

Course Outline: INNOV311 – Research for Social Impact

1. Contact Information for Course Instructor

Instructor: Tania Del Matto, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Social Innovation & Director of GreenHouse

E-mail: tania.delmatto@uwaterloo.ca or MS Teams messaging

Office hours: By appointment, using Microsoft Teams. You may book a meeting using Microsoft

Bookings: <https://outlook.office365.com/book/bkg-GreenHouse@uwaterloo.ca/>

Email or MS Teams messaging is the best way to communicate with me. If you do choose to reach out by email, please make sure you indicated in the subject line INNOV311 so that I can flag and prioritize it as I receive a heavy amount of email and having that subject line will ensure your email gets prioritized.

2. Course Delivery Mode:

This course takes place in-person on Wednesdays from 4:00pm – 6:50pm, at United College – GreenHouse space (UTD 164).

We will be using the following platforms:

LEARN is a web-based learning management system. The University of Waterloo has created this Student Guide on how to use LEARN:

<https://uwaterloo.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/ISTKB/pages/284530122/For+students>

Microsoft Teams will be used for the weekly mentorship circle taking place on Fridays.

3. Land Acknowledgement:

United College is situated on lands deeply connected to Indigenous peoples who have historically lived, and who currently live, in this territory. As an educational institution, we are committed, as an institution and alongside you as a learner, to respecting the traditional knowledge Indigenous peoples have derived from these lands, and to working toward a future where all peoples, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, can thrive together in harmony with the land.

As you move through your learning journey, we invite you to listen, to question your own assumptions, and to consider whose knowledge has shaped the systems you're seeking to change. In alignment with Indigenous ways of knowing, we embrace a vision of social innovation that is grounded in the values of reciprocity, sustainability, and community empowerment. These values we ask you to carry not just into your coursework, but into the ventures, partnerships, and community relationships you build during your time here and beyond.

4. Course Description:

Integrated with the GreenHouse Social Innovators in Training Program, this experiential learning course helps students develop essential skills, mindsets, and competencies for social innovation within a peer-supported environment. You craft a project that explores and understands a social challenge through research and early-stage experimentation: understanding stakeholder perspectives, identifying unmet needs and opportunities, and creating initial prototypes to test assumptions. The emphasis is on discovery, learning, and iteration rather than implementation. Your goal is to develop foundational competencies including problem identification, stakeholder engagement, creative ideation, and reflective practice. By the end of this course, you'll gain clarity about your unique contributions as a changemaker and the confidence to pursue meaningful social change.

5. Course Structure:

Step 1: Define Your GreenHouse Project

You will craft a project that explores a social challenge through research and early-stage experimentation. Your research activities will seek to understand stakeholder perspectives and identify unmet needs and opportunities. Through early-stage experimentation, you will create prototypes to test assumptions behind a new policy, program, product or service.

Step 2: Develop Your Learning Proposal

Once you define your GreenHouse project, you will then develop your learning proposal. The proposal will outline how your project will help you achieve each of the five learning outcomes for the course.

Step 3: Implement and Self-Assess

Your learning proposal will be reviewed by your instructor. Once approved, you will implement your plan while continuously self-assessing through:

- Weekly session participation in social innovators in training sessions and the mentorship circle meetings
- Mid-term milestone report and reflection
- Final milestone report and reflection

6. Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome 1: Research and Analysis

Demonstrate how you have actively developed your understanding of social innovation through research related to your GreenHouse project. Show evidence in the evolution of your thinking as well as evidence of your final understanding through a format of your choice.

Learning Outcome 2: Skill Application

Identify and apply existing academic, professional, and personal skills to your GreenHouse project while identifying areas for improvement. Show evidence on how you documented your existing skills and how you effectively applied these skills through a format of your choice.

Learning Outcome 3: New Skill Development

Actively develop one new skill from the University of Waterloo's Future Ready Talent Framework through your project work. Show evidence of your skill progression overtime as well as the level of competency you reached.

Learning Outcome 4: Changemaker Mindset Development

Actively explore and develop one of three changemaker mindsets through your course experiences:

- Self-starting and proactivity: Take initiative, set goals proactively, and identify opportunities to overcome barriers
- Positive outlook and perseverance: Maintain positivity, learn from mistakes, and seek new insights to help better contribute positively, ethically and respectfully as you engage with the communities and world around you
- Lifelong learning and long-term planning: Pursue learning that benefits yourself and the world around you while developing a workable long-term vision

Show evidence of your mindset development across multiple situations.

Learning Outcome 5: Reflection and evaluation

Critically reflect on and evaluate your approach, learning, and development throughout the course.

