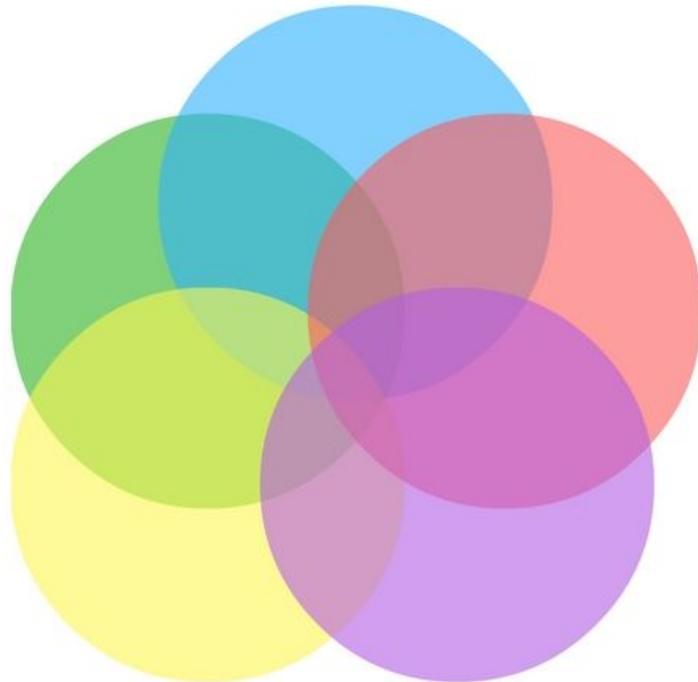


# Spodek Academy™

Student qualitative evaluations of  
Joshua Spodek's courses. (Anonymous)



Nothing tells you about a course like the voices of students who took it. Since Joshua's courses are experiential and personal, each student's experience is unique, but collectively they tell you what you can expect when you take it.

Below are anonymous student voices from graduates of courses Joshua taught in person at NYU over several years. Students ranged from teenagers in their first semesters in college to experienced professionals in continuing education programs, from countries all over the world, roughly equally male and female.

The document is long because so many students wrote so much so passionately about their experiences. You don't have to read them all, but the more you read the more you'll see how much you will get from his courses.

You will do the same exercises using the same software as these students. Though they met weekly in person, you learn from doing the exercises and sharing your reflections so you'll learn nearly equally. You'll have more flexibility to work where, when, and at what pace you want. You will all have lifetime access to the same online forum.

# Table of Contents

<a href="#">The C-Suite Perspective: Leadership</a>	4
<a href="#">Entrepreneurial Marketing and Sales (Poly), Spring 2014</a>	6
<a href="#">Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship (Wagner / Stern), Fall 2014</a>	7
<a href="#">Leadership (Wagner), Spring 2015</a>	10
<a href="#">Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship (Wagner / Stern), Fall 2015</a>	13
<a href="#">Entrepreneurial Problem Solving (SPS), Spring 2016</a>	18
<a href="#">Emails and forum entries from students</a>	19
<a href="#">Message to students considering taking the course</a>	21
<a href="#">What I will apply</a>	30

## The C-Suite Perspective: Leadership

- “This course really changed by definition of “Leadership.” Joshua is an amazing professor. He taught this class in a way that we learned about ourselves and then to understand others. He taught us how to find the real emotions and beliefs behind someone's behavior and use that emotion to lead them and make them feel understood.”
- “We only have 7 people in this class. Towards the end of this term I felt like we are really close friends . I think it is because Joshua motivates us to participate during class, also give us time to communicate with each other. There is no right or wrong answer in this class. We can say whatever we want freely...”
- “I would definitely recommend this class to my other friends. I think this course can not only improve our professional career, but also our personal life as well.”
- “I like that this course teaches leadership not just by reading theory, but actually putting the theory into practice. In most classes we are forced to regurgitate information back to the professor, in this class we are taught to be self-accountable , which is a skill everyone should have. What I learned in this class will stick with me for life . I can't say that about every SPS class. This course was refreshing.”
- “Absolutely. I would recommend this course not just to peers, but anyone interested in leadership . Honestly, even if you don't care about being a leader, this is the kind of class which can help anyone grow as a person, not only bettering themselves in terms of leadership, but also in terms of self actualization. The social skills you learn in this class have never been taught to me in an academic environment. I suggest SPS keep this course because it's one of a kind.”
- “This course is very practical . The things I got from the class can be applied in daily life as soon as I learned them. I also like the way how Josh taught this course. It makes me feel like talking with friends... I really like this course and actually I already recommended this course to several friends. I think this course can be useful to them as to me”
- “It is an open class and it's really helpful since our instructor teaches the mindset and the basic logic of leadership. I think it is really helpful and way much better than just focusing on case study...”

- “I would say this is one of the most “useful” classes in “C-Suite” based on what I heard from some of my friends from other “C-Suite” classes. I personally hate case study, therefore, I believe the class has the potential to change people's mind about how to teach leadership.”
- “I would recommend this course to my peers. This course let me realize more of myself. It is a discovery process of my emotion, motivation, and behavior. It is also helpful to understand more of others' behavior / feeling. It's helpful for both life and learning.”
- “I've learned now to lead others with empathy and connect tasks to motivations or passions. I will be able to be an effective leader with these newly acquired skills in future roles... experiential learning is a great way to learn skills and be able to apply them in real life.”
- “This course is helpful in both business leadership and personal relationships. Everyone would benefit from it.”
- “I really want to say you are my favorite professor and you are a really excellent instructor and friend. I learnt so many things from you and my life has changed a lot because of this awesome course and you. Thank you for what you did for us and I really appreciate it. I hope we can keep in touch.”

## **Entrepreneurial Marketing and Sales (Poly), Spring 2014**

- "Greatest course I have taken in poly. Thanks for everything."
- "He is the best prof I have ever seen in this school. I strongly recommend him to continue teaching this class for our engineering students. It is practical and really useful in our future career and social networking."
- "This is the best class I have ever taken in US. The prof is nice and the course is very useful. I hope I can take this class again"
- "This is one of the best courses I had during my studies in poly. He taught us a lot of important and practical knowledge"
- "The prof is excellent"
- "The structure of the course was very instructing and informative at the same time. Prof was very kind and answered all the queries. Feedbacks on assignments were given effectively. I enjoyed the class and the course totally."

