AGENTS OF CHANGE: USING TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY TO ENHANCE COURSES IN BUSINESS ETHICS & SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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I.   INTRODUCTION

"A change in perspective is worth 80 IQ points."

~ Alan Kay, computer programmer, serial entrepreneur

*"Change is hard because people overestimate the value of
what they have—and underestimate the value of
what they may gain by giving that up."*

~ James Belasco and Ralph Stayer,
Authors, *Flight of the Buffalo*

How can we catalyze "entrepreneurial thinking" and cultivate a deeper understanding of social responsibility and sustainability in business education? Academic scholars have begun to explore the key characteristics and origins of an "entrepreneurial mindset" through new streams of research in the areas of "entrepreneurial cognition" and "design thinking". Similarly, modern scholarship on "sustainable business" and "creating shared value" has offered a new sense of direction for research on social responsibility. If only a simple lecture or power point presentation could convey all the real-world complexities involved in actually creating shared value, or in effectively balancing "people, planet and profits." If only we could

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identify the cognitive traits, skills, and abilities of the world's most successful entrepreneurs and bottle them in an "entrepreneurial tonic" to be administered in our business school programs.

While we know of no such magic tonic, this paper offers a new approach by applying valuable theories on transformative learning to provide concrete examples of how business school faculty can serve as "agents of change" by catalyzing fundamental shifts in students' self-perceptions and the ways they perceive the world around them. Transformative learning theory provides new ways for teaching faculty to gain a deeper understanding of key factors in students' growth and development, so that we can travel together with our students on a cognitive journey that seeks to facilitate deeper levels of meta-cognition and understanding. The examples outlined in the paper reflect our experience is that pedagogies based on transformative learning theory are especially effective in areas of business education that involve significant "grey areas", intangible considerations, and must take into consideration a wider array of stakeholders—and thus such methods can be especially relevant in teaching social responsibility and entrepreneurship. By developing engaging pedagogies rooted in transformative learning theory, educators can better facilitate cognitive processes through which students achieve a significant transformation of deeply rooted habits of thinking into new modes of critical reflection, analysis, and problem solving. [1] Through

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[1]   Glisczinski, D. J. (2007). Transformative education. *Journal of Transformative Education,*

this process, students must learn to continually challenge assumptions and literally structure their knowledge differently.

A central role of the educator in the transformative learning context is to serve as an 'agent of change' by creating an active learning environment that facilitates such personal and cognitive transformation. This paper seeks to provide faculty members with structured theories and pedagogical tools that help them in the process, and is organized as follows:

Part II below provides background information and brief summary of research methods utilized. **Part III** of this paper is an overview of transformative learning theory, including a review of literature addressing learning objectives and pedagogical tools that have been shown to help students achieve deeper levels of critical reflection, self-actualization, and perspective change. **Part IV** discusses the origins and development of social entrepreneurship programs in higher education, including the unique features of social enterprises, as well as cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset and venture planning and implementation skills among students. **Part V** summarizes our research, by comparing and contrasting case examples

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5(4), 317-328.

of pedagogies applied in business ethics and social entrepreneurship programs in the United States and Ireland, while applying transformative learning theory to explain how business ethics and social entrepreneurship courses and projects are especially well-suited to achieving higher levels of self-actualization and perspective change. Finally, we conclude by discussing the implications of these case studies for introducing transformative pedagogies into business ethics and social entrepreneurship programs and courses, and opportunities for further research and analysis.

II.   BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH METHODS UTILIZED

Transformative learning theory is based on a relatively recent stream of scholarship that can be traced to the work of Jack Mezirow in the 1970s-80s, with more recent scholars adding additional trajectories to Mezirow's initial formulation.[2]   While transformative learning theory highlights the importance of 'experience' in the learning process, it goes a step further by seeking to facilitate a transformational shift in the learner's perspective and frames of reference. Transformative learning has been described as "learning that induces more far-reaching change in the learner than other kinds

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[2] Mezirow, J., & Associates. (2000). *Learning as transformation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Kitchenham, A. (2008). The Evolution of John Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory. *Journal of Transformative Education, 6*(2), 104. Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. (2009). Transformative learning theory. *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

of learning, especially learning experiences which shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or paradigm shift, affecting the learner's subsequent experiences."[3]   Proponents generally suggest that such transformation often begins with a 'disorienting dilemma', followed by cycles of critical reflection, which ultimately lead to perspective transformation. There are a range of views on how various educational pedagogies may help facilitate such a process.

Social entrepreneurship is a concept rooted in social movements of the 1960s – 70s, which has gained wider attention in the last two decades. New courses, materials, and assignments on social entrepreneurship are increasingly being incorporated into higher education curricula. Social enterprise is also increasingly the subject of qualitative and quantitative scholarly research and analysis. It is widely recognized that a primary difference between social entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship is that social enterprises reinvest the surplus income or utilize it for additional social purposes, and that the motives behind the venture are socially or community driven.[4]   These deeper social and community-oriented

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[3] Clark, M. C. (1993). Transformational learning, New Directions For Adult and Continuing Education, (57), 47-56.

[4] Martin, R. and Osberg, S. (2007) Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5, 28.

purposes underlying social entrepreneurship make this an area of study that is uniquely well suited for facilitating a transformative shift in outlook and perspective among students.

The research methodology used to assess the impact of transformative learning on social entrepreneurship education was through comparative case studies from two universities in the United States and a third university in Ireland. In the United States, the core pedagogy at the University of Southern Maine focuses on training students to think entrepreneurially. Integration into the global entrepreneurial community, experiential learning, and personal growth and development are cornerstones of this program. The curriculum is based on four key pillars: 1) developing a deep understanding and knowledge of opportunity recognition; 2) identifying and gathering necessary resources; 3) creativity in planning; and 4) execution for success. The Entrepreneurship faculty at the University of Southern Maine utilize a variety of pedagogies that are consistent with transformative learning theory, as they are designed to confront students with "disorienting dilemmas" early in the semester, followed by facilitating entrepreneurial thinking and problem solving using cycles of critical reflection to implement the above four pillars. The paper describes specific case examples of projects and activities through which this process unfolds, resulting in meaningful social progress in areas such as child obesity, human trafficking, animal cruelty, environmental sustainability, and drunk driving.

In Ireland, a program at the Technological University Dublin[5] has facilitated transformative learning by eliminating the need for students to take an end-of-semester examination, instead requiring them to organize an event for the benefit of a charity of their choice. The primary objective of this assignment is to give the student the experience of behaving in an entrepreneurial manner while also contributing to society. The assignment requires students to generate their own ideas, run the event, and then write a paper reflecting upon their experiences. There are many risks to this exercise, most notably the possibility of the event being highly unsuccessful, but this is considered part of the learning process for the student.

Our research followed the progress of students through their experiences in the above U.S. and Irish programs, tracking shifts in their thought processes, attitudes, and perspectives towards social entrepreneurship and business ethics as a result of those experiences. The research further explores how the pedagogies applied helped catalyze such transformative changes. From the knowledge gained in this comparative case research, the authors have begun to analyze how transformative learning theory can be applied to further enhance social

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[5] Since January 1st 2019, the institution formerly known as the "Dublin Institute of Technology" ("DIT") was renamed the "Technological University Dublin".

entrepreneurship   and   business   ethics   education.

III.   TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY

Transformative learning theory focuses on the relationship between personal change and learning, and involves shifts in one's perspectives and frames of reference by challenging prior habits of mind, old assumptions, and established patterns of behavior.[6] Transformative learning theory is based on a relatively recent stream of scholarship that can be traced to the work of Jack Mezirow in the 1970s-80s, with more recent scholars adding additional trajectories to Mezirow's initial formulation of the concept.[7]

Transformative learning theory builds upon previous research and pedagogical approaches relating to experiential learning. Researcher David Kolb divides experiential learning approaches into

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[6]   McAteer, T. (2010). Transformative learning in business education. Retrieved from http://www.nationalpost.com/transformative+learning+business+education/249 5255/story.html

[7]   Mezirow, J., & Associates. (2000). Learning as transformation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.   Taylor, E. W. (1998). The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008(119), 5-15. Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. (2009). Transformative learning theory. Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

four stages as follows:[8]

1. **Concrete Experience** - a new experience or situation is encountered, or the student engages in a reinterpretation of existing experience.

2. **Reflective Observation of the New Experience** - of particular importance are any inconsistencies between the above new experience and understanding.

3. **Abstract Conceptualization reflection** - gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept (the person has learned from their experience).

4. **Active Experimentation** - the learner applies their idea(s) to the world around them to see what happens.

