The George Washington University
Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

PPPA 6031 - GOVERNING AND MANAGING NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
(FALL, 2016)

(Rev. 5/10/2016)

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

PPPA 6031.10 (CRN 13191)
Governing and Managing Nonprofit Organizations
Fall, 2016, Mondays, 6:10 – 8 pm

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Michael J. Worth
Professor of Nonprofit Management
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Office hours: Fall, 2016: Mondays, 3-5 pm, Tuesdays 3-5, and by appointment. Students are encouraged to make an appointment, even during regular office hours. Email is the best way to contact the professor for a prompt reply.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive overview of principles related to the governance and management of nonprofit organizations. Topics considered include the historical, legal, and social foundations of the nonprofit sector; developing organizational strategy and capacity; managing staff, boards, and volunteers; financial management; fundraising, marketing, communications, and advocacy; collaboration, partnerships, and mergers; accountability and performance management; earned income activities; social entrepreneurship and innovation; and policy issues affecting the nonprofit sector. The emphasis is on nonprofit organizations in the United States.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This course is appropriate for students planning or considering careers in the nonprofit sector as well as individuals employed in nonprofit organizations who seek to expand their knowledge in order to advance to more senior management roles. It is a required course for Masters of Public Administration students concentrating in nonprofit management and for students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management program. It is also appropriate as an elective for other students who desire an understanding of the field.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students completing the course will be able to: 1) describe the unique characteristics and values of the nonprofit sector; 2) describe differences among various sub-sectors; 3) identify organizational opportunities and problems and propose strategic approaches; 4) recognize the major challenges in governing and managing nonprofit organizations and identify models and tools that may be applicable in various situations; 5) identify alternative strategies for revenue generation; and 6) explain the key policy issues affecting the future of organizations and management in the nonprofit sector.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Most classes will include a lecture portion and a discussion portion. Students are expected to have read the assigned reading before the class meeting and to have given thought to any key questions it raises. Students also are encouraged to read the popular and industry media to identify current news related to the course that they wish to bring up for discussion in class.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

20% of course grade: class participation

Students are expected to attend class and participate in discussion. Attendance will be taken in each class session. Excessive absences will negatively affect the course grade. Attendance policies follow those of the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration.

40% of course grade: brief papers

Twice during the semester, the professor will assign questions related to a case. The written assignment will require students to compare, contrast, and analyze concepts and issues related to the case, drawing on readings and class discussion. Answers are to be written at home. The assignment will be discussed in the class session when the paper is due. The paper may not exceed five (5) pages, double-spaced. Each brief paper counts for 20% of the course grade. The paper must be submitted electronically no later than the beginning of the class session in which it is discussed. The professor will provide instructions on how to submit the paper.

40% of course grade: Course paper or project

Students will complete a course paper or a project, on a topic of their choosing that is related to the course. The paper or project may take several forms, as explained in the Attachment to this syllabus.

Students are strongly encouraged to identify the topic of their paper or project as early in the semester as possible, not later than week 8. Formal approval of the topic is not required, but students are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the professor via email or during office hours to make sure that it is appropriate. Topic ideas also will be discussed in class.

Students should be prepared to give a brief (5-10 minutes) summary of their work in class, as called upon, beginning in session 13, with the understanding that the work may not be completed by that time. The completed paper/project must be submitted electronically no later than the beginning of the last class period. The professor will provide instructions on how to submit the paper.
POLICIES

This course follows established policies of the University and Columbian College, including the policy on class attendance (http://registrar.gwu.edu/university-policies#attendance), the policy on religious holidays (http://registrar.gwu.edu/university-policies#attendance), the policy on disabilities (http://registrar.gwu.edu/university-policies#attendance). Students with disabilities are encouraged to seek assistance from Disability Support Services (http://www.gwired.gwu.edu/dss). Any case of dishonesty will be referred to the Academic Integrity Council following the processes provided online. The Code states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating on any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the Code, see http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity.code/html. Written assignments are due on the day indicated in this syllabus. Failure to meet the deadline may result in a lower grade than otherwise would have been assigned to the work. Extensions may be granted only under certain circumstances, consistent with the above policies.

REQUIRED READING

Books (Purchase):


Blackboard and Web:

Additional required and recommended readings are available on Blackboard or the Web.

