



## Ph.D. Dissertation Defense

**Candidate:** Christina Polychroni  
**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy  
**School/Department.:** School of Business / Business Administration  
**Date:** Friday, December 9, 2022  
**Time:** 12:30 – 2:00 pm  
**Location:** Zoom (<https://stevens.zoom.us/j/98900560915>)  
**Title:** Three essays on social entrepreneurship at the nexus of social and profit institutional logics

**Chairperson:** Dr. Thomas Lechler, Management, School of Business

**Committee Members:** Dr. Yan Chen, Management, School of Business  
Dr. Tal Ben Zvi, Management, School of Business  
Dr. Mo Mansouri, Systems Engineering, School of Systems and Enterprises  
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### Abstract

Academic literature has offered various, conflicting definitions of the social entrepreneurship (SE) phenomenon. It is common practice to explain the SE phenomenon based on the relationship types between social and profit institutional logics, suggesting that these logics interact primarily according to a means-end, blending, or compartmentalizing view. Applying the logic multiplicity framework types (Besharov & Smith, 2014) to SE, we link the means-end view to dominant social ventures, the blending view to aligned ventures, and the compartmentalizing view to estranged ones. These varying views in the social-profit logic relationships within SE often lead to misclassifications and non-comparable empirical findings.

Through inductive research on eight case studies, we showcase that these relationships are not stable, but instead continue to alternate through time, taking various forms and proving the fluid and volatile nature of social ventures. We find that most social ventures start with a social or profit dominance, but subsequently present either a contested or, preferably as the venture matures, an aligned social-profit interaction, indicating that an end state might not easily be reached. In addition, we present a predictable centrality of a social or profit logic according to the profit levels the venture enjoys along the way, as shown in the way each venture handles various venture elements.

Therefore, we argue that social ventures should be examined having the time parameter controlled for, as their social and profit relationships do change and these multiplicity changes can greatly affect our understanding of SE. Controlling for time can also shield SE against the plethora of definitions the SE field is faced with, as these definitions are often isolated efforts to capture parts of the phenomenon without accounting for the full journey the social venture is going through.