University of Washington
Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy & Governance

PBAF 550: Managing Nonprofit Organizations
Winter Quarter 2016
Wednesdays 1:30-4:20pm
Mary Gates Hall (MGH) 058

Course website: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1025194

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Course overview
This course provides an overview of the managerial concepts relevant for nonprofit organizations. This course enables students to think strategically about nonprofit organizations and prepares them to take a leadership role in the nonprofit sector through employment or governance. Readings, class sessions, and assignments are structured to bridge nonprofit scholarship and practice. Students are encouraged to connect their own nonprofit-related experiences and goals to the course materials.

Course outline
Week 1: Nonprofits in a nutshell: Purpose, scope, and mission
Week 2: Understanding nonprofit organizations: Theory and stakeholders
Week 3: Leadership: Governing boards and executives
Week 4: Programs: Service delivery, strategy, and evaluation
Week 5: Workers: Staff and volunteers
Week 6: Funding: Fundraising and philanthropy
Week 7: Business: Marketing, fees for service, and social enterprise
Week 8: Politics: Advocacy and civic engagement
Week 9: Class choice topic and future directions
Week 10: Project vignettes and course wrap-up

Syllabus disclaimer
This syllabus is a guide for this course that is subject to change. I will notify students of any changes to the syllabus as early as possible during class and/or via email and Canvas.
Required readings

1. There is one book required for all students, which is available for purchase at the University Book Store (an electronic version is also available):
2. Students will be required to read five (5) cases. Some of these cases must be purchased.
3. Other required readings are available through the Canvas site or UW libraries system.

Optional readings

This course does not use a textbook; however, there are a variety of high-quality textbooks available that address much of the course content. The primary benefits of a good textbook are its structure, explanation of concepts, and comprehensiveness, all of which make it a good reference for practitioners as well as students. The drawbacks are cost, (often) dry writing style, and (often) omission or glossing over of more controversial or systemic issues.

A nonprofit management textbook is likely a good investment for you if a) you are not an MPA student, since textbooks will include more of the “public management” concepts already familiar to MPA students, and/or b) you envision a long career in nonprofit leadership, since a textbook may be useful in your current or future professional life. Below are some well-regarded textbooks commonly used in nonprofit management education:


Each topic also includes optional readings for students who wish to go beyond the week’s assigned readings.

Course design and objectives

I have designed this course with three broad objectives in mind:

1. Familiarize students with the scholarship of the nonprofit sector and nonprofit management. This includes engagement with nonprofit-related theory, research, and professional and popular literature.
2. Help students develop and practice some of the applied skills specific to nonprofit organizations. This refers to the “How To’s” of nonprofit management.
3. Foster each student’s leadership development through self-reflection and constructive feedback.
Course expectations and evaluation

Grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading questions (8)</td>
<td>80 (10 each)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class engagement (10)</td>
<td>50 (5 each)</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case reflection papers (2)</td>
<td>100 (50 each)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal reflection paper</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit portfolio project</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grade = Total points/100 rounded to the nearest .1. (.5 is rounded up)

Examples:
- Total points: 383; final grade = 3.8
- Total points: 355; final grade = 3.6
- Total points: 329; final grade = 3.3

*There may be limited opportunities for extra credit, at my discretion.

Assignments

As outlined above, five components constitute your course grade. Details of each assignment and grading guidelines will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas. A brief summary of each assignment follows:

- **Reading questions:** Reading questions (10 pts each) assess your understanding of the reading assignments and may include follow-up from the previous week’s class session. Reading questions help us make the best use of class time, since I will be able to adjust the class session based on this feedback. Reading questions will be available starting on Fridays at 9am and are due the following **Wednesdays at 8am**. Late submissions (turned in before class at 1:30pm) will be eligible for up to 5 points.

- **In-class engagement:** In-class engagement (5 pts each) consists of full participation during the class session. This includes thoughtful involvement in class discussion and exercises as well as adherence to class policies and norms.

- **Case reflection papers:** Case reflection papers (50 pts each) are individual writing assignments of approximately 1,000 words. These essays ask you to analyze aspects of the assigned case and reflect on the relevant management challenges. Case reflection papers are due on **Tuesdays at 8am** before the class session during which the case will be discussed.

- **Personal reflection paper:** The personal reflection paper (50 pts) is an individual writing assignment (approximately 1,000 words) that requires you to reflect on the course material and your identity as a nonprofit sector stakeholder. The personal reflection paper is due **Tuesday, March 15 at 8am**.
• **Nonprofit portfolio project:** The nonprofit portfolio project (120 pts) provides you the opportunity to apply the course material to a local nonprofit organization of your choice. In groups (4-5 people), you will research an organization and prepare several “deliverables” related to the organization, including a short vignette or role play presentation. The vignettes will be presented in class on March 9. The written deliverables are due **Friday, March 11 at 5pm**. There will also be intermediate due dates related to the organization research and project planning.

**Professionalism**

The Evans School is a professional school, and this class is an opportunity to practice the skills that will help you succeed in the workplace. I expect all written communication (including email) to follow professional norms, including appropriate capitalization and punctuation. In general, you can expect me to respond to email within two business days.