Cases (brief paper assignments):

Two case studies to be read in connection with the brief paper assignments must be obtained from the Harvard Business School. Students will need to register at the Harvard website and pay Harvard directly for the download fee of $3.95 for each case. The URL for the Harvard site is: https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/49713048. This will bring you to a site for this course, where you can register and purchase access to the two cases.

RECOMMENDED READING

Recommended reading is suggested for students who may wish to know more about a particular topic. It is optional. In addition, the professor may assign additional readings as the semester progresses.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

External links are provided on Blackboard to some websites that are good general sources of information on nonprofit management and related topics. Students may find some of these sites helpful in identifying paper topics and as resources. They are not required reading unless indicated in the course outline.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

August 29, 2016
SESSION 1
Course Introduction and Overview

- Professor’s lame opening jokes
- Typically awkward first session introductions
- Overview of the course
- Introduction to the nonprofit sector

SEPTEMBER 5, 2016 – LABOR DAY, NO CLASS

September 12, 2016
SESSION 2
Foundations of the Nonprofit Sector

- Structure and scope of the nonprofit sector
- Legal basis of the nonprofit sector
- The nonprofit sector in society
- Relationship of nonprofit sector to government and business
- Theories of the nonprofit sector
- How nonprofits work as organizations

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapters 1-3

Recommended reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapter 17 (International) NOTE: Those with an interest in international organizations may wish to read this chapter. While the focus of this course is on management of nonprofits in the U.S., most topics have relevance in the international environment. Students are also encouraged to pursue that perspective in class discussions and in their final papers, as their interests may dictate.
September 19, 2016  
SESSION 3  
Nonprofit Governing Boards

- Responsibilities of nonprofit boards  
- Characteristics of effective boards  
- Organizing and managing the board  
- Strategies for board development  
- Roles of board and staff

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapter 4  

Recommended reading:


September 26, 2016  
SESSION 4  
Nonprofit Executive Leadership

- Distinction of management and leadership  
- Leadership theories relevant to nonprofit organizations  
- Effective nonprofit CEOs  
- The board/CEO relationship

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapter 5; Appendix-NYC Opera case

Recommended reading:

October 3, 2016
SESSION 5
Accountability and Performance Measurement

- Accountability standards
- Definition of efficiency, effectiveness, and performance
- Common approaches to performance measurement

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapters 6-8 [NOTE: Chapters 7 and 8 are related to the topic for the class session #7, but it is suggested that students get started reading them this week to allow time for reading the Crutchfield and Grant book for session 7.]


Recommended reading:

WEB: Morino, Leap of Reason; Hunter, Working Hard-and Working Well (Both are books, available for free download at www.leapofreason.org.)
WEB: Website of PerformWell (www.performwell.org). Just peruse to see the various tools that are available.

FIRST BRIEF PAPER ASSIGNED: HULL HOUSE

Case available from https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/49713048
Students will need to register and pay a $3.95 fee to access the case. The professor will assign questions in this class session, to which students will respond with written answers, due in the next class session.

October 10, 2016
SESSION 6
GUEST SPEAKER - TBD

FIRST BRIEF PAPER DUE
October 17, 2016
SESSION 7
Building High-Performance Nonprofit Organizations

- Building capacity
- Strategic planning
- Collaboration and merger
- Characteristics of high-impact organizations

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, chapters 7,8; Crutchfield, chapters 1-12 (13 optional)

Recommended reading:


OCTOBER 24, 2016 – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

October 31, 2016
SESSION 8
Managing Staff and Service Volunteers

- Roles of paid staff and volunteers
- Theories of volunteer motivation
- Recruiting/retaining staff/volunteers
- Training, motivating, and rewarding staff/volunteers

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapter 9

Recommended reading:

WEB: Volunteer Management Resources Center (www.idealist.org/info/VolunteerMgmt) Just pursue to see the various tools that are available.

November 7, 2016
SESSION 9
Financial Management

- Fundamentals of nonprofit accounting
- Understanding nonprofit financial statements
- Monitoring financial performance
- Managing and investing endowment funds
- Financial accountability
Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapter 12; Appendix-Y Case
BLACKBOARD: Peruse the Form 990 of Food and Friends (Students don’t need to read line-by-line. Just become familiar with the major sections and format.)

