

Preserving the Public Good: Presenting an Organizational Model for the Changing Future of

Higher Education

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Paper presented November 18, 2011

at the annual meeting of

The Association for the Study of Higher Education

Recommended Citation:

Parra Garcia, S. (2011, November). *Preserving the public good: Presenting an organizational model for the changing future of higher education*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Charlotte, NC.

Abstract

Institutions of higher education face financial pressure to become self-sustaining (Gumport, 2001; 2000). This rapidly growing economic demand is negatively affecting the social mission of higher education (Kezar, 2004). Scholars suggest the implementation of a new model of higher education, one that blends a for-profit model with the traditional communitarian model (Kezar, 2004). The new model for higher education should be equipped to meet the fiscal demand and maintain the social mission of the academy. Arizona State University introduced the New American University, a new model for higher education, which is revolutionizing the institution's role as an agent of change (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "A New American University"). This new model is the both/and solution (Love & Estanek, 2004) that scholars have been looking to obtain because continued contribution to the public good is a key component to the model (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "A New American University"). The university is introducing social entrepreneurship ideology to the academy to create future leaders and social change agents (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "Entrepreneurship at ASU"), which allows the university to maintain its social mission.

Keywords: public good, entrepreneurship

Preserving the Public Good: Presenting an Organizational Model for the Changing Future of
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Past and more recent declines in the economy have placed public research universities under financial pressure, resulting in the integration of business strategies within university structure (Gumport, 2001; 2000). Universities have had to respond to reduced funding from state and federal agencies, thus creating tension between the original social purpose of higher education and the newly formed business model (Gumport, 2001; 2000). Supporters of the industrial or for-profit model argue that the academy must make essential adjustments to remain sustainable, while opponents of the industrial model proclaim a vast disconnect between for-profit strategies and the social mission of higher education (Gumport, 2001; 2000; Kezar, 2004). The original *social charter* or *social purpose* of the academy was to contribute to its relationship with society, educate students, produce and develop a knowledge base, and enrich local and global communities (Kezar, 2004). Kezar (2004) describes the transition of the mission of higher education from the traditional social purpose to one that is business oriented and financially driven. Higher education must continue to work towards the advancement of the public good (Tierney, 2003) in order to maintain the social charter of the institution. Furthermore, intellectuals must maintain an ethic of care as they progress through the academy in order to remain relevant to the community (Lincoln, 2000; Tierney, 2003). While there are benefits to an industrial model of higher education, the model negatively affects the conventional social purpose of the institution (Kezar, 2004). For the purpose of this paper, the author defines *public good* as a service (i.e., knowledge production, data collection, and the development of an educated citizenry) provided by institutions of higher education for the use and benefit of all individuals.

Although commercialization and privatization of the academy have been suggested to negatively affect the original social charter of the university (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), leaders and scholars in higher education must realize that state funding for public institutions will no longer be sustained through standard historical models, such as student tuition dollars (Crow, 2010). Instead, the academy must innovate to find alternative forms of financial support, while preserving the communal good and continuing the contribution to society (Crow, 2010). Scholars suggest the development of a new model for higher education, one that blends the industrial and traditional communitarian form of the academy, as a possible solution (Kezar, Chambers, Burkhardt, & Associates, 2005). Collins (2005) proposes that the path to greatness within a social organization is not determined by the fiscal returns, but rather by the amount of societal change the organization has caused. Consequently, institutions of higher education do not have to compromise the social charter of higher education to meet the new fiscal demands of the economic state.

Arizona State University (ASU) has implemented a new model for higher education, known as the New American University. This model creates an environment such that the university acts as an entrepreneur to solve social problems (Crow, 2010; Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "A New American University"). The New American University embraces the entrepreneurial mindset highly encouraged by innovative leaders in higher education (Thorp & Buckstein, 2010). ASU looks to build partnerships with the surrounding community; it is through these relationships that the university is able to identify and respond to the needs of society (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "A New American University"). Furthermore, ASU encourages action by challenging students and faculty to be entrepreneurial in order to solve the challenges facing our local and global communities (Arizona State University, 2010).

This paper will present a review of literature in social entrepreneurship curriculum. Specifically, the paper will focus on ASU's partnership with the international organization, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, and the continued effort to implement socially entrepreneurial curriculum throughout the university.

Social Entrepreneurship and the Connection to Higher Education

While the term *social entrepreneurship* is relatively new within institutions of higher education, the act of solving social problems is not (Dees, 2001). Florence Nightingale serves as an example of the extensive history of social entrepreneurs, during the mid-1800's she redefined the nursing profession and her trailblazing efforts resulted in standards of sanitation and hospital management that have produced best practice models globally (Bornstein, 2007). *Social entrepreneurship* attempts to supply innovative solutions to social challenges, providing direct action to attain sustainable and measureable outcomes (Dees, 2001; Kim, 2010; Martin & Osberg, 2007). A *social entrepreneur* possesses influential ideas that will assist in societal progression, and has employed these ideas across communities (Bornstein, 2007; Dees, 2001; Kim, 2010).

