Teaching Social Entrepreneurship in Public Affairs Programs: A Review of Social Entrepreneurship Courses in the Top 30 U.S. Public Administration and Affairs Programs

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ABSTRACT

Social entrepreneurship uses a radically innovative way to address social problems, with sustainable financing and a scale that can be expanded for broader social impact. Social entrepreneurship courses have a growing presence in U.S. public affairs programs, but the content of these courses has not yet been mapped. For this paper, we reviewed 16 syllabi from courses taught in U.S. schools of public affairs and administration, largely from schools ranked in the top 30 nationwide in 2012 by U.S. News & World Report. We identified patterns in program approaches, course content, and evaluation methods in order to offer information to others who may be teaching these classes now or in the near future. We conclude that the confluence of values, skills, and knowledge offered by public affairs programs is highly relevant to students who endeavor to be social entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs at any level of government or nonprofit organization.

KEYWORDS
Public affairs, social entrepreneurship, curriculum

Social entrepreneurship courses on university campuses have exploded in numbers in the United States and across the world. An AshokaU publication entitled *Trends in Social Innovation Education in 2014* found that "the total number of social innovation offerings [in universities] has grown by 200% since 1999" (2014, p. 4). These courses are found in business schools, leadership, law and nonprofit programs, and, increasingly, in schools and programs of public administration, public policy, and public affairs (hereafter called public affairs programs). Social entrepreneurship courses began in the late 1990s, and primarily at business schools, with early leadership by Stanford, Harvard, Berkeley, Duke, and Georgetown University business schools, among others (AshokaU, 2014, p. 15). In the last five years, AshokaU (2014) has documented an expansion of such courses to many other departments and cross-disciplinary programs, but still dominated by business school offerings. Indeed, in its recent 2013 survey of 945 universities worldwide, AshokaU (2014, p. 51) found that of the 215 universities that responded, 55% of the academic units that had

social entrepreneurship initiatives were housed in business schools, and only 6% were housed in public affairs programs.

The days of public affairs programs teaching governmental bureaucracy and single-agency programs are over, as cross-sectoral programs and collaboration have increased and become the norm for policy implementation and service delivery (e.g., Agranoff & McQuire, 2003; Hartley, Sørensen, & Torfing, 2013; O'Leary & Bingham, 2009). While nonprofit programs have worked closely with government units through contracting arrangements for decades (Salamon, 2003), public affairs programs have recently increased their offerings in nonprofit management, such that by 2013, over 56% of accredited U.S. Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Policy (MPP) programs offered a nonprofit specialization (NASPAA, 2014, slide 9). More accredited public affairs schools now offer a nonprofit specialization than any other specialization, including general management and public policy.

The distinctions between nonprofits and private sector businesses are also blurring (Billis, 2010; Hoffman, Badiane, & Haigh, 2012). Through the development of social enterprise, nonprofits and private businesses often find themselves with double bottom lines or dual missions: making a profit while meeting a social or environmental purpose. New forms of legal organizations, such as L3Cs, allow nonprofits to spin off from for-profit organizations, and mix the sectors much more radically than previously (Wexler, 2009). Innovation, a cornerstone of social entrepreneurship, was once viewed as restricted to technology, engineering, and business fields, while the field of public affairs was more oriented to hierarchy, accountability, and social equity. Now, technological, financing, and service delivery innovation is demanded at all levels of government; one example is President Obama's Open Government Directive (Office of Management and Budget, 2009). Local government leaders have been well-documented as innovators who use cross-sectoral and enterprise approaches to carry out governmental policy (e.g., Eggers, 2009; Goldsmith, Georges, & Burke, 2010). Innovation appears not to be a fad in government, but instead a required way of dealing with public value, demands for accountability, and effective service (Goldsmith et al., 2010).

The administration of public service now utilizes partnerships with the private and third sectors as the preferred way of conducting the people's business (Nicholls, 2006). Organizations that were once typically nonprofit are shifting to hybrid structures, either as a private enterprise with a social mission or as a nonprofit sustaining itself with earned income (Billis, 2010). Students need more experience and skills in understanding how to combine the best of public/nonprofit and business practices for agency missions geared toward social benefits. Social entrepreneurship is the creation of programs or agencies with social value that are sustainable and use innovative methods of finance, delivery, and organization. While social entrepreneurship courses and programs were incubated in business schools, their content and skill development is increasingly used and needed in the public and nonprofit sectors. Considering the developing popularity of a social entrepreneurship approach to management and public/private partnerships, how are public affairs programs responding to the demand for courses on social entrepreneurship? How are they structuring these new course offerings, and what are they teaching? This is the focus of our paper.

In their study of social entrepreneurship in the third sector, Young and Grinsfelder (2011) conclude that the skills needed by social entrepreneurs differ from those taught in business entrepreneurship programs, and need to include political and third sector management skills. Young and Grinsfelder (2011) argue that the concepts taught in public affairs schools and their nonprofit programs, concepts such as philanthropy, government collaboration and procurement, and volunteerism, fill the gaps in the business school curriculum on social entrepreneurship and are essential for success in the

nonprofit and public sectors. Mirabella and Young, in a look across disciplines at "graduate education programs with a social entrepreneurship emphasis," assess the identification of these skills in program websites or course descriptions (2012, p. 46). However, neither Young and Grinsfelder nor Mirabella and Young examine thoroughly what is being taught in the public affairs classroom related to social entrepreneurship, a gap this paper fills. Public administrators and faculty in public affairs programs must keep current with emerging, on-the-ground practices so that MPA/MPP students and graduates are prepared for the changing expectations and ground rules of the governmental cross-sector partnerships and non-profit management environments in which they will work.

