



Public Policy & Administration

PPPA 6058: NGO MANAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Time: Tuesdays 6:10p-8:00p

Fall 2024

Location: Duquès 360

Instructor:

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Student consultation hours: by appointment

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Imagine that you have just accepted a position as a manager in a nongovernmental organization (NGO) whose mission aims to promote international development. You are excited, but maybe a bit nervous too. What do you need to know about NGOs and international development? What tools and skills should you acquire? How can you contribute to making a difference in the world? This class will help you to answer these questions. I designed this course to enable you to:

- a) analyze the issues related to successfully managing international development NGOs (both US- and developing country-based),
- b) explore how those issues affect NGO performance, and
- c) develop your own skills in applying management tools to mobilize the potential of NGOs and the communities they serve.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

Together, we will explore the critical tasks associated with managing NGOs working in international development, humanitarian assistance, and conflict-affected countries. We begin by looking inside NGOs: what makes them efficient and effective? How do they motivate and empower their staff, volunteers, and board members, treat them fairly and help them express their values? How are NGOs different from public and private sector organizations, what features do they share?

Next, we will shift our focus outside NGOs: how do they interact with governments, funders, communities, intended beneficiaries, multinational corporations, and with other NGOs? How do they navigate the various roles they fulfill: project implementers, technical assistance providers, intermediaries, partners, and policy advocates? What are the challenges they face in managing these interactions? How do they navigate the contradictions, uncertainty, and limitations inherent in being an external actor seeking to help others pursue change and reforms?

We then look ahead to managing NGO performance and sustainability. How can NGOs balance fulfilling their missions, and paying attention to ongoing funding, scale of operations, accountability, safety and security, local participation, comparative advantage, and effectiveness? Throughout the course, we consider the implications of political and policy changes in the

developing and developed worlds, including topics such as: foreign aid trends, democratic backsliding, North-South relations, humanitarian and human rights policies, and global challenges.

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

1. Identify basic common features of NGOs and recognize their variety
2. Diagnose how management structures and processes impact NGO efficiency and effectiveness
3. Determine how to manage NGOs to fulfill performance expectations of their stakeholders
4. Prioritize challenges for NGOs and decide how to adapt accordingly
5. Describe what NGOs can contribute to solving problems facing communities, citizens, and policymakers
6. Communicate effectively in written products, discussion forums, and oral presentations

REQUIRED TEXT

Fowler, Alan. Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhancing the Effectiveness of NGOs in International Development. London: Earthscan Publications, Ltd., 1997.

HOW WILL YOU AND I KNOW YOU ARE LEARNING?

I designed the course to help you prepare for the kinds of activities and written products that you are likely to encounter in professional settings and the workplace. The course is discussion-based; it relies on all of you participating actively. We will use five types of assessments to gauge your learning. Below, I summarize them, and I explain why I have selected them, what you will be doing and when, and what criteria I will use to assess your learning. Don't be concerned if you have questions; we will discuss them in class and there are more details on the Blackboard site for the course.

Assessment Type	Description
Self-reflection	<p>Why? If you think explicitly about what you want to learn, and then reflect on what you think you learned, you'll be a more intentional learner. This activity helps me to get to know you and to understand what you would like to get out of the course. I can then make adjustments during the semester to help support your learning. Our conversation will also encourage you to think about the role of NGOs and the contributions they can make.</p> <p>What? This is a two-part assignment. First, you will have a 15-30 minute individual conversation (phone or video) with me to talk about your interests, relevant experiences, career aims, and objectives in taking this course. Our conversation should take place within the first two weeks of the semester. Based on our conversation, you will clarify your personal objectives for the course. Second, at the end of the semester, you will prepare a short reflection memorandum that offers your self-assessment of what learnings you took from the course, how the course design and assignments contributed to meeting your objectives, and how you anticipate applying what you learned in your current or future positions.</p>

