

Train and Inspire the Next Generation of Changemakers

Fall 2017 Philanthropy Advisory Fellowship to
Tom Kalil at Schmidt Futures



A program can deliver tools to students change-makers through different channels

Channels	Description	Examples
1 Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classwork and education through listening, discussion, assignments, and/or projects; field trips; research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University lectures (live or video)• Khan Academy• Coursera
2 Student Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student organizations aligned around a specific cause or mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective Altruism Clubs• Berkeley Nanotechnology Club
3 Professional Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jobs and internship opportunities• Mentorship, tutoring, and guidance from experienced individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stanford Impact Labs• The Gratitude Network
4 Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitions, potentially with grants attached	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Berkeley Big Ideas Grant• Hult Prize for Social Entrepreneurship• MIT Energy Hackathon
5 Volunteering and Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-impact uses of time and talent, typically for a labor-constrained charities addressing a global challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engineers Without Borders

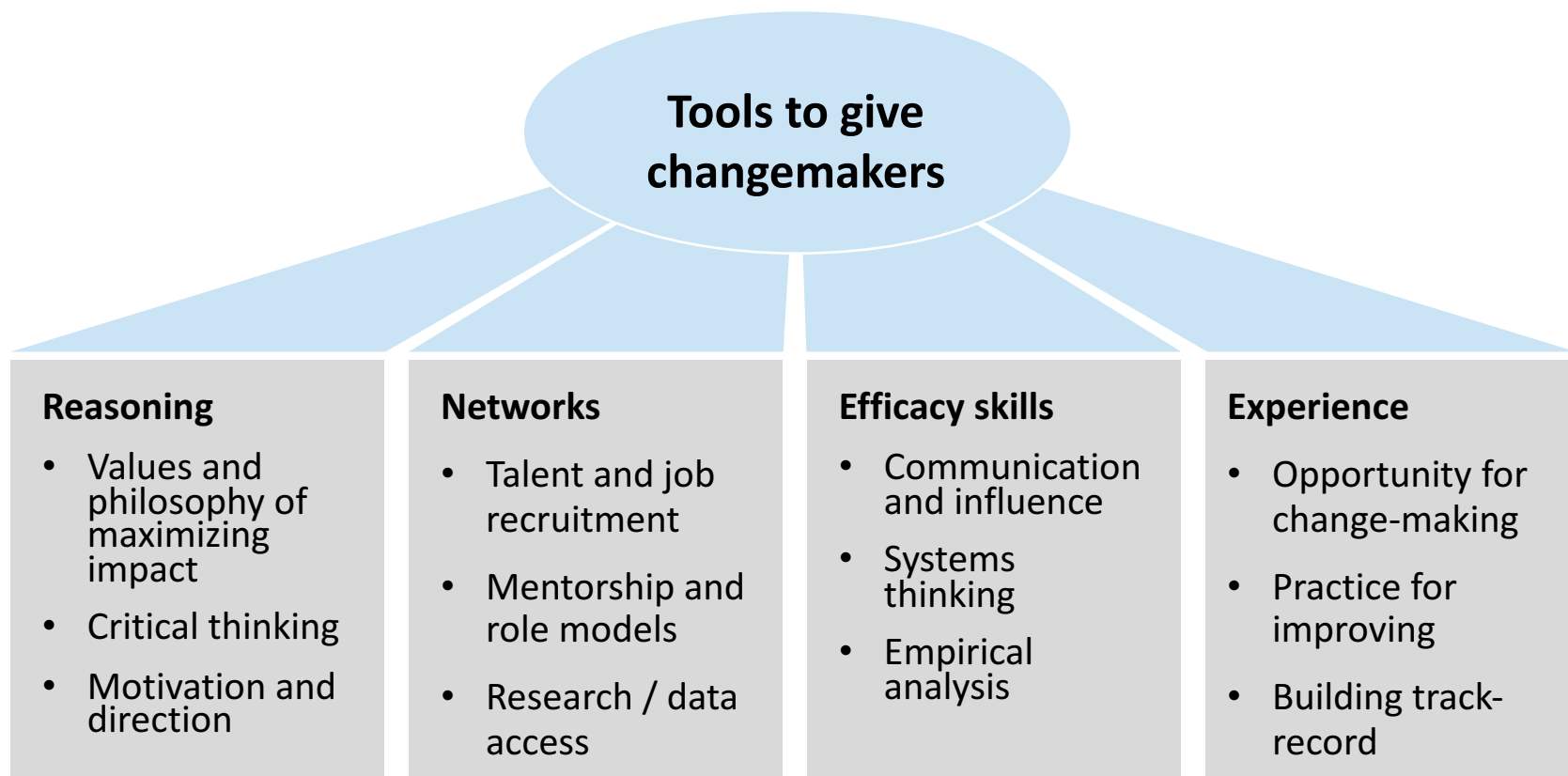
Envisioned student journey



Tools for scaling up


- **Online core course** may allow more students / universities to participate
- **Each club should adapt** to its current university's resources, including advocating university administration for more courses

