** COURSE DESCRIPTION **

The course explores the interaction between public policy and nonprofit organizations: how nonprofits influence and are influenced by public decision-making. We will examine the role of nonprofits vis-à-vis the public sector, broadly, and in public policy formation, specifically. While we will focus primarily on the United States, we will also investigate nonprofit-related policy issues from a comparative international perspective. The topics covered include models of government-nonprofit relations, public policies toward nonprofits (tax policies, regulation, charitable deductions), accountability, policy advocacy and legislative lobbying, contracting out and other forms of government financing of nonprofit service provision.

** LEARNING OBJECTIVES **

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Identify and analyze relevant policies, current developments and pressing challenges in the nonprofit world using course concepts and frameworks,
- Formulate their positions on policy issues impacting nonprofit organizations,
- Develop a deeper understanding and awareness of the complex dynamics of government-nonprofit relationships, and the role of nonprofits in the public policy process,
- Demonstrate familiarity with the IRS Tax Code and state laws, i.e. constraints nonprofits face and the benefits they can draw on in their domestic and international work,
- Obtain a toolkit of resources that will help them navigate the policy and resource environment of their nonprofit workplace.

** REQUIRED READINGS **

Available for purchase at Mary Jane Books and the UAlbany Bookstore:


Additional readings and roadmaps are available on Blackboard or will be distributed in class.

** SUPPLEMENTARY AND RECOMMENDED READINGS **

The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the plan outlined in this syllabus in order to adapt to current policy developments and emerging student interests. Students will be consulted with and notified of modifications. Other supplementary documents (news articles, case studies and guidelines for good practice) may be assigned a week before class or distributed in class. Lists of recommended readings and resources are posted on Blackboard (see sites of interest in the Web Links section).
If you want to seek wider help from the nonprofit community on your final paper, I recommend you join ARNOVA-L, the Nonprofit Organization, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy Discussion List for the duration of the course. For instructions click Arnova Listserv on <www.arnova.org>.

**COURSE FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS**

The course is designed as a seminar involving brief lectures, class discussion, student presentations, small-group work and occasional case studies. The course uses Blackboard to enhance interaction.

**Attendance and Participation.** Active participation in class discussions is required and highly valued in this course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. To help you do that, most weeks I will prepare a short roadmap to guide you through the following week’s readings. These roadmaps, posted on Blackboard, will help you identify the main issues in the readings and provide broad questions that we will discuss in class. You can miss up to 2 classes without being penalized, excused absences over this limit need to be documented. If you miss more than 2 classes, your default participation grade will be B (or less, depending on your performance). Absences will only be excused under certain circumstances such as religious observance, unplanned health emergencies and competing in intercollegiate athletics. If you miss more than 3 classes, the instructor reserves the right to drop you from the course and a notation will be placed on the transcript indicating you stopped attending class.

**Reflection papers.** Students are required to write four short reflection papers (1-2 pages, single space), one per each section of the course. A good reflection paper should be analytical; it should go beyond simply summarizing the readings or providing a description of a case. You are expected to demonstrate your skills of critical thinking. You may address a question in the roadmaps or an issue you find intriguing that is pertinent to the theme of the section. You can analyze a recent policy development, compare perspectives in the readings, or you can opt to compare the US with a foreign country in terms of some issues highlighted in the readings. You are also encouraged to integrate recent news from The New York Times, the Nonprofit Quarterly or other newspapers. Papers are due by **9 am on Thursday** on Blackboard. I will not accept email submissions or papers reflecting on readings we have already discussed in class. Late submissions will be penalized with grade reduction.

**Discussion Questions and Answers (Q&A).** Each week you have to submit one question regarding the week’s theme that you would like to be addressed in class. Questions should be posted on the week’s discussion page on Blackboard by **9 pm on Wednesday,** with your name indicated. You are expected to scan through the questions before class and respond to one of questions by another student by the beginning of the class. You will receive credit for 10 Q&As, thus you will not have to do this every week. You can choose to structure your reflection paper around the question you pose for the week.

**Team Projects.** Students are required to take ownership of one session section. You can work in teams of two or three. Your task is to design a presentation or a class activity that adds something new to the required readings. For instance, you can describe recent developments in the subject area (such as the impact of a new policy) or illustrate the topic through real-life cases you are familiar with, show video clips and lead a discussion session, and so on. You are not asked to regurgitate the readings. Your section should be no longer than 25 minutes and inform the instructor of your section plan by the Wednesday before class. Team members will receive the same grade unless they successfully present a report to demonstrate unequal work share.

**Paper Proposal.** You have to submit a short proposal of your final paper that should identify the central question, the goal and possible structure of the paper, along with the scholarly literature you plan to cover (with preliminary bibliography). Include the sources of data and other information, especially if you plan to write a research-based paper. Proposals are due by **April 4.**
Final paper. A final paper of 15-20 pages (double-spaced) is required on a substantive theme explored in the
course. You are granted freedom in selecting the topic of your paper but you are encouraged to consult me
regarding your choice. You can do a comparative analysis of nonprofit-public policy interaction in the
United States and another country. You can also opt to write a literature review or expand a theme in your
reflection papers into your final paper. The final paper is due by **May 7** on Blackboard. I will consider
collaborative team papers.

