

A course in social innovation

For the students of Sociology and related programs (O6)

Introduction

This course was created as one of the outcomes and as a product of the ‘Building the culture of social innovation in higher education’ project implemented by Collegium Civitas in partnership with the University of Iceland, the University of Northampton and Ashoka, co-founded by the European Commission. Thus it is meant as one of the basic building blocks in the didactic portfolio of Collegium Civitas at the area of social innovation. In this sense it also attempts to contribute to the development of the culture of social innovation at Collegium Civitas¹.

On the other hand the course addresses the growing popularity of social innovativeness in Poland and aims at delivering an informed and useful didactic boost to this process that is currently facing at least several significant barriers. A gap between enthusiasm and expectations unlocked in the recent years and shortage of more systemic and critical approaches towards the development of social innovations seems to be appealing. A visible lack of leadership and still too limited number of skilled and competent actors in the sector is another, practical factor hampering its growth in Poland. Finally, rapidly changing environments and markets as well as numerous social, economic and political challenges brought by the 21st century are yet another bunch of obstacles to be put under consideration. Therefore by providing

¹ with a particular focus on the CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) area where it is considered to remain underdeveloped;

(even a basic) new didactic tool for the teachers, that takes into account the above phenomena, this course attempts to contribute to the development of social innovations in general.

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared for the European Commission; however, it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Methodic assumptions

There are three overall didactic goals of the course:

- (1) to introduce the very idea of social innovation and a number of related topics, including the concept of critical thinking as the intellectual backbone of any innovation and the notion of social innovation culture as a so much needed systemic, systematic and sustainable approach to social innovation;
- (2) to provide a variety of real-life examples of social innovations – adjusted to the profile of the students enrolled for the course and to the local environment – not only to facilitate a better understanding of the theoretical concepts and mechanisms presented but also to trigger enthusiasm about social innovation;
- (3) to enable and encourage students to develop their own projects inspired by social innovations, but also join, support and develop already existing initiatives.

Within this process a number of other specific learning goals are to be achieved, including knowledge and understanding of selected social problems and their potential solutions by the means of social innovativeness, various tools, methods and current trends in social innovation as well as the importance of the business insights and approaches in the process of solving social problems. The course is also meant

to develop certain practical skills in project management, creative thinking, critical thinking, interpersonal cooperation, analysis of complex social phenomena and application of certain theoretical concepts learned to design solutions inspired by social innovations.

Simultaneously, it was assumed that no direct recipes on how to become innovative exists. In this sense this course rather aims at arranging circumstances and conditions where innovativeness can blossom naturally. It is also for that reason why the content of the course is meant to be at least partially delivered directly by social innovators (changemakers) and why the exercises worked out during the classes should be based on real life case studies. Special focus should be paid to maintain a good balance between unlocking potential of individuals enrolled for the course and developing collaborative skills and participatory approaches helping to better understand the concept of leadership.

Acknowledgements

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The main part of this document – to be found below – is a detailed description of the course addressed to the teachers interested in undertaking the effort to conduct classes in social innovation. It follows from the general assumptions of the project ‘Building the culture of social innovation in higher education’ that the general description of the course should be diversified with respect to specific needs of three different target groups – students of sociology, students of new media and students of management. Therefore this version of the course is meant for the students of Sociology and related teaching programs. In this sense special attention on learning outcomes relevant from the point of view of education in sociology was paid, especially learning outcomes as well as selection of examples and case studies. It should be underlined, however, that these instructions and guidelines should not be overwhelmingly

binding. All didactic elements can be adjusted, customized and changed as long as they serve the students.

The structure of the course is based on three modules employing three different didactic approaches / learning methods though serving the same goal (it is worth noting that these three modules correspond with the three didactic aims mentioned in the previous subsection):

→ **Module 1** – learning-through-critical-reflection

→ **Module 2** – learning-through-practical-insights

→ **Module 3** – learning-through-direct-experience (learning-by-doing)

The content of the course:

Module 1: Where and how innovation starts?

Meeting 1.1 Critical thinking

Meeting 1.2 What is innovation?

Meeting 1.3 How to trigger creativity/innovativeness?

Meeting 1.4 What it is and why it is worth to implement and develop social innovation culture?

Module 2: Social innovation – theory of practice & theory in practice

Meeting 2.1 Study visit 1

Meeting 2.2 Study visit 2

Meeting 2.3 Social economy as a natural framework/ground for social innovation

Meeting 2.4 Creative workshop: arranging your own SI project

Module 3: How to launch social innovation? (students' projects | potentially combined with internships)

Meeting 3.1 A project in social innovation: people, synergy & collective capital

Meeting 3.2 A project in social innovation: money & managing resources

Meeting 3.3 A project in social innovation: promotion & marketing

Meeting 3.4 A project in social innovation: monitoring & evaluation

Module | Meeting 4: Wrap-up | sum-up

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

Module 1: Where and how innovation starts?

