Foundations of Nonprofit Management P11.2125
Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service
New York University

Spring, 2010

Professor: Sonia Ospina
sonia.ospina@nyu.edu
The Puck Building, 3075, Ext. 87478

Class: Thursdays 6:45 – 8:25 pm
Office Hours: Ospina: Wednesdays 3pm to 5pm and by appointment

Prerequisite: P11.1020 or equivalent

Course Description

This course examines the nature and major trends of the nonprofit sector, understood within the context of a broad shift in governance, both in the US and internationally. The course aims to deepen student understanding of the nature of the nonprofit world and its organizations, using both theoretical and practical lenses to do so. Understanding the legitimacy and authority of the nonprofit sector to address collective problems requires inviting both management and policy practitioners to see the intersection between managerial practices and policy decisions and to connect the macro and micro dynamics of governance.

The course focuses heavily on the broad trends shaping the sector, predominantly in the United States, but making connections to international trends. The goal is for students – whether they are interested in policy, finance or management – to develop their own “cognitive map” of the sector, so that they can identify and interpret key issues and challenges of sustainability experienced by stakeholders of the nonprofit world, and consider their implications for practice. Classes will involve a mix of brief lectures; discussion based on readings and written assignments; and guest speakers.

Course objectives

Students will develop an informed perspective of selected theories about the nature of nonprofit organizations and their role in governance, as well as key issues affecting the nonprofit sector and their implications for practice. By the end of the course:

- Participants will identify the key concepts and theories that explain the nature of the nonprofit sector in order to appreciate the distinctiveness of nonprofits as public service organizations operating in the private realm, in relationship to for-profits and public agencies.
• Participants will link key trends in the US nonprofit sector to the broader international context where nongovernmental organizations are increasingly operating.

• Participants will be able to respond to arguments and positions about selected policy and management issues associated with the present and future of the nonprofit sector and its organizations.

• Participants will identify and discuss key themes associated with the sustainability of the nonprofit sector and of its organizational ecosystem.

**Required texts**

Available at the NYU Professional Bookstore:


Available electronically via NYU’s online electronic journal service or Blackboard and at the NYU Bobst Library Course Reserves:

- Additional readings from selected sources (** in schedule of assignments)

**Course requirements**

Students must complete the reading before class and engage actively in the discussions. Students must also satisfy the following requirements:

- **Two 3-4 page memos:**
  - Memo 1: 25 points
  - Memo 2: 25 points
  - **Total points from Memos** 50%

- **Participation in class** 10%

- **Journaling** (five sets @ 8 each) 40% (see Course Overview)

For instructions on assignments, please go to Blackboard.
Overview of Course Contents

PART I: Mapping the nonprofit world

1. Introduction: the state of the nonprofit sector (February 11)
2. The distinctiveness of the nonprofit sector (Feb 18)
3. Deepening our understanding: international and comparative perspectives (Feb 20 – Saturday class)
   *Set # 1 journal entries (for classes 2 & 3) due February 20*

PART II: Understanding the nonprofit sector’s functions: dominant theories and their implications for policy and management

4. A focus on expressive functions: political and social theories (Feb 20 - Saturday class)
5. A focus on expressive functions (2): community theories (Feb 25)
   *Set # 2 journal entries due on Feb 25*
6. A focus on instrumental functions: economic theories (March 4)
7. A focus on instrumental functions (2): entrepreneurial theories (March 11)
   *Set # 3 journal entries due on March 11*

   March 18-Spring Break

8. Integrating theories and implications for governance (March 25)
   *First memo due on March 28*

PART III: Pulls and tensions in sustaining and building capacity in the nonprofit sector

9. The changing landscape of philanthropy (April 1) **Guest - Michael Edwards**
   *Set # 4 journal entries due on April 1*
10. Accountability, legitimacy, impact and performance measurement (April 8) **Guest – Abigail Diner**
11. The leadership challenge: from service to social change (April 15) **Guest – Michelle de la Uz**
    *Set # 5 journal entries due on April 15*
12. Replicating and scaling up results (April 22) **Guest - Danielle Scaturro**
13. Putting it all together (April 29)
14. Exam week: **Second memo due May 6** (no class)

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1 See schedule of assignments for e-links to guests’ or their organizations’ website
Schedule of Assignments

PART I: Mapping the nonprofit world

1. Introduction: The state of the nonprofit sector (Feb 11)

** Lester M. Salamon and Stephanie Lessans Geller with the assistance of Kasey L. Spence, 2008, Nonprofit Policy Priorities for the New Administration, Johns Hopkins University, COMMUNIQUÉ NO. 11 [on blackboard and sent by mail]

The Nonprofit Sector in Brief: Facts and figures from the Nonprofit Almanac, 2008 [on blackboard and sent by mail]

Assignment:

1. Please browse The Nonprofit Sector in Brief: Facts and figures from the Nonprofit Almanac, 2008, then choose one particular table or chart that calls your attention and study it more carefully. Pose a question of interest to you about the nonprofit sector based on the data presented in that table. Be prepared to discuss in class your question and the motivation behind it. Please bring the question in writing, to hand it in.

