Syllabus

Foundations of Not-for-Profit Management
RPAD 613 – Fall 2019
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy
Department of Public Administration and Policy

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Class time: Asynchronous online   Office location: Milne Hall 306
Online Office Hours: Mondays 3-4p   Office phone: 518-442-2621
In-person Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4p or by appointment

I. Course Learning Objectives

Deepened understanding of:
  • the unique context of the not-for-profit sector
  • current and future issues with which nonprofit managers and leaders are grappling
  • values trade-offs inherent in various nonprofit organizational dilemmas
  • alternative management and leadership strategies

Increased competence in:
  • practice of different management elements in the nonprofit sector
  • leveraging the strengths and handling challenges in a team environment
  • writing management memos and reports
  • utilizing research techniques for application to practice
  • documenting references accurately and consistently
  • contributing to a professional discourse of ideas and techniques

II. Course Materials

Required
  • David O. Renz (ed.). *The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership & Management*,
    4th ed., San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016, ISBN 978-1118852965. Yes, I know there are
    other versions – please use this one because the chapters and content differ between
    versions. The text is available through the U Albany bookstore and several online retailers.
  • There are substantial additional readings that will be available on Blackboard. The readings
    for each week will be released every Monday at noon and kept available to you the entire
    semester once posted.

Recommended
  • Peri Pakroo. *Starting and Building a Nonprofit*, 7th ed., Berkeley, CA: NOLO, 2017, ISBN 978-1413323573. Since this is only recommended (though strongly so for those with no nonprofit experience) and will not be used in class, feel free to use whichever edition you want. The most recent will have the most up-to-date information.

Selected Journals of Interest
  • *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*
    Journal of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)
  • *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*
  • *Nonprofit Quarterly (Industry journal and daily newswire)*
  • *Voluntas*
    Journal of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)
  • *Stanford Social Innovation Review*

III. Classroom Approach

This course is taught in an asynchronous, online format. That means that there will not be any required meetings where you need to show up in person somewhere at a scheduled time for class. However, there will be set times during the week where things need to be submitted to me online and when different media or readings become unlocked and available. Success in this course will rely heavily on your ability to keep track of your own time. Deliverables will be due at one of two different times during the week: Monday at noon or Friday at midnight. Different types of assignment will be due at different checkpoints, but it will remain consistent from week to week. There are further details in the grading and assignment section below.

In previous semesters, this course was taught using a technique called Team-Based Learning (or TBL). Some pieces of TBL are already a part of the online learning environment: taking the initiative to do readings and watch course materials outside of class, for example. However, pieces like group quizzes or in-class cases become a little more problematic. So this course takes a hybrid approach, using your team for certain assignments and activities while using individual effort for others.

The focus of your team will be in the production of a semester-long Service Learning Project for a local nonprofit organization. By the end of the course, each team will complete a professional organizational analysis and recommendations for the nonprofit; these may be presented to the nonprofit's Board of Directors either live or via a webcast, pending their availability.

IV. Grading and Assignments:

A. Individual Performance
    Individual Reading Responses   **30%**
    Individual Participation   **5%**

B. Team Performance
    Team Weekly Activities   **30%**
    Team Project Checkpoint #1   **7.5%**
    Team Project Checkpoint #2   **7.5%**
    Final Report   **15%**

C. Team Peer Review   **5%**
                                         100%

1. **Individual Reading Responses (30%).** These 2-3 page assignments are responses to prompts that allow you to show your mastery of the concepts from the readings assigned each week. Each prompt's response will be roughly (but not more than) one page, single spaced, reasonable font, and standard margins; there will be between 1-3 prompts, depending on the week. The responses will be due each Monday by noon (submitted via Blackboard), at which point the discussion for that week plus the readings and prompts for the next week will be unlocked and available.

2. **Individual Participation (5%).** Throughout the semester, there will be 6 total tasks buried in the materials for each week. These will be found in the slides, videos, online readings, or other activities that are visible online. In order to receive full credit, at least 5 of these tasks should be completed. This is designed to make sure you are reading/listening to/watching the weekly materials for the class.

