

RESEARCH: SHARING ECONOMY - SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The "sharing economy" is a fast growing and transformational new economic modality that is driving business innovation and creating new opportunities in communities around the world. In this research seminar, students will learn about sharing economy through guided research and investigation of its increasing significance in society.

Sharing economy and related circular economies are critical next-gen economic mechanisms that enable rising entrepreneurships to create and redistribute value in ways that traditional capitalist economic models do not. Just as innovative entrepreneurships are the organizational vessels for change, decentralizing power and wealth; next-gen economic modalities enable these entrepreneurships to “do with less”: deliver goods and services more efficiently, extracting value from untapped resources.

The research seminar course is appropriate for students with strong English language and study skills who are interested in learning about business, economic trends, and developing their research abilities.

By end of the course, students will come away with a deeper understanding of the sharing economy and business models. Through their research they will develop their own insights about the growing significance of sharing economy in modern society. Working in teams, students will also gain experience and competence in research, study organization, and presenting their knowledge and findings.

COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE

Five Guiding Principles of Sharing Economy Enterprises:

1. Create value through reconceiving peer-to-peer transactions and supply chains

2. Are activated by, for, and through intentional communities of participants, where trust is a dominant value
3. Draw on the untapped value of idle or under-utilized assets and capital —human, economic or tangible.
4. Reduce asset acquisition and undermine conventional capitalist models of consumption and waste
5. Transactions and participation are powered by frictionless technologies of social media and internet

Three Functional Categories:

1. Redistributing Goods
2. Using vs. Owning
3. Lifestyle Experiences

Economic Implications:

1. Concept of Public Goods
2. Variations on Capitalism
3. Business Models
4. Creation of New Markets
5. Decentralized Infrastructure Development
6. Transformational and Macroeconomic Effects

Cultural Significance:

1. Contemporary Cultural Drivers
2. Antecedents and Archetypes

3. Role of Technologies
4. Fills Changing Cultural Needs

Social Influences:

1. Creates New Social Currencies
2. Emphasis on Trust & Accountability
3. Role of Social Media
4. Creation of Participant Communities

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Students will work in teams of 4 to focus on a specific research question about the sharing economy. Guidance on research processes and methods will be given throughout the seminar.

Teams will give weekly reports on their research and progress in workshop-style formats, and will prepare a final PPT presentation and white paper at the end.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Each week there will be one or two days of content discussion and group exercises; at least three days devoted to student in-class research; and one day for reviews and team progress reports. Peer-to-peer interaction, both within and between teams, will be an essential component of the shared learning experience.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Teams will choose a specific industry or prominent sharing economy business to research. They will formulate and answer a question about the social, cultural, and/or economic implications of the aspect of sharing economy they are investigating. Initial research model: "[Household Changes in contemporary China: an analysis based on the four recent censuses](#)"; Zhan Hu and Xizhe Peng

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Business of Sharing: Making it in the New Sharing Economy; Alex Stephany. Read chapters 1 & 2.
The Sharing Economy: The End of Employment and the Rise of Crowd-Based Capitalism (MIT Press);
Arun Sundararajan

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