## **Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship (Wagner/Stern), Fall 2014**

- “I am so grateful to you for starting me on my path toward entrepreneurship, three years ago. As a freshman, I wasn't sure of what to expect and, with your support and guidance, had opportunities and milestones I never could have predicted. As I extend a handshake across time to the inception of my venture in 2014, I am so thankful for your unique and open-minded teaching style and for always having the time and inclination to guide me in any way possible. I'm keeping this one short because I think the trajectory of my venture is the best reaction of all the knowledge and advice you imparted in me. I'm looking forward to continuing to share my experiences and hurdles with you along the way.”
- “Josh's class was fantastic, and he is a wonderful human and instructor.”
- “Breaking down the entire process into baby steps was extremely helpful. This course was amazing.”
- “This course combined an experiential method with fundamental concepts (such as leadership, market feedback, and developing relationships with investors and possible workers.) As a result, this course was one I most looked forward to each week. Josh's genuine interest in the subject and his anecdotes about his own experiences with his ventures provided valuable insight and inspiration to his students. I don't see any weaknesses in this course. This experiential method has provided me with the skills and confidence that has encouraged me to pursue the minor in Social Entrepreneurship.”
- “Strengths are that this class was very REALISTIC, I feel that it really taught me all the fundamentals I needed to know in order to go further in this field of work. I wish that the professor applied more readings and trips in supplement to our projects. I also wish that the course was a bit more demanding than it was so that it could really give people that extra push that needed it. Overall, great course and inspiring instructor!”
- “Really enjoyable course! I wish that there was a clearer outline of the grading breakdown. I also wish that we would have used the texts more in our class discussions. The class did not seem to follow the syllabus so, as a student, it was hard to stay organized. Overall, an incredible course! Professor Spodek was engaging and really inspiring!”
- “It was an incredible class that inspired me in immeasurable ways. It was my Arst real experiential course in college and thus allowed me to feel prepared to

actually use the skills I learned in the real world. The expectations were unclear making it difficult and a bit sloppy at times but overall I would highly recommend the class to anyone."

- "Overall, I thought the class was awesome!"
- "I enjoyed the hands on approach that the instructor used in this course. The material he taught was very interesting and useful."
- "Strength: People are all eager to learn from Joshua so we have a very motivated and engaging learning atmosphere. Weakness: The course has too many students. Each student needs more opportunities to develop his or her own presentation skills."
- "This class was excellent. I loved the combination of lectures and presentations every single class and how everyone had to show their process of building a business that would help save the world."
- "This class was absolutely amazing and Josh is a terrific teacher. His experience in the field provided strong examples for how we should model our own ventures."
- "I expected to gain a better understanding of the social entrepreneurship field, particularly the process of developing a project into a possible investment pitch. The class was very useful in teaching me all of this."
- "I didn't know what to expect, but what I got out of it was some amazingly useful skills!"
- "I expected to work on my own social venture and the class let me do just that."
- "I expected to learn how to build a business that would help the world, and that's exactly what happened. Josh Spodek was a great professor and really facilitated making the theoretical into practical."
- "I expected to gain a basic understanding of how social entrepreneurship worked. The course fulfilled this expectation and taught me many more things."
- "I learned what I expected to gain from this course - the ability to come up with an okay idea, contextualize the idea, and perfect the idea by listening to market feedback."
- "I went in with an understanding of entrepreneurship but little experience with social entrepreneurship. Professor Spodek provided us the foundations of what

social entrepreneurship is and then motivated us to pursue ventures concerning things we are passionate about.”

- “I expected to get introduced to what Social Entrepreneurship is, and to learn the basics and foundations of it. I did.”
- “I expected to learn the fundamentals for creating a social entrepreneurial project, and I did. This course was experiential in that it triggered students to simulate the experience of launching a socially entrepreneurial initiative. Great course!”
- “I expected to learn how to develop my ideas and to gain valuable skills that would allow me to pursue them outside of the classroom. And I got that and so much more.”
- “I expected to come away from this course with a stronger understanding of what social entrepreneurship meant to me. Josh has exceeded my expectations, by offering both a unique and inspiring perspective of social entrepreneurship and giving me the motivation to develop and continue a solution to an unmet need even after this semester has finished.”
- “I expected this course to teach me the very fundamentals that Social Ent. is built on and how to apply them to the field of work that i am interested in. It did just that.”
- “I expected to learn about Social Entrepreneurship and I ended up learning in a hands-on way.”
- “I expected to learn what Social Entrepreneurship is, and how can I work on it. Yes i did.”
- “I expected it to be more theoretical but enjoyed that it was more about application.”
- “I expected to learn the basics of social entrepreneurship and I learned so much more than that!”

## Leadership (Wagner), Spring 2015

- “Joshua Spodek’s course, the Meaning of Leadership, is uniquely distinct from any previous NYU course I have taken thus far. Professor Spodek was exceptionally adept at teaching this course’s material ... this class was clearly structured and well thought out. It would be impossible for one not to recognize the amount of time, passion, and dedication Professor Spodek invested in this course ... it had a profound impact on me personally.”
- “I truly hope other NYU students have the privilege of taking this course. It is the exact material that students of my generation need in order to tackle the unknown beyond graduation and in our everyday.”
- “This is the most influential yet relaxing class that I have ever taken in my life. ... I really loved, enjoyed it, and constantly amazed by how much I learned more and more over the course of practicing Joshua's exercises. ... This is a mutual experiential seminar for both students and professor to explore the meaning of leaderships. ... this is a really great class that I will recommend to my friends.”
- “This class embodied the perfect balance between in-class work and real-world exercises. I think NYU lacks a great deal in that area! ... As a result of what I learned from the course, I have been able to have wonderful interview experiences and network effortlessly. I use to think that majority of leading involved delegating task, but boy was I wrong. I learned that most of what consist of being a leader was connecting with people, being able to tap in their innate abilities, and get the job the in the best way possible.”
- “I’ve realized that even as an intern, I was able to lead my own colleagues and supervisors into helping me land my first out of college job by getting them to offer me a position at the company. Without this course and the techniques/exercises you taught us, I don’t think I would have been able to seize every leadership opportunity and successfully interact with my bosses and colleagues to the point where they actually offered me a job. I really want to thank you for all the knowledge I’ve gained from this course, it turned out to be one of the most useful and meaningful classes I’ve taken at NYU and challenged me to reconsider and redefine my understanding of true leadership.”
- “I really went above and beyond in my leadership project. I was deeply engaged in it every day. I was an active leader with my teammate and provided an incredible amount of resources for him”

