



# Entrepreneurship in Southern Italy: Small Businesses as Drivers of Social Development

## COURSE DETAILS

**Course Designator and Number: SCLY 3203**

**Number of Credits: 3**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**Contact Hours: 45**

**Instructor: On-site faculty**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Building a new business is a difficult endeavor anywhere in the world; tenacity, creativity, and endless intrinsic motivation are needed to drive the entrepreneurial spirit. Successful entrepreneurship also requires government and institutional support, infrastructure, and investment. This is clear in the development of “hubs” —tech, finance, AI, etc.—in urban centers around the globe. Such factors create business ecosystems where new entrants to a specific field can thrive. This is also true in Italy.

As one of the world’s most industrialized economies, Italy has important manufacturing, finance, and agricultural hubs that foster entrepreneurial growth. However, in Southern Italy, the obstacles to entrepreneurship are outsized in comparison to Northern Italy. Poor infrastructure, low cooperation, and a lack of entrepreneurial education have helped to perpetuate the slow development of the South. Young people often move north or abroad to study and work. This phenomenon, oftentimes dubbed the “brain drain,” can also be seen replicated in other highly industrialized countries, where capital, knowledge, and labor end up concentrating in specific geographical areas creating social divides. Nonetheless, entrepreneurship in Southern Italy is

growing. In recent years, over 50% of new small businesses registered in Italy were concentrated in the South and Island regions of the country. Thanks to focalized national and regional funding initiatives and collective advocacy movements for business development in Southern Italy, new companies have been able to take root.

## Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Comprehend in context how historical and contemporary perspectives of cultural identity can inform economic development.
2. Provide students through case studies with a working knowledge of the concepts, opportunities, and challenges of social entrepreneurship.
3. Compare differences across international communities in relation to the concepts of social entrepreneurship and ethics in business.
4. Engage in an experiential and collaborative learning process to uncover the role of business ventures in creating innovative responses to critical social needs (e.g., equal access to quality education, health care and food, climate change, etc).

## Methodology

This course uses classroom teachings to understand the Sicilian entrepreneurial environment and explore specific case studies throughout Southern Italy, then moving outside of the classroom to give students the opportunity to meet with entrepreneurs in Sicily across various sectors. Special focus will be paid to young entrepreneurs, innovation, family business models, and the burgeoning tech hub in Catania, as well as highlighting the work of labor movement campaigns to draw attention to entrepreneurial opportunities in the South. Through specific case studies, the course will consider entrepreneurship as a tool for social change, particularly in relation to the themes of corruption, ethics, migration, and human trafficking studied in the other program courses.

## Course Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites for the course.

## Required Readings/Materials

- Katz J., Gree R., (2021). *Entrepreneurial Small Business*, McGraw-Hill Education, 6th Edition, New York, NY.

## **Suggested Readings**

- A reading pack will be provided in digital format to the students, with relevant academic articles and case studies.

# Grading

## Grading Rubric

<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>Score or percentage</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	93-100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90-92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77-79	
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67-69	
D	60-66	
F	0-59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

## Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Participation in class	20%
Course project <i>Class presentation: 10%</i> <i>Written report: 30%</i>	40%
Final written exam	40%
<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Assessment Details

### Class participation & attendance

This course requires that students participate in-class discussions. This means contributions to class discussions by relating to experiences, asking questions, and making comments appropriate to the topics being discussed. Students will be assigned readings from the textbooks and articles which will be discussed during a given class period. In order for the discussions to be meaningful, each student must come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned reading and make meaningful comments. Since participation plays a role in the final grade, it is essential that students have not only read the assignment, but have drawn conclusions of their own from the reading.

### Course project

To enhance classroom-based instruction and provide an immersive learning experience for students in the local business context, site visits are organized to businesses as an integral part of the course. The broad goal of the field trips is to increase exposure of students to “real-world” organizations as part of their education. The student’s experience is to go on site to observe and familiarize themselves with the firm’s operations, as well as interact with entrepreneurs and business owners. To maximize the value of this course to students’ overall learning outcome, students are asked to act as researchers whose task is to formally collect information on small businesses in Syracuse, and use this information to evaluate its entrepreneurial nature. A key advantage of such an assessment mode is that students typically communicate with small businesses owners and employees, collect statistical information (using the Internet and government publications), and use such information to present a “story” about innovative enterprises in Sicily and Southern Italy and its social impact. Details of the project will be given in class. The project will include in-class presentation as well as a written paper for grading.