Kolb concludes that the most effective learning occurs when a person progresses through a cycle consisting of the above four stages, through which learning becomes an integrated process with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next stage.[9]   Additional

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[8] Kolb, D. A. (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development (Vol. 1). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

[9]   *Id.*

research by Kolb and Kolb applies the concept of "learning spaces" as a framework for understanding the interface between student learning styles and the institutional learning environment, in order to create the conditions needed to facilitate the above experiential learning cycle.[10]

Similar to Kolb's experiential education theories, transformative learning theory is also "learner-centered" and highlights the importance of "experience" and active engagement through successive cycles in the learning process. As described below, however, transformative learning goes a step further than experiential learning approaches, by seeking to facilitate a transformational shift in the learner's perspective and frames of reference, which in turn leads to personal, emotional, and intellectual transformation.

A.   KEY ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY AND PROCESS

Transformative learning has been described as "learning that induces more far-reaching change in the learner than other kinds of learning, especially learning experiences which shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or paradigm shift, affect[ing] the

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[10]   Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2005). Learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 4*(2), 193-212.

learner's subsequent experiences."[11]

More recent definitions of transformative learning incorporate both psychological and societal elements, suggesting for example:

> Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice, peace, and personal joy.[12]

Thus, transformative learning is not viewed as an "add on" to traditional forms of education, but rather as being the very essence or purpose of the educational process: "to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own

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[11]   Clark, M. C. (1993). Transformational learning, New Directions For Adult and Continuing Education, (57), 47-56.

[12]   O'Sullivan, E. (2003) "Bringing a perspective of transformative learning to globalized consumption." International Journal of Consumer Studies, 27 (4), 326–330

values, meanings, and purpose rather than uncritically acting on those of others."[13]

At its core, transformative learning theory seeks to explain the processes through which learners can come to revise deeply ingrained frames of reference and meaning structures that are developed over time through socialization and acculturation.[14] As explained by Taylor and Mezirow, these deep-rooted meaning structures help to support us by providing a familiar filter through which we can more readily explain and understand our daily lives, but at the same time, they are a reflection of our cultural and psychological assumptions that constrain us by making our views of the world highly subjective.[15]

When new learning experiences (whether in an educational setting or through life events) are assimilated into such existing meaning structures and frames of reference, such experiences typically either reinforce an existing perspective or may stretch its boundaries.

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[13]   Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* at 11.

[14]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review. , p. 131).   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.   Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. (2009). Transformative learning theory. *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[15]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review at 7.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

"However, when a radically different and incongruent experience cannot be assimilated into the meaning perspective, it is either rejected or the meaning perspective must be transformed to accommodate the new experience."[16] This latter process is at the heart of achieving the type of shift in worldview and deeper self-actualization that is associated with transformative learning theory.[17] Mezirow defined such a perspective transformation as being characterized by "a more fully developed (more functional) frame of reference . . . one that is more (a) inclusive, (b) differentiating, (c) permeable, (d) critically reflective, and (e) integrative of experience".[18] Mezirow adds that such deep rooted shifts in frame of reference can occur either from the cumulative impact of a series transformed meaning schemes, or sometimes after experiencing an acute personal or social crisis or milestone, such as the death of a loved one, divorce, medical diagnosis, natural disaster, conflict, a debilitating accident, retirement,

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[16] *Id.*

[17] Mezirow (1991a). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass at 131;   Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. (2009). Transformative learning theory. *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, & Higher Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[18] Taylor, E. W. (1998). The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review.

or job loss."[19]

Proponents of transformative learning theory emphasize that such deep shifts often begin with a "disorienting dilemma", followed by cycles of critical reflection, which ultimately lead to a lasting perspective transformation. More specifically, Mezirow has divided such perspective transformation into 10 stages, which emerged from a number of research studies, starting with a national longitudinal study and in-depth interviews of 83 students at 12 universities who participated in an academic re-entry program following long absences from educational programming.[20] The data from these studies led the researchers to identify the following common steps or factors typically involved in meaningful perspective transformation:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination, often with feelings of guilt, shame, or confusion
3. A critical assessment of one's previous epistemic, sociocultural, or psychological assumptions

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[19] Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* at 11. Taylor, E. W. (1998). The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review at 7.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

[20] Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 8.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

4.   Recognition that one's discontent and process of transformation are shared, and that others have had to negotiate a similar path of change when faced with such disorienting events or experiences

5.   Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions

6.   Planning of a course of action to resolve the disorienting dilemma

7.   Acquisition of the knowledge and skills needed for implementing one's selected plans

8.   Provisionally trying out new roles and reorienting one's sense of identity

9.   Building a sense of competence and self-confidence in these new roles and relationships

10.   A reintegration into one's life on the basis of new conditions necessitated by the new perspective

In 2010, researcher Sabra Brock completed a study of 256 undergraduate business school students to determine the extent to which students reported experiencing transformative learning in

relation to each of the above 10 precursor steps identified by Mezirow.[21]   The more of these steps respondents remembered experiencing, the more they also reported transformative learning.[22] The highest incidence of reporting transformative learning was associated with the precursor step of critical reflection, followed by the steps of disorienting dilemmas and trying on new roles.[23]

The interrelationships among the transformative learning steps outlined above can also be characterized by four broader themes that are necessary steps in the educational process to facilitate transformation:

- **Centrality of "experience"—** A strong emphasis on creating shared learning experiences to establish a common base from which each learner constructs meaning, so that such experiences can then be deconstructed by a group of learners to serve as the grist for critical reflection.[24]

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[21] Brock, S. E. (2010). Measuring the importance of precursor steps to transformative learning. *Adult Education Quarterly, 60*(2), 122.

[22] *Id.*

[23] *Id.*

[24] Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

- **Cycles of critical reflection—** The meanings that learners attach to their experiences may be subjected to cycles or critical scrutiny through group discussions, during which the teacher may consciously try to disrupt the learner's world view and stimulate uncertainty, ambiguity, and doubt in learners minds' about previously taken-for-granted interpretations of experience.[25]
- **Reflective/rational discourse**— The communication processes that actually facilitate critical reflection. Often takes the form of "communicative learning," which involves "identifying problematic ideas, values, beliefs, and feelings, critically examining the assumptions upon which they are based, testing their justification through rational discourse and making decisions predicated upon the resulting consensus."[26]
- **Taking action—** The process of making decisions and planning a course of action that is predicated upon the consensus resulting

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[25] Tennant, M. C. "The Psychology of Adult Teaching and Learning." In J. M. Peters and P. Jarvis and Associate (eds.), Adult Education: Evolution and Achievements in a Developing Field of Study. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991 at 197.

[26] Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. (2009). Transformative learning theory. Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

from reflective/rational discourse, and then building competence and self-confidence in one's new roles.[27]

As addressed below, there are a range of views on how various specific educational pedagogies may help facilitate a progression by students through the above transformation steps.

B.   PEDAGOGIES TO FACILITATE TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

By 2000, a variety of empirical studies had been conducted to explore the practice of fostering transformative learning in a range of educational settings, and thus some common pedagogical practices began to emerge from the literature.[28]   Following a comprehensive review of the literature, Taylor identified five common themes that characterize the nature of transformative pedagogy as: 1) experiential and group situated; 2) time consuming; 3) aided by a predisposition or openness to change; 4) dependent on affective learning through critical reflection;[29]   and 5) involving both educator and students as

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[27]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 8. See also, Mezirow 1995, p. 58.

[28]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 47; Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15; Bailey 1996; Cusack 1990; Dewane 1993; Gallagher 1997; Kaminsky 1997; Ludwig 1994; Matusicky 1982; Neuman 1996; Pierce 1986; Saavedra 1996; Vogelsang 1993).

[29] "Affective Learning" is characterized by learning processes that integrate a learner's interests, attitudes, emotions, and motivations. Bamidis, P.D., *Affective learning:*

transformative learners.[30]

Recent studies also establish that transformative teaching methods can be extremely valuable in helping undergraduate students hone their critical thinking skills, as well as facilitating their transition to young adulthood.   Transformative learning approaches allow undergraduate faculty to take better advantage of the increased experiential maturity of today's students.[31]   Many of today's undergraduate students are in fact "adults", by virtue of their age and/or experiential maturity, and thus classroom pedagogies should respect them as such.[32] Moreover, even those undergraduate students who have not yet transitioned into "adulthood" can also benefit greatly from exposure to transformative learning pedagogies to develop their

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principles, technologies, practice. Brain Function Assessment in Learning. LNCS (LNAI), vol. 10512, pp. 1–13. Springer, Cham (2017).

[30] Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

[31] Halx, M. D. (2010). Re-conceptualizing college and university teaching through the lens of adult education: Regarding undergraduates as adults. *Teaching in Higher Education, 15*(5), 519-530.

