



Course Syllabus: Independent Study in Management
Dillard College of Business Administration
MGMT 4553
Spring Semester, January 21-May 17, 2025

Contact Information

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Office hours: Monday, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:30 am to 11:00 am, or by appointment. This is an online course, so I cannot see if you understand me when I lecture or provide feedback on homework. Therefore, it is up to you to contact me if you do not understand something or have questions about grading, instructions, or the course. I also welcome you just stopping by to say hello and introduce yourself!

Course Description – See Scope of Work

Textbook & Instructional Materials

I have several books on social enterprises which you may check out for the semester. The following are available in the Center for Nonprofit Management Library:

Bornstein, David and Davis, Susan. *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-19-539633-1

Bornstein, David. *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-19-533476-0.

MacMillan, Ian C. and Thompson, James D. *The Social Entrepreneur's Playbook: Pressure Test, Plan, Launch and Scale Your Enterprise*, Wharton School Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2013. Paperback ISBN: 978-1-61363-032-7

Websites

REDFworkshop.org. This website has great resources for assessing, implementing, and evaluating social enterprise ideas. You can create a free account to access many great resources.

Required Reading and Video List

Throughout the semester I may provide you with links or hardcopies of articles, blogs, websites, videos, etc., in which you will be required to review prior to meeting ready to discuss. You will also be required to do some research on your own and bring your findings us to discuss.

Important Dates

Student registration: Early November – January 17, 2025

Martin Luther King's Birthday Observed: January 20, 2025 (No face-to-face classes)

Classes begin: January 21, 2025

Change of schedule and late registration: January 21-24, 2025

Deadline for May graduates to file for graduation: February 17, 2025

Spring break begins 5:00 pm March 8: No face to face classes March 9-15, 2025

Holiday break begins 10:00 pm April 16: No face to face classes April 17-18, 2025

The last day for students to drop with a grade of "W": 4:00 p.m., April 30, 2025, drops after this deadline will receive grades of "F"

Last day of regular classes: May 9, 2025

Final examinations begin: May 12, 2025

Commencement: May 17, 2025

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor. To report D2L problems, visit the [Online Problem Reporting System](#) and be sure you are using d2l.msutexas.edu to access D2L.

Online Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer and working internet in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, CMT time zone, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. This online class can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a

student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Browser Requirements

For the best browsing experience students should use Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Apple Safari.

Hardware Requirements

A computer, laptop, or iPad with webcam, microphone, and speakers to access Virtual Classroom, Skype, Zoom, Respondus Monitor Lockdown Browser, etc., is required for this course. **Chromebooks should not be used.** They are incompatible with Lockdown Browser. Please visit the [MSU Texas website](#) to review the most up-to-date technology requirements.

Software Requirements

Students can get free access to the Office 365 web edition. Students should contact the helpdesk at 940-397-4680 or helpdesk@msutexas.edu to get more information about accessing the software. **Please note that the D2L learning management system does not handle Pages or other Apple Mac software well.** If an assignment requires you to submit a document to D2L, please convert your homework assignments to Word documents or PDF before submitting them to avoid late submissions or no submission penalties.

Course Application

Mission-driven businesses harness the power of the marketplace to solve social, environmental, or economic problems and/or create social value. Through case studies, research, and entrepreneurship/intrapreneurship concept development, and feedback, this independent study will give students a broad understanding of the many ways in which they can pursue positive and sustainable social change through creating, scaling, investing in, or collaborating with mission-driven businesses. Students will “create” a social enterprise that addresses sustainability and environmental concerns.

Specific Learning Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should have completed a social enterprise project plan and should have refined their understanding of real-world social sector project planning.

1. Students will be able to define social innovation, social enterprises and social entrepreneurship and key traits of social entrepreneurs.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the social enterprise sector, including what distinguishes social entrepreneurship from both traditional entrepreneurship and traditional social services.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the role social entrepreneurs play in creating innovative responses to critical social needs.

General Learning Goals

1. Students will demonstrate problem solving and decision-making abilities through the critical analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of course information.
2. Students will demonstrate competency in writing for common business scenarios.
3. Students will demonstrate competency in oral communication for common business scenarios.
4. Students will utilize technology for business applications.
5. Students will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills within a business and nonprofit environment.
6. Students will have an understanding of the influence of multicultural issues on business activities.

