SYLLABUS

Foundations of Not-for-Profit Management (RPAD 613)

Fall 2017

Asynchronous Online Course

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth A.M. Searing

Online Office Hours: Monday 2:00p – 3:30p

In-person Office Hours: 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:
• 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
• 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 Living Resources, which is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Albany, New York. Living Resources has asked for assistance in exploring and analyzing the foundations of
one of its programs: The College Experience. As we move through topics each week during the course, we will spend time applying what we’ve learned to The College Experience case. At the end of the course, each team will have a completed and professional organizational analysis and recommendations for Living Resources; these will be presented to the Living Resources staff and Board either live or via a webcast, pending their availability.

IV. Grading and Assignments:

A. Individual Performance

   Individual Reading Responses 15%
   Individual Discussion and Activities 15%
   Individual Application Outlines 10%

B. Team Performance

   Team Project Checkpoint #1 7.5%
   Team Project Checkpoint #2 7.5%
   Final Project 40%

C. Team Peer Review 5%

   100%

1. Individual Reading Responses (15%). These 2-3 page papers are responses to prompts that allow you to show your mastery of the concepts from the readings assigned each week. Each 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 Discussion and Activities (15%). In addition to the reading responses, there will be some kind of activity each week 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. Though many of these activities will involve your team, this is to gain the benefit of group interaction rather than evaluate your work as a team member. The final version of whatever the week’s activity is will be due by Friday at midnight.
3. **Individual Application Outlines (10%).** This single page of single-spaced type is for you to begin applying your new knowledge from the week to the Living Resources case. It is an outline in narrative format and will be graded as a draft, casual piece. These will be returned to you with feedback so that you can pool together the insights from each team member as you assemble your team checkpoints and final report.

4. **Team Checkpoints #1 and #2 (7.5% each).** These are both milestones on the path to a final project. They are designed both to help you pace yourself and to get feedback regarding the shape and progress of your analysis before the final due date. The first checkpoint will reflect the first 3 management topics (Management through Advocacy). The second checkpoint will reflect management topics Government through Financial Guru). Each management topic should have 3 pages (double-spaced) of assessment and recommendation. Both checkpoints are TEAM SUBMISSIONS that should reflect a group effort and attempt to incorporate the thoughts and insights of each team member. Remember, you will have turned in the drafts of your singular thoughts, so the checkpoints on the team projects should reflect additional discussion and analysis beyond your individual efforts.

5. **Final Project (40%).** This portfolio integrates and expands on the materials learned in class, resulting a final product that will be delivered (and potentially presented) to Living Resources. The two Checkpoints will provide feedback through the semester to help ensure a quality product and high grade. The final portfolio should be approximately 25-30 double-spaced pages. The report’s analyses or arguments should be supported with substantial secondary sources from the reading, and at least five sources from readings conducted outside of those required on the syllabus. Be accurate, comprehensive, and consistent in documentation.

6. **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.

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

**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](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/

**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.