Assessment Type	Description
	<p>Criteria? These are ungraded assignments, with full credit for completion. The value to you depends upon the effort you put in.</p> <p>When? In the first two weeks of the semester and final class session.</p>
Participation	<p>Why? Adult learning studies demonstrate that you will retain information most effectively through actively engaging in collaborative discussion and analysis of assigned materials. By engaging collectively with each other to discuss the readings and contributing our individual experiences with NGOs and international development, we will learn more and remember more.</p> <p>What? I have designed this course as a seminar that creates a learning community for all of us to engage with each other throughout the semester. Case studies and exercises will supplement your learning with hands-on small group discussions that expose you to real life management situations and ask you to figure out what to do.</p> <p>To help you engage, for each class session (except the first one), I ask that you submit a reading reflection by noon of the day before class meets. This should be 1-4 sentences that identify something (for example, concepts, issues, perspectives, etc.) from the required readings for the week that you found to be interesting, unclear, confusing, novel, and/or thought-provoking.</p> <p>Criteria? For each class session you can earn a total of 3 points: 1 for your reading reflection submission, 1 for attendance (you can't participate if you aren't there), and 1 for engaging. I will assess how engaging your participation is by answering the questions: Do your contributions to discussions demonstrate that you have read and reflected on the assigned readings? And do they help us to bring out key points and informative perspectives?</p> <p>When? Throughout the semester.</p>
Reaction paper	<p>Why? In NGOs and many other types of organizations, as an employee you are often called upon to succinctly present and assess information on a topic in a written format. It may be a memo, an email, or a short report. Or it may be a component of a project proposal, evaluation, or implementation analysis. Building these skills is important for success in any organization. Writing is also a way of reflecting on, processing/organizing, and analyzing information. It will help you to identify and prioritize lessons and remember them.</p> <p>What? These papers are succinct critical reflections on the required readings for the topic. They should <u>not</u> be summaries of the readings. You will write two reaction papers of 4 pages each (double-spaced) on your choice of two of the weekly topics covered in the course. The only rules are that: 1) the introductory topics are not available for selection, 2) the topics selected may not include your topic choices for your NGO interview, and 3) you should space your chosen topics to allow time to learn from and apply the feedback I provide on earlier assignments.</p>

Assessment Type	Description
	<p>Criteria? The rubric for the reaction paper is the basis that I will use for assessment, and you will use it too for a self-assessment.</p> <p>When? Completed reaction papers and self-evaluations using the grading rubrics, are due the week after the topic is covered in class.</p>
Interview memo	<p>Why? Talking with people who work in NGOs helps you to gain insight into real world perspectives on the topics we discuss in class. You will be able to assess the relevance of what you are reading to the world of practice and also to reflect on how what you are learning in class might inform practices you may observe in a particular case. It also helps you to develop interviewing skills that are useful in many settings, for example, with job candidates or with community members your NGO may work with. You will often be called upon to write up interview results and findings, another skill useful in your career.</p> <p>What? You will contact a leader/manager in an NGO that focuses on international development and interview them on one of the course topics, which you will choose, starting from Topic #3 (I will circulate a sign-up sheet). You will write a memorandum of 4 pages (typed double-spaced) summarizing what you learned and commenting on your findings by discussing how concepts from the readings on the topic apply to your interview.</p> <p>Criteria? The rubric for the interview memo is the basis that I will use for assessment, and you will use it too for your own self-assessment.</p> <p>When? This assignment is due in the class session of the week that the topic is covered.</p>
Interview presentation	<p>Why? The rationale is the same as for the NGO interview memo: learning about a real-world NGO. You will also build skills in oral presentation, something that you are likely to be called upon to do during your career.</p> <p>What? You will prepare and deliver a presentation of your NGO interview in class using PowerPoint or Prezi (8-10 minutes).</p> <p>Criteria? The rubric for the interview presentation is the basis that I will use for assessment.</p> <p>When? The presentation is due in the class session of the week that the topic is covered.</p>

SUMMARY: ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES, & GRADING

45 pts 15%	Participation in class & Reading reflection submission	Ongoing; due by noon the day before class, as assigned
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	NGO interview and reaction paper topics selected; individual conversations with me scheduled or completed	September 10 (you may change topics later as desired by notifying me)
90 pts 30%	NGO interview memos (70 points) and in-class presentations (20 points)	Due on date your selected topic is covered in class
150 pts 50%	Two reaction papers (75 points each)	Due one week after the topic selected is covered in class
15 pts 5%	Self-reflection memos	December 10
300 pts	100% Total	

Please submit all of your work electronically on Blackboard. Please submit memoranda and papers in Word; do not send PDF versions. You can use either PowerPoint or Prezi for your presentations. More detailed assignment descriptions and assessment rubrics for each are available on Blackboard. I strongly encourage you to consult these before undertaking the assignments; please note that you are required to complete and submit the appropriate assessment rubrics for each of your written assignments.

COURSE CALENDAR

Except for the Fowler text, all readings are available on Blackboard, along with a detailed list of both required and recommended readings.