[32] *Id.*

critical thinking skills.[33]

1.   **Experiential and Group-situated Pedagogies**

A number of studies emphasize that transformative learning typically requires pedagogies that are both experiential and group-situated.[34]   These studies emphasize that experience, followed by deconstruction and reflection on the experience, provides the initial foundations for the transformational process.[35]   Taylor explains that the most effective pedagogies "involve creating experiences that can help facilitate understanding among the participants involved," and that "experiential, hands-on, learning activities offer a powerful medium for promoting transformative learning."[36]

Transformative pedagogies also require exploration of group dynamics

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[33]   *Id.*

[34]   Saavedra, E. (1996). Teachers study groups: Contexts for transformative learning and action, Theory Into Practice, 35(4), 271-277.; Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 8.   *See also*, Dewane 1993; Gallagher 1997; Kaminsky 1997; Neuman 1996; Pierce 1986.

[35]   Gregory, J. (2002). Principles of experiential education. *The Theory and Practice of Teaching,* , 94-107.   Smith, T. E., Knapp, C. E., Seaman, J., & Pace, S. (2010). Experiential Education and Learning by Experience. *Sourcebook of Experiential Education: Key Thinkers and their Contributions*.

[36]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

and relationships in order to engage in communicative learning and rational discourse. For example, Saavedra[37] emphasized the importance of openly discussing issues of background, prior experience, and positionality (e.g., race, class, gender, ethnicity) of each group member in relationship to the overall objectives of the group in order to create an open, trusting, and democratic environment within in the group. In addition, pedagogies that embrace dissonance or conflict among group members were found to create real learning opportunities for participants, provided instructors facilitate respect for differing viewpoints.[38] Pedagogies that provide opportunities for groups to actually act upon, validate, and explore the impact of their newly developed ideas were also more effective in facilitating transformation.[39] Another major benefit of using transformative pedagogies is to directly address the apathy and cynicism that instructors frequently encounter among young adult students in modern classrooms. Research by Duarte demonstrates how pedagogies implementing Mezirow's transformative learning steps are

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[37]   Saavedra, E. (1996). Teachers study groups: Contexts for transformative learning and action, Theory Into Practice, 35(4), 271-277.

[38]   *Id.*

[39]   *Id.* See also, Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*.

particularly effective in forcing students to confront their own sense of cynicism and learn to channel it more productively.[40]

2.   Time consuming nature of transformative pedagogies

Often the greatest practical hurdle to implementing transformative learning pedagogy is the inordinate amount of time required.   Taylor explains "the very conditions that foster transformative learning, a democratic process, inclusiveness of agendas, striving for consensus, critical reflection, dialogue, etc. [are what] create such a necessity for time."[41]   Time constraints may require educators to allocate time more creatively, for example by breaking down the learning process into a series of phases or projects that can be rolled out to build the learning experience over an entire semester, or even become integrated into a larger curriculum that designed to build up over the one to three year process of completing a particular major or program.

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[40]   Duarte, F. (2010). Addressing student cynicism through transformative learning. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 7*(1), 4.   Duarte, F. (2010). Using transformative education to address student cynicism in management studies. *Learning, Teaching and Social Justice in Higher Education, 1*(1), 201-215.

[41]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

3.   Recognizing a predisposition towards change

Several studies have emphasized that some students may have a predisposition to be more open to perspective change.[42] A learner's degree of readiness for change may vary depending on their life experiences, and whether or not they have previously faced a disorienting dilemma or critical event in their lives leading to deeper self-reflection.   Thus, it may be useful to consider "readiness for transformative learning" or identification of different learner stages (e.g., "conventional, threshold, and emancipated"), and tailor pedagogies to better suit such learning stages, or to position learners who are in a more experienced or advanced stage to be able to take on greater responsibilities or serve as role models for other learners in a group setting.[43]

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[42]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*; Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.; Bailey 1996; Neuman 1996; Pierce 1986.

[43]   Mezirow J. (1991) Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.at 217.

4.   Pedagogies to promote effective learning through critical reflection

In today's high-tech society, educational systems have tended to elevate cognitive and skills-oriented learning over affective learning. In such systems, there is a danger that thinking and learning may be viewed primarily as information processing, thereby marginalizing the importance of affective learning as "complexly intertwined with cognition in guiding rational behavior, memory retrieval, decision-making, creativity, and more."[44]   Affective Learning is characterized by learning processes that integrate a learner's interests, attitudes, emotions, and motivations.[45] Transformative learning pedagogies emphasize the importance of fully incorporating affective learning tools as being essential for critical reflection, self-identification, and ultimately transformation.[46]

For example, a two-year longitudinal study of leadership program students by Neuman concludes that affective learning has an important and multidimensional impact on students' capacity to learn

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[44]   Picard, R.W., Papert, S., Bender, W., Blumberg, B., Breazeal, C., Cavallo, C., Machover, T., Resnick,M., Roy, D., and Strohecker, C. (October, 2004). Affective learning — a manifesto.   BT Technology Journal, 22(4) p253–269.

[45]   Bamidis, P.D., *Affective learning: principles, technologies, practice. Brain Function Assessment in Learning*. LNCS (LNAI), vol. 10512, pp. 1–13. Springer, Cham (2017).

[46]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*; Bailey 1996; Dewane 1993; Gallagher 1997; Neuman 1996; Pierce 1986).

from experience.[47]   Pedagogies that embrace affective learning can help participants more readily identify their own assumptions, preconceptions, and emotional responses underlying their meaning structures and perspectives, which in turn can be a necessary precursor to shifting those meaning structures and perspectives.[48] For example, Neuman concluded that the processing of feelings and emotions related to experiences was both enabling (by expanding the scope and intensity of critical self-reflection) and therapeutic (facilitating the ability to work through negative feelings as essential for personal development), and therefore the outcome of affective learning was often a greater sense of insight, self-confidence, and self-worth.[49] The process of letting go of old meaning structures and embracing new ones can be an emotional experience, and it is often our feelings, emotions, and value systems that provide the impetus for critical

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[47]   Neuman, T. P. (1996). Critically reflective learning in a leadership development context. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin. Madison, WI, at 463.

[48]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

[49]   Neuman, T. P. (1996). Critically reflective learning in a leadership development context. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin. Madison, WI, at 463.

reflection.[50]

5.   Involving both educator and students as transformative learners

The most important pedagogical aspect of the transformative learning process is not found in the tips, tools, or tricks used by the instructor, but rather in the participation of the instructor in seeking to become a transformative learning herself.   Following his extensive review of the empirical literature, Taylor concludes: "[T]he most significant to the role of the educator seems not to be the various techniques and strategies that they employ; instead it is becoming a transformative learner themselves."[51]   According to Cranton:

> This means having a deep awareness of their practice, making explicit their underlying assumptions about teaching and learning, developing a critically reflective practice, networking and dialoguing with other educators, and taking an active role in their own professional development.[52]

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[50]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

[51]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 58. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

[52]   Cranton, P. (2011). A transformative perspective on the scholarship of teaching and

Transformative pedagogies also must place responsibility upon the learners to take an active role in shaping their own educational process and creating conditions that support the group as a whole, rather than depending primarily on an outside force to structure their learning environment. Thus, pedagogies may include open and frank discussion with students about the importance of their role in the learning process. While the instructor may guide and facilitate the process, instructor and students alike must share the responsibility for establishing the trusting, caring, and empathetic relationships that make constructive critical reflection and rational discourse possible within each learning group.   As stated by Taylor:

> If the class is not willing to collaborate and share the responsibility, the likelihood of fostering transformative learning is null and void. Furthermore, if the teacher uses her power to push transformative learning on the class, is she not crossing an ethical line, that of tampering with the "world view" of the participants without their permission?[53]

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learning. *Higher Education Research & Development, 30*(1), 75-86.

[53]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 60. Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.

In the final analysis, transformative learning is a collaborative process that requires the shared experiences and active engagement of both the students and the educator.

Below we outline the nature and key characteristics of social entrepreneurship and development of an "entrepreneurial mindset." We then seek to apply the above transformational learning theories and pedagogical goals and methods to social entrepreneurship programs in higher education as fertile ground for achieving the benefits of transformative learning.

IV.   SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

The field of entrepreneurship is a relatively recent addition to business school curricula, as compared to teaching of traditional functional areas in business such as finance, accounting, and marketing. Even more recently, Social Entrepreneurship courses, materials, and assignments are increasingly being incorporated into higher education curricula, whether centered in the business school, or in other departments or interdisciplinary programs. Although the term "social entrepreneurship" has gained popularity over the last two decades, there is still no universally accepted definition of the term. The term implies a blurring of the lines between for-profit entrepreneurial ventures and those that are not-for-profit, or at least

integrate a social responsibility mission into their operations.[54]

Below we first discuss the key characteristics of social entrepreneurship, before then exploring how programs in higher education can foster an "entrepreneurial mindset", and facilitate uniquely entrepreneurial forms of cognition and understanding.

