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

**PUBPOL 550: Managing Nonprofit Organizations**  
Winter Quarter 2017  
Tuesdays 1:30-4:20pm  
Parrington Hall (PAR) 108  

Course website: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1102499  

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Office hours:  
Thursdays 9:30-11:30am  
or by appointment  

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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: Project vignettes and future directions  
Week 10: Nonprofit management book club 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 are required to read five (5) cases. Some of these cases must be purchased.
3. Other required readings are available through the Canvas site.
4. Students are required to read one nonprofit- or philanthropy-related book, to be co-determined by students and the professor.

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.

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 (6)</td>
<td>60 (10 each)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class engagement (8)</td>
<td>40 (5 each)</td>
<td>10</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>Nonprofit management book club</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.5</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, six 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 **Tuesdays at 9am**. Late submissions (turned in before class at 1:30pm) will be eligible for up to 5 points. Note: There are 7 weeks of reading questions (each worth 10 points), but each student can receive a maximum of 60 points for reading questions.

- **In-class engagement**: In-class engagement (5 pts each) consists of full participation during the class session in Weeks 1-8. 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 **Mondays at 9am** 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 **Friday, February 24 at 5pm.**

• **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 February 28.** The written deliverables are due **Friday, March 3 at 5pm.** There will also be intermediate due dates related to the organization research and project planning.

• **Nonprofit management book club:** Students are required to read a nonprofit- or philanthropy-related book, which will be discussed in “book club” format **in class on March 7** (30 pts). Suggested books are listed on Canvas. Other suggestions are welcome but must be approved in advance by the professor. Selected books must have at least 3 students committed to read them (ideally a minimum of 4). Students should choose a book that they have not previously read.

**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**

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 PUBPOL 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 (1/3): Nonprofits in a nutshell: Purpose, scope, and mission**


*Optional:*

**Week 2 (1/10): Understanding nonprofit organizations: Theory and stakeholders**


*Theory reading assignments, by first letter of your last name:*

- A-F, read:
- K-Si, read:
Durazo, Ana Clarissa Rojas. 2007. “‘we were never meant to survive’: Fighting Violence Against Women and the Fourth World War.” In INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence (Ed.), The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, pp. 113-128.

Sm-Z, read:

Optional:

Week 3 (1/17): Leadership: Governing boards and executives

Optional:

Week 4 (1/24): Programs: Service delivery, strategy, and evaluation
- Frumkin, Peter. 2002. On Being Nonprofit. Chapter 3 (pp. 64-95).

Optional:

Week 5 (1/31): Workers: Staff and volunteers

Optional:

Week 6 (2/7): Funding: Fundraising and philanthropy

Optional:

**Week 7 (2/14): Business: Marketing, fees for service, and social enterprise**


*Optional:*


**Week 8 (2/21): Politics: Advocacy and civic engagement**


*Optional:*


**Week 9 (2/28): Project vignettes and future directions**


**Week 10 (3/7): Nonprofit management book club and course wrap-up**

- Selected nonprofit- or philanthropy-related book