These general learning goals are among those established by the Dillard College of Business Administration. General learning goals represent the skills that graduates will carry with them into their careers. While assessing student performance in obtaining these general learning goals, the Dillard College is assessing its programs. The assessments will assist us as we improve our curriculum and curriculum delivery.

Assignment Submissions

All written assignments should be submitted through D2L. Please only submit typed Word documents unless otherwise specified. Please convert your document to Word if you use Pages (or another word processor). If you fail to submit your document in the correct format and I cannot read your document, your document will have to be resubmitted in the correct format and will be considered late. **Submissions by email will not be accepted except when required by i.d.e.a. MSU guidelines.**

Brief Description of Course Activities and Evaluation

Most of my evaluation of your work in this course involves written assessments and presentations. Written evaluations take more time to grade but I will make a concerted effort to assess and post grades in D2L for assignments within a week of due dates.

Attendance and Professionalism (300 points)

Your participation is essential to the success of this course. As this is an independent study, you will be responsible for keeping yourself on track to meet deadlines. You are also responsible for independently studying and researching social innovation ideas and successful enterprises. We will meet periodically for scheduled check-ins, and you are responsible for reaching out if you need more frequent check-ins.

Exercises/activities (total 400 points)

As part of this independent, you will work to create a socially conscious business, either for-profit or nonprofit. Your business must have a “triple-bottom” line: social, environmental, and financial, or a double-bottom line: financial and either environmental or social. This business plan will be broken down into four segments. I will provide feedback on each segment, which you will incorporate into the final written business plan, and then submit to i.d.e.a. MSU.

Social Enterprise Written Plan (150 points)

Each spring, the Munir Abdul Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship and Free Enterprise hosts the i.d.e.a. MSU business competition to provide MSU students with an opportunity to hone their

business ideas, get valuable advice, and win prize money to get started. The contest operates in two steps. Teams or individuals first submit a four-page business plan. From those plans, the judges pick six finalists, who then make an oral presentation to the judges. The judges pick the winners based on the presentations.

As part of this independent study, **you must submit a proposal to the i.d.e.a. MSU business competition.** This written business plan should culminate your four class exercises related to a social enterprise, either for-profit or nonprofit, which has a social, environmental and financial impact. You must follow and submit your proposal according to the specified i.d.e.a. MSU guidelines to Dr. Deandrea Davis and also submit a copy to me to get the full credit for submitting. If you are selected as an i.d.e.a. MSU finalist and do **not** compete, **points will be deducted from your final grade for the course.**

Social Enterprise Pitch/Final Exam (150 points)

If your submission to i.d.e.a. MSU is chosen as one of the six finalists, **you are expected to compete in the business competition.** Regardless, if your submission is chosen as a finalist, you will make an oral presentation to me and a panel I select. The Social Enterprise Pitch should identify the social problem being addressed, the innovative solution proposed to address the problem, the desired social impact, as well as the financial impact and should follow the i.d.e.a. MSU guidelines. Your pitch will include a presentation deck (PowerPoint, Prezi, or similar format) that must be submitted to the instructor via D2L. The social enterprise pitch (either in the competition or to me directly) counts as your final exam for the course.

If you are selected as an i.d.e.a. MSU finalist and do not compete in the competition, **points may be deducted from your final exam grade.**

Course Grades

Activities	Points
Research, meetings and discussion, incremental activities	400 pts
Written business plan/i.d.e.a.MSU submission	150 pts
Business plan presentation/Final	150 pts
TOTAL	700 pts

Grading Scale

Actual Points	Letter Grade
626.5 or greater	A
556.5 -- 626.4	B
486.5 – 556.4	C
416.5 – 486.4	D
346.5 – 416.4	F

Instructor Class Policies

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty (cheating, collusion, and plagiarism) is taken seriously and will be investigated. **Please understand that integrity is very important to me. Instances of academic dishonesty will be handled quickly and severely.** Cutting and pasting text from the internet without citing the source, including AI-generating tools, constitutes

plagiarism. Cheating (using old assignments and/or exams, original thoughts/words from another source) on a written assignment is considered academic dishonesty. Copying or using other people's work, including AI tools, is considered academic dishonesty in this course. I use plagiarism software and AI detection software to identify instances of using uncited and unattributed sources. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct (see University Policies). Any assignment found to have resulted from cheating, collusion, and/or plagiarism will be given a grade of zero. Repeated offenses may result in failing the course.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of AI Tools