For this paper, we reviewed the state of social entrepreneurship programs in public affairs programs in the United States, largely from schools ranked in the top 30 in the nation (U.S. News & World Report, 2012).[1] An assessment of these programs provided insight into course content, structure, and teaching methods. The purpose of such an assessment is to identify patterns in course content, program approaches, and evaluation methods in order to offer information to others who may be teaching these classes now or in the near future. We are not arguing that there is a best way to teach social entrepreneurship. Indeed, the state of the field suggests that it is emergent and diverse rather than convergent. Adoption of social entrepreneurship courses within public affairs programs is still in early stages; the majority of the syllabi we reviewed were new within the past five years. While there are insights to be learned from comparing the public affairs curriculum with business school curriculum, this is not the focus of our paper.

Our study used a Web-based assessment of the top-30-ranked U.S. public affairs programs (U.S. News & World Report, 2012) to identify and gather course syllabi. Fifteen of the top-ranked programs offered social entrepreneurship classes. We obtained syllabi for 14 of these

courses, plus two additional syllabi from social entrepreneurship courses at public administration schools not on the top-30 list. Based on a summative content analysis of the 16 course syllabi, we found commonalities in key topic areas that, in most courses, prepared students to assess real-world case examples and develop a business plan for a new social enterprise. Our analysis revealed little overlap in textbook use across the courses and no standard approach to the evaluation tools. A concise review of the concept of social entrepreneurship as it applies to course themes is covered next, followed by the syllabi analysis and discussion of the answered and unanswered questions resulting from the analysis.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS LITERATURE

Defining Social Entrepreneurship

A review of the social entrepreneurship literature reveals a variety of definitions of the term itself and related concepts (Bielefeld, 2009; Young & Grinsfelder, 2011). We will not repeat earlier, in-depth discussions but only briefly describe widely used definitions without urging that any particular definition be adopted. In their recently published book, Guo and Bielefeld (2014) demonstrate in a table the disparity among 12 different approaches to defining social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs; definitions range from an explanation of behaviors of individual social entrepreneurs to a description of social enterprise activities. Their table summarizes definitions from well-known researchers in the field such as J. G. Dees (1998), Peter Frumkin (2002), and Paul Light (2006). Guo and Bielefeld conclude with a definition applied in a previous article coauthored by Bielefeld, in which social entrepreneurship is "the pursuit of social objectives with innovative methods, through the creation of products, organizations, and practices that yield and sustain social benefits" (Guo & Bielefeld, 2014, p. 7; Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012, p. 36). AshokaU's *Trends in Social Innovation Education in 2014* also notes that a variety of definitions of social entrepreneurship exist, and argues that this is healthy for the field (2014).

Frumkin (2013) draws a definition of social entrepreneurship based on a review of three books: Schwartz's *Rippling: How Social Entrepreneurs Spread Innovation Throughout the World* (2012); Light's *Driving Social Change: How to Solve the World's Toughest Problems* (2010); and Green and Hauser's *Managing to Change the World: The Nonprofit Manager's Guide to Getting Results* (2012). The books by Light and Schwartz offer similar definitions. Light defines social entrepreneurship as "an effort to solve an intractable social problem through pattern-breaking change" (2010, p. 12). This tight definition opens the door for social entrepreneurship to be sector agnostic. Bill Drayton, founder of Ashoka (an organization dedicated to finding, training, and celebrating social entrepreneurs), describes social entrepreneurs as *changemakers* in the foreword to Schwartz's bestselling social entrepreneurship book, *Rippling* (2012); Drayton also encourages *collaborative entrepreneurship* rather than solo entrepreneuring. Ashoka pushes beyond the contributions and outcomes of individual entrepreneurs and drives systems changes to promote broader policy and structural reforms. Social entrepreneurship in the public sector often takes the form of such collaborative entrepreneurship (Goldsmith et al., 2010).

Frumkin concludes his review with his own definition of social entrepreneurship as a practice that should (a) "involve a new and innovative way of solving a public problem" (2013, p. 375); (b) provide solutions that must be initially designed around a sustainable model both in terms of the organization and the finances; and (c) involve a commitment of scale in order to expand the social impact to a larger or more diverse constituency in the future. This definition is inclusive of all three sectors and provides an effective framework for use in the public affairs classroom. It relates to public policy solutions and organizational design, and underscores that solutions should be scalable beyond the project that first begins the enterprise.

What each of the authors above offer is an explanation of social entrepreneurship that goes beyond market exchanges of goods and services in order to fund a charitable cause.

These authors call for innovative solutions to small and large social problems, not simply developing unrestricted income sources for good causes. Social entrepreneurship is seen as distinct from generic nonprofit management in that it teaches students to create an innovative way to solve a social or environmental problem, a way that has sustainable financing and is developed on a small scale but can be scaled up. This is different from managing a program under standard government regulations and contracts. Many of the new financing techniques—events and earned income—are not new, but putting the development, management, and delivery elements together creates a new package.

