Community engaged scholarship and social entrepreneurship in universities: a (short) literature review

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Community Engaged Scholarship Institute

&

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Introduction

A review of literature was conducted to identify similarities and differences between community engaged scholarship and social entrepreneurship. The review is part of the evaluation of the Hub Sandbox, and it is intended to inform discussions about how the two approaches can be integrated into a single program.

The purpose of the *evaluation* is to support decisions about the future design of the Hub Sandbox. The evaluation is formative in nature; in other words, the primary purpose is not to pass judgment on the worth of the pilot and whether the program should be run again, but to identify lessons learned and early indications of success.

Key questions discussed in this review that may be relevant to future rounds of the Sandbox:

1. **What characteristics best describe the program?** Malone and Emmerling (2016) contrast characteristics of civic engagement and social entrepreneurship, and discuss a survey of student perceptions of the two approaches.

2**. What are the student learning outcomes?** Two articles discuss the skills and competencies associated with each approach (Kraemer 2016; Brammer et al. 2012). The Sandbox could usefully reflect on the ideal characteristics of students selected for the program, as well as the outcomes being offered to students.

3. **What is the role of community?** McBride and Myln (2016) contrast the different roles for the "community."

This review concludes with two examples. Some universities have organized hubs that brought together several types of efforts for community impact – including CES, social entrepreneurship - for information sharing and joint programming. These initiatives, often engage in activities that bring students and community members together in co-developing projects.

Quick definitions

Universities are increasingly encouraging faculty, staff, researchers, and students to think about how their activities impact their communities and society at large.

One way is through incorporating **community engagement** and **community engaged scholarship** into all aspects of their work including research, teaching, and service learning. Community engagement in academia is defined as "the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, n.d.). What makes an activity "scholarship" is work that is public, peer-reviewed, and available in a platform that others may build on (Community Engaged Scholarship Institute, 2014).

More recently, universities are using entrepreneurship and "business" innovation to achieve community and social impact. For example, universities are partnering with business and communities to develop and commercialize technologies and techniques (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017). Universities are also supporting students through work-integrated learning opportunities. At the University of Toronto, a network of incubators, accelerators, and programs help more than 200 student-led startup teams connect with mentors to apply their academic knowledge in practical settings (University of Toronto, n.d.).

Much like entrepreneurship, **social entrepreneurship** and **social enterprises** involve applying business practices and market-oriented approaches, but aim to solve social problems (e.g. justice, health, environment, education). Social entrepreneurship tends to focus on the personal qualities of people who start new organizations, while social enterprises tends to focus on the organization (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). The underlying objective of entrepreneurship and social enterprise is to create social value.

Researchers have turned their attention to the intersections between these two approaches. McBride & Myln (2016) argue that as both social entrepreneurship and civic engagement aim towards social change, there is opportunity to find common ground where the two approaches can work together, thus maximizing impact. Social entrepreneurship may bring creativity and skills in program development and communication, while civic engagement addresses community and sustainability needs. By combining these approaches, social entrepreneurship may develop sustainable solutions to problems, and civic engagement approaches may develop leaders who can encourage support for these solutions.

A Note of Caution
Some advocates of social entrepreneurship may argue that "community engagement" is too comfortable with charity-oriented approaches to engagement, too focused on student learning, and too little concern with sustainable impact on communities (Mcbride & Mlyn, 2015). Proponents of civic engagement on the other hand find that social entrepreneurship is too concerned with business thinking, launching new organizations, and prone to ignore the need for community involvement.

A note on "social innovation"
Social entrepreneurship and social enterprise have also paved way towards another construct, social innovation (Phills et al., 2008). While the Hub Sandbox did not claim to be a "social innovation" program, the term is popular and used with increasing frequency on campuses. The following may be useful in discussions about the goals of the Sandbox program.

Given the many people and organizations working in social innovation, however, there is no consensus on the definition of social innovation (Policy Horizons Canada, 2010; TEPSIE, 2014). Definitions tend to focus on social innovation either through a 'systems' lens (i.e. changing society as a whole), or a 'local' lens (i.e. incremental change at the local level). For example, social innovation has been defined as:

"A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals" (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008, p. 36).

