

Sustainability and Entrepreneurship: A Community Forum

Course Syllabus
Fall 2013
2195 or 5120 Grainger Hall

En Studies 900,
Gen Bus 765,

Alternating Fridays, noon – 1:15 pm

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WI School of Business and
the UW Office of Sustainability.**



Office of Sustainability
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Objectives:

This course is for students and community members who wish to learn from entrepreneurs about the entrepreneurial process. Over the course of 9 class meetings, we will hear from entrepreneurs in the food and agriculture area.

These speakers are all entrepreneurs and will be talking about the entrepreneurial process. We'll hear about how their initial idea was turned into a business, including what it took to actually take action on the idea, who their support network included, whether they developed a business plan, where they sought funding, what hurdles they encountered, and generally what experiences and knowledge they would share with a class of students interested in entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs are recognized as a driver of innovation, employment and value creation in the private sector, and through this class, I hope to convince you this is true for entrepreneurs in and around Wisconsin. Without the involvement of entrepreneurs in creating jobs, supporting (and being supported by) their communities, and reshaping how we think about our individual and collective responsibility to the earth and future generations, our chances of successfully navigating the very troubled waters ahead of us are slim.

This class brings together students with community members to dialogue on the relevance of sustainability and entrepreneurship in a focused and constructive way. Though the class is only a one credit class, it is my hope that the lessons and knowledge that you will take from this class will rival that which you would take from a three credit class.

I am deeply indebted and blessed with support from the Slow Money Wisconsin group, the WI School of Business, the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, and the Office of Sustainability.

GROUND RULES: It is essential that you **be present for each class**. One absence will affect your grade, two absences will result in you not passing the class. In addition to the 7 community forums, we will also meet on September 6 and December 13. You must be present for these meetings also.

I do realize that emergencies arise. If you find that you must miss class, please let Tom know before class. Extra credit opportunities will be available if you are concerned about your grade.

This is not a course geared toward "passive learning". Your purpose for being in this class should not be to passively receive information from "experts", but rather to actively engage in your own inquiry and restructure your thoughts about entrepreneurship. It's been said that your generation has 5 times as many entrepreneurs as my generation. Look to your classmates and speakers for support and work to develop your network.

You will be asked to read a book about sustainability and entrepreneurship. I recommend Elizabeth U's Raising Dough, but if you are interested in "The Good Food Revolution: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities" by Will Allen or "Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money" by Woody Tasch or "Be the Solution" by Michael Strong, or some other book, let me know. I do need to approve your selection of an alternative book.

I will need you to submit a one page (standard margins, **single spaced** and 10 point or 12 point font) response to the book by class on December 13th. This response to the book may include brief comments, reflections or observations about the relationship of the book to something that one of the speakers talked about or that you are pursuing.

You will also be graded on an interview you do with an entrepreneur. It is important to note that you will be graded on both your presentation and your questions. You should prepare your questions in advance and then use the questions that worked the best or got the best answers in your write-up. For your short paper to be graded highly, you will need to ask probing questions and develop the answers that you get so that the answers are interesting, accurate and readable. The interview is also due by December 13th.

GRADING

50% of your final grade will be based upon Citizenship - includes attendance, attitude, interest, appreciation, enthusiasm, active and productive participation in class and knowledge of topics.
25% of your final grade will be based upon your written response to the required book
25% of your final grade will be based upon your interview.

In fairness to others in the class, late submissions of the written response to the book or the short paper will be penalized at a rate of 20% of the paper's value per day (e.g., your short papers presented one day late will receive at most a weight of 20 out of the 25 points available).

LIST OF MATERIALS

Books (pick one of these, or pick a different book):

Raising Dough, by Elizabeth U, (White River Junction, VT. Chelsea Green, 2013) \$19.95

The Good Food Revolution: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities by Will Allen, (New York, Gotham Press, 2013) \$16.00

Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money: Investing as if Food, Farms, and Fertility Mattered, by Woody Tasch (White River Junction, VT. Chelsea Green, 2011) \$15.95

Be The Solution: How Entrepreneurs and Conscious Capitalists Can Solve All the World's Problems, by Michael Strong (Hoboken, NJ. John Wiley & Sons, 2009) \$24.95

Class will meet only on the following dates: September 6 & 20, October 4 & 18, November 1, 15 & 29, December 6 & 13.

September 6 -- Class introduction. Review syllabus, describe relationship of class to School of Business, Nelson Institute.

September 20 – Black Earth Meats, Bartlett Durand, owner
<http://www.blackearthmeats.com/>

October 4 – Clock Shadow Creamery, Bob Wills, owner,
<http://www.clockshadowcreamery.com/>

October 18 - Roelli Cheese, Chris Roelli, Owner, www.roellicheese.com

November 1 – Om Boys Food Movement, Adrian Reif, Chief Goodness Warrior and Matt D'Amour, Chief Wellness Carrier, <http://www.yumbutter.com/>

November 15 – Yum Tum Foods, Heidi Speight and Jacy Eckerman, co-owners,
www.yumtumdelivers.com

November 22 – Bill Anderson, Cheese maker and Affineur,
www.cremedelacoulee.com

December 6 – Class wrap-up. Final assignments due