Social entrepreneurship is not the same as policy entrepreneurship in that policy entrepreneurs work for policy change but rarely toward creating the organizational and financing structures to deliver that change. Social entrepreneurs learn policy advocacy techniques, but their focus is on innovative, sustainable projects that may lead to policy change in the future. One common theme is that social entrepreneurship involves innovative approaches to developing an organization and funding to create social value.

Thus, in the next section, we will cover three core topics in public affairs that have a new twist in social entrepreneurship classes: organizational structure, performance measurement, and internal organizational behavior. These topics, widely taught in public affairs courses, are explored here employing language specific to social entrepreneurship studies.

Organizational Structure

Housing social entrepreneurship courses and specializations in public affairs schools and programs is a smart fit, as social enterprise tends to function in a hybrid way—somewhere in between the three economic sectors (Billis, 2010). The shift from government to governance in public affairs curriculum over the past 20 years reflects a move to cover the relationship of the three sectors primarily in government's work and service delivery. Topics that address hybridity, though often not labeled as such, are explored throughout public affairs studies. For example, emergency management approaches

use a blend of levels of government, economic sectors, and hybrid organizations (Goodchild & Glennon, 2010; Perry, 1983; Waugh & Streib, 2006).

The hybridity of a social enterprise is defined both by the organization's legal structure and by the intended outcomes (Billis, 2010; Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014; Hoffman, Badiane, & Haigh, 2012; Wexler, 2009). Though a social enterprise will express a dual or triple bottom line, this legal designation guides how an organization may administer earned income. As Wexler (2009) points out, there is no legal definition of social enterprise. His special report on the legal structures available to social enterprise provides necessary information for the social entrepreneur beginning a new organization or for the social intrapreneur² restructuring an existing organization (Brooks, 2009; Guo & Bielefeld, 2014). Wexler offers two examples: (a) an L3C, "an LLC that is formed as a low-profit limited liability company"; and (b) a benefit corporation, "a for-profit corporation that also has a social mission and is licensed to use the trade name 'B corporation'" (2009, p. 566). Murray (2012) identifies 17 states with legal designation for L3Cs, B Corporations, and other variations of these models (such as California's flexible purpose corporation statute), and in summary states that there is no single approach to legal structures for this organizational behavior.

The curricula of public affairs programs reach beyond management discussions and into governance. Billis argues that rather than existing in a purely defined sector, hybrid organizations may employ principles from multiple sectors. Future leaders of hybrid organizations can apply operational priorities embedded in their organization's social or environmental missions (Billis, 2010). For example, Ten Thousand Villages operates on a for-profit model but is staffed by volunteers and is legally a 501(c)3 in which profits are reinvested in the company to expand its fair trade mission. Interdisciplinary approaches to teaching social entrepreneurship can greatly benefit from these lessons on organizational structure offered by public affairs schools.

Performance Measurement

An enterprise that exists solely to earn a profit is by definition not a social enterprise. Social value creation is central in defining social enterprise, thus performance measures must be able to calculate this bottom line (Guo & Bielefeld, 2014). Barinaga (2013) found that a single shared measure of value across social enterprises proves challenging due to differing missions and approaches to addressing even a single social problem. Teaching public value–oriented measures may be better suited to all subdisciplines of public affairs than to business, as public affairs curricula already include instruction on mission-driven services and alternate measures for the provision of public goods. Nonprofit courses typically include strategic planning for organizations that have missions for building social value.

Indeed, a recent whole literature on public values has had a renaissance (Bozeman, 2007) that argues for incorporating social justice, environmental sustainability, and equal opportunity values. This focus on public values contributes to the suitability of teaching and integrating social entrepreneurship in the public affairs curriculum. Public values demand measures in addition to return on investment or profit measures, and public affairs faculty are skilled in developing outcomes and outputs for broader public values. Earned income—representing unrestricted funds—is part of the social entrepreneur's strategy to fund ongoing enterprises, but as profits are shifted to social causes and benefits, then service outcome measurement is required to demonstrate public value.³

Government and foundation grant applications and programs typically require substantial measures of success. Social value can be measured as changes in the individual client or the community, in individual behavior or knowledge changes, or in larger societal indicators related to impact on community well-being and quality of life—these measures are all part of public affairs performance management literatures.

Internal Organizational Behavior

Social entrepreneurship is not limited to organizational structure or individual behavior

(Guo & Bielefeld, 2014; Kistruck & Beamish, 2010). Managers within an established organization can behave in ways that improve functionality while creating social value—thus acting *socially intrapreneurial.* An approach to teaching social entrepreneurship can focus on organizational behaviors that shift an entity's mission from client programs delivered in a traditional hierarchy to social value creation in flexible organizational partnerships. These organizational behaviors include active leadership support for entrepreneurial activities within the organization, formal policy supportive of innovative behavior, or loose management structures allowing for decision making by both frontline staff and management (Goldsmith et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2012; Young, 2011).

At the curricular level, both business and public affairs schools may utilize this distinction between organizational structure and organizational behavior in the way they teach social entrepreneurship. AshokaU (2014, p. 56) notes two primary teaching approaches in undergraduate social entrepreneurship degrees. One approach uses business training and business plan development as a foundation to attract students who want to develop a new social enterprise. A second approach is more designed for students who will manage organizations in constant change and global interaction.