Tools can be given to change-makers to make them more focused and effective



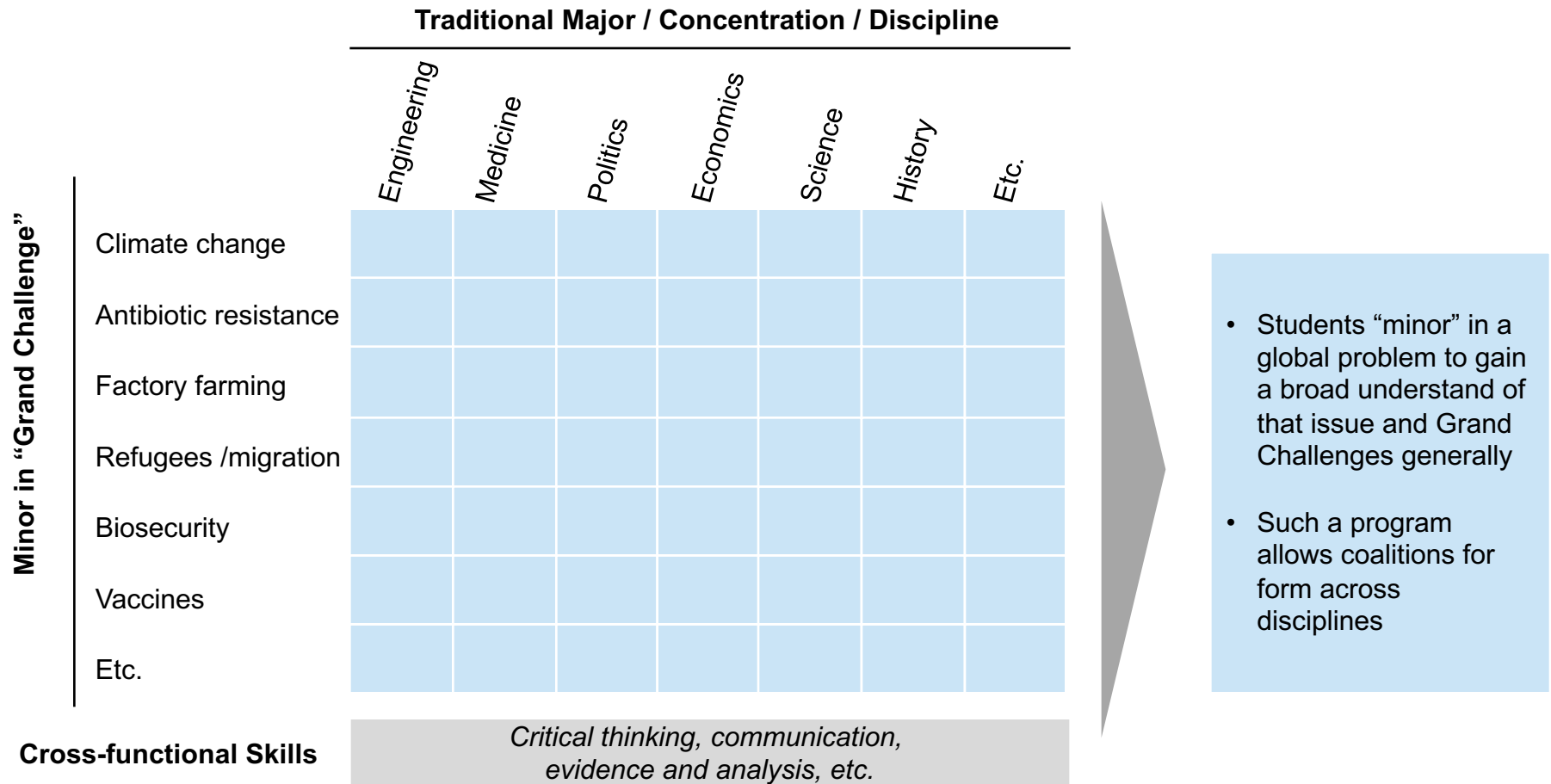
A combination of the channels is required to provide all types of tools to change-makers

Channels	Can the channel deliver the tools?			
	Reasoning	Networks	Efficacy	Experience
1 Academics	High	Medium	Medium	Low
2 Student Clubs	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
3 Professional Programs	Medium	High	High	High
4 Challenges	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
5 Volunteering and Service	Medium	Medium	Medium	High

-  High
-  Medium
-  Low

- An ideal program would combine these channels in such a way that:
 - Promotes student engagement
 - Is feasible to implement and administer
 - Is sustainable in the long-run
 - Is unique/ not a duplication of existing efforts

Imagine that students “minor in a problem” across disciplines to address grand challenges



Example: a group of students “minor” in the climate change challenge, part of a cross-functional team



Majors in Engineering, Economics, and Science

	Engineering	Medicine	Politics	Economics	Science	History	Etc.
Climate change	Laura			Dan	Kat		
Antibiotic resistance							
Factory farming							
Refugees /migration							
Biosecurity							
Vaccines							
Etc.							
Cross-functional Skills	<i>Critical thinking, communication, evidence and analysis, etc.</i>						