**In-class expectations**

We have been given the privilege of holding class in an experimental active learning classroom. This is the first quarter that students have had the opportunity to use this classroom and equipment for a quarter-long course. This a fantastic opportunity to experience the latest developments in classroom space and technology, but it also means that there may be some challenges associated with being early users. Regardless of these challenges, I expect you to treat the physical space, equipment, and technology with care and respect.

I prefer that you do NOT use your laptop or tablet to take notes during class, since using these devices for note-taking is more likely to distract you and your classmates than it is to add to the learning experience. However, I recognize that many of you complete your readings electronically and may occasionally refer to them. I will also try to give you advance notice if a laptop will be useful for a particular class session. I will post all PowerPoint presentations to Canvas following class.

Three hours is a long time to sit in the same classroom. I will provide at least one break per class session, occurring no later than 3pm (1.5 hours after class begins). You are welcome to bring drinks and food to class, but please refrain from noisy packaging, noisy foods, and fragrant foods. I will ask you to put away your food if it is negatively affecting the classroom experience.

I expect phones and other personal communications (email, text, etc.) to be put away during class sessions. You may check them during breaks. Please let me know in advance if you have a situation for which you cannot wait 1.5 hours to access your phone or email.

**Attendance policy**

As reflected in the grading, in-class engagement contributes to your final grade. I promise to work hard to make the in-class experience valuable, since I believe that face-to-face interaction enhances learning. Like the workplace, I expect you to attend every class period, arriving on time and staying until the end.
That said, I also understand that we are all professionals with lives outside of PB AF 550, and sometimes life circumstances take precedence over work/class. If you are unable to attend class and would like the opportunity to “make up” your in-class engagement points, I will provide up to two (2) alternate assignments per student. For an anticipated absence, please email me as soon as possible with the date of the anticipated absence. For an unanticipated absence, please email me as soon as you realize you will not be in class. To be eligible for an alternate assignment, you must contact me within 24 hours of the missed class. Please remember that the content and due dates of any alternate assignments are at my discretion.

**Evans School Community Conversation Norms**

Please note that everyone in our course is expected to behave ethically and professionally at all times. By registering for this course, you agree to abide by the ethical and civil discourse norms of the Evans School and the University of Washington. Specifically, you agree to: 1) not claim the work of others as your own; and 2) respect members of our Evans School learning community.

For guidance on how to behave respectfully with other members of the Evans School community, please refer to the Evans School’s Community Conversation Norms, reproduced below:

At the Evans School, we value the richness of our differences and how they can greatly enhance our conversations and learning. As a professional school, we also have a responsibility to communicate with each other—inside and outside of the classroom—in a manner consistent with conduct in today’s increasingly diverse places of work. We hold ourselves individually and collectively responsible for our communication by:

- **Listening** carefully and respectfully
- **Sharing** and teaching each other generously
- **Clarifying** the intent and impact of our comments
- **Giving and receiving** feedback in a “relationship-building” manner
- **Working** together to expand our knowledge by using high standards for evidence and analysis

**Academic integrity**

I expect each student to act honestly and sincerely with respect to this course and its related activities. Any student suspected of academic misconduct will have the option of receiving a zero on the assignment in question or appealing the decision to the Dean’s Representative. In the case of repeated or large-scale suspected academic misconduct, the matter will be referred to the Dean’s Representative for resolution. This policy aligns with UW’s recommended policies for addressing academic misconduct.

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, and fabricating information. Plagiarism is using another person’s words, ideas, artistic creations, or other intellectual property without
giving proper credit. The current MPA Student Handbook includes additional information about what constitutes plagiarism or other academic misconduct.

Policy regarding students with disabilities

In partnership with UW’s Disability Resources for Students (DRS), I am committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with Disability Resources for Students (DRS). If you are anticipating accommodation, please let me know by email within the first week of the quarter.

Reading assignments

Week 1 (1/6): Nonprofits in a nutshell: Purpose, scope, and mission
Optional:

Week 2 (1/13): Understanding nonprofit organizations: Theory and stakeholders
- See below for theory assignments

Theory reading assignments, by first letter of your last name:
- A-De, read:
- Di-K, read:
- L-Z, read:
  - Hall, Peter Dobkin. 2010. “Chapter 1: Historical Perspectives of Nonprofit Organizations in the United States.” In D. Renz (Ed.) and associates, The Jossey-


Optional:

Week 3 (1/20): Leadership: Governing boards and executives


Optional:

Week 4 (1/27): Programs: Service delivery, strategy, and evaluation

- Frumkin, Peter. 2002. On Being Nonprofit. Chapter 3 (pp. 64-95).

Optional:
Week 5 (2/3): Workers: Staff and volunteers


Optional:


Week 6 (2/10): Funding: Fundraising and philanthropy


Optional:


Week 7 (2/17): Business: Marketing, fees for service, and social enterprise


Optional:

Week 8 (2/24): Politics: Advocacy and civic engagement

Optional:

Week 9 (3/2): Class choice topic and future directions
• Other readings to be determined based on class choice topic.

Week 10 (3/9): Project vignettes and course wrap-up