This second approach helps students acquire skills to develop new programs geared to social value or, alternatively, to develop new funding streams within organizations that are not wholly new enterprises but that require creative leadership, new problem and solution definition, and a capacity to work collaboratively with other organizations. And the second approach, as a general focus, may be the better suited to public affairs programs' strengths even while public affairs courses continue to allow students to choose to create new social ventures.

In the next section, we present the detailed analysis of our research methods and the curriculum content of public affairs programs' social entrepreneurship courses.

CURRENT APPROACHES TO TEACHING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Method and Data

For our primary data, we conducted a summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of the social entrepreneurship programs and courses offered in public affairs (including public administration and public policy) programs and schools in the United States. A list of 30 top-ranked public affairs programs recognized by U.S. News & World Report (2012) served as our initial sampling frame. Based on a review of the websites of the top 30 schools, those with social entrepreneurship courses, certificates, or competitions were selected for inclusion in this study. An Internet search produced additional social entrepreneurship courses in U.S. public affairs programs, which are also included in our sample. Programs that merely mentioned social entrepreneurship as a topic within a course were excluded.

To identify these programs, first a manual search of each public affairs program's web page for *social entrepreneurship* and related keywords was conducted. If none were found, an Internet search engine was used. Fifteen schools in the top 30 were identified as offering social entrepreneurship courses. We were able to obtain syllabi from 14 of those schools. Two schools in the top 30 were identified as offering other related programs, such as certificates or competitions, in their curriculum. Two additional schools (not ranked in the top 30) were identified as offering courses and included here as well.

A great diversity of universities is represented in our sample, as demonstrated by their geographic location, public/private distinction, and enrollment size. The sample includes 14 public and five private universities located in 14 states and the District of Columbia and in all major regions of the United States. They vary considerably by enrollment size: five universities of between 10,000 and 20,000 students, seven between 21,000 and 40,000, six between 41,000 and 60,000, and one with more than 61,000 students. This sample is not a comprehensive list of all social entrepreneurship programs in the United

States, but instead a reasonably sized sample of social entrepreneurship programs located within public affairs schools or programs. AshokaU's recent (2014) survey of 215 universities world-wide found that only 6% of social entrepre-neurship initiatives were housed in public policy or public administration schools, which suggests that our relatively small sample may represent a fairly high percentage of social entrepreneurship courses currently taught in public affairs programs. But given our sampling limitations, we aimed not to establish sample to population generalizability but rather to pro-vide a variety of cases that offer rich descriptions and explanations for the variety of courses and topics offered (Firestone, 1993).

The presence of a course on social entrepre-neurship was assessed by noting the words in a course title or as the main objective present-ed in a course description or objectives. Once courses were located, an attempt was made to acquire a syllabus. If made available online, it was downloaded; if not, it was requested directly from the course instructor or a program administrator. We attempted to obtain the most current syllabus for each course. Sixteen course syllabi were collected (two of the 19 public administration programs did not offer courses, and we were unable to obtain a syllabus for one of the courses): 10 syllabi for graduate-level courses and six for undergraduate.

Though no assumptions or hypotheses were made about what would be learned from this search, patterns were expected. Many topics within the syllabi were identified and easily categorized into the themes presented later in this paper. Through our inductive analysis of the syllabi, we identified five distinctive cate-gories of course topics. After examining an initial sample of 12 syllabi, no further categories arose from examining additional syllabi. In this way, we believe theoretical saturation was attained (Mason, 2010). A list of the syllabi collected is available in Appendix A.

Titles of books required in the course, course topics, and course evaluation methods were identified and compared in an effort to identify similarities. After a review of overall program-matic approaches, the findings of the syllabus analysis are presented through narrative and descriptive tables on three content areas: (a) course topics, (b) assigned reading materials, and (c) evaluation mechanisms. A brief descrip-tion of specialized and interdisciplinary programs completes this section.

Findings and Discussion

Programmatic Approaches. By reviewing the schools' websites or contacting the school directly, 19 public affairs programs were identi-fied as incorporating some type of social entre-preneurship education into their curriculum, ranging from competitions to single courses to certificate programs (see Table 1). All but two of the 19 programs offered at least one course. Eleven programs offered graduate courses on social entrepreneurship as part of their MPA or nonprofit certificates; six offered undergradu-ate courses.

TABLE 1.
Types of Social Entrepreneurship Education in 19 Public Affairs Programs in the United States

	Graduate course(s)	Under-graduate course(s)	No courses	Graduate certificate or undergraduate minor	Joint program with business school	Competition/challenge
N schools	11	6	2	4	3	1

Four of the top-ranked public affairs schools offered a graduate certificate or undergraduate minor in social entrepreneurship; three of these schools indicated their programs were offered in partnership with their university's business school. One program, at Arizona State University, offered a graduate certificate in Social Entrepreneurship and Community Development online.

Many of the business schools that incorporated social entrepreneurship studies, at the universities included for analysis, provided challenges or competitions; only one public administration program, the University of Texas at Austin's RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service, which is housed in the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, advertised such an event at the time of the analysis. It may be the case that rather than hosting their own social entrepreneurship challenges, public affairs programs refer their students to externally hosted events, to support an interdisciplinary approach or to avoid duplication or competition for student participation. Additionally, it was common for the public affairs programs to house their social entrepreneurship education within their nonprofit curriculum as either a core course or an elective for a graduate-level nonprofit certificate or specialization.

