SP.723: D-Lab III: Disseminating Innovations for the Common Good
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Lecture Notes

Session 1, 2/6/07

- Have you realized your dream, your "Big Idea?"
    - "So my question is, what is your Big Idea?..." (Bono quote)
    - This course is about the realization of your dream project, your "Big Idea." It may be your own idea, or an idea developed with a team of friends, family or colleagues.
- D-Lab Intro
    - We've been working on the creations and improvement of D-Lab courses for the past several years
    - DLab I is about development
    - DLab II is about design for development.
    - DLab III is about disseminating your innovation, whether it's an invention, policy, plan, philosophical principle, or just a wild dream
- Competitions
    - We gear this class to several competitions, including the IDEAS Competition, the $100K Competition, the Ignite Clean Energy Competition, the World Bank Development Marketplace and several others you will hear about this semester
    - We placed **very well** in all four of these competitions last year – we won top prizes and recognition in each of these.
    - It will be a class requirement to enter a proposal into at least one competition – likely the IDEAS Competition
    - We enter these competitions because they're a good way to help move our dreams, our "Big Ideas," or even our small but important, just-emerging ideas into reality
    - These competitions can help get your idea out there, and they can also help raise funds critical to the success of your project.
    - The IDEAS Competition gives a number of cash prizes; anyone at MIT can enter, and it usually has a relatively small number of entries, so chances are reasonably good. Any idea that is geared to helping people and the planet anywhere in the world, Cambridge to far-way around the world, is eligible.
    - $100K competition requires a business plan. $50K goes to a winning for-profit firm and since 2006 there is now another $50K prize in the new "Development Entrepreneurship" track.
    - There's also the Deshpande Center IdeaStream Conference and Innovation Showcase, and we will participate in that conference.
- Presentation of the Syllabus and Readings
    - This course doesn't have problem sets and it doesn't have a lot of reading, but you can have the chance to actually move forward towards the implementation of your plans and you will work hard on those plans

through the creation and refinement of your project proposal and competition application(s).

- One student from last year got the chance to go to Ghana to work on water purification.
- Another student is now in the Philippines working on slum housing.
- Assignment weights can be determined collaboratively by the class. We'll wait a week or two to decide.
- This course is our class, not the instructor's class, and it is meant to be collaboratively invented as we go along.
- We can collaboratively learn a tremendous amount from the examples that you bring in: implemented innovations, videos, stories, histories, etc.
- We'll look at both mature innovations and at struggling seed ideas that are still being developed.
- You'll all lead a case study of your choosing.
- The last week we'll do group presentations

- Introductions: Instead of doing normal introductions, we're all going to introduce ourselves with a one-minute pitch, following the model of the Mixer Dinners of the IDEAS Competition process http://web.mit.edu/ideas. Take out a piece of paper and take a few minutes to answer these questions:

  - Category 1: Recruit your innovative dream team
    - Your name
    - Team name
    - Project summary (50 words max)
    - Recruiting needs
  - Category 2: Get yourself hired
    - Your name
    - Reason a team should hire you (50 words max)
    - Types of project sought, and your skills that are worth sharing

- Proposed Big Ideas – Team Recruiting and "Getting Hired" Pitches:
  - Zehra: "team recruiting" pitch
    - Cataloguing low-cost building materials for earthquake regions of Pakistan
    - Needs: cook stoves, lighting, website design
  - Tamira: "getting hired" pitch
    - Interested in project development
    - Community-demand driven work
  - Xavier: "getting hired" pitch
    - Motivation, passion, committed to project completion
    - Seeks to cut suffering in the world "at least in half!"
  - Ali: "getting hired" pitch
    - Social work, healthcare
  - Ibrahim: "getting hired" pitch and team recruiting pitch
    - Finding solutions to "water wars"
    - Trans-boundary issues are of interest
  - Tess: "getting hired" pitch

- Well acquainted with multiple nationalities and languages
- Interested in projects that enable independence, mobility, and women's education
  - Angela: Already has a team working on TB - she is pitching that team's idea
    - Background in economics and political science
    - Interested in understanding if a project is actually having an impact
    - Interested in education and health
    - Entering the IDEAS competition with a project involving TB
  - Chris: "team recruiting" pitch
    - Biogas Energy in Guatemala
    - The use of biogas as an alternative energy source in an efficient manner
    - Needs: engineering experience, interest in alternative energy, environmentalists, chemists
  - Daniel: "getting hired" pitch
    - Architecture background, shop skills
    - Interested in energy and building development
  - Leah: "getting hired" pitch
    - Interested in children's nutrition and mental health
    - Good Spanish skills
  - Jessica: "getting hired" pitch
    - Has experience doing work in Zambia
    - Good at diplomacy and social aspects
    - Particularly interested in engineering, design, and anything involving health and sanitation for a sustainable development project
    - Also experience with health volunteering and active EMT work

  - Jocelyn: OpenCourseWare team recruiting pitch [Jocelyn is sitting in on the class all semester to record all these class notes for OpenCourseWare]
    - Team Open Information/Open Education
    - We can use MIT OpenCourseWare as a platform to pass on your project ideas to the rest of the world, for audience, recruitment, and educational purposes