Meeting 1.1 Critical thinking

Usually social innovation occurs in the situations where a problem is being spotted or a new approach of an old problem occurs. Being in position to observe this new phenomenon or to perceive things differently is a question of having the ability to think critically. The same critical skill is needed at the path to new, innovative solutions. Therefore the course starts with a reflection and bunch of exercises concerning the critical sense.

Plan:

00:00-00:20 introduction to the course

teacher's activities: as this is the very first meeting with the students, the teacher presents the idea of the course and its overall aims, including main assumptions, needs and didactic objectives, motivations, he/she also very briefly explains why a course on social innovation is conducted, what is the role of social innovation in the contemporary world; the conditions and rules, assessment criteria and structure are being provided;

students' activities: active listening;

00:20-00:40 riddles, games and exercises explaining the concept of 'presupposition'

teacher's activities: the teacher provides examples of presuppositions in the form of riddles: (a) how to answer questions like: 'When did you stop accepting bribes?', 'Is the present king of France bald-headed?'; (b) riddles with infinitely many correct answers, for example: 'what is the next number in the sequence 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23?'; (c) video films – for example commercials like Spike Jonze's Ikea commercial – based on the concept of presupposition; (d) a set of pictures of people's faces is being presented to the students – students are being asked to say the profession of those pictured, however the

examples are chosen in a counter-stereotypic way, which makes the task more challenging; finally the teacher provides the formal definition of 'presupposition' and explains the concept and its usage in the spoken language;

students' activities: solving riddles, taking part in the conversation, active listening;

00:40-01:00 a short introduction to critical thinking on the basis of the theory of presuppositions

teacher's activities: the teacher explains what is the importance of the figure of 'presupposition' for critical thinking and overcoming obviousnesses; he/she also provides other concepts and figures related to critical thinking and explains how it unlocks innovativeness;

students' activities: active listening;

01:00-01:15 discussion on the role of critical thinking for pinpointing relevant social needs

teacher's activities: the teacher provokes a discussion on the role of critical thinking for pinpointing and revealing relevant social needs (as a benchmark example the teacher can present the project of AnaBella Estevez, who implemented a small yet crucial change in her work with people experiencing violence in their relations by referring to and calling them 'survivors' and not 'victims'); a few possible points of engagement: (a) provide examples of social problems and ask what stereotype had to be broken in order to get aware of the problem; (b) question how people understand 'being critical' and how other usually react to critical attitudes + why they react in this way?

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

01:15-01:30 discussion on the role of critical thinking for developing innovative solutions

teacher's activities: the teacher provokes a discussion on the role of critical thinking for developing innovative solutions; a few possible points of engagement: (a) provide examples of innovative solutions and ask what stereotype had to be broken in order to discover a given solution; (b) which circumstances are needed to happen in order to increase the chance or facilitate the process of finding a solution to a

given problem? (c) how a given stereotype can be perceived as a problem on the one hand and as a potential / resource on the other?

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

Desired learning outcomes:

→ student understands the concept of presupposition and can apply it to explain plurality of points of views on various issues

→ student has and demonstrates understanding of the role of critical thinking in the process of creating social innovation

→ student skillfully analyzes various social contexts, pinpointing various social needs as well as their causes expressed in a variety of narrations

!!! first two classes are crucial for planting/eliciting the feeling of inspiration & enthusiasm about social innovation and the very course itself !!!

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

→ student has and demonstrates understanding of sociological background/explanations of processes of social construction of stereotypes and presuppositions

→ student is able to apply classical theories from the field of sociology and social psychology (Berne, Bourdieu, Goffman) to describe mechanisms potentially unlocking creative/critical thinking about social innovations

Some useful links, materials & homeworks:

→ criticalthinking.org

→ research.omicsgroup.org/index.php/Critical_thinking

→ for more advanced/eager readers: Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*

→ students can be asked to try to figure out three things that seem to be obvious at their university (but they are not!)

→ students can be asked to try to figure out three things that are solved and everyone habituated to these solutions even though they are not satisfactory

→ students can be asked to try to figure out three resources that are not used / exploited enough at their university (like for example: people having time waiting in the queue to the shop; waste paper from the printer; energy produced by the students moving from place to place) as well as develop some initial ideas on how they can be employed

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Meeting 1.2 What is social innovation?

There are as many definitions and approaches to social innovation as misconceptions and misunderstandings around it. Thus it is relevant to spent one meeting on pondering the very definition of social innovation making it as meaningful as possible, despite this variety of approaches (which actually should be perceived as a creative advantage). Thus an overall goal of this meeting is to get familiar with the concept and, even more importantly, with its many incarnations, examples as well as critical approaches towards it.