Class	Topics	Readings	Activities/Assignments
No. 1 August 27	What are NGOs and why do we care?	Fowler, "Understanding International Development" Frumkin, "The Idea of a Nonprofit..." Ronalds, "Factors Driving..."	Introductions: Who are we, why are we here? Review of syllabus and assignments NGOs: Impressions and Perceptions
No. 2 Sept 3	A place for NGOs and every NGO in its place? Is managing just common sense?	Brinkerhoff et al., "Beyond the Non..." Fowler, "Understanding Development NGOs" DBS Foundation, "What's a Social Enterprise?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBhwDjoWEcg Salamon & Sokolowski, "Beyond Nonprofits..." Brinkerhoff, "Looking Out, In, Ahead"	Schedule/hold individual conversation with me Reading reflection commentary Topic selections: NGO interviews and reaction papers

LOOKING IN: INTERNAL MANAGEMENT OF NGOS			
No. 3 Sept 10	How should we organize NGOs?	Crowley & Ryan, "Evolving Structures of INGOs" Fowler, "Organising Non-Profits..." Case study: Save the Children	Reading reflection commentary Case study Q & A: small group discussion
No. 4 Sept 17	How do we motivate our people? Carrots, sticks, or ...?	Farmer & Fedor, "Volunteer Participation..." Fowler, "NGDO People" Hannum et al. "Emerging Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations"	Reading reflection commentary Small group case exercise
No. 5 Sept 24	How do we get the best out of our boards?	Dupree et al., "Building a Board" (read pp. 52-55 and example #2) Ellis blog, "15 Nonprofit Board Governance Mistakes" Holland and Jackson, "Strengthening Board Performance..." (read pp. 121-123)	Reading reflection commentary Small group exercise (selected from USAID, p. 14)
	Recap: What have we learned about looking in?	Tandon, "Board Games..." USAID. "Governance and NGOs..." (read pp. 11, 13, 18, 19)	Looking In reflection
LOOKING OUT: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF NGOS			
No. 6 Oct 1	Who is out there, what do they want, and what do we want from them?	Brinkerhoff, "Appreciating, Adapting, and Influencing" (read pp. 27-39, Table 3.3. on p. 49) Coston, "Government-NGO Relations" Fowler, "NGDOs are not Islands..." Hudson et al. "Everyday Political Analysis"	Reading reflection commentary Case study exercise
No. 7 Oct 8	Who's accountable to whom?	Brown & Moore, Accountability, Strategy, and INGOs" Crowley & Ryan, "Integrated Planning and Accountability..." Ebrahim, "Accountability in Practice..."	Reading reflection commentary Case study exercise
No. 8 Oct 15	Does money make the NGO world go around?	Fowler, "Mobilising Financial Resources" Casin & Dan, "Revenue Diversification Strategies..." Interaction, "Innovative Financing for Development..." (read pp. 4-16)	Reading reflection commentary

		Synergos, “Case Study of Hogar de Cristo” USAID, “Localization Progress Report Brief”	
No. 9 Oct 22	Do you want to dance? NGOs as partners	Brinkerhoff, “Government-Nonprofit Partnership...” Fowler, “NGDOs’ Sustainability, Partnership and Resourcing...”	Reading reflection commentary Balochistan video case and small group discussion
	Recap: What have we learned about looking out?	Fox, “Partnerships among Corporations and NGOs” Case study: Letters from Yasmine (video)	Looking Out reflection
LOOKING AHEAD: NGOS, PERFORMANCE, KEY CHALLENGES			
No. 10 Oct 29	Scale: Go big or go home?	Boorstin, “The Quest for Scale” Guha, “Going to Scale...” Schnell & Brinkerhoff, “Replicability and Scaling Up” Case study: Coptic Orphans	Reading reflection commentary Small group case discussion Guest commentator: Hoda Gamal, International Programs Director, Coptic Orphans
No. 11 Nov 12	How do we stay safe and still get things done?	Collinson et al., “States of Fragility...” Fast et al., “In Acceptance We Trust?”	Reading reflection commentary Guest speaker: Michael O’Neill, Founder and CEO, O’Neill Paragon Solutions, former Senior Director for Security, Save the Children
No. 12 Nov 19	How do we know we are doing things right and doing the right things?	Ebrahim & Rangan, “Limits of Nonprofit Impact...” Bruno-van Vijfeijken podcast, “Measuring Social Change...” Fowler, “Assessing Development Impact and Organizational Performance” Mitchell, “Why Will We Ever Learn?”	Reading reflection commentary Small group case discussion
No. 13 Dec 3	How do we navigate the thorniest	Brinkerhoff, “From Humanitarian and Post-conflict Assistance...”	Reading reflection commentary

	contexts and issues?	Hopgood, “The End of Human Rights” Mosel & Levine, “Linking Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development” Van Brabant & Patel, “Understanding the Localisation Debate”	
NGOS AND THE FUTURE: WHERE TO FROM HERE?			
No. 14 Dec 10	What is coming and how can we cope?	Banks et al. “NGOs, States, and Donors Revisited...” Bloodgood et al., “The Future of Transnational NGO Advocacy” Mitlin et al., “Reclaiming Development? ...” Ronalds, “The Change Imperative...”	Reading reflection commentary Due: Self-Assessment Reflection Memo

ACCESSING THE COURSE AND COURSE POLICIES

The syllabus: This syllabus is your guide to this course. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and I may, at my discretion, change content and requirements during the semester.