2. Read Salaman’s Communique and come to class prepared to discuss: What is your reaction to the expectations described by Salamon in reference to policy priorities for nonprofits in the new administration? If you have any information about how the first year has been, please be prepared to share.

2. The distinctiveness of the nonprofit sector (Feb 18)


** The International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations
Assignment:

Please review the categories and subcategories of nonprofits presented in the International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations and be prepared to discuss your reactions to this proposed classification.

3. Deepening our understanding: international and comparative perspectives (Feb 20 – Saturday class)


CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO CASE STUDIES AS THE SECOND READING FOR THIS CLASS:


Assignment:

Set # 1 journal entries (for classes 2 & 3) due February 20

PART II: Understanding the nonprofit sector’s functions: dominant theories and their implications for policy and management practice

4. A focus on expressive functions: political and social theories (Feb 20 - Saturday class)

Frumkin, Peter. Chapter 2: Civic and Political Engagement (pp 29-63)

** Fraser Nelson; David W Brady; Alana Conner Snibbe, 2007. “Learn to love lobbying.” Stanford Social Innovation Review; Spring 2007; 5, 2; ABI/INFORM Global, pg. 56

Supplement (not required):
5. **A focus on expressive functions (2): community theories (Feb 25)**

Frumkin, Peter. Chapter 4: Values and Faith (pp. 96-128)

**From Constituents to Stakeholders**, Minieri et al, 2005, Research Center for Leadership in Action, NYU/Wagner.

Document will be distributed in class and is available electronically at: [http://leadershipforchange.org/insights/research/files/ConstituentstoStakeholders.pdf](http://leadershipforchange.org/insights/research/files/ConstituentstoStakeholders.pdf) [also on Blackboard]

**Assignment:**

*Set # 2 journal entries due on Feb 25*

6. **A focus on instrumental functions: economic theories (March 4)**

Frumkin, Peter. Chapter 3: Service Delivery (pp. 69-95).


**Assignment:**

*Set # 3 journal entries due on March 11*

7. **A focus on instrumental functions (2): entrepreneurial theories (March 11)**

Frumkin, Peter. Chapter 5: Social Entrepreneurship (pp. 129-162).


**Assignment:**

*Set # 3 journal entries due on March 11*

March 18-Spring Break
8. Integrating theories and implications for governance (March 25)

Frumkin, Peter. Chapter 6: Balancing the functions of nonprofit and voluntary action (pp. 163-181).

** Heather McLeod Grant; Leslie R Crutchfield, *Creating High-impact Nonprofits*. Stanford Social Innovation Review; Fall 2007; 5, 4 [on Blackboard]

Assignment:

First memo due on March 28 (first Monday after last class)

PART III: Pulls and tensions in sustaining and building capacity in the nonprofit sector

9. The changing landscape of philanthropy (April 1)


Assignment:

Set # 4 journal entries due on April 1

10. Accountability, legitimacy, impact and performance measurement (April 8)

GUEST SPEAKER: Abigail Diner, Director, Planning & Measurement at Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA), http://www.bgca.org/

Collins, Jim. 2005. *(Good to Great)* Issue One: pages 4-9


Supplement: (not required)


**11. The leadership challenge: from service to social change (April 15)**

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Michelle De la Uz, Executive Director, Fifth Avenue Committee, [http://www.fifthave.org/](http://www.fifthave.org/)


**Assignment:**

*Set # 5 journal entries due on April 15*

**12. Replicating and scaling up results (April 22)**

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Danielle Scaturro, Senior Portfolio Associate, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, [www.emef.org](http://www.emef.org)

**Bradach, Jeffrey. “Going to Scale: the challenge of replicating social programs”. Stanford Social Innovation Review, Spring 2003 [on Blackboard]**


Supplement: (not required)
13. **Putting it all together (April 29)**

Collins, Jim. 2005. *(Good to Great)* Issue Five: p. 23-33. [please review the other four issues again]

[Second reading to be determined]

**Assignment:**

Bring to class a hard copy of a picture of your cognitive map of the nonprofit world (you will use this to write your second memo, and we will use your images to engage in an integrative conversation that closes the course).

14. **Exam week (May 6)**

NO CLASS. *Second memo (with picture of your cognitive map) due May 6 at noon.*