Plan:

00:00-00:15 work in groups to discuss on basic terms ('social', 'innovation', 'social innovation')

teacher's activities: splits the class into three groups working/discussing on terms 'social', 'innovation' and 'social innovation'; supports the three groups during the discussion trying to focus their attention on the task; after the groups finish their tasks he/she asks representatives of the groups to present their

findings and provokes a discussion asking to what extent ‘social innovation’ could be perceived as a mechanical combination of ‘social’ and ‘innovation’;

students’ activities: discuss/work in groups supervised by the teacher; present their findings;

00:15-00:30 introduction to „official” theory of social innovations, providing more classical definitions, key concepts

teacher’s activities: the teacher provides a number of classical definitions of ‘social innovation’, discusses and critically analyses the key concepts traditionally associated with ‘social innovation’ (as there is no single orthodox approach it is the teacher’s decision how to present the topic); a bridge (or: bridges) between the “official” lines and the findings of the student groups should be found and underlined;

students’ activities: active listening;

00:30-01:00 examples of social innovation – Skype calls, websites, concepts

teacher’s activities: the teacher provides a number of examples of ‘social innovation’, emphasizing the characteristic features distinguishing them from ‘business innovations’ on the one hand and ‘social initiatives’ in general on the other hand (as there is no fixed list of examples it is the teacher’s decision which of them he/she will present – the key suggestion for the teacher is to not close/limit the discussion and to keep an innovative attitude to the very definition of ‘social innovation’ – important features could be analyzed with respect to following categories: responsibility, collectivity, leadership, technology, profit); many of these examples can be easily found on-line, for example using Forbes or Ashoka websites, however preferably the teacher finds examples that match the context better, are relevant in the local environment or are related to the students’ needs; establishing a short Skype connection with one or two social innovators is a recommended method; in every case, a given social innovation should be

commented by the teacher in terms of its underlying need(s), innovativeness of the solution, social benefit as well as business idea behind; (compare also: hbr.org/2013/09/innovating-for-shared-value)

students' activities: active listening;

01:00-01:15 work in groups: what distinguishes social innovation from other businesses and social initiatives

teacher's activities: the teacher splits the class into groups working/discussing, provides a number of examples of 'business innovations' (like: conveyor belt, UBER, BlaBlaCar – even though these examples were inspired (stolen) by social innovations), 'non-innovative social initiatives' (food collections, volunteer work etc.) and 'social innovations', and asks groups to recognize those which are examples of 'social innovation';

students' activities: discuss/work in groups supervised by the teacher; present their findings;

01:15-01:30 presentation of conclusions and critical discussion

teacher's activities: the teacher wraps-up the findings of the meeting, signaling issues that require further investigation and are problematic; he/she encourages a critical discussion on a number of related topics, for example: (a) is social innovation context/time/place-dependent or not? (b) why we need the concept of social innovation? wasn't we socially innovative before the notion of 'social innovation' was created? (c) how can the concept of social innovation be abused? does it create any threats? (d) who should/can decide on what is a social problem/need and what is a socially desired solution and

what is not? (e) how development of social innovativeness was commodified and serves as a pure business?

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

Desired learning outcomes:

→ student understands the basic concepts, notions and features of social innovation, being able to explain them

→ student knows and is able to recognize examples of social innovation as well as to provide their distinctive features and explain underlying core ideas

→ student has basic critical understanding of the vagueness of the notion of 'social innovation' and sees potential threats related to the topic

!!! first two classes are crucial for planting/eliciting the feeling of inspiration & enthusiasm about social innovation and the very course itself !!!

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

→ student is able to analyze concepts of innovation and social innovation in light of the contemporary social sciences, in particular sociology

→ student is capable of discussing various examples of social innovation in terms of social structures, social groups, mutual relations among them as well as their particular interests and perspectives

Some useful links, materials & homeworks:

→ ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/policy/social_pl

→ gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/centers-initiatives/csi/defining-social-innovation

→ ashoka.org/en/our-network (choose 'fellow' as the type)

→ wethinq.com/en/blog/2014/02/18/32-Inspiring-Examples-of-Social-Innovation.html

→ students can be asked to consider/investigate and/or write an essay on one of the issues discussed during the last part of the meeting

→ students can be asked to search for most interesting – in their opinion – business innovations that could be improved and “captured” (similarly as business is capturing social innovations for profit) to develop socially innovative practices by involving the social factor (also stating the question if and how this could be possible?)

→ students can be asked to search for most interesting – in their opinion – social initiatives that could be improved and “upgraded” to social innovation practices by giving them a boost of innovation

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Meeting 1.3 How to trigger creativity/innovativeness?

Once the students are familiar with the concepts of critical thinking and social innovation they should start thinking on how to trigger these things to happen. There is a number of rules that could be followed in order to unlock the potential of creative thinking. Some of them are related to the process of adopting certain emphatic attitude, whereas others have more to do with creation of an inspiring working environment. Students are encouraged to find out some of these elements by themselves.