Course Topics.[4] A considerable range of course topics were identified across this sample of social entrepreneurship syllabi. True to the prac-

tical approach of MPA courses, topics tended to focus on developing a social enterprise rather than empirically analyzing causal factors of social entrepreneurial organizational or individual behavior. Table 2 presents a breakdown of the frequency of appearance of topics in the syllabi, and reflects a common topical approach to teaching this subject.

The content of the courses was quite diverse, requiring us to generalize the topics into broader categories such as *finance and fund-raising* and *management.*[5] In Table 2, the 23 original course topics have been grouped into six general categories. All of the courses explored *defining social entrepreneurship.* Course topics included in this category are social change and legal distinctions between sectors. About two thirds of the courses (11) included either *marketing,* market research, or marketing plans. Learning to build a social enterprise or incorporating social entrepreneurship into existing organizations was often a course objective, and the topic category of *business models and plans* was included in nearly all (15) of the courses. Also included in the business models and plans category is the concept of *going to scale* or growing a project. Fourteen courses discussed *measuring outcomes,* using language such as measuring performance, social impact, or social value.

Surprisingly, only just over half (six) of the graduate courses included *management* topics,

TABLE 2.
Topic Categories in Social Entrepreneurship Syllabi

	Defining SE	Marketing	Business models and plans	Finance and fund-raising	Measuring outcomes	Management
Graduate syllabi (n = 10)	10	6	9	10	9	6
Undergraduate syllabi (n = 6)	6	5	6	6	5	5
Total (N = 16)	16	11	15	16	14	11

Note. SE = social entrepreneurship.

TABLE 3.
Social Entrepreneurship Syllabi With Topics Related to Finance and Fund-Raising

	Earned income	Philan-thropy	Government funding	Fund-raising	Financial management
Graduate syllabi (n = 10)	9	6	3	2	2
Undergraduate syllabi (n = 6)	4	3	3	3	0
Total (N = 16)	13	9	6	5	2

though nearly all (five) of the undergraduate courses did so. This category included management and governance, human resources, leadership, partnerships, intrapreneurship, and ethics. This deficit in the graduate programs may reflect an understanding that management topics are often covered in core courses in public affairs programs and do not need to be duplicated in a specialized course. Instructors may sacrifice management topics in graduate courses with confidence that they will be covered elsewhere. The gap in attention to management in the graduate courses was addressed in the undergraduate courses, where five of the six courses included at least one management topic.

Because finance is one characteristic that distinguishes social entrepreneurship, it warrants further review. All 16 courses covered *finance and fund-raising* through a variety of approaches. The course descriptions mentioned "earned income as a form of revenue generation," "entrepreneurial techniques," or "commercial entrepreneurship." Topics include *earned income, investments, philanthropy, public sector funding, fund-raising,* and *financial management.* Few course objectives referenced finance topics, however, despite its centrality to social entrepreneurship and its inclusion in some courses. One may infer that given finance is not listed in the course objectives or specific skills that students will acquire as learning competencies, the instructors may provide only a general understanding of the subject matter, rather than in-depth social enterprise finance competencies.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the course topics related to finance. There was little consistency across courses on the topics provided. As expected, the most common finance topic was earned income. Financial management was incorporated least often (in only two courses), which was consistent with the overall dearth of management topics. It is possible, however, that financial management may have been incorporated as a subtopic in discussions about the economic sectors and business plan development.

One undergraduate course reviewed included all finance topics except for financial management. Students in an undergraduate course in a social sciences school are less likely than students in a business school or in an MPA program to have been exposed to finance-related courses. An undergraduate course may thus require a more comprehensive inclusion of finance topics, different from what might be expected of a graduate-level course, where students are getting that material in other public affairs classes.

Three topics found in the graduate course syllabi did not fall neatly into the broad categories reported in Table 2: (a) politics and public policy (three courses), (b) an international approach to social entrepreneurship (four courses), and (c) theoretical explanations (one course). These key topics may have been sacrificed by other instructors in order to allow more time for exploring the mechanics of the social enterprise proposal or plan. Alternatively, these discussions may have taken place as subtopics to other

topics that do fit in the general categories, or appear in case examples.

Reading Materials. A course textbook sets the tone for an instructor's approach to the material. The 38 textbooks identified in the syllabi in this study ranged from handbooks or models for social entrepreneurship (Brooks, 2009; Dees, Emerson, & Economy, 2001) to case reviews (Bornstein, 2004; Eggers, Singh, and Goldsmith, 2009). As is reflected in the varying course approaches, some books cover research methods and empirically sound models (Light, 2008; Nicholls, 2008), while others primarily provide case or historical examples of successful social entrepreneurs (Mortenson & Relin, 2007; Schwartz, 2012). One course included classic literature: *The Aeneid*, introducing Aeneas as the quintessential social entrepreneur (Shockley & Frank, 2010), and *The Grand Inquisitor* (Dostoyevsky & Guignon, 1993).

Guo and Bielefeld's 2014 book, *Social Entrepreneurship: An Evidence-Based Approach to Creating Social Value*, was required in two courses and marries much of the public affairs literature on social entrepreneurship with that available in the business management discipline. Their emphasis is less on building a wholly new enterprise and more on increasing innovation within existing organizations. Much of the textbook focuses on this idea of intrapreneurship and social entrepreneurship in the public sector. This differs from Brook's 2009 textbook, *Social Entrepreneurship*, and also *Enterprising Nonprofits:*

A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs by Dees, Emerson, and Economy (2001), both of which provide step-by-step guides for constructing a new social enterprise. Brooks (2009) provides tools and strategies from the for-profit and nonprofit sectors while Dees, Emerson, and Economy (2001) focus on applying these tools to the nonprofit sector.

