

The Evergreen State College
Master in Public and Nonprofit Administration
Nonprofit Success: Theory & Practice
Fall 2011 4 Credits

Meeting Dates: October 1 & 2/ November 5 & 6 / November 12
Time: All sessions 9:00am to 5:00pm
Faculty Member: Doreen Swetkis
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Course Description Interest in nonprofit (or third sector) organizations has exploded as their importance and distinctiveness receives recognition as a unique area of study and practice. Although nonprofit organizations share some key elements with those in the public and private sectors, this course focuses on the unique characteristics and topics of the nonprofit sector. Some of these issues arise because of the nature of the sector, such as the prominent role of and heavy reliance on volunteerism, or the tension between organizational mission and funders' demands. Additional issues are included because of significant changes in the nonprofit sector during the last twenty-five years. Increased involvement in policy making, enlarged roles in implementing former public agency services, the more cohesive identity of the sector as a significant piece of the economy and administrative state, and the heightened professionalism all converge to make the daily management of nonprofit organizations in the twenty-first century a challenging task.

In this course students will be given the opportunity to work through many of the issues impacting the development and management of nonprofit organizations. It will provide a context to help you more clearly understand the conditions that you observe either working in a nonprofit organization today, in the future, or in studying or interacting with nonprofit organizations. It is my hope that the course will help students consider possible appropriate actions in ambiguous and complex situations. Therefore, this course combines substantive readings on issues affecting nonprofit organizations with case exercises and activities. Also, students will have the opportunity to work with a nonprofit organization to gain experience applying these concepts and skills.

Learning Objectives In this course, students will gain

1. Knowledge about the nature of the nonprofit sector and its context;
2. Understanding of the uniqueness of the nonprofit sector in relation to the public and private sectors;
3. Understanding of issues specifically relevant to nonprofit organizations;
4. An improved understanding of essential management skills related to nonprofit organizations including strategy, human resources, financial management and fund raising;
5. Improved analytical and writing skills.

We will read four (4) texts plus some additional readings such as articles, governmental reports, cases and research studies, and discuss these items in class. Lectures, films, guest presentations and workshops will be featured during our class sessions. Students will complete

four (4) shorter assignments and prepare one longer paper on which they will deliver a presentation the last day of class.

Expectations, Credit & Evaluation Students will come prepared and attend every class on time, actively participate in class, and submit assignments on time. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program.

Your written work must be of the highest quality—clear with accurate grammar and spelling. Honor space limitations by distilling your thoughts and editing your writing rather than by reducing your font size and margins. Give yourself time to write drafts. You may benefit from consulting The Writing Center, or partnering with a colleague to proofread your work.

Students will receive four (4) credits at the completion of the course if all expectations and course requirements have been successfully completed. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples work as your own without acknowledging the source), missing class, failing to complete one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late (without having made arrangements before the due date) may be grounds for denial of credit. *Because of the intensive weekend format of this class, students can not miss more than two (2) hours for the whole quarter, without a loss of credit, and must inform me in advance and submit any assignment on time. Additional absences will result in partial or no credit given for the course.* An incomplete is not an option.

Students are required to submit a self-evaluation and a faculty evaluation. You can submit these evaluations to me via email at swetkisd@evergreen.edu or the MPA program secretary at lab2support@evergreen.edu. An evaluation conference is encouraged, but not required.

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.

Texts

O'Neill, Michael (2002). *Nonprofit Nation: A New Look at the Third America*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 0-7879-5414-4. Hardcover.

Renz, David. O., Editor. (2010). *The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management, Third Edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 978-0-470-39250-8. Hardcover.

Van Til, Jon. (2008). *Growing Civil Society: From Nonprofit Sector to Third Space*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. ISBN: 978-0-253-22047-9. Paperback.

Worth, Michael J. (2012). *Nonprofit Management: Principles and Practice, Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. ISBN: 978-1-4129-9445-3. Paperback.

Assignments

1. Seminar Paper on *Nonprofit Nation*. (3-4 pages). *NB* Although the data in this book are somewhat dated, it still provides a nice overview of the sector. Please do not submit a seminar paper criticizing how dated the statistics are in this book. **Due October 2 in class.**
2. Case Memo: Students will be required to complete a case memo (1-2 pages double spaced)

on an assigned case. The case leaves off at a decision point; your memo should include a recommendation for next action and why. Additional information for completing case memos will be provided in class. **Due October 16, via email.**

3. Seminar paper on *Growing Civil Society*. (3-4 pages). **Due October 23 via email.**

4. Students are to choose perform an analysis of one of the five (5) Parts of the Renz text. Students should explore the findings of the readings with the book section, the applicability of the articles to practice, and explore what research is needed to further our understanding on the topic. **Due November 5 in class.**

5. Organizational analysis. Each student will complete an organizational analysis of a nonprofit organization. This may be an agency for which you are an intern or volunteer, but please choose a different organization than one for which you are on staff or the board. It could also be a foundation or place of worship. ***Interview the executive director.*** You will not need to complete a Human Subject Review application if you follow the parameters outlined in class. Your paper should provide recommendations on how the organization could improve its performance. Provide citations and references and be prepared to deliver a 10-minute **presentation** of your analysis on **November 12; paper also due November 12 in class.**

The paper will need to include a description and analysis of the organization's

- Size (personnel and budget), structure, revenue sources & overall finances, board;
- History, mission, vision, strategy;
- Services or goods provided, statistics describing those services/goods, and any data on effectiveness/efficiency and overall reputation;
- Challenges and/or lessons learned; innovations implemented; future pursuits;
- Relationship to other sectors and/or non-profit organizations;
- Relationship to issues and topics discussed in the course.

TENTATIVE Class Schedule

	Topics	Readings
Saturday October 1 9am-5pm	Introduction Role and Context of the Nonprofit Sector; State of the Sector Legal and Political Environment Nonprofits vs. Others	O'Neill, <i>Nonprofit Nation</i> Worth, Part I Renz, Part One
Sunday October 2 9am-5pm	Governance—Boards & Executive Directors Management—People, Money, & Technology	Worth, Part II & III Renz, Part Two & Part Five
Saturday Nov. 5 9am-5pm	Money, Money, Money: Philanthropy, Foundations and Nonprofits Raising Money Marketing	Van Til, <i>Growing Civil Society</i> Renz, Part Four
Sunday Nov. 6 9am-5pm	Performance & Accountability Strategic Planning Public-Private Partnerships	Worth, Part IV Renz, Part Three
Saturday Nov. 12 9am-5pm	Ethics & Trust Capacity Building in Nonprofits	Worth, Part V Articles TBD