Plan:

00:00-00:15 a warm-up discussion and drawing roles

teacher's activities: the teacher provokes a discussion on how and why the very formulation of the problem and the working environment affect it's solution; he/she also raises the question of perspective and role of the agent who is meant to find the solution; at the end of the discussion the teacher invites the students to draw stripes of paper with the role description on it – these roles and their descriptions should match cases used in the next phase of the class (see below) – the number of stripes with a given

role should match the number of groups that are going to work on the tasks (i.e. each group consists of people playing different roles);

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

00:15-01:00 working on cases

teacher's activities: the teacher presents two different short problem tasks (an easier one and a more difficult one) based on real life cases (of situation where a given problem was solved in a socially innovative way, like for instance: how to convince people to unscrew plugs in the bottles before they throw them out or how to distribute a given resource in a more effective way (the difficulty of this task is scalable by the very selection of the resource to be considered) and asks students to work out solutions; students approach these problems playing the roles they have been assigned which frame their specific perspectives; hints and details are being provided in the course of the thinking process; at the end of the session each group briefly describes the solutions found;

students' activities: discuss/work in groups supervised by the teacher; students should follow their roles; finally they present their findings;

01:00-01:15 revealing the real life scenarios/outcomes

teacher's activities: the actual solutions to these challenges are being revealed either by the teacher (possibly via video) or – preferably – by a social innovator who found a real life solution (via Skype) – it is up to the teacher how to arrange this phase;

students' activities: active listening;

01:15-01:30 critical discussion on the process of looking for a solution in terms of social innovations

teacher's activities: the teacher wraps up the game paying particular attention to the role-playing aspect and asks students to draw conclusions on which elements of the process and working environment

were supportive and which weren't; an attempt to describe an ideal working environment is to be made and to be collided with critical reflection;

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

Desired learning outcomes:

- student gains extra skills in the development of general emphatic attitude
- student sees/recognizes key elements/circumstances required for triggering creative/innovative thinking and is able to arrange/adjust his/her own working environment accordingly
- student is able to work in a group trying to look for socially innovative answers to real life challenges (also having limited access to information)

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

- student has and presents knowledge of classic sociological learning models and is able to discuss the place of innovation and innovative thinking within these models
- student perceives the ability to think in a critical and creative way in the context of development of an individual/self in the society and is able to comment on it

Some useful links, materials & homeworks:

- Edward de Bono, *The Use of Lateral Thinking* and other books
- David Kelly, Tom Kelly, *Creative Confidence* and web materials by D. Kelly
- Michael Machalko, *Cracking Creativity*
- obligatory homework as a preparation to the flipped/reversed classroom method: students are asked and encouraged to investigate/search/think-through/read on social innovation culture – in particular:

what it is? how it differs in different contexts? is it positive/common/needed? what else could it be? etc.; some useful materials can be found in the internet – for example:

→ www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/corporate-social-innovation

→ vimeo.com/24306129

→ innovationexcellence.com/blog/2016/09/05/innovation-and-organizational-culture/

Meeting 1.4 What it is and why it is worth to implement and develop social innovation culture?

One of the key concepts behind the ‘Building the culture of social innovation in higher education’ project is a systemic, systematic and sustainable approach to social innovation. Institutions/organizations/companies and other actors can build up their social innovativeness through developing social innovation culture, preferably tailored to their specific needs, goals and different environments. Meeting 1.4 is intended not to discuss this issue in its full complexity but rather present the general concept and advocate for its realization.

Plan:

00:00-00:30 an introductory discussion on social innovation culture in the flipped/reversed classroom model

teacher’s activities: the teacher encourages the students to present their findings and reflections, comments on that and answers students’ questions; if necessary he/she delivers short interventions presenting elements of the concept which were not found by the students;

students’ activities: sharing their findings, presenting their thoughts and reflections;

00:30-01:00 examples of social innovation culture

teacher’s activities: the teacher presents the most interesting examples of social innovation culture programmes being implemented in the public administration, business and NGO sectors (by the teacher via video or – preferably – by a social innovator or social innovation culture manager via Skype), discussing how that was achieved, what were the initial circumstances, how these examples are different

from each other; the selection of the specific examples is up to the teacher, however it should be adjusted and differentiated with respect to the specific learning needs and perspective of the students of Sociology and related programs; (interesting examples are to be found on Harvard Business Review website);

students' activities: active listening;

01:00-01:15 creative brainstorming on barriers to the development of social innovation culture

teacher's activities: the teacher spurs a brainstorming session on what are the possible obstacles in the process of systematic implementation of social innovation in the three types of environments: public administration, business and NGO with a particular focus on the sociological aspects of the situation;

students' activities: active participation in the brainstorming session;

01:15-01:30 critical discussion on the global context of social innovation and ethics of responsibility

teacher's activities: the teacher initiates a discussion on the global context of social innovation and ethics of responsibility (climate changes, CSR, etc.) – the discussion should be led with respect to the sociological perspective of the situation specific for the students of Sociology and related programs;

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

Desired learning outcomes:

→ student has and demonstrates understanding of the concept of social innovation culture as well as at least main reasons for its implementation