**GRADING AND GRADE SCALE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection papers (5% each)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Team Projects</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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I do not grade on a curve. Students receive a letter grade that matches their performance throughout the
course and is determined by a weighted average of the points earned for each assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<td>A+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>64-66</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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**Grade appeals.** If a student has a grade dispute on a specific assignment, they should submit a one-page
memo to the instructor, along with the original assignment, presenting evidence for their case within two
weeks of receiving the graded assignment. The instructor will review and re-grade the original
assignment. This review can create a grade increase or even a grade decrease based on the new
evaluation.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Late paper policy.** Late assignments will be penalized by reducing points you can earn, except under
extraordinary circumstances when the instructor has given advance permission. You cannot take an
incomplete for this course. All assignments need to be submitted by **May 16**.

**Plagiarism.** Please review the University’s policy on violations of academic integrity <http://www.albany.edu/eas/104/penalty.htm> regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty and the
Plagiarism 101 tutorial at <http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/>. Ignorance of these policies will
not excuse dishonest conduct. Any forms of academic dishonesty will be penalized with a failing grade
for the assignment and/or for the course and by referral to the appropriate university judicial board. In all
cases of academic dishonesty, a Violation of Academic Integrity Report will be submitted to the Dean of
Graduate Studies to be placed in your university file. Note that you may be required to submit your
assignments online via Blackboard’s SafeAssign, which detects and prevents incidents of online
plagiarism.

**Students with disabilities.** Students with needs consistent with the Americans with Disability Act should
notify the instructor during the first week of class so that reasonable accommodations can be made.
Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students who have appropriate documentation on file
with the Disability Resource Center <http://www.albany.edu/disability/>

**Green classroom.** I encourage the reduction of paper waste and the electronic submission of assignments
via Blackboard. If you prefer a hard-copy submission, I encourage two-sided printing and the recycling of
used paper.
Communication. I aspire to create a welcoming, non-threatening and mutually respectful classroom environment. I encourage all students to form and express their own views openly and to listen to other students’ views with respect. Communication outside classes and office hours will occur primarily over email. Use regular email, and not Blackboard’s email function, to communicate with me electronically. To ensure timely response, put PAD 612 in the subject line and sign your letters. I will strive to respond to your emails within 24 hours. I will use Blackboard email to send out announcements so log on regularly.

Electronic device use in class. Switch off your cell phones, iPods, MP3 players and PDAs in class. If your phone rings or you text during class, you will be asked to leave and incur an absence. Notify the instructor before class begins if there is an emergency that requires you to leave your electric devices on.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Part I: Overview</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Reflection paper 1.</th>
<th>Q&amp;A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonprofits, Civil Society, Democracy</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonprofit-Government Relations</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 7</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>Part II: Public Policies Toward Nonprofits</td>
<td>Public Policies Benefiting Nonprofits</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>Policies Regulating Nonprofits</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
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<td>Legal Environment: Comparative Perspective</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 7</td>
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<td>Regulation of U.S.-based International Nonprofits</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>Part III: Policy Advocacy</td>
<td>Public Policy Advocacy: Overview</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations, Think Tanks</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Apr 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Transnational/International Advocacy</td>
<td>Q&amp;A Paper proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>Part IV: Service Provision and Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Government Financing, Contracting</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Service Provision</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open Service Area</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Part V: Overview</td>
<td>Future Avenues for Making Policy for the Nonprofit Sector</td>
<td>BYO dinner</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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PART I: OVERVIEW: NONPROFITS AND PUBLIC POLICY

1. Introduction to the course, course organization


2. Nonprofits, Civil Society, and Democracy


Optional


3. Nonprofit-Government Relationships


Optional

PART II: PUBLIC POLICIES TOWARD NONPROFITS


Optional

5. Public Policies Regulating Nonprofits: Accountability, Governance and Public Trust


Optional

6. The Legal Environment for Nonprofits and Civil Society Organizations from a Comparative Perspective: Overview and the Case of Accountability Enforcing Mechanisms


7. Regulation of U.S.-based International Nonprofits


PART III: POLICY ADVOCACY


Optional
Executive Summary: Overview of Findings of Strengthening Nonprofit Advocacy Project. 2002. OMB Watch, Tufts University and Charity Lobbying in the Public Interest. Blackboard


9. The War of Ideas: Foundations, Think Tanks and Their Influence on Public Policy


10. Transnational Advocacy and Nonprofit Advocacy in Comparative Perspective

Nonprofit Advocacy in Comparative Perspective


Transnational Advocacy


PART IV: SERVICE PROVISION AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

11. Government Financing of Nonprofits and Contracting


**12. Social Service Provision and Charitable Choice**


Optional


**13. Open Session on Service Area of Choice**

This session is dedicated to a field where nonprofits deliver government-supported services, either in the United States or abroad. Through discussion, students will come to consensus and vote on the theme of this session such as disaster relief, community development, or microfinance.

**14. Future Avenues for Making Policy for the Nonprofit Sector**