- “Personally, identifying with Josh’s passion for leadership and seeing the great powers it has on creating growth/change, I believe very much that my participation in these exercises were infused with honest effort and great enthusiasm. ... I have found increased meaning in the work I do, and have found myself more motivated to arrive and thrive within those spaces. ... I am beyond grateful. Thank you.”
- “If I could go back in time, I would have taken this class my sophomore year as opposed to my senior year, final semester. ... I think all of the exercises are integral to leadership.”
- “I think that one of the most important things that I learned from this class was how to connect the exercises to my everyday life and to teach and inspire others to lead when they are struggling ... my conversations with my roommate, helping her with the exercises, enhanced this class and created an application for my studies that I did not have in other classes. Also, even though she knows all of the exercises already, she wants to take this class!!”
- “To be honest, I wasn't too interested in the topic when I initially signed up for the class, but my interest for leadership/management grew tremendously through the course. My career goal was to become the best engineer I could be, but after this semester, I think I want to eventually (3-5 years) go to business school to be fully capable to take on managerial roles in tech. Had I not taken this class my last semester in college, I may have not thought of different options in my life.”
- “Helping some of the hall council members with their problems through suggesting the exercises we've practiced in class made me feel like a true leader (my new definition of a leader) for the first time in any of my leadership experience. I felt that I was actually leading people as opposed to just holding the position ... I try to incorporate everything and anything we learned in class to my daily life constantly; I think doing this really helped me think more about what we are doing and where we would be heading next ... applying classroom exercises in real life in a different context enables the opportunity to really make meaning of the class and the lectures.”
- “I just wanted to say thank you for the class. I really enjoyed learning what you had to offer as I really do believe that my dance team has benefited from the exercises I have incorporated from your class.”
- “I found this structure very helpful as it provided us the opportunity to gain practical knowledge instead of textbook knowledge that could be acquired without having to take a course. The class allowed me to learn at my own pace, and really think about what was being taught in class outside of class ... I liked that

he seemed to take genuine interest in the student's' progress, commenting on our journal entries one by one and pin-pointing out any individual goal we may want to keep in mind to explore possibilities in expanding our views on leadership ... The course provided many tips from ways to control my own emotions to initiating a memorable conversation with other people (networking), and the forum served as a space for me to organize my thoughts and contemplate about what I gained from the experiences. ... Throughout the semester, I found myself being able to handle situations in team-environments with much more effectiveness because I had a reference to the way I was participating in groups. I think Professor Spodek effectively redefined my understanding of leadership and of being a leader ... he really provided perspective in that we use leadership every day in both encounters with others as well as within myself. Overall, I believe that The Meaning of Leadership was an incredibly rewarding course that allowed me to challenge myself to strive for a better version of myself. The Meaning of Leadership felt like a real "college" class, because it required discovering what I wanted to learn through real-life encounters, as opposed to lecture- based classes in which many students only memorize concepts for the exam only to completely forget it in a couple months"

# Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship (Wagner/Stern), Fall 2015

Anonymous feedback from the last class:

- “This is one of the greatest classes I have ever taken. It was engaging, thought provoking, challenging, and fun. Josh is an incredible teacher, mentor, and friend to everyone in the class who is passionate about the subject matter. If I could take this class all over again, I would”
- “10/10 would take again! I loved every second of this class, but what's cooler, is that I think I may have loved the homework even more.”
- “As a senior, this was the first course that challenged me, asking me to think outside my comfort zones. Yet, it is also where I developed a strong network of supporters through group projects.”
- “Message for future students: Take the course seriously. Take advantage of every aspect of the course. In my seven semesters at NYU, it's easily been one of the most valuable courses I've taken; please give it the time it deserves. Don't be scared to reach out to people, anyone at all, for advice. The worst they can say is no and the best is invaluable.”
- “Take the course! As a senior, I think it's incredibly necessary for students to be equipped with some business knowledge before going into the 'real world.' Furthermore, the class taught me how to create sustainable solutions to remedy problems I'm passionate about. I'm incredibly grateful for the business and social tools I gained from this course.”
- “Be open-minded and ready to view things in different ways. The more flexible and less set you are on a solution, the more beneficial the class will be. You'll also end up with a more effective solution.”
- “What I would tell a student considering taking the course is to take it and that there's no way to exactly describe the course because it's a unique experience for everyone. I'd also tell the student to focus on an unmet problem he/she cares about as opposed to doing a project that seems like a popular issue because the experience will then be rewarding.”
- “In this course, I learned how active and capable NYU students are. It gave me a new sense of citizenship. It made me think about what the world would be like if everyone acted as social entrepreneurs in their own way. It may seem overly

optimistic but I think this is possible. This class showed me that everyone has the tools to be a social entrepreneur in their own right.”