There is a current need for social entrepreneurs to emerge in all disciplines as challenges face academe, the United States (U.S.), and the world from an array of areas including economics, education, poverty, and sustainability (Arizona State University, 2010; Crow, 2010; Jennings, 2011; Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). Researchers estimate 3.4 million U.S. jobs could be lost to outsourcing by 2015 due to the aggressive job market (Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy, 2007); accordingly the U.S. must increase efforts in science and technology if it wants to remain competitive in the global economy (Friedman, 2007). U.S. education is also suffering, ranking twentieth in high school completion rates and sixteenth in

college completion amongst developed countries (Jennings, 2011). Institutions of higher education must position themselves as agents of social change; furthermore, academe must hone and embrace an entrepreneurial mindset to accomplish societal change (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Identifying strong pedagogical methods in social entrepreneurship will allow institutions of higher education to cultivate *changemakers*¹ or individuals who have the desire to create social change (Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, n.d.; Herbst, 2009). These newfound changemakers will then possess the desire and ability to develop *social innovations*, or new ideas and solutions that are more efficient than current resolutions and provide communal benefits (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). These new social innovations will be able to address the societal problems we face.

Social entrepreneurship is a rapidly growing field of interest for individuals from various disciplines; the concept is garnering increased attention due to the remarkable stories social entrepreneurs illustrate throughout their personal journeys (Dees, 2001; Martin & Osberg, 2007). Introducing social entrepreneurship to institutions of higher education creates the both/and solution (Love & Estanek, 2004) that allows for the co-existence of the academy's original social charter and the industrial model of higher education. In one such example, ASU partners with like-minded organizations, such as *The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation* and *Ashoka: Innovators for the Public*, to advance its social mission (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "Our Work").

¹ Ashoka Founder Bill Drayton coined the term *changemaker*
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Ashoka: Innovators for the Public

Founded in 1980, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public is an international organization dedicated to supporting social entrepreneurs and changemakers (Bornstein, 2007). While working at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Bill Drayton, Founder of Ashoka, had a vision to institute an organization that would be committed to identifying individuals with new ideas for social change (Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, n.d.; Bornstein, 2007). Drayton believed the key to generating social change is finding creative people with dynamic visions and the fortitude to implement and sustain new ideas (Bornstein, 2007). Bill Drayton called these resourceful people social entrepreneurs and changemakers (Bornstein, 2007). The individuals that Drayton and Ashoka identify are named *Ashoka Fellows*. Ashoka provides these individuals with sufficient resources to pursue and grow their social innovations full-time (Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, n.d.; Bornstein, 2007). Additionally, Ashoka Fellows have access to the Ashoka network, a large talented group of social entrepreneurs that can provide additional support and guidance throughout the development and implementation of a Fellow's venture (Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, n.d.).

Since 1980, Ashoka has expanded across the globe, supporting thousands of Ashoka Fellows and building a support network with limitless influence (Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, n.d.; Bornstein, 2007). Ashoka: Innovators for the Public has branched out to expand efforts in social entrepreneurship, and though there are multiple programs within Ashoka, the following section will highlight the academic division of the organization, *Ashoka U*.

Ashoka U

Institutions of higher education have been among those demonstrating an increased interest in social entrepreneurship (Ashoka U, 2010). Faculty members have struggled to

provide high quality education in social entrepreneurship, and given Ashoka's extensive history and practice in the field, multiple institutions of higher education have approached the organization for assistance (Ashoka U, 2010). There are fifteen colleges and universities in the consortium whom actively work with Ashoka U: ASU, Babson College, College of the Atlantic, Cornell University, Duke University, George Mason University, John Hopkins University, Marquette University, Middlebury, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico, The New School, Tulane University, Colorado, University of Maryland, and University of San Diego (Ashoka U, 2010). Established in 2008, Ashoka U is dedicated to providing best practice guidelines in social entrepreneurship education to colleges and universities across the world (Ashoka U, 2010). Marina Kim (personal communication, February 25, 2011), Director of Ashoka U, strives to ensure the organization offers stakeholder groups the content and programming they need and want, making Ashoka U a user driven and directed association.