→ student knows examples of social innovation culture in various environments

→ student is able to critically assess real life cases of social innovation culture in entrepreneurial as well as ethical terms

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

→ student perceives and is able to elaborate on the issue of social innovation culture in the context of modern sociological structures and formations

→ student can describe and explain in a detailed way what is the role and interest of different social groups in public administration / business / NGO entities in case of implementation of social innovation culture patterns

Some useful links, materials & homeworks:

→ www.northampton.ac.uk/news/social-innovation/

→ ashokau.org/programs/changemakercampus/

→ a MOOC in social innovation culture developed within the framework of our 'Building the culture of social innovation in higher education'

→ (in Polish) szkolyzmoca.edu.pl/przybornik/szkoly-z-moca-o-umiejetnosciach-spolecznych/

→ students can be asked to write a short essay on barriers to the development of social innovation culture

→ students can be asked to write a short essay on global context of social innovation and ethics of responsibility

→ students can be asked to prepare a general plan of implementation of social innovation culture at their university

Module 2: Social innovation – theory of practice & theory in practice

Meeting 2.1 Study visit 1

The aim of the second module is to confront the knowledge and ideas learned within the first module context with a direct experience of social innovativeness and more practical insights. The plan to achieve this reflection is very much dependent on the particular realization of the course and the teacher's underlying plan/intention. In this sense it is also place-specific. However, there are certain elements of the study visit that should be taken into account and addressed within this meeting →

Plan:

- introduction
- explaining the key concept of a given social innovation
- social and economic context
- the general scheme: needs – challenges – solutions – actions – results
- an overview of the business model
- meetings with social innovators (preferably more than one)
- critical discussion

All these elements should be delivered by the teacher her-/himself or by the representatives of the institution/organization/company to be visited. It is the teacher's task to arrange the details of the study visit and secure the efficiency and correctness of the method adopted and resulting learning process. Students activities in this case are more or less limited to active listening and posing questions.

After the study visit the teacher should find a suitable time and place for a wrap-up and feedback session. Using this opportunity students should share their first impressions and observations. The resulting discussion could be also considered as a collective form of oral examination of the lessons learned from

the first module of course. Again, teacher's activity would be limited to leading the discussion, whereas the role of the students is to participate.

This visit should be conducted in collaboration with a chosen partner active at the field of social innovation and it is recommended to arrange this first meeting as more economically-oriented. The choice should be made with respect to the perspective of the specific target group of the course - students of Sociology and related programs.

Desired learning outcomes:

- illustration to Module 1, a base for confrontation of the theory learned with practice observed, and reflection
- general, overviewing insights to the key elements of the actually functioning social innovations, including their social and economic context, needs – challenges – solutions – actions – results analysis, and business model
- inspiration and spurring enthusiasm for the upcoming Module 3

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

- student is able to analyze observed real life cases in sociological terms, in particular explaining the role of different actors, groups and social formations as well as interactions between them
- student knows and presents skills to conduct an interview with the representatives of social enterprises in order to collect relevant information

Proposals of places to visit / organizations to meet in / near Warsaw (to be adapted by the teacher):

- targsniadaniowy.pl
- fundacja.slawek.org

Homeworks:

→ students can be asked to find more economically-oriented socially innovative initiatives

→ the teacher can ask the leaders of the institution/organization/company visited to share some of the open challenges that the institution/organization/company is facing; these problems/challenges (simplified, if needed/applicable) can be presented to students as an object of individual considerations

→ obligatory homework: students have to start thinking about social needs/problems/challenges that will become the starting point of their own projects - preferably observed at the university where the course is taking place (teachers are also encouraged to use and apply materials available at in Polish:

(Polish) ashoka.box.com/s/u94j3jb6ba817a3mhbjkub4yqu8kkfqw

(English) ashoka.box.com/s/1hrg2gsh0bd0bgo47cajwysyx9ko60

Meeting 2.2 Study visit 2

Similarly, as in the case of the previous meeting the aim is to confront the knowledge and ideas learned within the first module context with direct experience of social innovativeness and practical insights. Also, again the plan to achieve this reflection is very much dependent on the particular realization of

the course and the teacher's underlying intention. In this sense it is also place-specific. The same elements of the study visit as previously should be taken into account and addressed within the second meeting →

Plan:

- introduction
- explaining the key concept of a given social innovation
- social and economic context
- the general scheme: needs – challenges – solutions – actions – results
- an overview of the business model
- meetings with social innovators (preferably more than one)
- critical discussion

All these elements should be delivered by the teacher her-/himself or by the representatives of the institution/organization/company to be visited. It is the teacher's task to arrange the details of the study visit and secure the efficiency and correctness of the method adopted and resulting learning process. Students activities in this case are more or less limited to active listening and posing questions.

After the study visit the teacher should find a suitable time and place for a wrap-up and feedback session. Using this opportunity students should share their first impressions and observations. The resulting discussion could be also considered as a collective form of oral examination of the lessons learned from the first module of course. Again, teacher's activity would be limited to leading the discussion, whereas the role of the students is to participate.