Studies published in management journals in public affairs and business administration schools, as well as studies from the *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, were required reading in some courses. The articles provided both empirical analyses and theoretical explanations of entrepreneurial behavior—both organizational and individual. Though peer-reviewed journal articles had a stronger presence, news articles were a common source of current trends in the field and case examples. The variety of assigned reading materials could indicate (a) ample presence of social entrepreneurship in academic literature or (b) lack of agreement on the concept itself. The list of articles identified in the reviewed syllabi is too comprehensive to include here (one graduate course listed 73 scholarly and news articles to read during the semester, with an average of six readings per week). Key pieces of literature are cited in the literature review, and a list of the required textbooks is included in Appendix B.

Evaluation Mechanisms. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the mechanisms for evaluating student learning, skills, and knowledge. Only four of

TABLE 4.

Evaluation Mechanisms Used in Social Entrepreneurship Syllabi

	Exam or quiz	Case reviews	Business plans or proposals
Graduate syllabi (*n* = 10)	4	7	6
Undergraduate syllabi (*n* = 6)	1	4	5
Total (*N* = 16)	5	11	11

the graduate courses and one of the under-graduate courses employed exams or quizzes as evaluation mechanisms. These exams were often accompanied by case studies or other small assignments such as journaling or online dis-cussions. Courses without formal exams or quizzes relied on individual and group-based design of social enterprises, case studies, and class participation. This approach to evaluation requires students to create a detailed business plan for a social enterprise from opportunity identification to mission development to income sources to risk minimization. Students then "pitch" their ideas to the class or to visiting social entrepreneurs. Business plans or proposals were the preferred method; only five of the courses did not require a business plan, though one offered this as an option among five choices for the final paper requirement. In addition to the business plan option, the final paper options included research on an area related to social entrepreneurship, a case analysis of an existing social venture, or a comparison of several social ventures addressing the same social problems.

An informative finding was the varying ap-proaches to reviewing cases. Students evaluated social entrepreneurship in ways that included (a) identifying news stories of social entrepre-neurs, (b) writing term papers assessing indiv-idual social enterprises, (c) preparing discussion questions, and (d) engaging with local social entrepreneurs who served as guest speakers. Some instructors incorporated specific case examples presented by Harvard Business Review or available in textbooks like *Entrepre-neurship in the Social Sector* by Wei-Skillern and colleagues (2007). Other instructors required students to seek their own case examples and present them to the class online or in the class-room. The objective appeared to be to expose students to a large variety of social entrepreneurs and enterprises. Instructors measured students' competence on the subject matter through the written analyses of the cases on online dis-cussion boards or final papers. Students were asked to compare the entrepreneurial behavior in the case examples to explanations posed by assigned readings and lectures or to propose solutions to problems faced in the cases.

Two courses set out to connect students directly with social entrepreneurs within the local com-munity. One course actively paired students with social entrepreneur mentors associated with the university in order for the mentor to guide the student through the development of a business plan. Another course required an informal needs assessment of local organizations addressing social issues of interest to the students, including by attending meetings held by community groups. About two thirds (10) of the courses made a brief connection to social entrepreneurs by having them serve as guest speakers.

Overview of Content. The course content was diverse, though most courses walked students through generating a business plan for a so-cial enterprise. The step-by-step approach of identifying opportunities, developing a mission statement, identifying legal structures and funding streams, and measuring outcomes was common. Analyzing theory as it relates to prac-tice was less of a focus. Most courses reflected a practical approach to program development.

As expected, each course presented a definition of social entrepreneurship in the initial meeting periods. The reading materials reflected the inclusion of discussions around blended, or hybrid, organizational structures as well as the variety of performance measures available to social entrepreneurs. Eleven courses discussed the measurement of social value, a determining factor between commercial entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. An additional course included readings on social impact, but not specifically the measurement of social im-pact. And finally, by reviewing a multitude of case examples, students observed patterns in the organizational behavior of these entities.

Overall, in the majority of these classes, stu-dents learn how to develop a plan for a social enterprise. They are provided a successive ap-proach to the tools and skills needed to bring the project to fruition. Measuring the achievement of this competency may be better accomplished through the development of a business plan or case assessment rather than through a formal exam.

Specializations in Social Entrepreneurship. Three public affairs programs exemplify a thorough academic exploration of social entrepreneurship. More importantly, they provide students with a connection between academia and practice and a hands-on experience of creating social value. The School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Bloomington offers a graduate Certificate in Social Entrepreneurship in partnership with the university's Kelley School of Business and Center on Philanthropy. This program includes coursework from the public affairs and business schools in addition to an internship requiring students to work directly with local organizations.

Georgia State University's Andrew Young School offers a graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management and Social Enterprise. The program is rooted in nonprofit courses addressing the sector as a whole, financial resources and management, and human resources. Electives are offered in a variety of nonprofit practice areas, such as disaster management and international nongovernmental organizations. The program promises to prepare the practitioner for the field and the student for higher-level academia.