- “This is a class that took me in really unexpected directions and I would highly suggest it if you have a mind that likes to innovate and take the class seriously.”
- “I do not want to leave the classroom. THANK YOU JOSH!”
- “I would say that this class makes you refreshingly uncomfortable. The curriculum forces you out of your comfort zone. I am also glad that at the end of the semester we have a tangible project to walk away with.”
- “One of the things I valued most was being able to debunk that entrepreneurship isn't always about disrupting an entire industry or creating something brand new but making changes and innovations. I think this goes hand in hand with really internalizing the fact that ideas do come often, it's just the belief in yourself and the application of skills that are the most important. Approach the class from day 1 with the explicit goal of taking your project outside of the classroom—that way you'll get the most out of the material.”
- “I valued the freedom we had in this class. Unlike many other classes, you guided us without giving us the answers, making it a more meaningful and real experience. It's not like most classes where you learn things and are tested on it. Instead, you learn things that could actually be used in the real world. Also, I like how the grading isn't a large factor for the class. I think that takes a lot of stress of w/o having assignments or tests graded each week. I would recommend taking this course if you have any interest in social entrepreneurship. You are able to learn in the class because you want to, not because it is a required class.”
- “This is an extremely hands-on practical class. What you put in you'll get out. You need to be very motivated and passionate to really get the most out of the class.”
- “Group work was insightful. You are very good at responding and providing feedback. I would recommend to students really dedicated to starting something impactful.”
- “Finding a need and then arguing out a solution applies to many things outside of creating a venture (applies to the advertising and consulting field too—both industries I'm interested in!).”
- “Forcing us to share ideas with each other all the way up to high value people really forces us out of our comfort zone and teaches us valuable networking skills. You'll enter this class with a fuzzy idea of what social entrepreneurship is, and

leave with valuable life skills, experience, and a passion to put your ideas in action.”

- “Make sure you are committed to your project, or just the problems you're addressing. However, don't get intimidated by the people around you or by the field where your problem lies. Look at each step individually so that the overarching project doesn't seem overly daunting. This will result in your confidence in the class and your project rising, in the same way that your confidence in yourself and your developing skills will rise as well. It will be surprising to see how many people will get back to you and try to help if you dedicate yourself to the process of the class and your project.”
- “This class is really what you make of it. You can do the bare minimum of each assignment and pass the course or you can put 110% into everything and get more than a class project at the end of the semester. I really learned a lot, about entrepreneurship, about problems in our world, about communication, and about passion, from the class and from Josh. I hope you can get as much out of it as I did!”
- “I really enjoyed taking a class that allowed me to work on something I am passionate about.”
- “Josh's class helped me understand the realities of being an entrepreneur, while also opening my eyes to my creative potential to help causes I care about.”
- “I've come up with a great and innovative business idea over the course of my life but going through with an idea can be scary. The course offered me skills and enhanced skills that I already had to fearlessly try and execute. Life is trial and error. And to know that screwing up and failing is a part of the growth process of truly discovering one's passions is a relief. I got to experience this first hand through the course.”
- “Practical learning can take you a long way! Would advise students to take this course because of the value it has in real life.”
- “I really enjoyed this course as it taught me about social entrepreneurship through hands- on experience. I came to class with an idea on what issue I wanted to see solved, but no idea on how I can make it happen. Through the past 15 weeks I was able to identify problems and build upon a specific solution and personally develop it by talking to people in the real world. Josh taught me a lot about entrepreneurial skills and techniques that I could use in business and even everyday life. You don't have to have a project in mind or even any idea what

social entrepreneurship is and you will still be able to glean much knowledge in the field from this class.”

- “After taking this course, I truly feel that I am a bit of a social entrepreneur now. I understand how to identify an issue and go about improving it instead of complaining. I truly enjoyed this course, for the most part. Before, social entrepreneurship was a vague, unexplored field for me. But now I feel much better equipped to actually change issues I care about.”
- “I really enjoyed the course! I think the course seems daunting at first, but because we do everything on a step-by-step basis, it was actually very attainable and not as overwhelming as I had originally feared it would be. Overall, a great course!”
- “Overall, thanks for a great semester! This class was a nice change in pace compared to some of my other classes.”
- “Do not let hurdles discourage you from the project. Indeed, going through the iteration process and effectively staying close/connected to your issue will help you truly develop a social entrepreneurship model that is relevant and effective. Be ambitious with your high-valued people -> I spoke to people from the UN Government [sic] of the country I was interested in working for all through emails.”
- “The course is effective in walking you through the steps to go from *issue* to *solution*. Everything in between is up to you and your diligence with your project. TRUST THE ENTREPRENEURIAL THEMES—probably the greatest takeaway.”
- “How people as small as us can make such a huge difference from a spontaneous idea.”
- “I highly recommend Professor Josh Spodek's Social Entrepreneurship class. Unconventional, hands-on, and engaging, taking this course can help you develop skills that are crucial in life beyond the classroom. The course broadens your perspective on how *you* can contribute to society—as a student and as a social entrepreneur! Thank you for a wonderful class [smiley face]”
- From online question (anonymous): What did you expect to get out of this course, and did you?
- “Expected not to get much, was proven very very wrong - got a ton out of it, Josh is one of the best professors I got to have at NYU”

- “I expected to develop my social venture, specifically its business plan and I was able to accomplish that through this course.”
- “Learn the basics of starting a social entrepreneurship venture and I did!”
- “To learn the basics of social entrepreneurship - its theory and how to start one myself. Yes I did.”

## **Entrepreneurial Problem Solving (SPS), Spring 2016**

- “I would tell people considering taking this class to do it! I have actually referred most of the people I asked for advice to your site because they were curious. I'm sure my enthusiasm was a testament to how much I was loving the class. Besides entrepreneurs and management would recommend this course to someone who was in need of a life change or in need of some motivation. You are a very inspiring person I always feel very pumped leaving the class. I especially liked when you applied the exercises to real life this evening. This type of problem in the workplace resonates with the whole world and this is truly a useful solution to help solve the problem.”
- “This course gave us much more exercise rather than methodology of the topic. These experiences were quite practical and they removed the feeling that I felt difficulty when I started something new.”
- “Practicing what we discuss in the classroom is very valuable, the whole course is based on the assumption that you will be working hard in between sessions.”
- “Josh is an excellent teacher! The exercises were much more hands on than I expected. I was pleasantly surprised and I felt challenged with every exercise.”
- “I loved the in class exercises we could do more.”
- “Looking forward to the Sales class!”