This visit should be conducted in collaboration with a chosen partner active at the field of social innovation and it is recommended to arrange this first meeting as more socially-oriented, preferably non-

profit². The choice should be made with respect to the perspective of the specific target group of the course - students of Sociology and related programs.

Desired learning outcomes:

→ illustration to Module 1, a base for confrontation of the theory learned with practice observed, and reflection

→ general, overviewing insights to the key elements of the actually functioning social innovations, including their social and economic context, needs – challenges – solutions – actions – results analysis, and business model

→ inspiration and spurring enthusiasm for the upcoming Module 3

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

→ student is able to analyze observed real life cases in sociological terms, in particular explaining the role of different actors, groups and social formations as well as interactions between them

→ student knows and presents skills to conduct an interview with the representatives of social enterprises in order to collect relevant information

Proposals of places to visit / organizations to meet in / near Warsaw:

→ dobrze.waw.pl

→ watchdog.org.pl

Homeworks:

→ students can be asked to find more socially-oriented, preferably non-profit, initiatives at the field of social innovation

² non-profit in the sense that all the profit is being reinvested or spent to achieve social (relevant and adequate goals);

→ the teacher can ask the leaders of the institution/organization/company visited to share some of the open problems/challenges that the institution/organization/company is facing; these problems/challenges (simplified, if needed/applicable) can be presented to students as an object of individual considerations

→ obligatory homework: again – students have to continue thinking about social needs/problems/challenges that will become the starting point of their own projects, now trying to look for some initial candidates for innovative solutions to them

Meeting 2.3 Social economy as a natural framework/ground for social innovation

In the simplest way: social economy is an alternative to two dominating economic models: the state-controlled economy and the free market economy. Depending on the time period and state one can consider various models of social economy, however there are certain features which seem to be substantial for it: (a) social enterprises are not-for-profit and usually their activity is related to economics amongst the community; (b) they promote co-ownership and co-responsibility; (c) they have democratic management structures. To a certain extent this resembles a typical framework of a social innovation initiative.

Plan:

00:00-00:30 introductory short lecture on social economy, explaining different approaches, contexts

teacher's activities: the teacher delivers a short lecture on social economy, including: (a) it's brief history, (b) current trends, developments and most popular forms; (c) depending on the circumstances, short characteristics of the social economy in various countries; (d) general examples/classes of social enterprises, ideas and initiatives (participatory budgets, civic audits, crowdfunding, sharing economy,

slow life, resources based economy, local currencies, fair trade, cooperatives); he/she also explains why and how social economy can be considered a natural framework/ground for social innovations;

students' activities: active listening;

00:30-01:00 examples of social innovation – Skype calls, websites, concepts

teacher's activities: the teacher provides a number of specific real life examples of social economy; definitely many of these examples can be easily found on-line or in the city space close to the location of a given university (for example in Warsaw there is quite a big number of cooperatives providing services of various type; also big number of sharing economy and crowdfunding platforms can be easily found in the internet) and, preferably, the teacher should find examples that match the context better, are relevant in the local environment or are related to the students' needs; establishing a short Skype connection with one or two social entrepreneurs is a recommended method; in every case the teacher should provide an actual/potential link between a given social economy initiative and social innovation;

students' activities: active listening, interacting with social entrepreneurs invited to the Skype call;

01:00-01:15 critical discussion on differences between social economy and social innovation

teacher's activities: the teacher spurs a critical discussion on differences between social economy and social innovation; what is possible using the methods of social economy and is not possible at the ground of social innovation? and the other way around: what is possible using the methods of social innovation and is not possible at the ground of social economy? where there are contradictions between

these two approaches? can they be easily overcome? – the discussion should be led with respect to the perspective of the students of Sociology and related programs;

students' activities: active participation in the brainstorming session;

01:15-01:30 critical discussion on how social economy environment can be used and combined with social innovation initiatives

teacher's activities: the teacher initiates a discussion on how social economy environment can be used and combined with social innovation – the discussion should be led with respect to the perspective of the students of Sociology and related programs;

students' activities: active participation in the discussion;

Desired learning outcomes:

- student has and demonstrates an understanding of the concept of social economy
- student knows examples of social economy and is able to explain it's relation to social innovation
- student is able to critically asses how social economy sector can or cannot serve the need and goals of given concepts in the field of social innovation

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

- student is able to comment and analyze the concept of social economy in sociological terms, including social groups, formations as well as their individual perspectives and interests
- student understands how microsociological phenomena in social economy impact changes at the macrosociological level

Some useful links, materials & homeworks:

→ socialeconomy.eu.org/

→ ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/

→ socialeconomy.pl/

→ youtube.com/watch?v=a6fTpAyqSpk

→ youtu.be/oII7uW6vzqk

→ also have a look at European Social Innovation Competition

→ students can be asked to write a short essay on differences between social economy and social innovation

→ students can be asked to write a short essay on how social economy environment can be used and combined with social innovation initiatives

→ students can be asked to imagine and describe how a college/university based on social economy model could work/operate

→ students can be asked to provide the most interesting examples of initiatives which combine social economy with social innovation

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Meeting 2.4 Creative workshop: arranging your own SI project

Eventually students should use their knowledge and skills to find and pinpoint a specific social problem – preferably at the university where the course is taking place – then find/develop a solution to the problem (inspired by social innovation and possibly socially innovative), then turn it into a project and implement. The whole third course module is earmarked for this activity, however first the students need to be split into groups and choose their projects.