A.   UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Social enterprise is also increasingly the subject of qualitative and quantitative scholarly research and analysis.[55]   It is widely recognized that a primary difference between social entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship is that social enterprises reinvest the surplus income or utilize it for additional social purposes, and that the motives behind the venture are socially or community driven.[56]

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[54]   Short, J. C., Moss, T. W., & Lumpkin, G. (2009). Research in social entrepreneurship: Past contributions and future opportunities. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, 3*(2), 161-194;   Dees, 1998, 2001.

[55]   Short, J. C., Moss, T. W., & Lumpkin, G. (2009). Research in social entrepreneurship: Past contributions and future opportunities. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, 3*(2), 161-194.

[56]   Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for definition.

At the heart of social entrepreneurship is the cultivation of an entrepreneurial mindset that can be applied to create social value. Thus, to fully understand the origins of the term "social entrepreneurship", we must first examine what it means to be an "entrepreneur".   As explained by Duke University Professor Greg Dees, the term entrepreneur derives from the French word meaning "to undertake", as in the pursuit of a venture by facilitating change and innovation:

> The French economist most commonly credited with giving the term this particular meaning is Jean Baptiste Say. Writing around the turn of the 19th century, Say put it this way, "The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield." **Entrepreneurs create value**.   In the 20th century, the economist most closely associated with the term was Joseph Schumpeter. He described entrepreneurs as the innovators who drive the "creative-destructive" process of capitalism… Schumpeter's **entrepreneurs are the change agents in the economy**. By serving new markets or creating new ways of doing things, they move the economy forward.[57]

Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5(2), 28-39.

[56]   *Id.* at 35.

[57]   Dees, G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Accessed on 5th March 2018 at: http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/documents/dees_SE.pdf#search=%22social%20entr

Dees further notes that entrepreneurs "have a mind-set that sees the possibilities rather than the problems created by change."

Legendary management guru Peter Drucker emphasized that starting a new business is neither a necessary nor sufficient to qualify as "entrepreneurship", because the essential ingredients are change and innovation, which are often missing in many conventional new ventures (e.g., Drucker highlights the example of a husband and wife who open the third or fourth Mexican restaurant in a suburban area).[58]

Similarly, to distinguish entrepreneurial management from ordinary administrative management, entrepreneurship educator Howard Stevenson of Harvard Business School finds that entrepreneurs must have the ability to readily identify and pursue opportunities that elude administrative managers, without allowing their own resource constraints to limit their options, often by mobilizing the resources of others to achieve their entrepreneurial objectives.[59] By contrast, administrators typically allow their existing

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[58]   Drucker, P.F. (1993) Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Harper bussines, p. 37-130.

[59]   Dees, G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Accessed on 5th March 2018 at:

http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/documents/dees_SE.pdf#search=%22social%20entre preneurship%22 .

resources, assumptions, and job descriptions to constrain their vision and actions, and thus often fail to recognize opportunity and engage in innovation.

The above characteristics of entrepreneurship— identifying opportunities not seen by others, serving as agents of change, engaging in innovation, and mobilizing the resources of others to overcome constraints and achieve entrepreneurial objectives— make it clear that entrepreneurship embodies a mindset that can thrive in a variety of organizations and contexts that are not limited merely to the startup of for-profit businesses. Research further shows that experiential teaching methods, such as those employed in transformative learning approaches, are best suited to development of an entrepreneurial mindset in students.[60]

In particular, the same entrepreneurial mindset described above is an essential component of social entrepreneurship. As the name implies, for social entrepreneurs the creation of social value serves as a central and explicit focus of their mission. Wealth creation then typically becomes a means to an end, with the ends focused on the social mission of the organization.[61] As further explained by Dees,

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[60]   Krueger, N. F. (2007). What lies beneath? The Experiential Essence of Entrepreneurial Thinking. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 31*(1), 123.

[61]   Dees, G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Accessed on 5th March 2018 at:

http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/documents/dees_SE.pdf#search=%22social%20entrepreneurship%22 .

this presents a unique set of challenges to the social entrepreneur:

> In particular, markets do not do a good job of valuing social improvements, public goods and harms, and benefits for people who cannot afford to pay. These elements are often essential to social entrepreneurship. That is what makes it social entrepreneurship. As a result, it is much harder to determine whether a social entrepreneur is creating sufficient social value to justify the resources used in creating that value. The survival or growth of a social enterprise is not proof of its efficiency or effectiveness in improving social conditions. It is only a weak indicator, at best.[62]

As a result, Dees proposes the following definition for "social entrepreneurship," which he believes takes into account the fact that market mechanisms will not automatically weed out social ventures that are not effectively and efficiently utilizing resources.

Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

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[62]   Dees, G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Accessed on 5th March 2018 at:
http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/documents/dees_SE.pdf#search=%22social%20entre
  preneurship%22 .

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
- Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

More recently, Martin and Osberg built upon Dees' definition of Social Entrepreneurs, while incorporating additional elements of social justice theory to identify three essential components of social entrepreneurship:[63]

We define social entrepreneurship as having the following three key components: [64]

1) identifying a stable but inherently unjust equilibrium that causes the exclusion, marginalization, or suffering of a segment of humanity that lacks the financial means

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[63]   Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5*(2), 28-39.

[64]   *Id.* at 35.

or political clout to achieve any transformative benefit on its own;

2) identifying an opportunity in this unjust equilibrium, developing a social value proposition, and bringing to bear inspiration, creativity, direct action, courage, and fortitude, thereby challenging the stable state's hegemony; and

3) forging a new, stable equilibrium that releases trapped potential or alleviates the suffering of the targeted group, and through imitation and the creation of a stable ecosystem around the new equilibrium ensuring a better future for the targeted group and even society at large.

In considering what pedagogies may be most effective in social entrepreneurship education, we note that both of the above definitions of social entrepreneurship incorporate key elements of opportunity identification, continuous innovation, adaptation, and the creation of targeted social value.

At the outset, as discussed below, the development of an "entrepreneurial mindset" and an understanding of research on "entrepreneurial cognition" is therefore just as relevant in the education of social entrepreneurs as it is in programs that focus on teaching market-oriented entrepreneurship.

B.   LITERATURE REVIEW ON DEVELOPING AN "ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET" IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A number of scholars have defined an "entrepreneurial mindset" as "the ability to rapidly sense, act, and mobilize, even under uncertain conditions."[65] As explained by Haynie et al.: "To sense and adapt to uncertainty characterizes a critical entrepreneurial resource and extant conceptualizations of an entrepreneurial mindset indicate that this resource is, at least in part, cognitive in nature."[66] Thus, entrepreneurship scholars have found that cognitive research aids in understanding how individuals identify entrepreneurial opportunities and successfully act upon them.[67]

In turn, "entrepreneurial cognition" has been defined as "the knowledge structures that people use to make assessments, judgments, or decisions involving opportunity evaluation, venture creation, and growth."[68] In the past decade, scholars have emphasized that these

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[65] Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.   Ireland et al., 2003: 963–989).

[66]   *Id.* See also Ireland et al., 2003; Krauss et al., 2005; McGrath and MacMillan, 2000.

[67] Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.   McMullen and Shepherd, 2006.

[68] Mitchell, R.K., Busenitz, L., Lant, T., Mc Dougall, P.P., Morse, E.A. & Smith, J.B. (2002). Toward a theory of entrepreneurial cognition: Rethinking the people side of

cognitions are formed through an individual's perception and interpretation of information, which, in the context of entrepreneurship, includes any information (about the marketplace, the technology, social, political, regulatory, and economic changes, etc.) that ultimately enable the discovery and exploitation of new business opportunities.[69] A growing number of researchers have therefore postulated that a better understanding of such cognition has the potential to make a significant contribution to the study of entrepreneurship.[70]

Significant research advances have helped to demystify the role of cognition in entrepreneurship, particularly with respect to identifying key cognitive traits of individuals who embody an "entrepreneurial mindset."[71] A recent body of research on cognition

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entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Winter, at 97.

[69] Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. The Academy of Management Review, 25(1), 217–226. https://doi.org/10.2307/259271

[70] Cross-cultural cognitions and the venture creation decision. Academy of Management Journal, 43(5), 974-993; Allinson & Hayes, 1996; Allinson, Chell, & Hayes, 2000; Baron, 1998; Busenitz & Barney, 1997; Mitchell, R.K., Smith, B., Seawright, K.W., & Morse, E.A. (2000).