- Laura majors in **engineering**, Dan in **economics**, and Kat in the **sciences**
- Yet, they all study and collaborate together with other students focused on **climate change** during the course of their studies
- All three also learn core **cross-functional skills** to become more effective

Proposed curriculum for core EA course

Topic	Number of classes
Changemaking: how reason, science, and humanism can enable progress	1
Introduction to moral philosophy: what are our moral obligations and opportunities?	3
Cognitive biases: what prevents us from doing as much good as possible?	3
Fundamentals of critical reasoning: how can science help us overcome these biases?	6-9
Cause prioritization: where should we focus?	2
Making an impact: what skills do we need to succeed?	1-4
Problem-based modules: what causes am I interested in tackling?	4
Final class – review of concepts and capstone projects	1

Detailed curriculum proposal

Topic	Points covered	Example readings / assignments	Number of classes
Changemaking: how reason, science, and humanism can enable progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framing idea: the history of human progress should make us optimistic that we can improve the world - Examples of major “moonshot” attempts at solving global problems, and discussion of what contributed to success vs. failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from Steven Pinker, “Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress” 	1
Introduction to moral philosophy: what are our moral obligations and opportunities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic introduction to fundamental concepts in moral philosophy, including consequentialism, deontology, virtue ethics, Effective Altruism, Rawls’ Veil of Ignorance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from William MacAskill, “Doing Good Better: Effective Altruism and a Radical New Way to Make a Difference” - Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” <i>Philosophy & Public Affairs</i> 1 (1972): 229- 43 and/or selections from “The Life You Can Save” 	3

Topic	Points covered	Example readings / assignments	Number of classes
Cognitive biases: what prevents us from doing as much good as possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of common cognitive biases and fallacies - Examples of how these have hindered efforts to do good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from Thinking, Fast and Slow - Selections from Josh Greene, “Moral Tribes” - Selections from Dan Ariely, “Predictably Irrational” 	3
Fundamentals of critical reasoning: how can science help us overcome these biases?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of principles of critical reasoning: counterfactual reasoning, expected value thinking, bayesian reasoning, market failures, etc. - Review of benchmark metrics to measure impact, e.g. QALYs/WALYs - Survey of empirical tools to help apply these principles in practice: cost-effectiveness analysis, randomized controlled trials, modeling, etc. - Guest lectures from other fields - Case studies of how changemakers (e.g. policymakers, GiveWell) have used some of these tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from William MacAskill, “Doing Good Better” - Toby Ord , “The Moral Imperative Toward Cost-Effectiveness in Global Health” - Selections from Cass Sunstein and Richard Thaler, “Nudge” - Allow students to read methodological papers in select disciplines (e.g. a climate modeling paper vs. an RCT on poverty alleviation) depending on their area of interest - Problem sets where students create their own cost-effectiveness models 	6-9

Topic	Points covered	Example readings / assignments	Number of classes
Cause prioritization: where should we focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of the “important, neglected, tractable” framework for cause prioritization - Historical review of how certain causes (e.g. eradicating smallpox, installing sanitation infrastructure in cities, abolishing slavery) achieved outsized impact relative to the effort invested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from William MacAskill, “Doing Good Better” and/or Peter Singer, “The Most Good You Can Do” - Open Philanthropy Project reports on cause selection - Student exercise in evaluating an NGO’s marginal impact (e.g. what to look for in an IRS 990 form) 	2
Making an impact: what skills do we need to succeed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Typology of skills that students can try to develop to help them make an impact, e.g. resource mobilization, movement building, persuasion, analytical abilities, persistence, self-efficacy, etc. - Case-studies of changemakers and discussion of skills that made them successful - Guest lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cialdini and Beno, “Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion” - Selections from Sargeant and Shang, “Fundraising Principles and Practice” - Selections from 80,000 hours blog posts - Potential assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a letter to a decision-maker on a particular issue, and see if you can shape the response by getting to know their staff. - Interview a mid-career or senior "changemaker" that you admire, with a focus on what skills they found most useful for being effective in the world 	1-4

Topic	Points covered	Example readings / assignments	Number of classes
Problem-based modules: what causes am I interested in tackling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students select 2-3 short modules from a range of options, each providing an overview of a particular problem. Why is it important? What are the most pressing issues? What does the stakeholder landscape look like? What can we learn from successful and unsuccessful efforts to address this problem? What types of knowledge and skills are useful? What is a “day in a life” of people in business, government, civil society, and academia that are working on this problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each module may involve a series of readings, videos, and a discussion session, equivalent to ~2 lectures worth of homework and time - Students can begin by reading introductory reports on a range of cause areas (including 80000hours.org) to identify which modules they want to take 	4
Final class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of concepts learned - Highlight select student capstone projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capstone project: Research paper or project where students conduct a cause prioritization analysis, select a particular problem and suggest solutions for a particular actor in the space 	1