3. **Team Weekly Activities (30%):** Each week, there will be some kind of activity designed to apply the lessons learned in the readings and other materials to real-life scenarios. Sometimes this will be contributions to a discussion thread, other times it will be a team activity involving a case study or role-playing; most of the time, it will involve both. A discussion board specifically dedicated to your team will be available for you to carry out planning and discussions, and I will occasionally chime in on the conversation. The final version of whatever the week's activity is will be due by Friday at midnight. (Note: There are two instances where the weekly activity

is an individual activity – it will still count toward that student's weekly activity average.)

4. **Team Checkpoint #1: Status Quo Description (7.5%):** Please submit a team effort describing how your assigned portion of the final report currently exists in the group project. This checkpoint will ensure that you know the status quo, which will allow you to think more clearly on how to use your management perspective to improve the situation. This should be 3-4 pages and should also include a list of ten questions that we will direct to the local nonprofit.

5. **Team Checkpoint #2: Description of Comparable Organizations (7.5%):** This should be an identification and description of other organizations that have successfully addressed the issues which face the local nonprofit. This could also include potential competitors, potential collaborators, and successful/unsuccessful approaches to your group's management issue(s) taken by other organizations.

6. **Team Final Project (15%).** This report will integrate and expand on the materials learned in class, resulting a final product that will be delivered (and potentially presented) to a local nonprofit. The final report will be approximately 20 double-spaced pages, though this is subject to change based on the preferences of the local nonprofit. The report's analyses or arguments should be supported with substantial secondary sources from the reading. Additional details will be released during the second week of class.

7. **Peer Evaluation (5%).** Each team member will evaluate the helpfulness of the other members of their team at both the midterm point (for guidance) and the end of the term (for a grade). You will have a set number of points to distribute amongst the rest of your group to assess their contributions, plus will have the opportunity to give written verbal feedback. There will be a "practice" evaluation mid-semester, then a final evaluation at the end of the semester that will be used to assign points.

8. **Final Grade:** Final grades will be based on the point distribution described above. Final letter grades will be assigned as followed:

Grade	Total Percentage Achieved
A	93%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	83%

B-	80%
C+	77%
C	73%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	63%
D-	60%
E	59% and below

9. **Late and Make-up Policy**: Since discussion materials are unlocked at noon on Mondays, I am unable to accept late submissions for the Individual Reading Responses since they are designed to gather your own reactions to the readings. Many times, the answers are discussed in those materials, so it is essentially like handing out an answer key. For other written assignments, if it is turned in within 24 hours of the beginning of the class where it was due, the assignment is eligible for 90% of the original point total. A written assignment submitted between 24-48 hours after it was due is eligible for 80% of the original point total. No written assignments will be accepted more than 48 hours after they are due except for a documented emergency situation. A documented emergency situation is hospitalization (with accompanying paperwork), the death of an immediate family member, or situations of similar magnitude. All emergencies must have documentation, and the treatment of each is totally within the professor's discretion. If you know that you will have difficulty turning in an assignment at a certain time (travel, work obligations, etc.), you should plan ahead, coordinate with your team, and/or turn in assignments early.

V. Other Policies

Academic Dishonesty: Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please refer to University at Albany's Academic Code at: http://www.albany.edu/content_images/AcademicIntegrity.pdf for the definition of academic dishonesty. Ignorance of these policies will not excuse dishonest conduct. Violations of these standards will result in one or more of the following penalties: reduction in the grade for the assignment, failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or expulsion. In all cases, a Violation of Academic Integrity Report will be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies to be placed in your university file, with copies provided to you, the department head, and the Dean of Rockefeller College.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) contact the Disability Resource Center; and

(2) provide the instructor with the appropriate and official university documentation indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

For more information about services available to University at Albany students with disabilities, contact:
Disability Resource Center, University at Albany, State University of New York
BA 120, 1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222
(518) 442-5490 (voice)
Director: cmalloch@albany.edu
http://www.albany.edu/disability/

Incomplete Grade Policy: From the Graduate Bulletin: **"**Incomplete: A tentative grade given only when the student has nearly completed the course but due to circumstances beyond the student's control the work is not completed on schedule. The date for the completion of the work is specified by the instructor. The date stipulated will not be later than one month before the end of the session following that in which the Incomplete is received. The grade I is automatically changed to E or U unless work is completed as agreed between the student and the instructor."

Course Evaluations: Your honest assessment of this course is an important source of feedback for both me and the department. We will have course evaluations both mid-semester and at the conclusion. These are an important part of curriculum development, so please take the time to fill out the evaluations thoughtfully.