[71] Ardichvilli, Mitchell, R.K., Smith, B., Seawright, K.W., & Morse, E.A. (2000), *Cross-cultural cognitions and the venture creation decision*, Academy of Management Journal,

and entrepreneurship is generally rooted in psychology literature on individual cognition.   For example, Mitchell, Busenitz et al. build toward a theory that links specific mental processes with entrepreneurial behaviors, stating: "entrepreneurial cognitions are the knowledge structures that people use to make assessments, judgments, or decisions involving opportunity evaluation, venture creation, and growth."[72]

Recent empirical research examining the connection between entrepreneurial cognition and new venture creation has demonstrated that entrepreneurs across many different national cultures do, in fact, use similar "cognitive scripts."[73] This stream of research, in turn, built upon previous studies finding that entrepreneurs across cultures hold similar perceptions about what it means to be an "entrepreneur."[74]

43(5), 974-993; See also, Cardozo, & Ray, 2003; Baron, 1998; Busenitz & Barney, 1997; Corbett, 2005, 2007; Shane 2000; Shapero 1984; Venkataraman 1997; Ward 2004.

[72]   Mitchell, R.K., Busenitz, L., Lant, T., Mc Dougall, P.P., Morse, E.A. & Smith, J.B. (2002). Toward a theory of entrepreneurial cognition: Rethinking the people side of entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Winter at 97.

[73]   Mitchell, R.K., Busenitz, L., Lant, T., Mc Dougall, P.P., Morse, E.A. & Smith, J.B. (2002). Toward a theory of entrepreneurial cognition: Rethinking the people side of entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Winter, 93– 104 ; Mitchell, R.K., Smith, J.B., Morse, E.A., Seawright, W.K., Peredo, A.M. & Mckenzie, B. (2002). Are entrepreneurial cognitions universal? Assessing entrepreneurial cognitions across cultures. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Summer, 9–32.

[74]   McGrath, R. G. and MacMillan, I. C. 1992. More Like Each Other Than Anyone Else? A Cross-Cultural Study of Entrepreneurial Perceptions. Journal of Business Venturing 7 (5), pages 419-429.

Mitchell et. al. took this common notion of entrepreneurial identity an important step further by specifically connecting the cognitive schemas of individuals to their propensity for successful venture-creation decisions and behaviors.[75]

More specifically, recent cognitive research in entrepreneurship draws upon literature from social cognition to describe the entrepreneur as a 'motivated tactician', who can be characterized as a "fully engaged thinker who has multiple cognitive strategies available."[76]   The entrepreneur also has the ability to shift and choose rapidly from among available strategies based on specific goals, motives, needs and circumstances, leading to the ability to act (or not) in response to perceived entrepreneurial opportunities.[77]   This research is significant, because it explains in part the cognitive skills

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[75] Mitchell, R.K., Smith, B., Seawright, K.W., & Morse, E.A. (2000). Cross-cultural cognitions and the venture creation decision. Academy of Management Journal, 43(5), 974-993 ; Mitchell, R.K., Smith, J.B., Morse, E.A., Seawright, W.K., Peredo, A.M. & Mckenzie, B. (2002). Are entrepreneurial cognitions universal? Assessing entrepreneurial cognitions across cultures. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Summer, 9–32.

[76]   Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.

[77] Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1991). McGraw-Hill series in social psychology. Social cognition (2nd ed.). Mcgraw-Hill Book Company; McMullen and Shepherd, 2006).

that help entrepreneurs engage in so-called "adaptable decision-making", or the ability to shift rapidly from one mode of thinking and analysis to another in making decisions under unpredictable and rapidly changing circumstances.[78]

Several scholars have focused specifically on the importance of "metacognition" – most simply described as "thinking about thinking"– to the adaptable decision-making processes of entrepreneurs.[79]   As explained by Haynie et al.:[80]

> [M]etacognitive processes are important in dynamic, uncertain environments like those that entrepreneurs typically face. When environmental cues change, individuals adapt their cognitive responses and develop strategies for responding to the environment.[81] Researchers have found

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[78] Schraw, G., & Dennison, R. S. (1994). Assessing metacognitive awareness. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 19(4), 460–475. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1994.1033

[79] Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring: A New Area of Cognitive-Developmental Inquiry. American Psychologist, 34, 906-911. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.906 ; Flavell, J. H. (1987). Speculation about the nature and development of metacognition. In: F. E. Wernert and R. H. Kluwe (Eds.), Metacognition, Motivation and Understanding. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

[80] Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.

[81] Earley, Connolly & Ekegren, 1989; Haynie, Shepherd, Mosakowski, & Earley, 2009 ; Shepherd et al., 2007.

that metacognitive awareness is positively related to adaptable decision-making. Individuals who are metacognitively aware are more likely to formulate and evaluate multiple alternatives to process a given task, and are also highly sensitized and receptive to feedback from the environment that can be incorporated into subsequent decision frameworks. Given the dynamism and uncertainty surrounding entrepreneurial action, metacognition facilitates studying how entrepreneurs adapt to their evolving and unfolding context and why some adapt while others do not. [82]

Similarly, studies have demonstrated that persons with limited metacognitive capabilities are less likely to identify and engage alternative strategies, and are therefore have more difficulty adapting when a decision-context changes, or when a situation is new, novel, uncertain, or rapidly changing.[83]

These studies on metacognition also emphasize that it is not a

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[82] Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.

[83] Batha, K., & Carroll, M. (2007). Metacognitive training aids decision making. Australian Journal of Psychology, 59(2), 64–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530601148371 .

dispositional trait, but rather metacognition is a learned process,[84] which can be improved through training.[85]   This finding is especially significant for entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship programs in higher education, because it means that faculty should seek to design effective pedagogies for enhancing the metacognitive skills of our students.[86]

In addition to metacognition skills, entrepreneurs must be capable of becoming effective leaders of the organizations they are developing.   Selecting, inspiring and leading the teams who will be executing the entrepreneurial vision requires them to develop new mental models that address the complexities of leadership challenges. Researcher Homer Johnson explains that "what separates successful leaders from unsuccessful ones is their mental models or meaning structures, not their knowledge, information, training, or experience per se."[87] Research reflects that transformative teaching methods are

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[84]   *Id.*

[85]   Schmidt, A. M., & Ford, J. K. (2003). Learning within a learner control training environment: The interactive effects of goal orientation and metacognitive instruction on learning outcomes. Personnel Psychology, 56(2), 405–429. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00156.x .

[86]   Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing, 25*(2), 217-229.

[87]   Johnson, H. H. (2008). Mental models and transformative learning: The key to leadership development? *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 19*(1), 85-89.

one of the most effective approaches to leadership development education, by helping students acquire new mental models that offer more valid and useful ways for effectively dealing with the complex challenges of leadership.[88]

Finally, another significant stream of cognitive research relating to an entrepreneur's ability to readily adapt to uncertain and rapidly changing circumstances focuses on the interplay between intuitive and emotional modes of cognition on the one hand, as compared with logical and analytical modes of thinking on the other. Scholars find that both styles of cognition play important roles at various stages in the entrepreneurial process, but that affect or intuitive cognition is especially significant for adjusting to rapidly changing or unpredictable circumstances.   As summarized by Baron: [89]

> [T]he environments in which entrepreneurs function are often highly unpredictable and filled with rapid change. As a result, such environments are not ones in which individuals can follow well-learned scripts or prescribed sets of procedures. Rather, as many entrepreneurs put it, they must

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[88] *Id.*

[89] Baron, R. A. 2008. *The role of affect in the entrepreneurial process*. Academy of ManagementReview 32: 328-340.

often "make it up as they go along." Research on the influence of affect suggests that it is most likely to exert powerful effects on cognition and behavior in precisely this type of situation. In contexts involving high uncertainty and unpredictability, affect can readily tip the balance toward specific actions or decisions—effects it might not produce in environments that are more certain and predictable.[90]

Organizational decision-making environments have become increasingly fast paced and dynamic, leading to an increased focus on how to achieve decision making that is both rapid and effective among today's managers. As a result, entrepreneurship scholars are reconsidering the merits of intuition in such a dynamic business environment. Many researchers now contend that, understanding the roles of intuition and affective learning in the decision making process is an effective tool in entrepreneurship education.[91]

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[90]   Forgas, J. P. 1995. *Mood and judgment: The affect infusion model (AIM).* Psychological Bulletin, 117: 39 – 66;   Forgas, J. P. 1998. *On feeling good and getting your way: Mood effects on negotiating strategies and outcomes.* Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 74: 565–577;   Forgas, J. P. (Ed.). 2000. Feeling and thinking: Affective influences on social cognition. New York: Cambridge University Press ; Forgas, J. P., & George, J. M. 2001. *Affective influences on judgments, decision making and behavior in organizations: An information processing perspective.* Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 86: 3–34.

[91]   Sadler-Smith, E., Hodgkinson, G. P., & Sinclair, M. (2008). A Matter of Feeling? The Role of Intuition in Entrepreneurial Decision-making and Behavior.

