There are growing worries that new technologies may eliminate work, increase inequality, and create a large dependent class. But can technology instead be turned against itself and used to end poverty? This class explores the sources of domestic poverty and then examines how new technologies might be developed to eliminate poverty. We first survey existing poverty-reducing products and then attempt to imagine new products that might end poverty by equalizing access to information, reducing transaction costs, or equalizing access to training. Throughout the course, we rely heavily on key leaders in the nonprofit and technology industries to discuss technology products that are already on offer, products that are being developed, and products that might usefully be developed in the future. In a follow-up class in the spring quarter, students who choose to continue will select the most promising ideas, continue to develop them, and begin the design task within the Stanford Poverty and Technology Lab.
For more information, please see a sample syllabus [3].