While AI-based tools can aid in research and learning, it is crucial to understand the limits and appropriate use of such tools. Students are encouraged to leverage AI tools for tasks like data analysis, language translation, and correcting spelling and grammar (such as Grammarly). Learning to use AI **responsibly and ethically** is an important skill in today's business community. However, using AI tools to generate content submitted as your original work and not citing or attributing AI as a source is a breach of academic integrity and constitutes plagiarism in this course.

Generative AI tools can be helpful tools in the academic setting as well as in the professional setting. However, they are NOT a substitute, nor should they be used as a replacement for your own original thoughts and academic work. The use of generative AI tools (ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine-tuning your research questions
- Finding information on your topic
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and
- Checking grammar and style

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you, to answer essay or short-answer questions on quizzes or tests, or content you post on D2L or Zoom chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing an entire sentence, paragraph, or paper to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (e.g., that it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be appropriately documented and cited, as would any use of someone else's work or thoughts, to stay compliant with university policies on academic dishonesty. Any assignment that used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will be given a grade of zero. Repeated offenses may result in failing the course. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification. All instances of

academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Chair, the Dean of Dillard College of Business, and the Dean of Students. If you as a student need guidance on how to cite and reference AI sources, I have provided the following resource:

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Attendance and Class Participation

As this is an independent study, it is up to you, the student to keep yourself on track. I will set up periodic deadlines and regular times for us to meet, and I expect you to meet those deadlines. Meeting those deadlines and being prepared when we meet is a significant portion of your grade. Regular and active participation is an essential aspect of this online course. You are expected to do the work assigned, notify the instructor when emergencies arise, and makeup assignments no later than the due dates. Missing assignments and scheduled meetings may constitute non-attendance or excessive absences. This may result in the instructor dropping the student from the course for non-attendance or lack of participation.

Course Communication

I will provide all course content, updates, readings, handouts, and other communication using D2L and MSU student emails. I will provide feedback on homework assignments via D2L and/or MSU student emails. If you have any questions or need help, the best way to reach me is via e-mail. I will communicate with the class through D2L and student MSU e-mail.

Note: Ensure your e-mail settings are set up so you receive communications via D2L. It is your responsibility to manage your settings. I will not respond to students through a non-MSU email. I will only respond to a student through the student MSU email and D2L.

Course Syllabus

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change. Syllabus changes will be communicated via D2L, e-mail, and announced in class if applicable. *Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

E-mail Communication Guidelines

I expect upper-division students (which you are!) to be able to communicate professionally. Also, per University guidelines, I have to be particularly careful in responding to email inquiries so that I am following student privacy guidelines. In order to ensure that you are exhibiting professionalism and that I am following student privacy guidelines, please adhere to the following guidelines when communicating with me via email.

- Always use your MSU student email or communicate through D2L. I cannot respond to your personal, non-MSU email per student privacy guidelines.
- Always include your first and last name, the course name/number and section in the subject line (MGMT 4553 Independent Study).

- Your e-mail should also have a "signature," including your first name, last name, and M#.
- Your e-mail should have proper spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

If your e-mail does not follow these guidelines, I may not answer your e-mail. All of these guidelines reflect business-appropriate and professional e-mail communication standards and also adhere to student privacy guidelines.

Grading and Feedback

All the course activities will generally be graded one week or less after the set due date. You must contact me immediately if there is any discrepancy in the grade.

Inclement Weather/Closing of Campus

Since this is an online course, campus closure for inclement weather will not change the structure of the course or affect the due dates of assignments. In other words, just because the campus is closed due to weather, you will still be responsible for submitting assignments and adhering to the syllabus.

Late Work - Makeup Work/Tests

No late submission will be accepted and graded. All course activities must be submitted before or on set due dates and times. Being out of town or traveling (e.g., such as university-sponsored athletics) is also not an excuse for missing deadlines, as activities are made available well in advance of when they are due.

Note: The due dates and times for the activities will adhere to the Central Time Zone.