## Emails and forum posts from students

- RJ: "This class was one of those "life classes" where everything you learn is really applicable to your everyday life. It wasn't like all of the math classes I took throughout my years of schooling where I rarely saw any real life application. The Ave themes especially, are extraordinarily important to your daily life. They are helpful to more than just entrepreneurship. They can be used in almost all of my dealings in life. That is when you know a class is valuable and the knowledge gained is important.
- I know can see the importance of asking for advice. The humility that comes with it is so important in all of my dealings. There is so much benefit to improving ideas and being flexible. If you aren't flexible in life, I believe you will have a much harder time succeeding in whatever you are trying to do. If you work to improve your skills, expand your strengths, and minimize your weaknesses, you will And more success. Great ideas come ALL THE TIME. You just have to be open minded and flexible to them. Work on them, and when the going gets tough, work even harder to see if you can And a solution.
- If you are considering this course, stop. Don't consider it. Do it. Put it in your shopping cart in registration and enroll yourself in it. Just do it. I cannot express enough how great of a decision it was to take this class. If you are in the class, enjoy it. Be immersed in everything it has to offer, because there is so much you can learn from it. Don't get lost on Facebook. Because if you do, you are royally screwing yourself out of an amazing opportunity. This is one of those classes where you get as much from it as you put in. So put in everything you have and more. It will pay off and it will be an incredible investment of your time. If you have the opportunity to stay after class and learn even more from Josh, DO IT. Do you understand the incredible opportunity you have when a teacher is willing to stay after every week to teach you more? Especially when they are doing it out of the goodness of their heart? Josh drops wisdom and incredible life advice. Not nearly enough students stayed after class because they were "tired". I promise you, they missed out. I looked forward to staying after class every week because it was so amazing. So please, give this class your all. Focus. You will not regret it.

- I cannot even begin to express how much I have enjoyed this course. It is by far the best class I have taken while at NYU. Thank you, Josh, for your time, wisdom, and passion. It made an incredible impact on my life.”
- Nahima: “This class has by far been my favorite course at NYU for many reasons. It really made me think differently, experiment with different unmet problems I found myself connected to, create a video, go very outside of my comfort zone, and changed the way I think about the world in many way. I’m very fortunate to take a course like this and I really hope that I’m able to take many courses like this in the future (and if not might as well try to And a way to change a course to make it like yours right? Haha). Thank you again, Josh, for such a great semester and I’d love to keep in touch.”
- Gila: “I just wanted to thank you for an amazing semester. Taking your class was a really transformative and introspective experience for me. I learned about myself, what I want, and what I believe in. Thank you so much for being so patient with me, I know I can be really stubborn sometimes. Thanks for believing in me and encouraging me to focus on my passions. And lastly, thanks for making each class interesting and memorable.”
- Shakthi: “This course was phenomenal. This is my last semester as an undergraduate, and I can't say enough how influential this course has been, and how strongly I encourage other students to take it. Thanks for a great class, Josh.”
- Shakthi again: “Message to the next class: Take the course seriously if you want to get most out of it. And on that vein, there’s a lot you can get out of the course, so take it seriously. Don’t be afraid to try something bold; it’s the best way you can learn, and possibly the way you can make the most notable impact.

## Message to students considering taking the course:

- “Don’t take this course if you don’t want to commit the time. If you can’t, then there are certainly people who can better utilize the skills taught in this course.”
- Do take this course if you’re interested in making an impact, going into entrepreneurship, or if, in general, you just want to do something meaningful with your life. There are few courses like this at NYU; don’t lose your chance.”
- Jodie: “to write a message to students thinking about taking this course next year I would stress the hands-on, practical nature of the course and how it is really about applying what you learn in the classroom to your own project. It is an extremely different kind of course to anything else I have taken at NYU and I loved the action based learning style of it. I would highly recommend this course to someone who is interested in the idea of starting their own venture but hasn't had the confidence, support or general idea of the way in which to go about it. I would also recommend this course to people who would like to meet fellow students who have diverse passions and are highly motivated to explore them. I think it's important to stress with this course that you will be most rewarded if you bare in mind that what you put into your project you will certainly get out. What most surprised me after taking this course was how connected it made me feel to NYU and the greater NYC community. At the beginning of the course i felt very unresourceful and disconnected from a lot of the world however after having reached out to so many people in my field of interest I realise that this is certainly not the case. I think the highlight of this course was de/nitely the connections and people I met along the way as they really inspired me - the guest speakers, my fellow classmates, the community I wished to serve, and the high value people I was connected with along the way. I think this is the /rst course at NYU in which I developed more than just traditional academic skills, it really does help you apply yourself in so many aspects of life. I hope to continue with my project and I'm excited to see where it goes!”
- Arya: “I have already started applying everything I've learnt in this course to my real life and venture that I am taking forward. Jazz Hands developed tremendously in this class and because of the analytical model that Prof. Spodek made us do, I was able to realise just where I needed to tweak my business model and I did precisely that. I applied everything I learnt to my venture and was successful in

receiving a \$8500 grant from NYU to make it work. Thus this class has been extremely rewarding for me.

- My only advice to people considering taking the course would be that they should have an open mind and be willing to stray away from the traditional theory based learning system. They should assimilate everything this class has to offer and the only way it'll be rewarding is if they apply it and keep applying whatever they have learnt. I would advise them to appreciate their classmates because they would learn a lot of the people around them that could bring immense changes to their life and venture.
- "Overall I loved the course and thought that it taught me skills that I could apply in all aspects of my life which I am thankful for."
- Arya again: "The last class helped me to really look back on whatever I've accomplished throughout this course and realise how meaningful it has been for my life. Right from the first class where we introduced ourselves to each other to the last class where everyone has played a huge role in the development of each other's ventures. It has been a great journey as I haven't just seen my own venture grow, but I am also witness other's ventures progress. My favourite part about the class was the fact that everyone was so different and it just allowed us to learn so much from one another.
- Prof. Spodek had organized the class assignments and discussions in a manner that would enable us to make complete use of the diversity among our class. Since day 1, we had small group assignments and group discussion where we really did work on the entrepreneurial themes. We were able to ask our friends advice and iterate our ventures. We learnt to be flexible enough to accommodate constructive feedback. What eventually ended up happening was that we were able to provide and receive multiple perspectives regarding different aspects of our venture and that just helped us make it more sustainable. I loved the guest speakers because they have just been inspiring for me. I have sent Josh many emails regarding my video projects and he has replied with constructive feedback for the same and I am thankful for that connection that I was able to make in this class. Furthermore, by working on different aspects, especially the financial model in depth, I found the courage to enter Jazz Hands into a social venture competition at Stern and I just learnt last week that I won funding of \$7000 which I intend to use for workshops in the summer. Thus, this class has proved to be invaluable for me and I am so glad I decided to take it."
- Divya: "while it is hard to come up with an initial idea and while it can be intimidating, the best way is to just jump in and act as though your project is going to happen, even if at first you might believe otherwise. Once I believed in myself