Plan:

00:00-00:20 creative brainstorming on needs/problems/challenges to become the base of students' projects

teacher's activities: the teacher spurs a brainstorming session asking students to provide examples of needs/problems/challenges and possible innovative solutions to this needs/problems/challenges (attention – the teacher has to be prepared for the shortage of concepts/ideas and therefore has to prepare his/her own creative and interesting examples, adjusted to the local context); these initial examples can be further discussed and modified, preferably in a way adjusting them to the perspective of the students of Sociology and related programs; list of needs/problems/challenges is noted down on the black-/whiteboard

students' activities: active participation in the brainstorming session;

00:20-00:30 students choose projects

teacher's activities: the teacher supports the process of choosing the projects by the students; depending on the circumstances he/she advises (but not: obliges) students to join this or other group; preferably there should be 3-5 people in a group, preferably (if applicable) with different skills; if the teacher observes a major problem, he/she should intervene according to the following rules: (a) if there is only 1 person assigned to one of the issues, the teacher has to convince this person to find at least one partner or join a different team with no more than 6 members; (b) if there is a team with more than 6 people,

the teacher has to convince some of the people from this team to join other teams or split the issue/need/problem into two creating two different groups working on a similar (but not the same, however theoretically, in certain circumstances it could be even exactly the same issue) issue (attention – it can occur to be time-consuming); a general important remark is that the projects should not be too complex and ambitious – they should be chosen in a way that will enable students to experience all the basic elements of a project managing process and social innovation implementation process; too complex projects can result in complex managing structures and the necessity to prepare complex business models which can occur to be beyond the skills of the students;

a useful publication: Strategy for Change: case studies on social innovation and social entrepreneurship by Teresa Franqueira, Álvaro Sousa, Gonçalo Gomes, Cátia Pereira (Chief Eds)

students' activities: choosing teams and projects;

00:30-01:15 students start working on their projects in teams

teacher's activities: the teacher advises the teams how to prepare the general schemes behind their projects: the social need – the challenge(s) – the solution(s) and the key concept of their social innovation – the action(s) – the result(s); then he/she supervises the work of the teams trying to help them to focus their attention and pinpoint the essence of their concept;

students' activities: students discuss/work in groups supervised by the teacher;

01:15-01:30 explanation of the further steps and homework

teacher's activities: the teacher explains how to proceed with the work started between the classes and what should be prepared for the next meeting; he/she explains how students should start collecting data and approaching the simple business model behind their projects; also all the groups are informed how

to prepare to thematic sessions (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4) – depending on the arrangements planned by the teacher; the teacher should double-check if the groups/teams understand their tasks;

students' activities: active listening;

Desired learning outcomes:

No specific learning outcomes at this stage. Consolidation of the lessons learned at the previous stages.

Homework:

After the initial considerations students, working in project groups, need to sum-up their project, their approach and their plan. In particular they need to:

→ clearly extract the general scheme behind their project: the social need – the challenge(s) – the solution(s) and the key concept of their social innovation – the action(s) – the result(s). Importantly, they had the opportunity to observe all this elements “in action” during their study visits and all these elements were also commented and explained by the teacher;

→ start preparing a simplified business model for the project;

→ to try to think through the topic of the next thematic meeting (3.1) in order to prepare relevant questions and issues requiring discussion, thus increasing the efficiency of the learning process during the meeting (somehow in the way similar to the flipped/reversed classroom model).

Module 3: How to launch social innovation? (students' projects)

All the meetings planned within the framework of the third module are project meetings in the sense that their main purpose is to support the projects being developed by the student groups and inspired by social innovations. Students are meant to work on their projects also in between the classes and use the

classes to consult various aspects of their projects. The schedule of the four planned thematic meetings covers the following key aspects of the projects developed by the students

→ **Meeting 3.1 A project in social innovation: people, synergy & collective capital**

→ **Meeting 3.2 A project in social innovation: money & managing resources**

→ **Meeting 3.3 A project in social innovation: promotion & marketing**

→ **Meeting 3.4 A project in social innovation: monitoring & evaluation**

Plan (of each one of these four meetings):

