Strategic Management of Public Service Organizations  
P11.2110(001)

COURSE INFORMATION:

Wednesdays 6:45 – 8:25 PM  
25 W. 4th Street, C-20

INSTRUCTOR:

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Office Hours: By phone, Tuesdays 9:00-10:00 PM, or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES:

How can a nonprofit or public sector organization achieve its goals and fulfill its mission? How should management structure an organization to enhance its effectiveness? How can an organization motivate staff and improve its development of leadership? How do organizations successfully navigate changes in the political, economic or media climate?

In order to deal effectively with these challenges, managers need to acquire knowledge and skills in strategic management. These include conceptual and leadership skills such as the ability to accurately read changes in the external environment, define and redefine organizational purpose, handle the complex trade-offs between demand for services and resource constraints, manage ongoing relationships and partnerships with other groups, maintain the commitment and productivity of employees, and guide the organization toward continuous improvement of services and delivery systems to meet client needs.

Strategic Management aims to prepare current and future managers of public service organizations for leadership roles by focusing on the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to manage public service organizations strategically. This course is required for all students in the Public and Nonprofit Program's management specialization.

Students completing this course will have: (1) a deeper understanding of the manager’s role as leader, strategist, planner, designer of structure, and creative problem-solver; (2) the ability to identify and analyze critical short term and long term issues confronting an organization and make recommendations for strategic solutions; (3) the ability to tailor strategy to promote its implementation; and (4) a good understanding of the role of leadership in achieving strategic change in public service organizations.
**READINGS**

There are two required texts, which are available at the Bookstore or library reserve:


We also will read a series of cases. A reading packet with the following cases has been assembled:

- Linda Gibbs and the Department of Homeless Services: Overhauling New York City’s Approach to Shelter (Harvard Kennedy School, C16-07-1873.8)
- Upwardly Global: Building a Model for Assisting Immigrant Professionals (Harvard Kennedy School, C16-05-1803.0)
- Habitat for Humanity International (Harvard Business School, 9-694-038)
- The Nature Conservancy (Harvard Business School, 9-303-007)
- Oxfam America in 2002 (Harvard Business School, 9-302-124)
- Finding Black Parents: One Church, One Child (Harvard Kennedy School, C16-88-856.0)
- Jumpstart: A Culture of Performance Measurement and Management (Harvard Business School, 9-301-037)
- Mayor Anthony Williams and Performance Management in Washington, DC (Harvard Kennedy School, C16-02-1647.0)
- Meeting For a Need: Jerry Abramson and CityWork in Louisville, KY (Harvard Kennedy School, C16-92-1155.0)

Additional readings will be posted on BlackBoard. Please notify me immediately if you have any trouble downloading any of these readings.

Please do not read ahead. Readings may be changed or adjusted as the course proceeds.

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES**

Your grade in this course is based on three components. More details will be provided in class.

1. **Class Participation** – 15% - Because lively case discussions are essential to this class, your active participation is critical. You are allowed one excused absence over the course of the term – with prior notice. Any additional absence without a medical or other serious emergency will result in a loss of one-quarter of your participation grade per class missed. Besides attendance, I will be looking for you to have read and thought about the readings, contribute questions and comments, and actively participate in case discussions.

2. **Case Reports** – 35% - Three case reports, maximum two pages in length, will be due at the start of certain classes.

3. **Group Project** – 50% - Your group project will describe an organization, its environment, and the dynamics of strategic management questions facing the organization, and contain recommendations on how to resolve those questions. There will be three parts to this
assignment over the course of the term. Only the final “deliverables” – an in-class presentation and supporting 10-15 page report, will be graded.

a. **Project Outline** – Due in Class – Session 4
   - 1-2-page outline on the organization and key issues.

b. **Strategic Assessment** – Due in Class – Session 8
   - 4-5 page analysis of your organization, its history, environment and the primary strategic issues that it faces.

c. **Final Projects** – To be presented during last 2 class sessions. Supporting report due at final class session.

**IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ/REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:**
- NYU/Wagner Academic Integrity Policy: [http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/](http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/)

**COURSE SESSION CALENDAR**

**Note: NO CLASS ON SEPTEMBER 8!**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Introduction & Leadership I  
   - 9/15
2. What is Strategy?  
   - 9/22
3. Developing Strategy and the Strategic Planning Process  
   - 9/29

**DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY**

4. Strategic Assessment of the Environment  
   - 10/6
5. Strategic Assessment of the Organization  
   - 10/13
6. Developing Growth Strategies  
   - 10/20
7. Developing Cooperative Strategies  
   - 10/27
8. In-Class Workshop  
   - 11/3

**IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY**

9. Implementing Changes in Structure  
   - 11/10
10. Engaging Your Workforce in Strategic Change  
    - 11/17

**Note: NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 24!**

**STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP**

11. Strategy and Leadership II  
    - 12/1
12. Project Presentations & Discussion  
    - 12/8
13. Project Presentations & Wrap-Up  
    - 12/15
Weekly Topics, Readings, Cases & Assignments:

Session 1  Introduction and Leadership I

**Readings:**
- ACS Sample Performance Measures (BB)

Session 2  “What is Strategy?”

**Readings:**
- Kearns, 3-31
- Goldsmith, 1-25

**Case:** Linda Gibbs and the Department of Homeless Services

**Assignment:** Bring in sample mission statements

Session 3  Developing Strategy and the Strategic Planning Process

**Readings:**
- Kearns, 32-49
- Smergut, Peter. Strategic Planning on a Budget, Nonprofit World: July/Aug 2005, 14-16. (BB)
- Case: Upwardly Global: Building a Model for Assisting Immigrant Professionals

**Assignment:** 2-page response to “UpGlo” case

Session 4  Assessing Your Environment

**Readings:**
- Kearns, 50-107
- Goldsmith, 27-64
Case: Habitat for Humanity

Assignment: Project outline

Session 5 Assessing Your Organization

Readings:
- Kearns, 108-134

Case: The Nature Conservancy

Session 6 Developing Growth Strategies

Readings:
- Kearns, 135-161 (skim 162-240)
- Goldsmith, 65-100

Case: Oxfam America

Assignment: 2-page response to Oxfam case

Session 7 Developing Cooperative Strategies

Readings:
- Kearns, 241-270
- Goldsmith, 101-130

Case: One Church, One Child

Session 8 In-Class Workshop

Assignment: Strategic Assessment

Session 9 Implementing Change – Organizational Structure

Readings:
Case: Jumpstart

Assignment: 2-page response to Jumpstart case

Session 10  Engaging Your Workforce in Strategic Change

Readings:

Case: Mayor Anthony Williams and Performance Management in Washington, DC (Harvard Kennedy School)

Session 11  Strategy & Leadership II

Readings:
- Goldsmith, 169-224

Case: Jerry Abramson and Louisville, KY

Session 12  Group Presentations & Discussion

Session 13  Group Presentations & Wrap-Up

Readings:
- Kearns, 317-326