These streams of research on entrepreneurial cognition also rely on evidence from the neurosciences, explaining that two distinct systems for processing information appear to exist within the human brain.[92]   One system is concerned with what might be termed reason (or logical thought), while the other deals primarily with affect or emotion.   Growing evidence suggests that these two distinct systems of neural functioning interact with one another in complex ways during problem solving, decision-making, and other important forms of cognition.[93]

C. THE CONVERGENCE OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET IN TEACHING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This paper adds to the literature on entrepreneurial cognition and transformative learning by exploring potential intersections between the two theories.   As indicated in the chart below, we find there are several specific thematic overlaps between the theories of

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[92]   Forgas, J. P., & George, J. M. 2001. *Affective influences on judgments, decision making and behavior in organizations: An information processing perspective*. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 86: 3–34.

[93]   See Baron 3008; Cohen 2005; Sanfey, Rilling, Aronson, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2003.

entrepreneurial cognition and transformative learning:

Key Characteristics of Entrepreneurial Mindset and Cognition	Parallels in Transformative Learning Theory
Ability to adapt rapidly to unexpected and changing circumstances	Transformation process often begins with a "disorienting dilemma," such as an unfamiliar situation or unexpected change
Ability to engage in meta-cognition and critical reflection	Transformation process requires meta cognition through cycles of critical reflection, and self-examination., and questioning of assumptions
Development of skills for opportunity recognition, gathering of resources, planning, and execution/implementation	Participants must then plan of a course of action to resolve the disorienting dilemma and acquire the knowledge and skills needed for implementing the selected plans
Ability to shift rapidly between logical/analytical modes of thinking on the one hand & intuitive/emotional modes of cognition on the other	Employs pedagogies based on affective learning, as feelings, emotions, and value systems play an important role in gaining deeper personal insights needed for transformative shift in perspective

The above parallel themes reflect that these two distinct lines of research can be mutually reinforcing.   In other words, entrepreneurship education may be a discipline area that is particularly well suited for helping students achieve transformative shifts in perspective; and similarly, the types of pedagogies found to be most effective through studies of transformative learning may be particularly appropriate for use in entrepreneurship education.

In addition, social entrepreneurship provides a natural bridge between elements of transformative learning and the goals involved in developing an entrepreneurial mindset. The following Venn diagram further illustrates this relationship, reflecting that building social value can reinforce personal values and thereby serve as an important path to personal transformation.
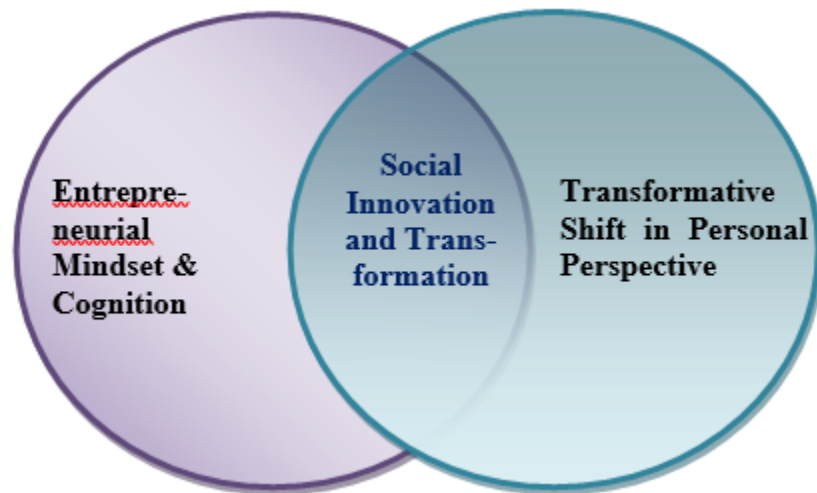
Key features of social entrepreneurship as identified by Dees (2001) and Martin & Osberg (2007) include the importance of recognizing social injustice or suffering; defining a social value proposition to address the social problem;[94] creating and sustaining social value by efficiently utilizing limited resources to address the social issue.[95] Very often, social entrepreneurs choose to address a

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[94]   Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5*(2), 28-39.

[95]   Dees, G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Accessed on 5th March 2018 at:

http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/documents/dees_SE.pdf#search=%22social%20entre preneurship%22 ; Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for

particular issue or cause with which they have some type of personal affinity or identification that increases their desire to make a difference. Thus, these conceptions of social entrepreneurship may help participants in social enterprise engage in greater critical reflection and meta-cognition to achieve personal transformation more rapidly through a deeper commitment to a cause that ties directly into deeply held personal values or beliefs. As a result, the pursuit of a social enterprise is arguably even more likely to require critical reflection and affective learning, utilizing both logical/analytical as well as intuitive/emotional modes of cognition.[96]

V.   COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CASE EXAMPLES FROM THE U.S. AND IRELAND ON TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PEDAGOGIES

In order to better explain the intersection between transformative learning, entrepreneurial cognition, and social entrepreneurship, below we provide case examples of pedagogies employed at two different higher education institutions in the United

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definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5*(2), 28-39.

[96] Cope, J. (2003). Entrepreneurial learning and critical reflection. *Management Learning, 34*(4), 429.

States and Europe. In each case, instructors utilize pedagogies that draw upon transformative learning principles and pedagogies to more fully engage students, help students cultivate and entrepreneurial mindset, and to encourage students to add value in a way that addresses a social issue or problem.

A.   EXAMPLES FROM THE UNITED STATES: THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE (USM) SCHOOL OF BUSINESS IN PORTLAND, MAINE AND ELON UNIVERSITY IN ELON, NC

In the United States, the Business Administration program at the University of Southern Maine School of Business and the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business at Elon University offer courses and assignments that focused on training students to think entrepreneurially and honing their critical thinking skills as applied to social enterprise.   Integration into the global entrepreneurial community, experiential learning, and personal growth and development are cornerstones of this program.

As described in the examples below, faculty in these programs have utilized a variety of pedagogies that are consistent with transformative learning theory, as they are designed to confront students with "disorienting dilemmas" early in the semester, followed by facilitating entrepreneurial thinking and problem solving using cycles of critical reflection to implement the "four pillars" of entrepreneurship that form the central goals of the course.

1. "Four Pillars" Final Exam/Project

The University of Southern Maine entrepreneurship curriculum covers both traditional and social entrepreneurship principles, and is centered on four key pillars of entrepreneurial success:

a) developing a deep understanding and knowledge of opportunity recognition;
b) identifying and gathering necessary resources;
c) creativity in planning; and
d) execution for success.

Throughout the program, in each of the above four categories, students are urged to clearly define and focus on "value creation", and they are encouraged to frame "value" not only in terms of financial value, but also in using resources efficiently and effectively to build and sustain social value.

The above themes are first introduced in the Entrepreneurship Skills Course, when the students receive their "final exam" on the first day of class. The exam asks them to: "identify a social issue of interest to your team and directly apply the four pillars of knowledge and skills covered in this course to add value in addressing the social issue you have identified." The goal is for students to gain experience

in applying opportunity recognition skills, and debate and refine their concept of "adding value" to a social issue about which the students are passionate. The project unfolds across the course of the semester through a series of activities that incorporate a number of transformative learning inspired pedagogies.

For example, this "four pillars" assignment emphasizes the "centrality of experience" and "cycles of critical reflection," that are hallmarks of transformational learning theory. The project involves active and experiential learning by groups of learners, as each group is sent out into the local community to identify a social issue or problem, and actively engage with local organizations and community leaders to identify and "add value" to address a social problem. Moreover, the structure within the classroom is based on cycles of critical reflection, because students must not only must create a shared learning experience within their own group, but every day in class, each group must also share their experiences, explain their plans moving forward, and provide rationale/justification for how those plans will "add value" in the context of the overall social purpose of the project. As each group presents its ideas, experiences, and proposals during each phase of planning and implementation, they are questioned and critiqued by every other group, and thus the class collectively "deconstructs" each project to use it as "the grist for critical reflection." [97]

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[97] Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical*

This latter vetting by groups in the classroom also serves the function of "reflective/rational discourse," which Mezirow describes as the process of "identifying problematic ideas, values, beliefs, and feelings, critically examining the assumptions upon which they are based, testing their justification through rational discourse and making decisions predicated upon the resulting consensus"[98] It is important to note that the instructor serves as facilitator of this critical reflection process, by modelling the types of questioning that will lead students to question their assumptions, and pushing them to fully justify the efficacy and value created by their proposed courses of action **before** the group actually moves into the implementation phase.   The instructor's lines of questioning ideally will model a respect for differing viewpoints, while also sharing examples of similar issues the instructor has addressed in his/her own entrepreneurial experience to show his/her own transformative learning process. These techniques help to build the sense of trust and collaboration needed for more open discussion and deeper reflection.