SECOND BRIEF PAPER ASSIGNED: COLLEGE SUMMIT CASE

Case available from https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/49713048
(Students will need to register and pay a $3.95 fee.)
The professor will assign questions in this class session, to which students will respond with written answers, due electronically by the next class session.)

November 14, 2016
SESSION 10
GUEST SPEAKER – TBD

SECOND BRIEF PAPER DUE

November 21, 2016
SESSION 11
External Relations: Marketing, Fundraising, Advocacy, Lobbying

- Marketing principles
- Principles of fundraising
- Advocacy and lobbying: distinctions and limitations

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapters 10, 11, 13, 15
WEB: Lobbying Guidelines for Public Charities (Independent Sector); Lobbying Guidelines for Private Foundations (Independent Sector) http://www.independentsector.org/lobbying_guidelines_public_charities (Note: Not necessary to read all of this. Peruse for content that you find interesting.)

November 28, 2016
SESSION 12
Social Enterprise, Social Entrepreneurship, and Social Innovation

- Definitions and distinctions
- Earned income ventures/social enterprise
- Social innovation and innovators (social entrepreneurs)

Reading:

BOOK: Worth, Chapters 14, 16; Appendix-No Kid Hungry case
December 5, 2016
SESSION 13
Discussion of Student Papers/Projects

- Students should prepare to give a brief (7-8 minute) overview of their paper/project.

December 12, 2016
SESSION 14
FINAL SESSION

- Continued discussion of student papers/projects
- Final mad rantings of the professor

FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE
ATTACHMENT: OPTIONS AND IDEAS FOR COURSE PAPER OR PROJECT

Below are some suggestions of approaches to the course paper/project. These are suggestions, but the professor is open to various approaches that students may propose.

(1) A case study of a nonprofit organization. Writing a case study requires identifying strategic issues faced by the organization and analyzing its efforts to address those issues, not merely providing a summary of the organization’s programs. In some instances, a case study may be written entirely from published materials. Others require conducting interviews with the organization’s leaders. The professor can provide suggestions of organizations to students who wish to pursue this option. There is no prescribed length for a case study, but most are about 16-20 pages, including references but not including attachments.

(2) A critical survey of the literature on a subject related to the course. The paper should reflect the student’s critical thinking rather than just summarize the material, for example, identifying themes and issues in the literature and analyzing various approaches. Assigned readings may stimulate thinking about paper topics. Reading the Chronicle of Philanthropy is also a good way to identify topics that are of current interest in the nonprofit sector. The professor will discuss possible paper topics in class, but students should select topics of particular interest to them. A paper of this type is usually about 16-20 pages in length, including references.

(3) An analysis of an ethical or policy issue related to the course. The paper should analyze both sides of the issue and take a position, supported with reasoned arguments and data. For example, there are significant issues related to tax policy, standards for nonprofit accountability, proposals for legislation increasing the regulation of nonprofits, and many others. This type of paper is usually about 16-20 pages in length, including references.

(4) Other projects related to the course. The professor is open to creative projects that are of sufficient magnitude and relevance to the course, for example, developing a strategic or fundraising plan or conducting a capacity assessment of a nonprofit organization. The project needs to be substantive, not just a volunteer experience (e.g., tutoring students in an after-school program). The project should involve applying knowledge gained through readings and discussions in this course. Students are strongly advised to discuss project ideas with the professor in advance of beginning work.

Students who are employed at a nonprofit may do a case study or project related to that organization, but only if it represents work outside of their normal job responsibilities and is over and above what they are required to do in their jobs. In other words, you cannot submit a work product from your employment to meet the requirements of this course.

Students may voluntarily choose to work together with up to two other students as a team to complete a significant project or case study. This requires the professor’s prior approval, which will be given only for projects that represent a very substantial body of work, worthy of the efforts of multiple individuals.

Projects need to result in a tangible product that the professor can evaluate. For example, if a student were to develop a plan or manual or conduct a study or assessment for a nonprofit organization, the professor would expect to see the written plan or report. In addition, the student must submit a memorandum reflecting on the project. This memorandum should describe how the project was conducted – what meetings were held at the nonprofit, what documents and materials were used, etc. It should also summarize what was learned through the experience. If the project has been undertaken by a team, the memorandum should describe the role played by each team member.