In general, a social innovation involves a novel *application* of ideas, in other words, the ideas (not necessarily new) are applied in different contexts (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008).

There is also a variety of views on what makes an innovation 'social'. Some definitions are broad and encompass economic or business innovations, while others emphasize innovations from collaborations with community-actors.

A social entrepreneur or social enterprise generally focuses on solving a problem through a business or product, while a social innovator could be looking to solve a problem through a range of strategies (e.g. nonprofit, government, or for-profit)

Articles on social entrepreneurship and community engaged scholarship

Key question for the Sandbox: What characteristics best describe the program?

(and what messages are we trying to convey to students)?

Malone and Emmerling (2016) explored students' experiences in and perceptions of civic engagement and social entrepreneurship at Duke University (Malone & Emmerling, 2016)**.** In general, **social entrepreneurship** may be associated with the following characteristics:

- Starts from idea that the world presents problems to be solved or innovated upon
- Project based
- Community/public is client in need of innovation and skills
- Values design thinking
- Hero/leader develops project for community
- Leaders are valued for "chutzpah"

In comparison, **civic engagement**:

- Starts from idea that world starts with relationships and partnerships and from them emerge the problems to address
- Builds relationships
- Collaborators and co-creators with community
- Ethics of collaboration
- Apprentice in institutional partnership
- Leaders are valued for "humility"

The authors found that students associated SE with completing consultant-generated projects, community as client, and effectiveness through innovative action. In contrast, civic engagement is associated with completing community-generated projects, community as partner, and effectiveness through partnerships and reciprocity.

When students engage with communities, they come with preconceived notions about the work they are about to engage in, along with divergent values, assumptions, and epistemological beliefs. The authors emphasize that social entrepreneurship **_and_** civic engagement can reinforce power differences – these values, assumptions, and beliefs need to be explored before engaging civically.

Key question for the Sandbox: What are the student learning outcomes?

Universities aim to equip students with the knowledge, competencies, and skills to positively contribute to their communities. Specifically, encouraging involvement in community engaged scholarship and social entrepreneurship can yield such gains for students.

Both social entrepreneurship and civic engagement emphasize self-reflection, systemic thinking, and social responsibility as key knowledge and values. Where they differ is mainly in skills and practice – social entrepreneurship focuses on business modeling, pitching, and team management, while civic engagement focuses on community building, research, and critical thinking.

Kraemer 2016: What critical skills and abilities do business school students need to become effective social impact leaders? How do we define these competencies and help students develop them?

Kraemer 2016 explored 39 global programs, mainly open online courses (MOOCs), and other online resource collections for social entrepreneurs to identify the range of skills and abilities education programs are focusing on—and not focusing on (Kraemer, 2016). Most programs reviewed focused on teaching skills, versus helping students discover and build their abilities. Zooming in on skill education, many social impact courses and incubator programs offer little more than classic entrepreneurship instruction—pitching, fundraising, business modelling, and strategy. The author emphasizes that there is room to connect them more clearly to the social impact field and to foster skills that can serve a range of social impact leadership roles.
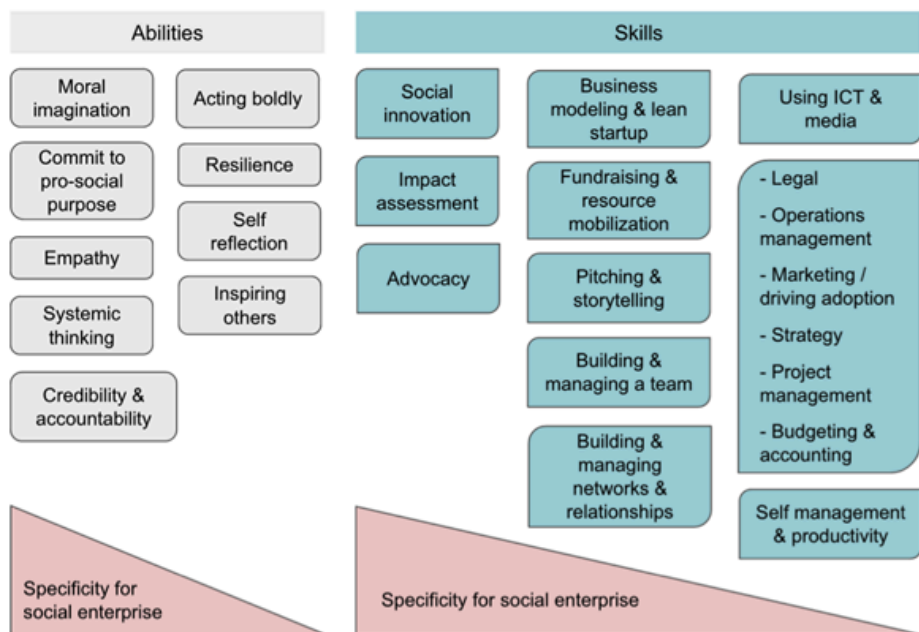
Based on the review, the author offers several recommendations that social impact educators might consider:

- Developing their ability to individually coach program participants over longer time periods of time and build programs that allow for this. Specifically, coaching which supports reflection of values, life goals, and motivations for entering the social impact field, and has the potential to heighten students' ability to act boldly, find their path, and develop resilience.
- Allowing students to "apprentice with" a problem instead of pushing them to develop quick-fix solutions. This means encouraging them to get deeply inside and even "live" the issue they strive to address. Support them in

experimenting and prototyping to identify leverage points, and build credibility grounded in a deep and systemic understanding that might lead to impactful solutions.

Brammer et al. 2012: What are the core competencies in civic engagement?

A review of existing academic programs was conducted by Brammer et al. 2012 to identify core competencies of civic engagement. Competencies or student learning outcomes from 29 colleges and universities in United States that offer minors or majors or student affairs programs in community engagement were gathered and analyzed. The review identified civic knowledge, civic engagement, and experiences as core competencies.

Specifically, knowledge of the systemic nature of oppression and social justice was identified as a key knowledge area. The review also identifies core competencies relevant to knowledge of community/societal issues in local, national, and global contexts. For skills, the review emphasized intercultural competence, leadership, and conflict management, and less emphasis on research and translating theory into practice. Practice was perhaps not so much a core competency area, but mainly for gaining knowledge and skills.

Summary of civic learning outcomes

CIVIC KNOWLEDGE	CIVIC SKILLS	CIVIC VALUES	CIVIC PRACTICE
Issue awareness in context	Intercultural competence	Social responsibility/ Citizenship	Community-based learning
Systemic processes of oppression	Communication Leadership	Action in community	
	Community building	Self-reflection	
Community/organizational processes	Conflict management/Civility	Ethics	
Democratic processes	Research/Modes of Inquiry	Personal Development	
Community-based learning/Service-learning	Analysis		
	Critical Thinking		
	Theory into Practice		

Key question for the Sandbox: Are we aiming for new *student-led* or *community-led* initiatives?

Community engagement is widely seen as essential to the development of solutions for addressing social needs (Davies & Simon, 2013; TEPSIE, 2014). As communities have specific knowledge on the challenges that they face, engaging with communities can allow for better understanding of such challenges. Additionally, the diverse perspectives offered by communities can be a valuable source of innovative ideas. Finally, when communities are actively involved in the decision-making processes surrounding an innovation, the innovation is more likely to be adopted and sustainable.

So…what role does community play on campus? Differences between social entrepreneurship and civic engagement

The teaching *practices* of social entrepreneurship and CES in universities are not dramatically different (McBride & Myln, 2016). Both approaches involve internships, coursework, community services, international trips, and group- or team- based programs. In social entrepreneurship however, competitions and hackathons are popular, whereas service learning is common in CES. Indeed, these differences reflect different values – competition for market-based approaches, and service learning for collaboration.

The relationship between universities and community partners is also different among the two movements. Those working in social entrepreneurship tend to view the individuals affected by their work as clients and may see students in the field as consultants serving the client who may fill the role of end users. In contrast, those working in civic engagement often position community members as experts and co-educators who best know the issues at hand because they live those issues. Furthermore, in social entrepreneurship internships, the partner generally pays the student for their time along with the institution for assigning the student. In contrast, civic engagement more-so reflects a charity ideal – with partners assume the opportunity costs and students volunteer their time.