ASU's New American University is devoted to driving social change. This commitment to social transformation and entrepreneurship has been recognized by the Ashoka U organization (Ashoka U, 2010; Office of University Initiatives, 2010, "A New American University"). In 2010, ASU was named to the Changemaker Campus Consortium, a select group of colleges and universities that are dedicated to setting the standard in social entrepreneurship education (Ashoka U, 2010). The Changemaker Campus Initiative utilizes the Ashoka ideology in social entrepreneurship and infuses practitioner knowledge and experience within the university setting (Ashoka U, 2010). M. Kim (personal communication, February 27, 2011) believes Ashoka U can serve as a catalyst in the expansion of social entrepreneurship efforts in academia by providing a support network to the constituents. Changemaker Campuses work together by sharing new ideas, struggles, successes, and pedagogies in social entrepreneurship (Ashoka U,

2010; Kim, 2010). During 2010, Ashoka U reviewed and compiled ten outstanding syllabi in social entrepreneurship education, which was the basis of the Ashoka U Curriculum and Teaching Resource Guide (Kim, 2010). Ashoka U then shared this resource guide with Changemaker Campuses and the guide has since assisted faculty with drafting and developing new curriculum in social entrepreneurship (Kim, 2010).

Ashoka U Changemaker Pedagogies

Colleges and universities across the globe are implementing curriculum in social entrepreneurship as a means to produce future leaders and changemakers (Ashoka U, 2010; Kim, 2010). Professor J. Gregory Dees of the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University is often referred to as the founding father of social entrepreneurship education, due to his pilot launch of the first social entrepreneurship course at Harvard University in 1995 (Brookes, 2010; Kim, 2011). Dees's work strives to create a greater understanding of the impact social entrepreneurs afford the world; his efforts in academia have significantly influenced the progression of the social entrepreneurship field (S. Davis, personal communication, February 26, 2011).

The New American University model provides ASU an opportunity to connect with the community and maintain the social charter of the institution. The ASU Office of University Initiatives (2010, "Entrepreneurship at ASU") is the supporting partner to entrepreneurship projects across the university, advocating for entrepreneurial thinking and action in various academic units (see Appendix A). ASU's connection to Ashoka U and the Changemaker Campus Consortium has served to accelerate the university's social entrepreneurship initiatives (Kim, 2011). The flourishing relationship has extended ASU's network in social entrepreneurship, providing academic resources and connections to faculty working on pedagogies and best practice guidelines for social entrepreneurship education (Ashoka U, 2010).

Institutions of higher education can introduce various forms of programming to encourage the vision of a changemaker within the student population. ASU is embedding social entrepreneurship within the university structure by developing social entrepreneurship curriculum, encouraging students to engage in venture funding competitions, and building student organizations (Office of University Initiatives, 2010, “Entrepreneurship at ASU”).

Successful Approaches to Social Entrepreneurship Curriculum and Instruction

Ashoka Founder Bill Drayton (personal communication, February 26, 2011) believes social entrepreneurship education should encompass four key elements: empathy, teamwork, leadership, and changemaking. Ashoka U Changemaker Campuses work to incorporate the key fundamentals within the syllabi design and course structure (Kim, 2010; Martin et al., 2011). The Ashoka U Curriculum Review Panel compiled the best strategies in social entrepreneurship education to date, which include discipline specific integration, personal connection to the course material, focus on depth within a single course, and curriculum that connects the classroom to real world societal challenges (Kim, 2010; Martin et al., 2011). Promising approaches also use advanced concepts in course sequences and pedagogical procedures that involve business plan competitions and incubators, allowing students to learn from applied projects and venture failures as a process of knowledge acquisition (Kim, 2010; Martin et al., 2011).

More faculty are building social entrepreneurship curriculum that is discipline specific (e.g., engineering, education, and law). This approach allows students to better relate to the material during class because they can associate the material with their respective fields of study (Kim, 2010). Providing students with social entrepreneurship concepts within a disciplinary framework allows students to use their acquired knowledge and apply it to their field of study while engaging in changemaking behaviors (Kim, 2010). Additionally, faculty members are

nurturing personal connections to social entrepreneurship in the classroom (Kim, 2010; Martin et. al, 2011). Students engage in reflective exercises that permit self-exploration and the ability to identify personal passions and aspirations (Kim, 2010). This is a crucial piece to the progression of social entrepreneurship, as self-reflection is an important process in the development of social entrepreneurs and changemakers (Kim, 2010; Martin et. al, 2011).

Another successful approach to social entrepreneurship education includes focusing on one social issue in a single course (Kim, 2010). One course is often asked to address multiple social issues in one semester and this can be difficult and overwhelming for students (Martin et. al, 2011). Centering the curriculum on one social issue allows students to fully explore the problem (Kim, 2010). In addition, exploration can be addressed from a variety of angles, such as social injustices, possible solutions, and personal approaches or innovations.