I understand that in life there are emergencies that students cannot anticipate. If a student experiences an emergency (health issue, death in the family, hospitalization, car accident, etc.) that may impact class participation/attendance and completing assignments on time, it is the student's responsibility to contact the MSU Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and request an Absence Letter (<https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?MSUTexas>) to provide to their instructors. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will provide me with a letter and notify me once you have provided the required documentation.

It is the instructor who decides if the situation warrants special consideration or any extensions, not the student, or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. However, I will not grant any extensions or special considerations if you do not have a letter from the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities that shows you provided the proper documentation.

Midterm Progress Report

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor for this class will provide a Midterm Progress Report through each student's WebWorld account or Navigate account. Midterm grades will not be reported on the

students' transcript; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students earning below a C at the midway point should schedule a meeting with the course instructor.

Response Policy

I always try to respond within 24 hours to an email or phone message left during regular business hours, which I consider Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. As I strive to maintain healthy life-work boundaries, if you contact me after 5 pm on Friday, do not expect a reply until Monday. For scheduled University Holidays, I try not to look at email on those scheduled holidays but I will respond on the next scheduled workday. If I am out of the office for a planned absence, I try to have an out of office reply on my email or post my planned absence on D2L. A planned absence may affect my normal response time.

Turnitin or Similar Detection Tools

This course may utilize plagiarism or AI detection tools to evaluate assignments. If you are found to have more than 25% of similarity or AI detection, and/or you fail to disclose the use of AI or cite any sources properly, you may be at risk of academic dishonesty and plagiarism which will be dealt with as explained above.

University Policies

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity involves upholding ethical standards in all academic activities. This encompasses originality in work, proper attribution of sources, and honesty in assessments and assignments. Concerning university-wide academic integrity, students are referred to the [Student Honor Creed](#) in the undergraduate catalog and in the MSU Student Handbook. The procedures outlined in this policy will be followed for alleged incidents of Academic Dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly

enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity.

Campus Carry

For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

Student Handbook

The Midwestern State University Student Handbook is a source of valuable information regarding student responsibilities, obligations, and privileges while attending the university. This handbook is available online from the Midwestern State University website at <https://msutexas.edu/site-policies> and within the myMSUTexas portal. Copies are available at the Clark Student Center Information Desk and Residence Hall offices. Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described within Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Tentative Schedule for Spring 2025
MGMT 4553: Independent Study In Management

Week	Topics	Assignments	Due date
Week 1 – Jan 20-26 MLK Holiday, Jan 20	What is social innovation, social entrepreneurship and social enterprise?	Meet with instructor: Establish goals, incremental deadlines	
Week 2 Jan 27-Feb 2	What is your big idea? Defining your issue/cause/need		
Week 3 Feb 3-9	Mission, Vision & Values Value Proposition		TENTATIVE DEADLINE #1
Week 4 Feb 10-16	What is your brand? Know your Market		
Week 5 Feb 17-23	Best Practices; Competitive Analysis; Positioning Statement		TENTATIVE DEADLINE #2
Week 6 Feb 24-Mar 2	What is the best structure for your business? Board governance Staff and job descriptions Organizational charts		
Week 7 Mar 3-9	Measures and Indicators SMART Goals Logic Model		TENTATIVE DEADLINE #3
Week 8 March 10 - 16 Spring Break	Spring break	No assignments	No assignments due
Week 9 March 17 - 23	I.D.E.A. MSU Guidelines/Orientation		

Week	Topics	Assignments	Due date
Week 10 Mar 24 - 30	Financial Assumptions Financial indicators Pricing strategies		TENTATIVE DEADLINE #4
Week 11 Mar 31 – Apr 6	Building a budget Cashflow sheets		
Week 12 April 7 - 13	Startup costs Financing your venture		
Week 13 April 14 - 20			TYPICALLY i.d.e.a. MSU written business plan is due this week of April (TBD)
Week 14 April 21 - 27			TYPICALLY i.d.e.a. MSU finalists announced this week (TBD)
Week 15 April 28 – May 4			PRESENTATION SLIDES due this week
Week 16 May 5 - 9			TYPICALLY i.d.e.a. MSU competition is held this week of May (TBD) Presentation will count as final