

TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION
Spring 2020

COURSE NAME: Transformative Action, 3 Credits - WSE 201
INSTRUCTORS: Sam Elmore
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OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM, Thursdays 10:00 AM -11:00 AM
OFFICE LOCATION: Watson Institute
CLASS LOCATION: Watson Institute
TIME OF COURSE: Tuesdays 2:00 PM - 4:45 PM
DURATION: 15 Weeks, 165 minutes per week

Catalog Description: This course guides students through the process of overcoming key challenges faced during the social entrepreneurial process and in the social change sector. The course is based on the principles of “transformative action,” which is defined as new methods of solving society’s problems by looking beyond traditional methods of social change. This covers topics and skills such as: positive psychology, transforming fragility to resilience, and moving from stagnation to creation. This course is highly interactive, experiential, and dynamic.

No prerequisite is necessary, however the course assumes that each student is working on a social entrepreneurial endeavor.

Course Learning Outcomes (L.O.): Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- L.O. 1: Describe key challenges faced during the process of starting a social enterprise and apply the skills of transformative action to overcome those challenges (SE 2.1)
- L.O. 2: Practice and apply the virtues and character traits necessary to accomplish both personal and social entrepreneurial goals (SE 2.2)
- L.O. 3: Identify, describe and apply the principles of transformative action to their own lives and social entrepreneurial endeavors (SLO 13.1, SLO 13.3, SLO 13.4)
- L.O. 4: Complete an in-depth portfolio of his/her past, present, and future to demonstrate understanding and self-awareness of his/her life to date and future trajectory (SE 2.4)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Text: There is no textbook for this course, however required readings and videos are outlined below and highlighted in pink.

Deliverables & Exercises: Students will complete a series of assignments throughout the course of the semester. These are called *Deliverables* and can be found in the course outline (*Deliverables* are highlighted in green) and the assessment breakdown is found directly below. Each Deliverable will be assessed for the quality of the submission. All Deliverables must be submitted via Google Classroom.

Exercises / Optional Readings: These are suggested activities or optional readings to be completed outside of workshops, but will not be turned in on Google Classroom. Select exercises will be peer reviewed during the following workshop. These are highlighted in **blue**.

Item	Due	Weight
Reflection Journal (Total)	--	65%
Reflection Journal #2	Thurs , Jan 30	5%
Reflection Journal #3	Tues, Feb 4	5%
Reflection Journal #4 (<i>transformation experiment worksheet</i>)	Tues, Feb 11	5%
Reflection Journal #5	Tues, Feb 18	5%
Reflection Journal #6	Tues, Feb 25	5%
Reflection Journal #7	Tues, March 3	5%
Reflection Journal #8	Thurs , March 19	5%
Reflection Journal #9	Tues, March 24	5%
Reflection Journal #10	Tues, March 31	5%
Reflection Journal #11	Tues, April 7	5%
Reflection Journal #12	Tues, April 14	5%
Reflection Journal #13	Tues, April 21	5%
Reflection Journal #14	Tues, April 28	5%
Clarity Checkpoint: Transformation Experiment	Tues, March 3	5%
Money Checkpoint: Gumball Challenge:	Tues, March 31	5%
People Checkpoint: Transformation Artifact	Tues, May 6	0%
Participation and Engagement (including reading / video “do nows”)	--	25%
TOTAL		100%

OVERVIEW OF COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Tues, Jan 21 - Week 1 Orientation - No Class

Tues, Jan 28 - Week 2 - Welcome to Transformative Action

This workshop includes an overview of the structure and methodology of this course, as well as an introduction to the societal and personal “transformation equations” we will be crafting throughout the semester.

