

## 44:197 International Development (Social Entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu, India)

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3 SH Winterim 2007-2008, December 27-January 19

### Course Background

Social Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying large-scale social problems and devising innovative ways to change society in order to alleviate such problems. Examples: Fabio Roza and rural electrification in Brazil, Muhammad Yunus and Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (Microfinance). Social entrepreneurs find solutions where others only see problems (e.g. poverty and unemployment, environmental problems, lack of infrastructure). Often (but not always) working in developing countries, social entrepreneurs observe that part of society is stuck, and find ways to get it unstuck.

This three week course will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity for students to directly and intensely experience and contribute to the work of one or more social entrepreneurs or enterprises working in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, in southeastern India. We have obtained commitments from more than twelve organizations and their leaders to work with us and the UI Winterim Program.



Last year, a group of 17 UI students accompanied us to Tamil Nadu to study microfinance. Some of the pictures from this experience are in the collage above. Others can be seen at the website below. To read more about last year's course and to see how our program compares to those at Harvard and Lehigh, see the article in BizEd magazine (which features our course) below.

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Shinn, Sharon. **Making a Major Impact with Microfinance.** BizEd Magazine. May/June 2007.  
[http://www.aacsb.edu/publications/Archives/MayJun07/26-31\\_bized.pdf](http://www.aacsb.edu/publications/Archives/MayJun07/26-31_bized.pdf)

Photos from last year's trip to India: [http://www.iowawaterquality.org/india\\_photo\\_index.html](http://www.iowawaterquality.org/india_photo_index.html)

For this Winterim, we have decided to expand the course beyond microfinance, though it is a strong contemporary movement, it is still only one of many important ongoing approaches to social change.

### This Year's Partner Organizations

- **Aravind Eye Hospital** <http://www.aravind.org/>
- **CIOSA** <http://www.ciosa.org.in/>
- **Hand-in-Hand** (child labor, health, environment, microfinance) <http://www.hihseed.org/>
- **Interface Group** <http://www.theinterfaceonline.org/about.html>
- **Madurai Meenakshi Hospital and Research Center/SmileTrain**  
<http://www.meenakshimission.org/> <http://www.smiletrain.org/site/PageServer>
- **Mahasemam** (microfinance) <http://www.mahasemam.org>
- **New Horizon Media** (low-cost book publisher) <http://www.nhm.in/>
- **Palmyra Plantation** (self-help groups and forestry)  
[http://www.palmyraauroville.org/Annrep05\\_06/annreport05-06.htm](http://www.palmyraauroville.org/Annrep05_06/annreport05-06.htm)
- **Planet Read** (literacy) <http://www.planetread.org>
- **Rain Centre** (rainwater harvesting) <http://www.raincentre.org/>
- **Rising Star (tentative?)** (leprosy and micro loans) <http://www.risingstaroutreach.org/>
- **Satya School** (school for handicapped and disabled children)—no website
- **Shuddham** (waste management, "Beautiful India") <http://shuddham.24hr.to/>
- **Tamil Nadu Foundation** <http://www.tnfusa.org/>
- **Tsunamika** (using design to retrain people impacted by the 2004 tsunami, gift economy)  
<http://www.tsunamika.org/>

**Tentative Course Schedule:** (depart December 27<sup>th</sup>, Return January 19<sup>th</sup>)

- **Week 1:** Students get first-hand exposure to potential sponsors. In collaboration with instructors and organization leaders, students develop a project idea
- **Week 2:** Spend the week with the chosen organization
- **Week 3:** Prepare and deliver final presentation to a group of all organization leaders and your classmates and instructors

In addition to the course activities outlined above, we will also visit several religious, social and cultural landmarks, including temples, ruins, and places of contemplation. Please note that although the course is only three weeks in length, commitment to significant preparation (in the form of several class meetings during the fall semester to discuss academic matters, and travel logistics, cultural matters, and general expectations) will be required in order to enroll in this course. As we get nearer to departure, airfare for the roundtrip to India will continue to increase; we can keep costs to a minimum by early commitment to course requirements and airline tickets.

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