and my project (which sounds cliché, I know) I was truly able to go out of my comfort zone and apply myself in a way I never thought I would at Arst. To students considering this class, I would say take it even if you are not completely interested in social entrepreneurship, but something along the lines of leadership and creativity. This class will make you feel confident in your ability to reach out to people that might seem intimidating. It will also help you develop the courage to pursue an idea that you are passionate about, even if it is not in a socially entrepreneurial manner. I'm so glad I took this course, and I'm grateful for everything I am taking away from it as I know it helped me attain my goals in a way I couldn't completely do before,"

- Iris: "I learned a lot, about social entrepreneurship, about the process of starting a venture, about communication, about identifying problems in our world, from the class and Josh. This is the Arst project based class that I have been a part of at NYU and I truly got a lot out of the course by being hands on and having discussions with peers and the professors. I hope that more classes are like this here. Thank you Josh!"
- Danielle B: "This class is not just about the classroom but it is about skills for life. I learned a tremendous amount of skills such as how to share your ideas with a variety of people from various backgrounds. I learned how to give advice that is helpful and inspires people to pursue their ideas and not lose hope."
- Yihan: "I really enjoyed this class. I feel like the things I learned would definitely apply to not only the social entrepreneurship, but also my life. I really love the presentation of the guest speaker Grace in the second session. Before listening to her presentation, I was quite nervous because the idea of social entrepreneurship is so vague and intimidating. Her presentation really helped me to build up my confidence, and understand that social entrepreneurship is not something "up in the air". We don't need to be established in order to do something."
- One message I would like to pass on to the students taking this course next year is, be brave. Don't be afraid to be yelled at, or worry about others shutting the door to you. There is nothing to lose and even if there is only a little chance of people helping your project, you should open your mouth and talk to them. Also, try to get as much feedback or advice as possible. Maybe half of them are not useful at all, but surely you will find the gold in other's intelligence."
- Emery: "This class has taught me more skills I can use outside of the classroom than any class I have taken so far at NYU. We use social, professional, and social professional skills every day."

- I guess that would be my message to the students next year and also to students thinking about taking the course. You don't have to be a social entrepreneur, and you don't have to have some great idea to take this class. Maybe while you're taking this class you'll come up with a social venture of your own, but I know that you'll definitely grow and be a better thinker. It's also neat being surrounded by a group of such inspired people—the students and professor. Everyone has different passions and things that they want to do, but everyone has the same drive to succeed in making the world a better place."
- Steve: "Overall, I enjoyed taking this course. I came in thinking that I'd just be learning about exactly what the course was titled. Obviously, that wasn't the case and I was exposed to a very hands-on approach to starting my own venture. It was kind of scary and nerve racking initially; however, as my idea came along and grew, I felt more comfortable being an "entrepreneur."
- As we already discussed, all these course topics are applicable to daily life. For me, the key takeaway of the course is to not be afraid of asking for help. If you don't take that first step, you never know what may develop (cliche, but very true).
- Project-wise, I hope to continue my business in the following years and hopefully it'll be up and running. After this semester's progression, I think the idea has taken real form and has enough substance that can really do good and make money at the same time. I recommend taking this course and that you get what you put in. In hindsight, I want those considering taking this course to come in with the same notions as I did and And that it might just be Called with an entirely different experience."
- Chelsea: "I think that this course is extremely relevant to life outside of school. As we talked about in class, there are a lot of ways in which the skills that we learned can help is in more simple situations, such as situations at work, or in larger situations such as ones that affect large groups of people in potential life or death situations. The important thing is to never be passive and to never be afraid to take initiative and make a change. We should never feel like we have to sit and suffer in silence when in a work situation or any other life situation. We should never feel afraid to voice our opinions.
- Over the course of the semester, the Ave entrepreneurial themes began to make a lot more sense. My favorite theme was "the idea of a lifetime comes once a month." When one idea fails, I think it's really easy to think that that's it and that you won't have any more good ideas. But the truth is, we get good ideas all the time, we just have to know what to do with those ideas and how to act on them. I also really appreciate the amount of time that we spent asking for feedback. An idea can get so much better just by talking to family, friends, and experts in the

field that you're working in. I, like many people in the class, felt like I was asking a huge favor by asking people for feedback. But I found that people are really honored when we ask them for their advice. It's essentially a huge compliment and they are (almost) always really excited to give you their feedback.

- My message to next year's student would be to not be intimidated by the class at Arst. It can seem overwhelming, but you just have to take things one step at a time and appreciate the journey and the growth that you will experience. The class is super rewarding if you put in the time and the effort.
- My message to students who are considering to take the course next year is to absolutely take it if they feel like they've ever had an idea that they don't know how to carry out. This class has really helped me (through hands-on experience) figure out how you take an idea and make it into a real business or organization. It's really hard to do, but the purpose of the class is to give you practice. Practicing these skills will ultimately make you more successful down the road."
- Vinay: "A lot of the skills developed in class have already started to play into my everyday life. I feel that I now think less and do more- and am more willing to get my hands dirty- in any project/issue I am tackling. I think this class has also showed me how much the people around me and the people that I know/am connected to are willing to help. I've also learned to become less fearful of contacting/reaching out to people that I simply do not know and am really looking forward to using these enhanced communication skills to my advantage, be it when looking for a job or when working on my own project.
- I think the process of iteration and the notion that no idea starts out perfect was probably the most important theme that I learned to understand and accept. The conversations with a few high valued people truly helped me address some underlying issues I was unable to pinpoint or address myself. What seemed like a model that was simply wrong transformed into something that I could take control of and be creative with.
- With that said, I would definitely recommend anyone taking this class to not let seemingly large hurdles stop you from tackling an issue a certain way. I realized, by changing paths, to my second business model (impact donations app), that, changing your approach to solving a particular social issue doesn't eradicate you of any problems or challenges. Indeed, I guess I had to learn Arst hand that you do not need a perfect idea, but rather, need one that can be iterated. This is definitely one of my key takeaways- even though it was repeated in class weekly. I guess this applies to every field in a way. Persistence and the ability to stick to something, regardless of the hurdles that you may be faced with, ultimately can be overcome with guidance and creativity."