- During each weekly session, you will be encouraged to share what you are working on, how you are progressing, what is holding you back and how your plans are evolving. You will capture and summarize these insights through your mid-term and final milestone report and reflection. Reflections should include failed attempts and learning from mistakes while balancing self-critique with acknowledgment of your growth as a social innovator.

7. Course Schedule

Each week, there are two convenings that require your attendance and active participation.

- **Mentorship circle (4:00-4:45pm):** You'll be meeting among peers that are taking the course. During the first few weeks of the term there will be discussion and support given on crafting your GreenHouse project and learning proposal. Later in the term this time will be used by you to share updates and reflections on the execution of your GreenHouse project.
- **Social Innovators in Training sessions (5:00-6:30pm followed by dinner):** You'll be joined by other students who are part of the GreenHouse community. Every week there's a different theme and set of activities that are intended to support the execution of your GreenHouse project.

Course Schedule	
Week	Topic
Sept 9	UWaterloo Innovation Ecosystem Open House – 4PM @SCH, 2 nd floor
Sept 16	Intro to INNOV311 + Being a Changemaker
Sept 23	Developing your GH Project Learning Proposal + Defining the Problem
Sept 30	Developing your GH Project Learning Proposal + Stakeholder Engagement
Oct 7	Feedback on your GH Project Learning Proposal + Ideation and Prototyping
<i>Reading Week – no session</i>	
Oct 21	Updates on your GH project + Testing your Prototype at Demo Day
Oct 28	Updates on your GH project + Selling your Idea
Nov 4	Updates on your GH project + Creating a Pitch Deck
Nov 11	Updates on your GH project + Building Relationships
Nov 18	Updates on your GH project + Practice Your Pitch
Nov 25	Social Impact Showcase
Dec 2	Updates on your GH project

8. Course Assessment, Assignments and Deadlines

Learning proposal (20%) - Due Sunday, October 4th by 11:59pm

Create a proposal outlining how your GreenHouse project will help you achieve each of the five learning outcomes and how you will document your progress. This proposal defines your personalized learning path and assessment approach, making your experience more authentic and tailored to your development needs. Submit your proposal to the instructor for approval.

The learning proposal should include the following:

- **Project Description:** briefly describing your GreenHouse project and its social innovation focus
- **Learning Outcome Plan:** for each of the five learning outcomes, explain: how your project will help you achieve this outcome; what specific activities or approaches will you use; your timeline
- **Evidence Framework:** You will commit to providing at least one evidence source per learning outcome, drawn from the list below:
 - Portfolio artifacts that show evolution of learning our time (documents, prototypes, slide presentations)
 - Process documentation (journals, progress logs, iteration records)
 - External validation (feedback from community partners, peer assessments)
 - Demonstration materials (videos, presentations, case studies)
 - Analytical products (research syntheses, skill gap analyses)

Length: 3,000+ words suggested | **Assessment:** Rubric-based

Mid-term Milestone Report and Reflection (30%) – Due Sunday, November 1st @11:59pm

Report on your GreenHouse project progress and reflect on learnings, challenges, and breakthrough moments in both project effectiveness and your development as a social innovator. Provide evidence of progress toward each learning outcome.

Length: 3,000+ words suggested | **Assessment:** Rubric-based

Final Milestone Report and Reflection (30%) – Due Friday, December 11 @11:59pm

Evaluate your complete project experience and development as a social innovator across the entire term. Provide evidence of achievement for each learning outcome.

Key Focus Areas:

- How your view of your GreenHouse project evolved throughout the course
- How your understanding of your changemaker role developed over the term
- Where you see your role as a changemaker now and into the future

Length: 3,000+ words suggested | **Assessment:** Rubric-based

Participation (20%)

It is your responsibility as a learner to come prepared to engage every week as an active participant. This means lending your full attention during class, actively engaging in classroom discussions, asking questions and contributing your observations and ideas. Your participation will be evaluated at two points during the term. You will receive your first participation mark when we return from reading week and your second participation mark at the end of the term.

Deadlines

Course Assignments	Weight	Due Date
Learning proposal	20%	Sunday, October 4 @11:59pm
Midterm milestone report and reflection	30%	Sunday, November 1 @11:59pm
Final milestone report and reflection	30%	Friday, December 11 @11:59pm
Participation		
First half of term	10%	Sept 9 – Oct 7
Second half of term	10%	Oct 21 – Dec 2

Expectations for Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are mandatory. Students who miss class will have their participation grade reduced. Students will spend a fair amount of time in smaller groups in which they not only talk and share insights and experiences, but also collaborate on understanding problems, analyzing solutions and assessing opportunities for social change.