Average minimum amount of work: You will spend ~2 hours per week on direct instruction (a combination of asynchronous and synchronous activities) and ~6 hours per week on independent activities, on average. Over the course of the semester, you can expect to spend an average of 8 hours in instructional time per week for a total of 112 hours for the semester.

Getting started: This course is available to you through GWU’s Blackboard. Technology requirements for participation in the course are described at the following site, which also provides instructions to you for getting help: <https://online.gwu.edu/technical-requirements-and-support>.

Use of AI: You may use AI programs but you must indicate how you have used them and if you want to include AI-generated content in your written products you must cite them just as you would a standard citation. See this link for an example of how to cite: tinyurl.com/UMCiteAI.

Incompletes: You must consult with me to obtain a grade of I (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes in a semester. If you’re having difficulty completing the course requirements, please come talk to me. Visit <http://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/> for the complete university policy on incompletes.

Submission of written work Products after due date: You need to turn in work by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit for the assignment, unless I have granted you an exception. My policy is that without prior approval, late work is reduced by one-half grade for every three days (or parts thereof) that it is late. If you’re having a problem meeting a deadline, please contact me.

Changing grades after completion of course: No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

Contesting a grade: To contest a grade you must submit a brief, professional memo stating the grade you believe is warranted and justifying the case for a changed grade with specific examples from your work, using the grading rubric for the particular assignment.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity Code

Academic integrity is an essential part of the educational process, and all members of the GW community take these matters very seriously. As the instructor of record for this course, my role is to provide clear expectations and uphold them in all assessments. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and otherwise violate the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). If you have any questions about whether or not particular academic practices or resources are permitted, you should ask me for clarification. If you are reported for an academic integrity violation, you should contact Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) to learn more about your rights and options in the process. Consequences can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the University and may include a transcript notation. For more information, please refer to the SRR website at studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity, email rights@gwu.edu, or call 202-994-6757.

University policy on observance of religious holidays

Students must notify faculty during the first week of the semester in which they are enrolled in the course, or as early as possible, but no later than three weeks prior to the absence, of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. If the holiday falls within the first three weeks of class, the student must inform faculty in the first week of the semester. For details and policy, see “Religious Holidays” at provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines.

Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact Disability Support Services at disabilitysupport.gwu.edu if you have questions or need assistance in accessing electronic course materials.

Academic support

Writing Center

GW’s Writing Center cultivates confident writers in the University community by facilitating collaborative, critical, and inclusive conversations at all stages of the writing process. Working alongside peer mentors, writers develop strategies to write independently in academic and public settings. Appointments can be booked online at gwu.mywconline.

Academic Commons

Academic Commons provides tutoring and other academic support resources to students in many courses. Students can schedule virtual one-on-one appointments or attend virtual drop-in sessions. Students may schedule an appointment, review the tutoring schedule, access other academic support resources, or obtain assistance at academiccommons.gwu.edu.

Support for students outside the classroom

Disability Support Services (DSS) 202-994-8250

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services at disabilitysupport.gwu.edu to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services 202-994-5300

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services.

Safety and Security

GW Campus Emergency Information: GW Emergency Services: 202-994-6111. For situation-specific instructions, refer to GW's Emergency Procedures guide.

GW Alert: GW Alert is an emergency notification system that sends alerts to the GW community. GW requests students, faculty, and staff maintain current contact information by logging on to alert.gwu.edu. Alerts are sent via email, text, social media, and other means, including the Guardian app. The Guardian app is a safety app that allows you to communicate quickly with GW Emergency Services, 911, and other resources. Learn more at safety.gwu.edu.

Protective Actions: GW prescribes four protective actions that can be issued by university officials depending on the type of emergency. All GW community members are expected to follow directions according to the specified protective action. The protective actions are Shelter, Evacuate, Secure, and Lockdown. Learn more at safety.gwu.edu/gw-standard-emergency-statuses.

Shelter

- Protection from a specific hazard
- The hazard could be a tornado, earthquake, hazardous material spill, or other environmental emergency.
- Specific safety guidance will be shared on a case-by-case basis.

Action:

- Follow safety guidance for the hazard.

Evacuate

- Need to move people from one location to another.
- Students and staff should be prepared to follow specific instructions given by first responders and University officials.

Action:

- Evacuate to a designated location.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Follow additional instructions from first responders.

Secure

- Threat or hazard outside of buildings or around campus.
- Increased security, secured building perimeter, increased situational awareness, and restricted access to entry doors.

Action:

- Go inside and stay inside.
- Activities inside may continue.

Lock down

- Threat or hazard with the potential to impact individuals inside buildings.
- Room-based protocol that requires locking interior doors, turning off lights, and staying out of sight of corridor window.

Action:

- Locks, lights, out of sight
- Consider Run, Hide, Fight