Issues in Not-for-Profit Management (RPAD 613)

Fall 2015
Monday 5:45p – 8:35p, Husted Hall 208

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth A.M. Searing
Office hours: Thursday 3:00p – 4:30p or by appointment
Office location: Milne Hall 305
Office number: 518-442-2621
Email: esearing@albany.edu

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:

• 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 Readings

• There are substantial additional readings that will be available on Blackboard.

Text is available through Mary Jane Books, 215 Western Avenue, Albany, NY, 12203. Phone: 518 465 2238. maryjane@maryjanebooks.com

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
• Voluntas
  Journal of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)
• Stanford Social Innovation Review

References are included on the syllabus for your information. They are not part of the required course reading, but are good resources for additional information on the topic.

III. Grading and Assignments:

1. Class attendance and participation (15%). Participation and attendance account for 15% of the final course grade. Students are expected to attend each class on a timely basis so that they will benefit maximally from the class lectures and discussion. No formal attendance is taken, but each student is expected to contribute at least one thoughtful question to the discussion on the readings per week. Therefore, missed class will be reflected in your grade. If you find you must miss a class, please send me a notification via email. Reading assignments should be completed prior to class.

2. Individual Readings Summaries (10%). Each student will be assigned articles from the readings. For each of these assigned readings summaries, the student is responsible for preparing a very brief summary of the article, followed by a few points for discussion or practical extensions of the main article ideas. The written portion should be less than one page, and a printed copy should be handed in at the beginning of class. When the article is discussed in class, the student should also be prepared to lead the discussion with the brief summary and their own commentary.

3. Memoranda (20% each). These memoranda offer the opportunity to explore the research literature beyond what is discussed in class. The first memorandum should explore the differences between the government, corporate, and nonprofit sectors based on the readings from class and outside sources. The audience for this paper is the professor.

The second memorandum explores a management issue of interest to you. Convey the insights gained from the literature in a memorandum format directed at a particular audience. Some examples of audiences are: an executive manager in the public or nonprofit sector; a nonprofit organization’s board of directors; a regional or statewide nonprofit umbrella association; or a group of nonprofit agency executives in a particular industry. Be accurate and consistent in documentation for both memoranda. Each memorandum should be 5-7 double-spaced pages.
4. **Final Report (35%)**: This report integrates and expands on the materials learned in class. Each student should pick a nonprofit organization (with the approval of the professor) and discuss the topics covered in class in the context of their chosen organization. Further details and the grading rubric will be given as the semester progresses. The report should be 20-25 double-spaced pages. The report’s analysis or argument should be supported with substantial secondary sources (at least five sources). Be accurate, comprehensive, and consistent in documentation. The audience for this paper is as an organizational analysis or report for the nonprofit.

5. **Final Grade**: Final grades will be based on class attendance and participation, homework assignments, and semester projects, as described above. Final letter grades will be assigned as followed:

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6. **Late and Make-up Policy**: No late readings-related assignments will be accepted since they will be discussed in class. Extra time for a paper is granted in rare circumstances. A documented emergency situation is severe illness (with accompanying paperwork from a physician), 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.
IV. 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.

Classroom Expectations: Most classes will begin with student-led discussion of the readings, followed by limited lecture and interactive discussions and activities. Therefore, preparation for the day’s class in terms of readings and exercises will be essential. All students should come to each class prepared to discuss issues raised in the assigned readings for that week whether they have been assigned an article to facilitate or not.

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/

Electronics: Cellphones are not allowed to be used while class is in session unless it has been cleared by the instructor ahead of time. You can use your laptop or tablets only for taking notes, reading class materials, or doing in-class exercise. No other programs are allowed in class. The instructor reserves the right to view your screen (in addition to the fact that most of your neighbors can see it anyway) or to require you to turn it off. Any violation of the above
policy can result in either temporary or permanent revocation of the privilege to use electronics in class.

**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.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Aug. 31  Introductions, Syllabus Review, and Discussion

Reading in Class:

“Jean Ekins and the Family Learning Center,” Kennedy School of Government Case Study.

Sept. 21  Being a Manager in the Nonprofit Sector


References

Sept 28 Nonprofit Manager as Leader

**FIRST MEMO DUE**


Reference

Oct. 5 Nonprofit Manager as Advocate

Guest Speaker: Peter Fleischer, Executive Director of Empire State Future


Reference

Oct. 12 Nonprofit Manager as Entrepreneur


**References**

**Oct. 19  Nonprofit Manager as Financial Guru**


**Reference**

**Oct. 26  Nonprofit Manager as Government Contractor, Partner, and Policy Influencer**

**Guest Speaker: Natasha Pernicka, Executive Director of The Food Pantries for the Capital District**

Opportunities. Edited by Donald C. Menzel and Harvey L. White, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 156-170. (Blackboard)


References


Nov. 2 Nonprofit Manager as Public Relations Expert

** SECOND MEMO DUE **


Nov. 9 Nonprofit Manager as Program Evaluator and Outcomes Monitor

There is little evidence, however, that organizations can reliably measure organizational performance at the institutional level, much less at the community and/or sectoral levels at a time when sophisticated assessment methodologies are in demand (Flynn and Hodgkinson, 2001:5)


Wheatley, Margaret and Kellner-Rogers, Myron. 1998. “What Do We Measure and Why?” the New England Nonprofit Quarterly (Fall/Winter), 6-9. (Blackboard)

References


Nov. 16 Nonprofit Manager as Governance and Human Resources Manager

“Right from the Start: Responsibilities of Directors and Officers of Not-for-Profit Corporations,” Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, New York State Charities Bureau. (Blackboard)


Kearns, Kevin P. “Effective Nonprofit Board Members as Seen by Executives and Board Chairs,” Nonprofit Management and Leadership 5 (Summer 1995), 337-358. (Blackboard)

Nov. 23   Nonprofit Manager as Strategist

Guest Speaker: Natasha Pernicka, Executive Director of The Food Pantries for the Capital District


Nov. 30   Future Trends in Nonprofit Management


Dec. 7   **Final Reports and Presentations Due**