00:00-00:15 introduction to a thematic meeting

teacher's activities: the teacher delivers a short introduction (a) justifying the selection of a given topic, (b) explaining its importance from the perspective of the successful delivery of the project; (c) discussing crucial aspects and details that should be taken into account by the students;

students' activities: active listening;

00:15-01:15 ideas market

this part – potentially – consists of three elements:

1. The basic setting. For each of the four meetings the teacher prepares relevant materials – in case of 3.1 descriptions/slides/videos/examples of different management models related to different types of organizations, including general descriptions of the group relation/interaction models and HR management schemes (for example: flat structures, corporate structures, cooperatives, etc.); in case of 3.2

descriptions/slides/videos/examples of various financial models for different social innovation initiatives as well as ways of gaining necessary resources (for example: crowdfunding, grants, loans, in kind contributions, etc.); in case of 3.3 descriptions/slides/videos/examples of promotion and marketing methods (for example: press advertisement, whispering marketing, happenings, social media marketing, etc.); in case of 3.4 descriptions/slides/videos/examples of monitoring and evaluation methods applicable for social innovation projects. This various materials are available at different tables in the classroom. At a certain moment of time a given group/team investigates one of the method/model/material sitting around one of the tables; after a fixed period of time the groups/teams switch tables; students are asked to analyze a given method/model/material and try to apply/adopt/adapt it to their project; every time – before the class starts – students are also encouraged to contribute with descriptions/slides/videos/examples of their own / alternative models.

2. Improved version: *exchanges between the teams. Apart of the process described in 1., in turns teams invite representatives of the other teams to present solutions/methods/models applied/adopted/adapted in their project – with regard to the topic of a given meeting (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4); being obliged to describe this given aspect of their project students consolidate their understanding of their own project; moreover, the representative of the other team provides feedback that can help to improve the solution/method/model chosen; an important didactic aspect of this process is the vanishing borderline between the teacher and the student, as some of the students enter the teacher's role; this exchange model also supports the development of the team working skills.*

3. Most recommended option. *If the teacher manages to invite to the class changemaker(s) and/or specialist(s) in a given area (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4), then the idea market can become even more interesting; student groups are sitting round the tables and guest or – depending on the number of guests – guests and the teacher and some of the students migrate among the tables and provide feedback to all the groups in the sense/way explained in 2. It is important to emphasize that this model definitely should not be followed too strictly – students should feel free to approach any of the guests or other student groups with their questions at any time (obviously unless they interrupt others); and similarly all the*

guest should feel free to approach any table; the main task of the teacher is to moderate this process and secure that it eventually contributes to the improvement of the students' projects.

01:15-:01:30 sum-up

teacher's activities: the teacher sums-up the meeting, emphasizing crucial learning points and conclusions; he/she also uses this time to briefly consult the next steps to be undertaken by each of the student groups;

students' activities: active listening, participating in the discussion (if necessary/applicable);

Desired learning outcomes:

the knowledge and skills gained at previous stages meet practice and in this way students:

- realize their competences
- realize their shortcomings
- learn by practice to apply, adopt and adapt the knowledge and skills gained

Moreover, these meetings should support and improve the development of students' projects.

Specific learning outcomes (for the students of Sociology and related programs):

- student is able to analyze the project designed by his/her own group in sociological terms, including analysis of perspectives and interests of different groups and social formations involved.

Homework:

at this stage there are only two tasks left for the students in regard to the meetings schedule:

→ to try to apply the information gained and lessons learned during the previous meeting to improve the project of a given group

→ to try to think through the topic of the next thematic meeting in order to prepare relevant questions and issues requiring discussion, thus increasing the efficiency of the learning process during the meeting (somehow in the way similar to the flipped/reversed classroom model).

Module 4 / Meeting 4: Wrap-up | sum-up

00:00-01:00 presentation of the projects

teacher's activities: the teacher moderates the presentations of the students; there should be enough time earmarked not only for the presentations of all the groups but also for the feedback sessions after each presentation by one of the groups; the teacher should provoke students to assess the social

dimension of each project, innovativeness of each project as well as discuss to what extent it realizes the idea of social innovation;

students' activities: presenting their projects and actively listening to the presentations of the other groups, participating in the feedback sessions;

01:00-01:20 evaluation sessions

the evaluation session of the course should consist of two elements at least: (a) filling the questionnaires previously prepared by the teacher; (b) a short discussion enabling students to share their views/feelings/reflections with the rest of the group; the teacher him-/herself should also feel encouraged to express his/her opinion; the teacher moderates this session;

01:20-01:30 wrap-up

teacher's activities: a brief wrap-up of the course, information on grades, and hints regarding further information/sources on projects/knowledge/skills/opportunities in social innovation;

students' activities: active listening;

Desired learning outcomes:

No specific learning outcomes at this stage. Consolidation of the lessons learned at the previous stages.

Homeworks:

No homework at this stage.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

All modules are to be assessed by coursework and it is highly recommended that the assessment method promotes professional and work based development. Having said this, the final selection of the assessment model is left to the teacher.