop ideas or technology. These ideas can be combined with effective business plans and social change plans and serve to solve social problems. That shows us the importance of interdisciplinary, collaborative education that pulls together all the pieces of the social innovation puzzle and exposes students to all of the tools that can be used. A great example of this is Stanford's Design School, with classes such as "Entrepreneurial Design for Extreme Affordability" in which engineering and business students apply their skills to create product prototypes and business plans to address challenges faced by the poor. These types of interdisciplinary academic innovations can be extremely powerful in educating future social entrepreneurs and social innovators.

There seems to be a shift happening—from social entrepreneurship being taught almost exclusively at business schools, toward many more schools entering the field, creating cross-campus programs, and engaging undergraduates as well as graduates. What are your thoughts on that trend and any advice for programs that are outside of the business school?

At Stanford, I had the opportunity to teach undergraduates as well as MBA students and law students. With the undergraduates, we found that it was particularly helpful to offer a course on "Business Skills for the Social Sector," covering very basic concepts of marketing, operations, strategy, organization, finance, and accounting. This provided a solid basis for students to dig more deeply into the social entrepreneurship course, and generated some great discussions about when business-inspired approaches were appropriate in the social context. The same would be true of any school with students who do not have the business background.

As social entrepreneurship education programs become more popular, are there any concerns that we should be aware of?

In general, I think the trend of more schools and programs engaging in social entrepreneurship ed-

education is a great one. It brings more competition and more innovative thinking to the field.

However, as in any field that becomes popular, there is always a danger of a lot of people jumping in and not having the same level of rigor—or lacking consistency across programs that can appear as a lack of rigor to outsiders. There is always a risk to that, and it is something we need to be careful about if we want this field to continue to develop and have credibility.

How do we ensure that rigor and consistency remain?

There is one important distinction for us to keep in mind—the distinction between research universities and teaching colleges and programs where you don't expect the faculty to be doing a lot of research. We have to look to the research universities to continue to provide the rigor and build the base of research. But then we have to make sure that the high-quality research is translated into effective, credible teaching materials that can be used by everyone. Fortunately, we have some people in this field who are willing to do that.

Many other schools will contribute by developing the pedagogy and experimenting with different teaching styles. The research universities can learn from creative teaching programs on this dimension. The two have to work together, communicate and coordinate, so that the knowledge base continues to be built in a rigorous way, and then that knowledge base is reflected in new, effective teaching techniques.

How do you measure whether your teaching is having an impact? Do you anticipate that your students will go on to found organizations and your success will be measured by the number of new social ventures or are there other metrics to consider?

I don't think our job is to produce students who immediately launch social ventures upon graduation. That may happen, but if it does, it will be the exception.

It turns out that few students launch any kind of new venture right after graduation, and for good reason. Many of them are not well-positioned to do so. Even if they have an intriguing idea, the timing may not be right, they may not have the experience or skills to lead the venture, or they may have trouble attracting the necessary resources. And many MBAs and other graduates are better suited to different roles,

[such as] helping social entrepreneurs build their ventures into something with greater impact. Preparing students to do this is just as important as preparing them to be the lead social entrepreneur. It takes a team to achieve social impact. Interestingly, when you look at great entrepreneurs, such as Steve Jobs or Bill Gates, many did not come out of MBA programs. Some did not stay to finish college. The profiles of leading social entrepreneurs are likely to be similar, probably a few will be MBAs, but most will have MBAs on their teams who will play important roles in building something sustainable and scalable.

So I think the right measures are more about equipping our students with the tools to be effective in any entrepreneurial social problem-solving activity they might engage in—whether it is through a corporate employer, at a consulting firm, working with a social entrepreneur, serving on a board, providing volunteer consulting, or the like.

What do you see as the future of the field of social entrepreneurship and how will that impact teaching pedagogy?

I hope it will become part of an overall growing interdisciplinary, interschool curriculum on finding innovative, effective solutions to social and environmental problems. As change becomes more rapid and uncertainty more of a norm, social problems will continue to evolve and shift. In the face of this, our societies need to be flexible and adaptive. Social entrepreneurs have a key role to play in creating that adaptability. They can serve as a learning laboratory for society as they try out innovative solutions. We just need to provide the right environment to encourage decentralized social problem solving, to harvest the knowledge from this activity, and to put that knowledge to work in a timely fashion. This is what I am currently writing about in my new book.

In terms of pedagogy, I would hope we get more sophisticated about equipping social entrepreneurs with effective social change strategies and with the kind of emotional intelligence (and underlying values) that they need to be effective.

CONCLUSION

It is truly impressive to reflect on how far the field has come in the past two decades—from fighting just to be included in the curriculum at a top-tier university to a stage where many univer-

sities and institutions are embracing social entrepreneurship, developing minors and majors, and launching student programs across multiple disciplines. In addition, research in social entrepreneurship has been building in quantity and quality from occasional case studies to frameworks and rigorous academic inquiry into business models, scaling, evaluation methods, and much more.

As the field continues to grow, Dees's reflections on how—and where—social entrepreneurship should be taught are important to consider. Coordinating social entrepreneurship programs with commercial entrepreneurship programs to leverage resources, faculty interests, and capture a "wide net" of students is important but not enough. Most scholars agree that we must recognize the distinctions between mainstream commercial entrepreneurship and the unique challenges of social entrepreneurship, and account for those distinctions in our teaching pedagogy—not only in terms of incorporating lessons on the primacy of a social venture's mission and the "nuts and bolts" of business model choices and legal forms, but also in terms of the intangible skills that students must learn to excel in social entrepreneurship.

For example, Dees referred to the "art of social change" and the complexity and uncertainty inherent in the ecosystems in which social entrepreneurs work. Of course, this is also true in the commercial entrepreneurship space, but it becomes even more complex in a world of market failures, measurement difficulties, and a focus not just on starting new ventures, but on creating and achieving sustainable and scalable social impact.

In order to best prepare students to tackle these complex issues in an authentic and emotionally intelligent way, Dees argues for innovation in teaching pedagogy and a focus on cross-disciplinary teaching and research. However, the challenges associated with creating this truly interdisciplinary approach (ranging from idea and technology generation in sciences and engineering, business fundamentals in business schools, public policy, and political science, law, anthropology, and many more) will require creative thinking and flexibility on the part of universities and institutions. Institutional barriers exist in many schools, and incentives are not always in place to work across these barriers. There could also be risks of stretching across too many disciplines—will that make things too diffuse as we try to build consistency and rigor in an emerging field?

Fortunately, some of this innovation has already begun and is leading us toward the future of social entrepreneurship education—a future of cross-disciplinary programming and research, engaging students in the learning process and tailoring the learning objectives to the student's stage (undergraduate, graduate, business, etc.), building on entrepreneurship education, but also addressing the distinctions inherent in social entrepreneurship, and helping students to develop empathy, emotional intelligence, and a true understanding of both content and context when solving social problems.

As Peter Drucker has said, "The entrepreneurial mystique? It's not magic, it's not mysterious, and it has nothing to do with the genes. It's a discipline. And, like any discipline, it can be learned" (Kuratko, 2009: xxix). The same could be said for social entrepreneurship. So, if we build on the progress that has already occurred in social entrepreneurship education and continue to develop rigorous, innovative methods of teaching, we will be able to prepare new generations of social innovators to solve some of the world's greatest social issues.

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