New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service offers an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor. Required and elective courses are housed within public administration and business. Students are required to split their courses between the two departments, presumably to inform future work across "public and private boundaries" (Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, n.d.). The university also offers field experience where students spend a week learning the culture and engaging in social entrepreneurial activities in another country following 15 hours of coursework in the classroom in New York.

Interdisciplinary Approaches. In this search for social entrepreneurship programs at universities housing top-ranked public affairs programs, interdisciplinary programs were also discovered. Programs such as business, engineering, and art schools were all found to be

partners in larger interdisciplinary programs; the public affairs programs were not always identified as partners, however. For instance, the Marshall School of Business and the Leventhal School of Accounting partnered at the University of Southern California to offer a social entrepreneurship minor.

The challenge and competition opportunities offered by all of the programs identified as having such events were open to all students of all disciplines registered at the university. Other programs that supplemented coursework but were open to students at large were offered as well, such as the lecture series at the Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with leaders from private foundations, social entrepreneurs, and representatives from local human service organizations. In these interdisciplinary and open programs, students throughout campus can benefit.

Duke offers a social entrepreneurship program with progressive levels of engagement and campus-wide emphasis including schools of medicine, engineering, public policy, and business. Cocurricular activities like speaker series, hackathons, and start-up challenges are open to students university-wide. Students hear from seasoned social entrepreneurs and are also supported in building their own solution to social problems. Additionally, an immersion program at Duke is a highly hands-on experience, where students are immersed for summer- or yearlong programs with local experts and organizations in major U.S. cities. The Enterprising Leadership Initiative, housed in Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy, combines coursework, fieldwork, a project incubator, and mentorship opportunities with alumni to provide students with hands-on experiences in solving social problems. This cutting-edge program takes students from the classroom to implementing innovative solutions in the field. Though other universities offer a start-to-finish approach to social enterprise generation, none of the others reviewed were as comprehensive and flexible as Duke's program.

CONCLUSION

Interest in social entrepreneurship on university campuses is growing rapidly. This is due to a number of factors that suggest that public affairs programs will and should become more central in offering social entrepreneurship classes and participating as partners in social entrepreneurship programs that are cross-disciplinary majors and certificates on university campuses. What accounts for this great increase in interest in social entrepreneurship education? First, student demand for these classes and for learning how to tackle social change is increasing (AshokaU, 2014, p. 43). Millennials are a generation raised on technology, globalization, and entrepreneurial action (Howe & Strauss, 2000). They bring these interests to universities, and believe they can make social change. Social entrepreneurship classes enable these ambitions to be better understood and, perhaps, realized.

Second, universities are being asked to be more responsive to community needs; university civic engagement and service-learning programs from the past 15 years are finding common ground with social entrepreneurship programs and promoting the development of these programs across campus (AshokaU, 2014). Social entrepreneurship is a unifying theme that cuts across all disciplines; it can unite students who bring different disciplinary perspectives, ranging from engineering, politics, law, business, and communications, to work on projects or new organizations designed to address issues related to sustainability, poverty, clean water and air, housing, and a host of other societal concerns. Public affairs programs have already established close ties with community partners for internship and service-learning placements, and the required practitioner orientation of social entrepreneurship classes is consistent with public affairs teaching approaches.

A third factor is that universities are under pressure (often from legislatures and elected officials) to be relevant, to provide students with employable skills, and to promote economic development in their community. Social entrepreneurship offers a way to contribute to these broad goals, particularly as the social entrepreneurship coursework is often supplemented with more traditional disciplinary training. Finally, university presidents seem to embrace social entrepreneurship as a positive cross-campus theme and way to unite siloed disciplinary programs that do not teach their students collaborative and cross-disciplinary perspectives (AshokaU, 2014). Students must solve complex problems in the workplace, and these offerings teach problem definition, solution development, and sustainability requirements that are consistent with learning to solve complex social problems.

Our paper has presented detailed descriptive information on the topics and approaches used to teach social entrepreneurship courses in a sample primarily of the top 30 public affairs programs. As teachers working within a campus-wide social entrepreneurship initiative, we believe this approach offers the best options for students to learn the skills and entrepreneurial behavior that enables successful social entrepreneurial ventures. This belief is coupled with a certainty that the confluence of values, skills, and knowledge that public affairs programs offer, in organizational structure and behavior, policy, and management, are all highly relevant to students who endeavor to be social entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs at any level of government or nonprofit organization.

Most of the courses reviewed here are attached to the nonprofit management specialization, although many of the degree programs are interdisciplinary. The analysis of these public affairs social entrepreneurship classes show that they cover additional material than that covered in established classes in management and organizational behavior, material such as business plans, social change, and scaling for impact. Social entrepreneurship reflects activities in all sectors, but its hybrid nature particularly suits the public affairs perspective.

Our review supports the conclusion drawn from a review of 215 university programs in social entrepreneurship: that there is a wide variety of approaches and definitions. The authors of this review conclude that this is healthy for the

field; as they say, "we don't particularly care what you want to call it, but we very much care whether or not you are doing it and whether or not it is working" AshokaU (2014, p. 25). The report goes on to say:

> It will become increasingly necessary for social innovation educators and campus leaders to make a "breadth vs. depth" decision: Will we adhere to a narrow definition of social entrepreneurship and only strengthen programs designed to launch professional social entrepreneurs, for example? Or will we focus on expanding programs that serve the interests of students from varying disciplines with broad and diverse life and career goals? (AshokaU, 2014, p. 25)

We believe that public affairs programs are more likely not to focus on preparing students who want to become professional social entrepreneurs, but rather to focus on empowering students who work in the governance arena to be social change agents, and to understand the existing tools and development processes for creating radically new programs or organizations.