Faculty members are using real world challenges to create a substantial connection to the material for students (Kim, 2010) by building relationships with communities and social entrepreneurs in need of assistance. Structuring a link to social entrepreneurs for students makes the applied learning experience relatable and practical (Kim, 2010). Furthermore, the exchange is beneficial for the social entrepreneurs as they are utilizing the knowledge and skills of the students to advance their venture (Kim, 2010). The use of real world challenges could also create the personal connection to the course content for the students. While there is an ever-changing environment surrounding institutions of higher education, the academy must stay true to the original social mission, as this consistency has been part of the success of higher education (Kezar, 2001). Connecting students to the community provides the opportunity to advance the social charter of the institution, maintaining the original mission of the academy through social entrepreneurship education. Additionally, this level of community engagement allows

universities to become major players in social innovation and identifying solutions to the world's most challenging problems (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Enhancing Social Entrepreneurship Education

Even as faculty members are progressing in social entrepreneurship education, there are areas in curriculum development and instruction that could be improved upon (Kim, 2010). The Ashoka U Curriculum Review Panel identified several enhancement areas, which include defining social entrepreneurship accurately, clarifying the purpose of the course, identifying learning outcomes, increasing course rigor, and creating a student-centered course design (Kim, 2010). Additionally, instructors should carefully select case studies that will be introduced during the course and connect to real world challenges and applied learning opportunities should be incorporated into social entrepreneurship curriculum design (Kim, 2010).

When designing a course in social entrepreneurship, faculty members need to provide students with a clear definition of the topic (Kim, 2010). Supplying students with a clear definition allows for the progression of a well-informed view on social entrepreneurship, and faculty could in turn assess the range of definitions and schemas in the field (Kim, 2010). Faculty must also convey the purpose of the course, and determine if it is to provide students with the skill set to become social entrepreneurs or simply offer an understanding of social entrepreneurship (Kim, 2010). Finally, the Review Panel suggested improvement in course learning outcomes; recommending that instructors identify what students should take away from the course and then design the course competencies based on the desired knowledge acquisition (Kim, 2010).

Conclusion

The state of the economy has placed the academy under financial pressure, resulting in the implementation of business strategies within the university structure (Gumport, 2001; 2000). Scholars suggest the implementation of a new model for higher education as a resolution (Kezar, Chambers, Burkhardt, & Associates, 2005); the New American University at ASU is an example of a new model that encompasses a fiscally mindful institution that continues to work for the greater good of local and global communities (Crow, 2010; Office of University Initiatives, 2010, “A New American University”). Ashoka is leading the charge in cultivating changemakers worldwide, and is committed to generating global social change (Bornstein, 2007). By incorporating social entrepreneurship education into academia, institutions of higher education will not have to compromise the social mission of the university to meet economic demands.

The New American University at ASU is driving societal change through social entrepreneurship education. This new model for higher education is the both/and solution (Love & Estanek, 2004) that scholars in higher education have been looking to obtain. While social entrepreneurship education is a great way to create social change, further assessment is needed in this field of study. Specifically, research is needed that begins to determine the impact social entrepreneurship programming has on the local and global communities, and whether or not this is a significant amount of change. Additionally, the implementation of a longitudinal study is needed to determine the social and economic impact of social entrepreneurship education and programming. The study will demonstrate whether or not social entrepreneurship curriculum influences student learning outcomes, student career choice, and overall student commitment to driving social change.

Further research in this field will assist Changemaker Campuses, like ASU, to identify successful strategies in both social entrepreneurship programming and pedagogies. This data collection will provide colleges and universities with best practice guidelines for social entrepreneurship education. Moreover, this information will allow for the purposeful expansion of thriving social entrepreneurship methodologies. Identifying and implementing successful strategies in social entrepreneurship education and programs will position universities as leaders in social innovation and high level contributors to the public good.

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Appendix A

Entrepreneurship at ASU 2010 – Arizona State University

<i>Schools, Colleges, Institutes, and Offices Involved in Entrepreneurship Initiatives</i>	
American Indian Policy Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Innovations
ASU Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President’s Award for Innovation
Biodesign Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodesign Impact Accelerator
College of Nursing and Health Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Healthcare Innovation & Clinical Trials
College of Public Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation
College of Technology and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Resolve • Advanced Technology Innovation Center (ATIC) • Bachelor of Science and Minor in Technological Entrepreneurship and Management • Innovation and Technology Collaboratory
Educational Outreach and Student Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Impact Careers, Career Advising in ASU Career Services • Entrepreneurs@ASU Student Organization
Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Arts, Media and Engineering • InnovationSpace • Digital Culture Initiative
Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering Projects in Community Service (EPICS) • Technology Entrepreneurship Certificate
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanford Education Project • Office of Innovation and Partnerships • Entrepreneurial Educators
Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Venture Catalyst
Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Advancement Program • Lisa Foundation Patent Law Clinic
School of Human Evolution and Social Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoenix Innovation Study
School of Social Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnography and Innovation
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship • New Media Innovation Lab
W.P. Carey School of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of Enterprise Center • MBA Entrepreneurship Society • Certificate in Knowledge Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Chart adapted from the *Entrepreneurship at ASU 2010 Report*
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