- Stephanie: "I really enjoyed this course - coming into the class I was really interested in taking this because I had read the syllabus from online earlier and liked how it was a very hands on course where I could develop from start an idea that I was passionate about. I had a slight idea on what I wanted to do my project about because I researched it in one of my classes last year, but this class really helped make the idea more feasible (with all the market feedback, flexibility, and iterations). I can truly say I've learned a lot in this class, and I will continue my project going forward. I contacted the head of the Verizon Foundation over LinkedIn a couple of days ago but I have not heard back a response yet. This class really engrained the Ave entrepreneurial themes in my head, and reminded me not to think conventionally when I go about trying to start something. In the beginning, I probably had a different view on each of the entrepreneurial themes. I always thought ideas only came once in a long time, and wrote down every idea that came to my head to not forget it. I never realized how much asking for advice rather than just pitching people made a difference. It really made me realize how much very small nuances can affect responses. I really enjoyed watching everyone's videos last week - I believe that the class was full of individual creativity and putting it together really created a synergy of something much more. This class was very different from my typical course load, and it made me feel like I was making a difference in life and being impactful rather than just learning about finance and money. I'll de/nitely take what I learned in this class and apply it in the future, maybe by starting a social venture of my own or working in the social impact arm of a Arm. I am currently working in a company in which I am afraid to speak up because it's a very small company and everybody seems to know each other very well already. After hearing about social entrepreneurship's applications, I believe that I'll be able to build up the confidence to be more involved within the company. Overall, I'm really glad I enrolled in this class and I hope to keep in touch!"
- Isabelle: "I liked how hands-on the class is and the skills that we have learned through this semester that are very important in outside the classroom- asking for advice (rather than pitching), how to approach high-value people, and thinking flexibly (and not getting too attached to an idea). I feel that the 5 entrepreneurial themes are very valuable and true, and I especially liked the idea on how it is more important to learn and develop skills rather than depend on a past achievements or personality. A message to next year's students is that how much you learn depends on how much you put into the course. Take this course if you are looking for something unconventional, hands-on and engaging!"
- Sherine: "This course has been helpful in many ways- both entrepreneurially and just in life. I had a lot of nerves and fears when it came to starting a Social Venture and everything that it would entail. The main fear was actually the communication

with people I didn't know. Another big one was the way I viewed Social ventures that already existed and well-established Social entrepreneurs. I felt like it had to be an amazing idea or it wouldn't really have much of an impact. That second fear was addressed straight of the bat with the Social Entrepreneurship themes. "Better than a great idea, is an ok idea with flexibility, market feedback, and iterations." The first fear slowly went away as we did more and more of the exercises. I have definitely gained a new confidence when it comes to putting myself and my ideas out there. I think learning to ask for advice or thoughts or evaluations definitely made it easier to reach out.

- I strongly believe that the life skills I learned in this class and the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship are strongly entwined. A big part of starting a venture and strengthening your business plan and solution is reaching out to new people and people that are more often than not more established in the field than you are. It's the same thing with gaining experience and learning more about the career field you want to go into. I had a very personal experience with these two because by asking new people for advice and by talking to strangers I became more confident in networking and putting myself out there. That resulted in me putting myself out there by asking Josh if he would be interested in having an intern. After Josh spoke in class, building brand names and working on the production of brand videos seemed very interesting to me. It also worked well with my future business plans. Now, I am learning a lot more about something I find extremely interesting and important and interning at Madoff productions."
- Noel: "I always knew that high-value people are accessible. Now I know what steps I have to take in order to connect to them."
- In NYU Shanghai, due to the experimental nature of the university, many of us were pushed to become problem solvers. I was really glad to meet problem solvers in New York as well. I became more aware and confident about my skills as a social entrepreneur. I have realized that to a considerable extent I can become intimidated by strangers when I ask for their advice. I overcame this issue by the time I talked to my 10th person closest in the field. I have learned how to direct, film and edit videos. I have accepted that no socially entrepreneurial organization or company will provide the perfect panacea. Therefore, it no longer discourages me from brainstorming about unmet needs and potential solutions to them. Knowing the unmet need thoroughly is indeed more important than the solution itself. Last, choosing this class was a great idea. Thank you very much!"
- Rachel: "This class gave me the opportunity to apply the skills I am learning straight to the real world. We haven't just been learning about what social entrepreneur is with a textbook and memorizing different definitions or case studies to then regurgitate back on an exam. The main goal of this class is for us

to get a head start in the real world and try to acquire real experience that will be useful to us in our careers.”