Finally, the last stage of the "Four Pillars" project is "execution

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review.

[98] Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.   See also, Mezirow 1995, p. 58.

for success", which helps to facilitate the "taking action" step identified in transformative learning theory, which Taylor describes as the process of making decisions and planning a course of action that is predicated upon the consensus resulting from reflective/rational discourse, and then building competence and self-confidence in one's new roles.[99] In other words, once the students have had opportunities to fully vet their plans and ideas within their group and through cycles of presentations and justifications to the class, they must then engage in implementation. As part of that process, each group must seek to implement their solution in a manner that will create value in the community.

The following are a few examples of the types of social issues addressed and implementation efforts made by students teams on the "Four Pillars" projects:

- **Child obesity** – students created lesson plans and materials to teach students at local schools about the causes and prevention of childhood obesity, including videotaped sessions and accompanying materials posted on the web that can be accessed by teachers as educational resources.

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[99]   Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 8 (citing to Mezirow 1995 at 58).

- **Human trafficking** – Created flyers targeted at hotels to educate staff about human trafficking and help them identify signs of trafficking activities; Provided contact information for organizations to which signs of trafficking can be reported so that they can provide assistance.
- **Preventing Animal Cruelty** - Tied into a local animal protection organization; creating a "reduced tension" zone during exams where students could pet and play with rescued puppies and kittens, hear information, and receive flyers on how to prevent and report animal cruelty; some animals adopted as a result, and raised awareness.
- **Environmental impact** - Project to provide students with reusable shopping bags and educate about problems caused by plastic grocery bags.
- **Reducing Drunk Driving** – Presented comprehensive proposal to administration to create after hours runs of the campus shuttle buses after hours on weekends.

The actual "final exam" work product for the "four pillars" project consists of a report and presentation that is judged by three entrepreneurs who serve as mock investors or mock social enterprise venture funding organizations, who provide an independent evaluation

of whether the project has accomplished each of the "four pillars" while "adding value" in relation to the social issue selected by the team.

2. Examples of Assignments Evoking "Disorienting Dilemmas"

One of the pedagogical hallmarks of transformative learning theory is to facilitate a shift in student perspectives and frames of reference by creating a so-called "disorienting dilemma."   It is often quite challenging to accomplish such "disorientation" of students in the classroom, but instructors can start by utilizing various creative means of disrupting students' typical expectations.

A simple example of this concept has been utilized by entrepreneurship faculty member Gary Palin to create an unexpected interpersonal dynamic on the first day of class.   In order to assign students randomly to the "four pillars" project groups discussed above, Palin has students draw cards from a stack, each of which pictures an animal that will serve as the mascot of each group.   The students are then required to locate their other group members by walking around the classroom making the "sound" of the animal depicted.   This process works quite well for the groups assigned a dog, cat, horse, or cow, but proves to be more difficult (and humorous) for the students who draw a "whale" as their assigned animal. This is an initial means of breaking the ice, creating humor among the teams, and creating friendly bonds among students in the class. This exercise not only "breaks the ice," but also starts the semester by immediately

challenging students preconceptions or assumptions about what they consider to be a "normal" or "typical" classroom and group experience.

As the semester progresses, additional short assignments are designed to throw students off balance, and force them to analyze situations from multiple perspectives that may require them to frame a problem in a different and usual way. Several of these assignments are specifically aimed helping students gain new insights about themselves and others through the use of "disorienting dilemmas". For instance, Professor Gary Palin uses a "Meyers Briggs" assessment in an extremely unconventional manner. First, all students are sent to complete a full Meyers & Briggs assessment, and then asked to bring their Myers-Briggs Type Indicators® (MBTI®) report results with them to class for discussion purposes.[100]

On the first day after taking the test, the entire class shares their type indicator results and discusses the whether they feel they in fact personally display the traits/characteristics of the type from their results. Students engage in debate over the accuracy and value of the test, and consider what it would be like to live as one of the other

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[100]   Briggs, K. and Briggs Myers, I. (2015). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

primary personality "types" described in the test materials. At the end of this first day, the students are given the assignment: for the next four days, each student must model what they believe would be the likely behaviors of four other Myers Briggs personality types that are most different from their own type indicator. An essential rule of the exercise is that the students **not** permitted to reveal to their roommates, friends, family members, teachers, or others that they are intentionally behaving in a manner completely opposite from their own usual Myers Briggs profile.

On each of these four days, students must write reflection papers describing their experience, including providing examples of specific behaviors and why those behaviors seem to model a specific Myers Briggs type indicator.   They also are asked to describe whether their change in behavior provoked any reactions from others who know them well, and to explain how they felt about the experience (eg, whether it was disorienting, liberating, humorous, stressful, etc.).

Following this four-day process, students reconvened in class to share their experiences of attempting to walk in the shoes of these other Myers Briggs personality types. For example, one student who is typically rather introverted attended a party to which he wore unusually "loud" clothes and made a point of talking to every person he met.   He concluded it was very stressful at first, but liberating in many ways as well. Another student's mother thought she sounded very depressed, and sent her money to do something nice for herself. She felt this was humorous in some ways, but it also made her feel a little guilty, so she called her mom at the end of the assignment to

explain her behavior.

Most of the students have agreed that this assignment is "disorienting", and discussion centered on being able to "walk a mile in others' shoes", which included literally trying to structure one's thoughts and priorities differently to understand other perspectives and the ways someone else might analyze the same situations or problems. The journaling process involved in drafting reflection papers during each day of their experience, along with the rounds of discussion at the end of the process, helped to facilitate the types of self-examination and critical reflection that are at the heart of transformative learning theory.   During the experience, students often spoke of feelings of confusion, guilt, liberation, or even gaining new insight insights regarding why certain friends or family members of a different Myers Briggs category might exhibit certain patterns of behavior.   Some spoke of having to try and "re-wire" the way their thought processes worked in order to be able to play the "role" of another personality type. The class discussions afterwards also reflected "exploration of new roles, relationships, and actions" as encouraged in transformative learning theory, and seemed to lead to at least an initial level of "re-assessment   of   one's   previous   epistemic,   sociocultural,   or

psychological assumptions."[101]

These types of "disorienting dilemmas" not only seemed to facilitate changes in student perspectives, but also challenged students to think in creative, unconventional, and innovative new ways that helped encourage development of an "entrepreneurial mindset" by expanding frames of reference and breaking down traditional boundaries that can limit problem solving.

3. **Student Consulting Projects with Regional Companies and Non-Profit Organizations at Elon University**

A series of assignments created by Christina Benson, Associate Professor of Business Law and Ethics at Elon University, have effectively utilized transformative learning theory have involved setting up consulting projects in which students work directly with real world companies and non-profit organizations. In particular, these consulting projects emphasized the following hallmarks of transformative learning:

- Creating a disorienting dilemma
- Emphasizing on the centrality of "experience"
- Engaging in cycles of critical reflection

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[101] Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review* at 8.   Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 5-15.   *See also*, Mezirow 1995 at 50.

- Engaging in reflective/rational discourse
- Empowering students to take action

The two most relevant consulting projects and the ways they embody the above pedagogical goals are described in further detail below.

a) *Piedmont Business Ethics Award consulting projects*

In the first series of consulting projects, students were assigned in teams to consult with real world regional companies that had been nominated for the "Piedmont Business Ethics Award" in the piedmont region of North Carolina.[102]   The process involved having each team of 3 to 4 students assist a company in completing the PBEA review process.   Student teams were given significant responsibilities to schedule meetings with key executives/management of the company to gather the detailed information needed to fully understand the nature of the company's ethics programming, including such factors as the company's: 1) mission/vision/values; 2) ethical codes; 3) stakeholder

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[102]   See *Finalists Announced for 2014 Piedmont Business Ethics Awards* for examples of the regional companies that students worked with in this consulting project, https://www.dmj.com/dmj-blog/finalists-announced-for-2014-piedmont-business-ethics-awards/ .

management processes; 4) community engagement programs; and 5) handling of ethical issues or challenges faced by the company in the past.

The very nature of the Piedmont Business Ethics Award consulting projects furthered each of the key transformative learning objectives outlined above.   By being thrust into scheduling and meeting with key executives, students were immediately confronted with a "disorienting dilemma" in having to navigate through both the logistics, and the substantive issues.   This assignment also places "experience" at the center of its pedagogy, because it involves collaborating with real world companies on understanding their company deeply enough to be able to complete an actual hands-on awards review process.   The assignment is divided into a series of stages, from initial meetings, through information gathering, meetings with management, preparation of the review materials, and attendance at the final awards ceremony where winning companies are announced.   Dividing the process into multiple stages allows ample opportunities for cycles of critical thinking, while also engaging in reflective discourse with the company.   Finally, the project sets a structure, but also fully requires, expects and empowers students to take action and initiative over the project.