In the course syllabi we reviewed, the stated course objectives included understanding the basics (e.g., "Define and discuss key terminology, concepts and theories") as well as efforts toward motivation and confidence (e.g., "To empower [students] to develop their own innovative solutions to difficult social problems around the world"). There were immediate understandings (e.g., "Learn the function of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise in communities") and also intentions for long-term, individual goal setting (e.g., "Realization of alternative career options in making life choices and, possibly, greater confidence").

Considering the aggregate of course topics in our sample, we expect students will come to feel comfortable assembling or evaluating plans for a social enterprise. With the high quantity of case reviews incorporated throughout the courses, dual and triple bottom lines will be considered the norm rather than special or unique. Ample practice pitching ideas in class, at the hackathons, and as part of social entrepreneurship competitions and challenges will ensure that students graduate and move into the workforce as strong, confident presenters.

Some of the reviewed courses are a department's single effort at including social entrepreneurship in the curriculum, and this may result in students who lack the skills to plan beyond start-up. It is expected that a majority of start-up commercial enterprises will fail; this is also likely true for start-up social enterprises whose missions reach beyond profit. If public affairs programs focus too heavily on idea pitches and start-ups, students may be left lacking key skills for managing their organizations. Thus organizational sustainability, outside of financial sustainability, may be a struggle. Other public affairs courses can buttress the skills gained in the social entrepreneurship course, while social entrepreneurship courses present innovative conceptual and development approaches to social and organizational change.

Our ultimate goal with this research was to gather resources for developing the first social entrepreneurship course for the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy at Florida State University. Applying the results of this analysis, we developed a course that follows the core findings: six core topic areas (see Table 2), ample exposure to case examples and connections with local social entrepreneurs, and the tools and confidence to generate a plan for building a social enterprise. At the time this paper is published, we will be in our sixth offering of the course, with full enrollment each semester. A quote from an email sent to one of the authors by a student four months after the student's graduation articulates our success:

> It was your class that helped me realize having a career with non-profits or socially conscious organizations was even an option. Your class not only gave me a sense of direction but helped me discover what I believe to be a passion that I will have for the rest of my life.

NOTES

1 This research was prompted by an effort to design a social entrepreneurship course and a larger social entrepreneurship program within the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy. The authors had not previously taught such a course; thus the content analysis of the small but sufficient selection of syllabi provided a toolbox from which to build a course plan.

2 A social intrapreneur is someone who works inside of an organization to achieve radical change or follow the principles of social entrepreneurship.

3 The authors thank an anonymous reviewer for sharing this insight.

4 A caveat should be noted: A summative content analysis of a course syllabus cannot tap into the course lectures and class dialogue. Consequently, this course topic review provides merely the face value of what a course has to offer to a student.

5 Italicized terms represent course topics, themes, or categories of topics discovered in the syllabus review.

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APPENDIX A

Course Syllabi Included in Analysis

Public Affairs Programs With Courses in Social Entrepreneurship

School	Course level	Course title
Syracuse University (Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs)	Graduate	EEE 600: Social Entrepreneurship (Spring 2008)
Indiana University Bloomington	Graduate	SPEA V559: Principles and Practices of Social Entrepreneurship
University of Georgia	Graduate	PADP 8220: Social Entrepreneurship (Fall 2009)
New York University (Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service)	Undergraduate	P11.0064: Understanding Social Entrepreneurship: How to Change the World One Venture at a Time (Fall 2010)
George Washington University	Graduate	PPPA 6033: Nonprofit Enterprise (Spring 2014)
Florida State University	Undergraduate	PAD 4946: Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Spring 2014)
University of Minnesota	Graduate	PA 5144: Social Entrepreneurship (Spring 2014)
University of Texas at Austin	Undergraduate	PA388L/MAN 385/SW 395K: Social Entrepreneurship (Fall 2010)
Arizona State University	Graduate	NLM 562: Social Entrepreneurship (Summer 2012)
Georgia State University	Graduate	PMAP 8232: Social Enterprise (Fall 2014)
Duke University (Sanford School of Public Policy)	Undergraduate	PPS144s: Social Entrepreneurship in Action: Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector (February 2012)
University of Colorado Denver	Graduate	PUAD 5180/7180: Social Entrepreneurship (Summer 2012)
University of Maryland—College Park	Graduate	BUMO758D-DC06 PUAF689D: Social Entrepreneurship (Summer 2013)
Portland State University	Graduate	PA 541: Social Entrepreneurship (Spring 2014)
University of Colorado-Colorado Springs	Undergraduate	PAD 2180: Social Entrepreneurship
Tufts University	Undergraduate	AMER 141, ELS 141: Innovative Social Enterprises: Nurturing Social and Civic Good (Fall 2010)

APPENDIX B

Books Listed in Course Syllabi

Bornstein, D. (2004). *How to change the world: Social entrepreneurs and the power of new ideas (1st ed.).* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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APPENDIX B (continued)

Books Listed in Course Syllabi

Karlan, D. A., & Appel, J. (2011). *More than good intentions: How a new economics is helping to solve global poverty*. New York, NY: Dutton.

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