- Yuanping: “Starting a new venture and seeing so many competitions going on might be very frustrating, but being consistent will really help one gets through tough times. Also, when we are discouraged because people do not agree with our ideas or projects are not going as well as we expect, we should avoid letting those negative emotions affect our attitudes toward the project. Instead, we should put all the energy into adding solutions, people value our projects, and strengthening our mindsets daily.”
- Tyler: “I really enjoyed this class. I have already started applying everything I learned in this class to not only me social entrepreneurship ventures, but all the projects I take on. When I Arst came it the class, I had a very narrow mindset of what Social Entrepreneurship is and how people went about it. I really learned a lot from the projected based environment, I allowed me to work with other and conversate with people that was coming from a completely different perspective. Also, I was able to put everything that I learned into practice immediately.
- Paideia was something that I was working on about two months before the class started. This class helped solidify everything I thought about the process and shed some light on the future of the project. I was always skeptical about doing a program such as Paideia because there are so many other programs like it that already exist. It was the entrepreneurial themes that help me understand that no matter what my venture is, it is up me if it's going to be successful. One of the themes that stuck with me was "Better than a great idea is an okay idea plus feedback, flexibility, and iteration."
- The advice I would give to prospective students would be to think of the class as a social entrepreneurship incubator. It's a place to de/ne what social entrepreneurship means to you and put your ideas into practice. You will get what you want to get out of the class. If your goal is to have a start a social venture by the time the class is done, then that's totally possible. Or if you're already working on a project, I think this class will help you revisit your perspective on entrepreneurship and the structure of your venture. Meanwhile, I will say that if you're interested in a class where a grade is associated with every assignment then this class is not for you. Although, if you're the students that enjoy have autonomy within your classes; this would be the perfect class for you.”
- Yuanping again: “I learnt many things from this class throughout the semester. Practicing the idea of approaching different people for advice is very rewarding. It not only helps me with the project, but it also helps me to build positive connections with people I am not familiar with. I remembered when I talked to a

girl who graduated from Columbia University about graduate school information, I brought up that I was doing a social entrepreneurship project, she turned out to be very interested in it and gave me several suggestions, even though I did not ask for them. Approaching her as a problem solver instead of a person solely asking for help exposes me to more opportunities. It seems that people will be more likely to help me if they know that the reason I reach out to them is not for my own benefits but for people I try so hard to help. Because of her, I also got to know an unadvertised interns opening that really hit my interests. Another take-home-message I got from this class is the power of branding. The impact one could make can last even longer than his or her life through branding. Branding matters since you can not really make any changes if people don't listen to and trust you when you are trying to deliver something to others. Branding offers you power of having your voice being heard. I also like what Josh said: "the problem today might be the solution yesterday". Sometimes, it is sad to see this from a larger time scope, but it motivates us to be a better person than we were yesterday. It also means that as a social entrepreneur, you need to be forward looking, be insightful about things around you and /nd the unmet need. Making improvements, just like learning new things, is a lifelong process. To become a real change maker, you need to act on those insightful thoughts, connect with people in the /eld, and make the plan happen. It's /ne to fail multiple times, even hundreds of times, as "the idea of a lifetime comes once a month". The key is to be persistent, persistent, and persistent."

- Kamolnan: "What I learnt: I learnt a great deal and a very useful/ practical mindset of how to approach and stay in the entrepreneurial field. I loved learning about how great ideas aren't once in a lifetime because that gives you the hope and motivation to not give up and keep innovating. I never thought of it that way and always felt like the very successful social entrepreneurs had a genius idea and flourished- never really thinking about the possible previous ideas and projects that they had but didn't pull through. This mindset gave and gives me a lot of encouragement and motivation to keep working hard in this field. Another valuable skill I learnt was identifying unmet needs along with due diligence on it as the initial starting point of an entrepreneurial endeavor. The significance of this is in order for a social enterprise to be successful, it obviously but sometimes overlooked... must be unique, new and innovative. The world is simply just so big that we may have come up with an idea on our own and because of that think it is one-of-a-kind but in reality might already exist.

## What I will apply

- The lessons and mindsets I have learn, I will apply to every aspect of my life and every project/ work I do because I have learnt that a mindset like this is effective in all areas and sectors in whatever career we all end up in or try out. I am walking away with a encouraging and motivated mindset of an aspiring social entrepreneur and as a young person searching for her purpose in this world.”
- Henry: “This course has actually taught me a lot of real life skills that I can even use in the average workplace. If I /nd a problem, rather than complaining, I can go ahead and try to /x the issue with a solution. Going into the class, I was really excited about entrepreneurship itself, and hadn’t realized all the possibilities of taking a class that’s more or less about problem solving. At this point, I’m wondering whether another entrepreneurship class would be useful, or just getting into more startups and furthering my gym idea. I’m glad I can better solve my own problems now. Even with classmates or going into the workplace, I feel better prepared to address whatever problems there are, small or large.”
- Natalie: “I was eager to enroll in this class because I am planning on working in the field of social entrepreneurship and this class was my Arst step in the right direction. I never considered starting my own venture because I didn’t feel like I had a revolutionary idea and I thought that it would be too much to handle. However, taking Josh’s class made me realize that revolutionary ideas can “come once a month.” I also really appreciated the exposure to guest speakers. The most helpful guest speaker to me was Jeff. Because I plan on working in marketing/advertising for nonprofits and social entrepreneurship companies, his lecture on branding was extremely insightful. Going over the purpose of each exercise and unit on the last class really helped connect the dots. Each exercise had an additional purpose/lesson beneath the surface that I now realize in hindsight. This class did not simply teach us the entrepreneurial themes and the steps to creating a social venture, but it also taught us how to think, how to communicate our ideas, and how to truly be social entrepreneurs.”

- Walter: "If you have ever wanted to solve a problem; you don't need an idea or a perfect solution. You don't need profound knowledge or experience. All you need is an investment in a problem and a willingness to follow through. The tools are out there to create a workable solution. You just need to look for them. You are also not alone. It is likely someone has been there before. It's also likely that someone is working on the same problem as you and would love some inspired support. Go for it."
- Lillian: "I really enjoyed this class, as it taught me a lot not just about entrepreneurship, but also skills that I can apply beyond the class. I feel that I have come a long way given that in the beginning of the semester, social entrepreneurship was still an entirely new concept to me. Now, I am considering the possibility of pursuing a career in the field. I thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on homework that we had, including talking to a variety of people in the field. Overall, I couldn't have chosen a better elective to take my freshman year. The lessons I've learned and experiences I've gained through working on the project are invaluable to me. Although I may not continue my project for this class due to feasibility issues, I hope to start a new project very soon. When that is planned, I will definitely be applying the skills and the concepts I've learned in this class, as well as the new connections I have established."