For Thursday, Jan 30:

- **Reflection Journal #2**

- [Wheatley, Turning to One Another](#) (Intro: pgs. 3-5, pgs. 22-33)
 - [Brene Brown: Power of Vulnerability](#)
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***Thurs, Jan 30 - Week 3 - Isolation to Connection**

We discuss the benefits of vulnerable, authentic connection and our greatest asset - the people we surround ourselves with.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #3](#)
 - [Deutschman, Change or Die](#)
 - [NPR's Hidden Brain: Creatures of Habit Podcast](#)
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Tues, Feb 4 - Week 4 - Apathy to Authorship I

In this workshop, we look at why people tend to resist change, and what we can do to move from being apathetic about personal habit change, to taking ownership and being the authors of our lives. We also reflect on the Emerson quote: “*All life is an experiment,*” and launch into our own personal transformation experiments, exploring one vital behavior that we can transform in our own lives during the next three weeks.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #4 \(Transformation Experiment Worksheet\)](#)
 - [Sherman, How We Win](#)
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Tues, Feb 11 - Week 5 - Apathy to Authorship II

This week we ask the question, “*Why don't more people get involved in social change?*” - It is hard enough to motivate oneself to change, so how do we motivate others to transform their actions to create collective positive action?

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #5](#)
 - [Brene Brown: Listening to Shame](#)
 - [5 Ways to Boost your Resilience at Work](#) (HBR)
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Tues, Feb 18 - Week 6 - Fragility to Resilience I

This session is centered around frameworks of turning doubt into self-efficacy, fragility into resilience, and looking at challenges through the activity of having “tea with your demons.”

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #6](#) - Be prepared to share case study next week
 - Finish Transformation Experiment - submit final document in Google Classroom and present in class next week
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Tues, Feb 25 - Week 7 - Fragility to Resilience II + CLARITY CHECKPOINT

Students will present the results from their personal transformation experiments and will look into community resilience case studies that the students have prepared in their reflection journal for this week.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #7](#)
- [How the Scarcity Mindset is Holding You Back](#)

Tues, March 3 - Week 8 - Scarcity to Abundance

We will discuss both the “scarcity mindset” and “abundance mindset” and how we can benefit from looking through a lens that sees potential for growth. We will also start the “Gumball Challenge,” which asks the question: “*how do we define and create value starting with few resources?*”

For 2 weeks from now (Thurs, March 19) [*Note NO TE NEXT WEEK, but will resume Thursday, March 19]

- [Reflection Journal #8](#)
- The Gumball Challenge: In your groups, you have 3 weeks to create the greatest value you can out of a few gumballs and a few dollars, which you will then collectively decide to donate to the Kiva account of your choice.
- [Madsen, Improv Wisdom](#)

*Thurs, March 19 - Week 9 - Status-Quo to Creativity

Einstein once said that the problems that we face cannot be solved with the same type of thinking that created them. This week’s class looks at how social entrepreneurs, change agents, and activists in the 21st century develop their skills of creativity.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #9](#)
- [Seligman, “Learned Optimism,” from Authentic Happiness](#)
- [The ABCDE Model](#)

Tues, March 24 - Week 10 - Cynicism to Action I

We debate the merits and faults of optimism and pessimism in social change work, and through several activities, explore how we can utilize both mindsets to set ourselves and our organizations up for success.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #10](#)
- [Conclude Gumball Challenge](#) - be ready to present next week & submit final document on Classroom
- [Goleman, Emotional Intelligence](#)
- [The Stanford Prison Experiment](#)

Tues, March 31 - Week 11 - Cynicism to Action II

This week involves a lively debate surrounding the question: “*Are humans fundamentally good or bad?*” and we dive deep into scenarios and discussions examining the human capacity for evil... and good.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #11](#)
- [Susskind, Mutual Gains Approach](#)

- [Fisher & Ury, Getting to Yes](#)
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Tues, April 7 - Week 12 - Enemies to Allies I

There are many tools and approaches to transform enemies into allies. Today we'll be talking about what that looks like on an interpersonal level, through aikido, nonviolent communication, and the "mutual gains approach"

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #12](#) - be prepared to share your reconciliation case study next week.
 - [The Real Risk of Forgiveness & Why it's Worth It](#)
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Tues, April 14 - Week 13 - Enemies to Allies II

Today we discuss the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation after divisive and horrific atrocities. Is true reconciliation possible? How do societies heal after such traumatic events? Can enemies be transformed into allies?