Examples of community engaged scholarship and social entrepreneurship

Some universities have organized hubs that brought together several types of efforts for community impact – including CES, social entrepreneurship - for information sharing and joint programming. These initiatives, described below, often engage in activities that bring students and community members together in co-developing projects.

Local Economic Development Lab

The Local Economic Development Lab (LEDlab) is a social innovation lab (Bird, Reuda, I., & Williams, 2017). It is a 3-year university-community partnership (2015-2018) supported by Ecotrust Canada and Radius Simon Fraser University (SFU). LEDlab provides full-time graduate students with two 4-month paid internships (8 months total). Students are supported through training, mentorship, and a peer-based learning program. Graduate students supply research and prototyping support to various products. This model helps to add capacity to community-led projects while building community engagement experience for graduate students.

Selecting community partners and students
The projects must be led by individuals, groups, or organizations with deep roots in community. Preconditions: the community partner has a paid staff who has the capacity to mage a graduate student project coordinator; the project is in 'start up' stage, rather than 'idea stage'; and those most affected by the problem are involved in project development and design.

Graduate student Project Coordinators are recruited and assigned to a specific project that focuses on problem identification, problem solving, and solution-building. Project management is overseen by the community partner, who also has a role in selecting the student. Interns are paid a total of $20,000 for the 8 months.

Evaluating outcomes
The LED Lab uses a developmental evaluation approach. Students and lab staff submit a developmental evaluation report every two weeks focused on answering the questions:
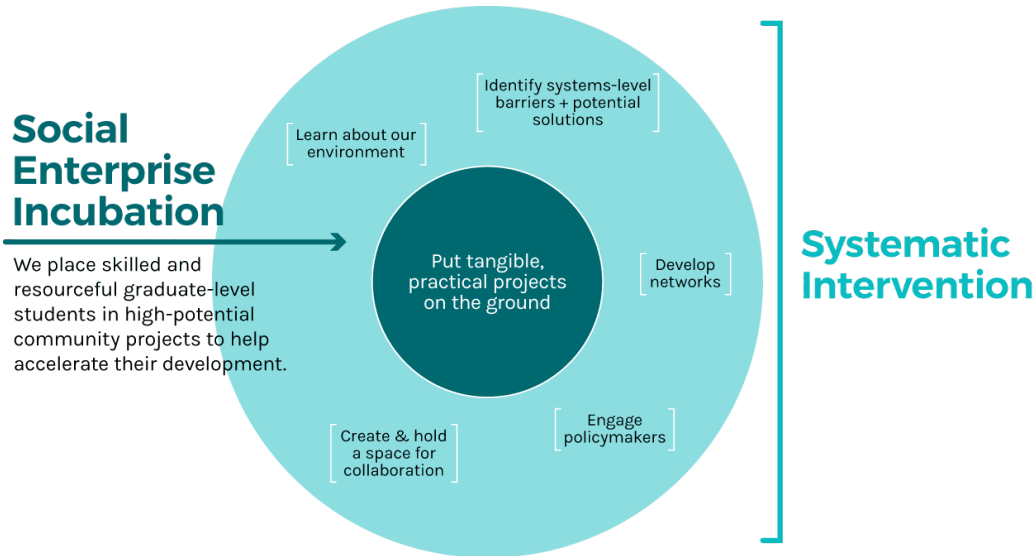What? (describing what is happening)
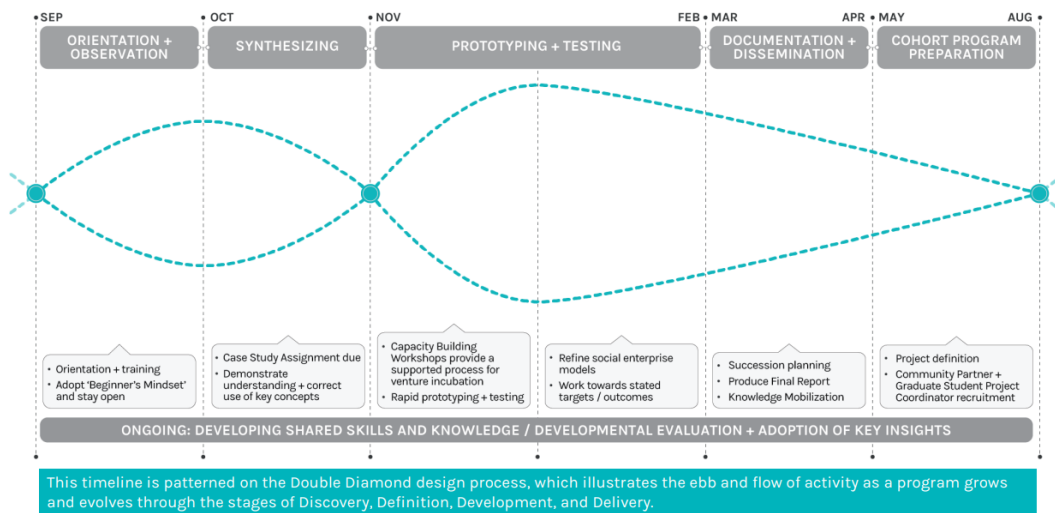So what? (implications and learning)
Now what? (how to operationalize learning).