Citation

- ANY content you have not created yourself must be cited using the [APA formatting style](#).
- Social media citations must adhere to the [How to Cite Social Media in APA Style](#).
- Recommendations for how to cite GenAI in student work at the University of Waterloo may be found through the library: https://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/chatgpt_generative_ai.

Procedures on Submitting Assignments

All assignments will be submitted via LEARN.

Expectations on Submitting Assignments by due date

Prepare and organize your work early in the term in case of emergencies. You may hand in work before the due date. Late submissions will not be accepted for grading unless negotiated in advance due to exceptional circumstances.

9. List of Readings, Resources and Materials

All slides, tools and other resources that are shared during each weekly session will be posted on LEARN.

Administrative Policy

Generative AI

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) trained using large language models (LLM) or other methods to produce text, images, music, or code, like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot, may be used in this course with proper documentation, citation, and acknowledgement. Recommendations for how to cite GenAI in student work at the University of Waterloo may be found through the library:

https://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/chatgpt_generative_ai.

Please be aware that generative AI is known to falsify references to other work and may fabricate facts and inaccurately express ideas. GenAI generates content based on the input of other human authors and may therefore contain inaccuracies or reflect biases.

In addition, you should be aware that the legal/copyright status of generative AI inputs and outputs is unclear. Exercise caution when using large portions of content from AI sources, especially images. More information is available from the Copyright Advisory Committee: <https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-at-waterloo/teaching/generative-artificial-intelligence>

You are accountable for the content and accuracy of all work you submit in this class, including any supported by generative AI. Using ChatGPT (or similar tools that generate text, code, or visual images) for content generation and submitting it as one's own original work is a violation of the [University of Waterloo's Policy 71 \(Student Discipline\)](#).

Inclusive Teaching-Learning Spaces: The University of Waterloo values the diverse and intersectional identities of its students, faculty, and staff. The University regards equity and diversity as an integral part of academic excellence and is committed to accessibility for all. We consider our classrooms, online learning, and community spaces to be places where we all will be treated with respect, dignity, and consideration. We welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. We are all expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive teaching- learning environment. Any member of the campus community who has experienced discrimination at the University is encouraged to seek guidance from the [Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-racism \(EDI-R\)](#) via email at equity@uwaterloo.ca. [Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office \(SVPRO\)](#), supports students at UWaterloo who have experienced, or have been impacted by, sexual violence and gender-based violence. This includes those who experienced harm, those who are supporting others who experienced harm. SVPRO can be contacted at svpro@uwaterloo.ca

Religious & Spiritual Observances: Students need to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Respectful Communication and Pronouns: Communications with Instructor(s) and teaching assistants (TAs) should be through recommended channels for the course (e.g., email, LEARN, Piazza, Teams, etc.) Please use your UWaterloo email address. Include an academic signature with your full name, program, student ID. We encourage you to include your pronouns to facilitate respectful communication (e.g., he/him; she/her; they/them). You can update your chosen/preferred name at [WatIAM](#). You can update your pronouns in [Quest](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources: If you are facing challenges impacting one or more courses, contact your academic advisor, Associate Chair Undergraduate, or the Director of your academic program. We recognize that throughout the term students may face health challenges - physical and / or emotional. **Please note that help is available.** Mental health is a serious issue for everyone and can affect your ability to do your best work. Counselling Services <https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/> is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counselling for a variety

of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

All students are encouraged to download the WatSAFE app which is available free through the google and iOS app stores. The WatSAFE app provides on- and off-campus contacts for students in distress, including international students, and other information related to campus safety and security.

Intellectual Property: Be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or the University of Waterloo. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof).
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides).
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein are used to enhance a student's educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA and/or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights and academic integrity. Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online.

Declaring absences: Regardless of the process used to declare an absence, students are responsible for reaching out to their instructors as soon as possible. The course instructor will determine how missed course components are accommodated. Self-declared absences (for COVID-19 and short-term absences up to 2 days) must be submitted through [Quest](#). Absences requiring documentation (e.g., Verification of Illness Form, bereavement, etc.) are to be uploaded by completing the form on the [VIF System](#). The [UWaterloo Verification of Illness form](#), completed by a health professional, is the only acceptable documentation for an absence due to illness. Do not send documentation to your advisor, course instructor, teaching assistant, or lab coordinator. Submission through the VIF System, once approved, will notify your instructors of your absence.

Rescheduling Co-op Interviews: Follow the co-op process for [rescheduling co-op interviews](#) for conflicts with a course requirement. Attendance at co-operative work-term employment interviews is not considered to be a valid reason to miss a course requirement.

University Policy

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.