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #13](#)
 - [Wiseman, The Luck Factor](#)
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Tues, April 21 - Week 14 - Fear to Courage I

We discuss the question: "*What role does failure have in social change and entrepreneurship?*" and engage in a challenging exercise that involves risk-taking and rejection.

For next week:

- [Reflection Journal #14](#)
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Tues, April 28 - Week 15 - Fear to Courage II

We will synthesize our learnings and strategies for transformation and prepare transformation artifacts for our culminating workshop next week.

For next week:

- Create your [Transformation Artifact](#) (be prepared to present this next week)
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Tues, May 6 - Week 16 - Closing Session

Students present their transformation artifacts and we circle back to the transformation equations we began at the beginning of this course.

A FEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Do not use skepticism as an excuse for inaction: We believe in the mantra: "This approach could be totally wrong, but it is a hypothesis worth disproving." Innovation always starts with an educated guess - then it is a process of trial and error. Sometimes we predict correctly from the outset, but more often, we make mistakes and stumble across unexpected findings, which lead to new questions and progress. We do not use skepticism as a thinly veiled excuse for inaction or remaining in our comfort zones.

Enjoy it: Students witness and go through different experiences and screw-ups throughout their time at Watson. Watson is meant to be a safe place to experiment, pivot, get things wrong, mess up, and then get things right. Enjoy it! We are here to throw ourselves deeply into the work we are passionate about. Work hard and don't forget that joy is the basis for what we do.

Mutual respect: Feel free to disagree with something someone says or does, but first empathize with them and acknowledge the merits in their point of view, and feel free to offer a respectful disagreement, taking into account the best practices of nonviolent communication.

Peer to peer feedback: Peer to peer feedback that students give each other has been found to be some of the most helpful advice. Students will have the opportunity to receive feedback on assignment by mentors, Preceptors and the Watson team, but don't forget that the feedback of peers will form the foundation of personal and professional development.

Statement of inclusivity: The Preceptor and class members in this course strive to support an inclusive learning community, respecting those of all backgrounds and beliefs. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, veteran status, ability, immigration or economic status, gender or sexual orientation.

Other needs: If students have any other needs that may require accommodations (special arrangements) or if students will miss a class because of a religious holiday, please contact the Preceptor.

POLICIES & ASSESSMENT

Late Work: Meeting deadlines is an important part of building a successful venture and establishing credibility as a professional. As such, deliverables *not* received by the deadline given by the Preceptor will be given at maximum half credit.

Watson Institute's Policy on Academic Honesty/Integrity: Integrity and honesty are essential to Watson Institute's mission and community standards. Preceptors, staff and students must accept their responsibility to uphold and abide by the highest standards of integrity and honesty. Violations of the Academic Honesty Policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. *Cheating:* Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials
2. *Fabrication:* The intentional and unauthorized invention or falsification of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. *Plagiarism:* Intentionally or unintentionally representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.
4. *Facilitation:* Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty
5. *Falsification of Injury:* The intentional fabrication or distortion of an injury or illness used as an excuse to miss workshops or meetings.
6. *Misrepresentation of External Performances/Commitments:* The intentional embellishment of outside commitments used as an excuse to miss workshops or meetings.

Procedures: Preceptors who have evidence of a possible violation of the academic honesty policy must formally report the incident to the Director of Programs.

Simple Rubric for Assessing Deliverables:

Credit	Timeliness & Quality
Full Credit	Turned in on time and with high quality and effort. Complex thought process and presents original ideas and analysis
Half Credit	Turned in on time, but with minimal effort exerted, or turned in late, with sufficient effort exerted.
No Credit	Could be turned in on time, turned in late, or not turned in at al. If turned in, entire sections are incomplete and very little effort was exerted.

Grading Scale: Each student's final grade is based on the final average for the course requirements as compared to the university grade scale.

A	93 - 100
A-	90 - 92
B+	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79
C	73 - 76
C-	70 - 72
D+	67 - 69
D	60 - 66
F	0 - 59

Extra credit is not applicable or available in this course.