These reports are used as a management and strategic learning tool throughout the organization.

Approach (Bird et al., 2017):

Social Enterprise Incubation

We place skilled and resourceful graduate-level students in high-potential community projects to help accelerate their development.

Learn about our environment

Identify systems-level barriers + potential solutions

Put tangible, practical projects on the ground

Develop networks

Create & hold a space for collaboration

Engage policymakers

Systematic Intervention

GRADUATE STUDENT COHORT PROGRAM ARC

SEP	OCT	NOV	FEB • MAR	APR • MAY	AUG
ORIENTATION + OBSERVATION	SYNTHESIZING	PROTOTYPING + TESTING		DOCUMENTATION + DISSEMINATION	COHORT PROGRAM PREPARATION

• Orientation + training
• Adopt 'Beginner's Mindset' and stay open

• Case Study Assignment due
• Demonstrate understanding + correct use of key concepts

• Capacity Building Workshops provide a supported process for venture incubation
• Rapid prototyping + testing

• Refine social enterprise models
• Work towards stated targets / outcomes

• Succession planning
• Produce Final Report
• Knowledge Mobilization

• Project definition
• Community Partner + Graduate Student Project Coordinator recruitment

ONGOING: DEVELOPING SHARED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE / DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION + ADOPTION OF KEY INSIGHTS

This timeline is patterned on the Double Diamond design process, which illustrates the ebb and flow of activity as a program grows and evolves through the stages of Discovery, Definition, Development, and Delivery.

Centre for Social Enterprise

Memorial's Centre for Social Enterprise (CSE) acts as a catalyst to nurture social entrepreneurs and strengthen social enterprises in Newfoundland and Labrador through three strategic pillars: 1) Research Centre; 2) Supporting Teaching and Learning Programs; and 3) Social Enterprise Incubator (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2017). The centre works within the social entrepreneurial ecosystem to create linkages among students, faculty, community, and company leaders for networking and mentorship opportunities.

Social enterprise incubation

Through innovative curricular development and engaging in research initiatives, CSE supports and nurtures social enterprise growth:

Teaching and learning programs

The centre supports social enterprise champions through:

- Building relationships among faculty and students across disciplines in the field of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship
- Exposing students to SE through experiential learning and new innovative curriculum and programs
- Stimulating cross-faculty courses/programs, develop courses that align with sector needs
- Working with faculty / staff to bring social enterprise content into the classroom through course assignments and projects

Research:

By working together, faculty members can undertake more ambitious and relevant research; they can collaborate on larger research grant proposals to access federal granting council and provincial funding; and community leaders, social entrepreneurs and faculty members can design and implement research projects that would strengthen the social enterprise ecosystem. The centre provides pathways for graduate and undergraduate student participation on these research projects.

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