

Social Impact Entrepreneurship in the Liberal Arts: Curricular & Co-Curricular Innovations & Connections

We propose to bring together representatives of participating AALAC institutions to learn from each other about our educational offerings in social impact entrepreneurship and innovation and consider opportunities for collaborations.

Social impact entrepreneurship and innovation offer powerful opportunities to respond to two important societal realities of our time:

- Critical social, economic, and environmental challenges demand new approaches at the national and global level and innovative and impactful ideas for positive change at the community level.
- Concerned about the possibilities for successful careers in a highly competitive and rapidly changing labor market and eager to contribute to a more just and sustainable world, students have been demanding programming in the entrepreneurship, social impact and innovation arena.

Liberal arts colleges are uniquely well positioned to respond to these societal challenges and student demands, given the mission and breadth of their education. Indeed, over the past several years, a number of schools have added courses, majors, minors, competitions, prizes, academic incubators, and maker and innovation design spaces to address the increased demand for options in this arena.

It is in this environment of institutional innovation that we find ourselves designing and developing a new pedagogy: an interdisciplinary, hands-on project-based education and a learning approach that sets entrepreneurship and innovation in a social context and on a liberal arts foundation. This approach also extends our work beyond the academy and places students and faculty into direct interaction with governmental, for profit and not-for-profit organizations through co-curricular engagement.

The timing is ideal, then, to elevate our conversations about these various efforts, to learn from each other, and to consider opportunities for sharing and collaboration. We are planning to convene relevant faculty from AALAC institutions for a two-day workshop at Mount Holyoke College in the second half of September.

The aim is to share our goals, practices, and insights on the curricular and co-curricular sides, with an emphasis multi-disciplinarity and integration of the curricular and co-curricular. The key focus on the curricular side is content and pedagogy; on the co-curricular side, it is scaffolding of different applied opportunities, including funding, preparation, reflection and connections with curriculum.

In preparation for the workshop, we plan to solicit materials and specific ideas from the participants listed below to form an agenda that leverages participants' innovative ideas and practices and addresses the issues of greatest interest.

Workshop date: May 29 to May 30, 2019

Workshop Leaders:

Mount Holyoke College:

[Rick Feldman](#), Lecturer in Economics and Coordinator of Entrepreneurship

[Eva Paus](#), Professor of Economics, Chair of the Entrepreneurship, Organizations, and Society Program;
Carol Hoffmann Collins Director of the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives (designated workshop liaison)

Middlebury College:

[Nadia Horning](#), Associate Professor of Political Science, Faculty Director, Social Entrepreneurship Programs

[John Isham](#), Professor of Economics, Co-founder of the Center for Social Entrepreneurship

Potential participants based on expressed interest:

Grinnell

Doug Caulkins, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology

Monty Roper, Professor of Anthropology, Director of the Wilson Center for Innovation and Leadership

Macalester

Kate Ryan Reiling, Entrepreneur in Residence

Mount Holyoke

Catherine Corson, Associate Director of Environmental Studies, Director of the Miller Worley Center for the Environment

Eleanor Townsley, Professor of Sociology

Oberlin

Eve Sandbery, Associate Professor of Politics

Bara Watts, Director of Entrepreneurship

Pomona

Manisha Goel, Assistant Professor of Economics

Swarthmore

Denise Crossan, Visiting Professor for Issues of Social Change

Wesleyan University

Makaela Kingsley, Director, Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship

Barbara Adams, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow in Design

We welcome participation of additional faculty members from AALAC member institutions beyond the specific ones listed here. Broadening the circle of participants will expand the discussions beyond the ones already engaged with the subject matter.