The feedback from students on the Piedmont Business Ethics Award consulting projects reflected that the process helped them project themselves into the role of a professional consultants, while having to think critically and deeply about the ethical and social impacts of real world companies on their surrounding communities.

Students remarked that they found especially transformative the experiential and hands-on aspects of the project, as it helped them to directly see and understand practical real world challenges and considerations faced by companies in their ordinary business operations.

b) *Non-profit organization "Advocacy" consulting projects*

The second category of consulting projects involved pairing student teams with regional non-profit organizations to help them conduct an in-depth stakeholder analysis and devise multimedia communication pieces to target a persuasive message at a key target group of stakeholders.   1) the non-profit organizations have included: the cancer treatment program of a major regional hospital; 2) an organization dedicated to signing up potential blood platelet and bone marrow donors to assist leukemia/lymphoma/blood cancer programs; 3) a regional sustainable agriculture initiative; 4) a regional biofuels production company; 5) a regional center that provides assistance to victims of domestic violence.

The Advocacy consulting projects involve student teams engaging in the following stages:

- selecting and researching the organization, its mission, and services;

- gathering information from organization representatives on current priorities;
- conducting a stakeholder analysis and selecting a target audience,
- devising a creative approach and mapping out a storyboard,
- producing a short multimedia project with a clear persuasive message

As with the Piedmont Business Ethics Consulting Projects, the "Advocacy" projects required students to confront "disorienting dilemmas" and take action/initiative in organizing meetings. The storyboarding and production processes require built in "cycles of critical reflection" in deciding upon a final creative approach, and then actually executing that approach by editing together a multimedia piece.

The feedback from student teams on the Advocacy projects reflects that it meets the transformative learning objectives. Students especially comment that they appreciate the opportunity to make a difference for real world non-profit organizations, which they say makes the project both more memorable and gives it deeper meaning than a typical class project. They also mention that the logistical and technical challenges require them to think on their feet and solve problems on the fly.

B. EXAMPLES FROM THE CENTER FOR MINORITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY IN DUBLIN, IRELAND

Technological University Dublin is one of Ireland's largest and most innovative university-level institutions. As a comprehensive, dual-sector doctoral-awarding institution, Technological University Dublin combines the academic excellence of a traditional university with professional, career-oriented learning focused on preparing graduates for productive leadership roles. The core values reflected in its mission emphasize student-centered learning, useful knowledge, rigorous processes of discovery and critical enquiry, and support for entrepreneurship and diversity.   Business and entrepreneurship programs at the Technological University Dublin have adopted a distinctive approach to teaching and learning that is underpinned by a strong commitment to engaged learning and continuous quality enhancement.   These programs incorporate practice-based learning, research using real-life issues, internships in the community or industry, volunteerism, study abroad opportunities, and using interconnected modules to create highly inter-disciplinary programs.

Technological University Dublin takes pride in preparing graduates for global citizenship, making sure they are capable of adapting to a changing international environment. Within the overall range of socially-responsibility oriented activities offered by

Technological University Dublin, the Students Learning With Communities (SLWC) initiative is particularly effective.   The SLWC involves staff and students working together with underserved community partners (community groups, not-for-profit organizations, charities, and NGOs) to develop real-life projects. These types of programs are referred to as community-based learning, community-based research, and/or service-learning.

SLWC exemplifies many of the hallmarks of transformative learning discussed above.   Programs and projects in the SLWC are designed to take the students' learning out of the classroom or lecture hall, and have them working closely with communities on projects that will be of mutual benefit, in which the students can experience their impact. Student have opportunities to collaborate with non-profit organizations, community groups, charities, clubs, and schools – in fact any organization that could benefit from assistance but is not in a position to pay for it. They are usually one-off projects that have defined starting and finishing points to fit into the normal academic timetable. They are designed to have real, practical outcomes, which will directly benefit the community, as well as clear personal and academic learning outcomes for students. Community-based learning is very different from volunteering which is usually part of the ongoing work of the community. These projects also differ from internships or work placement, as they are woven into the educational process.

Participation in SLWC allows the students to see that their programs of study are not just abstract theories that lecturers provide

from books, but rather that such theories can be applied to real-life problems and implemented in real time in an effort to innovate new solutions. The projects created in the SLWC embody transformative learning principles, because they challenge the students to go beyond what they might have imagined themselves being able to do, and give them a specific and practical focus for completing their course-work. Student learning comes alive when they realize that a real client outside the college will use and benefit from their work. In this way this work improves students' confidence and motivation and has been shown to impact positively on their well-being and college experience, and improves retention. From a staff point of view, research shows that it enhances the achievement of curricular goals of the course, facilitates deeper connections among faculty, staff and students, as well as a better understanding of student learning styles, provides more meaningful engagement with and commitment to teaching, and promotes a greater sense of connection to staff and the university. When the students are given the chance to work on a project to benefit an organization its makes them realize that all work is not necessarily done for financial gain – the benefits of real work are much broader. It engages their critical thinking and also develops their social awareness.

From their first contact with the community, students often become more actively engaged in their learning, often giving over and above what is expected on the course in order to meet the community's

needs. Typically, a lecturer can expect to see their interpersonal skills, confidence, theoretical understanding of their subject and problem-solving skills improve as they work with, and learn from, the community. Often the initial project definition is very adventurous, challenging and broad in scope, and needs to be scaled down to make it more achievable. Experience shows that in most cases the students make a relevant contribution, and often want to continue working on the project the following year, and can decide to involve new students in the year behind them in the project. This is when longer-term project planning can really start to happen, once the initial project is completed and more, new projects are identified. In this way, the mantle passes from student project team to project team and the benefits accumulate as a stream of projects are defined and completed.

Within the overall SLWC initiative, one particular activity is the charity event assignment. As part of the Business and Management Degree Program, students are offered an elective entitled 'New Venture Creation' in Year 3 of their four-year degree program. As part of this course students are asked to organize an event for the purposes of raising money for a not-for-profit organization. The primary objective of this assignment is to give students the experience of behaving in an entrepreneurial manner while also contributing to society. The assignment requires students to generate their own ideas for an event, run the event, and then write a paper reflecting upon their experiences. The event must be organized as a team of no more than three students, but the reflective paper is submitted on an individual basis. Each student group can choose which charity it wishes to support and what type of fundraising event they wish to organize.

They receive no seed funding and any losses incurred must come from their own resources. The reflective paper must include a letter of certification from their chosen charity stating that they gave permission to the students to undertake the event and confirming the amount of money that they received from the students. In the seven years that this assignment has been part of the course, over €350,000 has been raised for charitable causes by the various student groups and hundreds of students have benefitted so much from the experience that their reflection have stated that their future behavior in terms of entrepreneurial activity and making a contribution to society has been positively altered.

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

Prior transformative learning research compiled by Cooper (2001) has found that the instructor plays an important role in catalyzing transformative learning, and concludes that the following types of transformative learning goals and pedagogies encourage deeper understanding and shift in perspective among students:[103]

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[103]   Cooper, S. (2001, November). Transformational learning. Life Circles. Retrieved on February 3, 2012 from http://www.lifecircles-inc.com/Learningtheories/humanist/mezirow.html.

- Cultivate assignments that may facilitate "disorienting dilemmas" in the minds of students, which they must determine how best to resolve
- Encourage students to reflect on and actively share their concerns, feelings, ideas, and thoughts in class
- Be holistically oriented, aware of body, mind, and spirit in the learning process
- Establish an environment characterized by trust and care
- Encourage students to become transcendent of their own beliefs and open to the views of others
- Cultivate self-awareness of alternate ways of discovering and learning
- Demonstrate ability to serve as an experienced mentor reflecting on his/her own journey
- Help students question reality, premises, and assumptions in ways that promote shifts in their worldview

        According to Cooper, transformative learning pedagogies can be very different from what many students are accustomed to in the classroom, and are especially effective for students who are open to new ways of becoming active participants in their own learning

experience.[104]   For example, students must be encouraged to determine their own reality, as opposed to allowing social realities being defined by others or by cultural institutions. Students must be willing and able to integrate critical reflection into their schoolwork and personal life, and cultivate the ability to transcend past contexts of learning and experience.

This research reinforces many of the above findings, but also adds whole new dimensions by focusing specifically on social entrepreneurship education, and by relating findings from transformative learning theory to recent research on entrepreneurial cognition and pedagogies for cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset. The paper therefore offers fresh insights regarding the relationship between transformative learning and social entrepreneurship education, thereby adding new perspectives to the body of knowledge that already exists regarding entrepreneurship education.

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[104] *Id.*