### **Final written exam**

Held during the final week of term, the final written exam will include both multiple choice-type questions and essay-type questions.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Part 1: Entrepreneurs & Ideas: The Basis of Small Business**

#### **Unit 1**

##### **Italian Small Business: Varieties & Impacts**

- Introduction
- Starting an Entrepreneurial Small Business in Italy
- The Main Types of Entrepreneurial Small Businesses
- Myths about Small Businesses
- Getting Started Now: Entry Competencies
- Mini-Case on the Italian Small Business

#### **Unit 2**

##### **Small Business Entrepreneur: Characteristics & Competencies**

- The Psychology of Entrepreneurs
- The Sociology of Entrepreneurs
- The Family Businesses
- Mini-Cases on The Sicilian Family Businesses
- *Field Trip: Company Visit to Firm Operating in the Agri-Food Sector*

#### **Unit 3**

##### **Small Business Environment: Managing External Relations**

- The Environment of Small Business
- Environmental Scanning for Small Businesses
- Skills for Managing Relations with the Environment
- Skills for Making the Right Decision
- Mini-Case on the Small Business Environment in Southern Italy

## Unit 4

### **Small-Business Ideas: Creativity, Opportunity, & Feasibility**

- Ideas, Opportunities, and Businesses
- From Ideas to Opportunities through Creativity
- Make Sure an Idea Is Feasible
- Way to Keep Being Creative
- Mini-Case on Creative Business Ideas Developed in the Southern Italy
- *Field Trip: Company Visit to Firm Operating in the Creative Sectors*

## Part 2: Small Business Paths & Plans

## Unit 5

### **Small Business Entry: Paths to Part-Time Entrepreneurship**

- Why Part-Time Businesses Are Important
- When to Consider Part-Time Entrepreneurship
- What Kinds of Part-Time Entrepreneurship Exist?
- Key Considerations for Success in Part-Time Entrepreneurship
- Success Factors for Part-Time Businesses
- What Are the Challenges of Being an Entrepreneur Part-Time?
- Mini-Case on a Successful Part-Time Entrepreneurship in Southern Italy

## Unit 6

### **Small Business Entry: Paths to Entrepreneurship**

- Planning a Path into Business
- The Path to Business Ownership
- Starting a New Business
- Buying and Existing Business
- Inheriting a Business
- Professional Management of Small Business
- Mini-Case on Successful Sicilian Start-Ups and on Other Planning Path To Entrepreneurship

## Unit 7

### **Small Business Strategies: Imitation with a Twist**

- Strategy in the Small Business
- Goals: The First Step of Strategic Planning
- Customers and Benefits: The Second Step of Strategic Planning
- Industry Dynamics and Analysis: The Third Step of Strategic Planning
- Strategy Selection: The Fourth Step in Strategic Planning
- Mini-case on the Strategy Behind a Sicilian Small Business

## Unit 8

### **Business Plans: Seeing Audiences & Your Business Clearly**

- Business Plan Background
- The Business Plan Story: Starting Small and Building Up
- The Business Plan
- Focusing Your Business Plan
- The Most Common Critical Risks in a Plan
- Pitching Your Plan
- Mini-Case and Experiential Exercises on How to Develop a Business Plan in Southern Italy

## Unit 9

### **Small Business Promotion: Capturing the Eyes of Your Market**

- The Need for Promotion
- Developing Your Promotion Strategy
- The Process of Personal Selling
- Customer Retention: Keeping and Growing Customers after the Sale
- Experiential Exercises of Personal Sales in Some Typical Sicilian Stores
- *Field Trip: Company Visit to Firm Operating in the Manufacturing Sector*

## Unit 10

### **Small Business Protection: Risk Management & Insurance**

- Risk in Small Business
- Thinking about Risk
- Risks Associated with Specific Business Operations
- Managing Risks and Insuring against Risks

- Mini-Case

## Unit 11

### **Human Resources Management: Small Business Consideration**

- The Bigger Small Business
- Attracting Employees
- Selecting and Training Employees
- Human Resources Issues in the Family Business
- Experiential Exercises in Some Sicilian Small Businesses

## POLICIES

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

### **University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

#### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

## **Student Conduct**

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.