Foundations of Nonprofit Management PADM-GP.2125  
Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service  
New York University

Fall, 2012  
Professor: Sonia Ospina  
sonia.ospina@nyu.edu, The Puck Building, 3075, Ext. 87478

Class: Wednesday, 4:55-6:35 pm; Office Hours: Tuesdays 4–6 pm and by appointment

Prerequisite: P11.1020 or equivalent

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to deepen participants’ understanding of the nature and major trends of the nonprofit sector and its organizations, using theoretical lenses to explore key current debates and their implications for practice.

The course reviews broad trends shaping the sector in the context of a larger shift in governance, at a time when the lines between the private, public and nonprofit sectors are becoming more and more blurred. Understanding the legitimacy and capacity of the nonprofit sector to address collective problems in this context requires connecting the macro and micro dynamics of governance, which means linking managerial practices to broader policy debates and dilemmas.

Students in this course – whether interested in policy, finance or management, in urban planning, health, education in public and nonprofit contexts – will identify and interpret key theories, issues, debates and challenges as experienced in the practice of stakeholders of the nonprofit world, and will consider the implications for their own practice. To provide a space for this process, throughout the course students will work on developing a “cognitive map” of the sector that incorporates their perspectives and learning. A visual representation of this map and its accompanying explanatory memo represent the final assignment due at the end of the semester.

Classes involve a mix of brief lectures; discussion based on readings or written assignments; and guest speakers. The course’s readings focus predominantly on debates in the United States, but connections to international and global trends are surfaced where possible through targeted readings, guest speakers’ stories and class discussions.

Course objectives

By the end of the course students will have developed an informed perspective of selected theories about the nature of nonprofit organizations and their role in governance, as well as key issues and debates affecting the nonprofit sector and their implications for practice. To do so, they will:
• Identify key concepts and theories that explain the nature of the nonprofit sector, thus appreciating the distinctiveness of nonprofits as public service organizations operating in the private realm, in relationship to for-profits and public agencies.

• Link key trends in the US nonprofit sector to the broader international context where nongovernmental organizations are increasingly operating.

• Be able to respond to arguments and positions about selected policy and management debates associated with the present and future of the nonprofit sector and its organizations.

• Develop a cognitive map of the sector that identifies key themes associated with the sustainability of the nonprofit sector and of its organizational ecosystem.

**Required texts**

Available at the NYU Bookstore:


• Collins, Jim. 2005. *Why business thinking is not the answer. Good to great and the social sectors.* A monograph to accompany *Good to Great.*

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

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

**Course requirements**

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

• **Two memos:**
  - Memo 1 (3-4 pages): 25 points
  - Memo 2 (Visual and 4-5 pages): 30 points
  - **Total points from Memos** 55%

• **Participation in class** 10%

• **Journaling** (seven sets @ 5 pts each) 35%

For instructions on assignments, please go to Blackboard. For deadlines see course overview below.
Course Overview: Structure, Contents and Requirements

PART I: The nature of the nonprofit world

1. Introduction: the state of the nonprofit sector (Sept 5)
2. The distinctiveness of the nonprofit sector (Sept 12)
   *Set # 1 journal entries (for classes 1 &2) due September 12*

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

3. A focus on expressive functions: political theories (Sept 19)
4. A focus on expressive functions (2): community theories (Sept 26)
   *Set # 2 journal entries (for classes 3 & 4) due on September 26*
5. A focus on instrumental functions: economic theories (October 3)
6. A focus on instrumental functions (2): entrepreneurial theories (Oct 10)
   *Set # 3 journal entries (for classes 5 &6) due on October 10*
7. Integrating theories: implications for governance & management (Oct 17)

   *First memo due on Friday October 19, noon*

PART III: Issues of sustainability and capacity of nonprofit organizations

8. Shifting roles, opposing tensions and divergent views of the sector (Oct 24)
   *Set # 4 journal entries (for classes 7 & 8) due on October 24*
10. Replicating and scaling up results (November 7) **Guest – Surita Sandosham**
    *Set # 5 journal entries (for classes 9 & 10) due November 7*
11. Accountability, legitimacy and performance measurement (Nov 14) **Guest – Amparo Hofmann**
    *Set # 6 journal entries (for classes 11 & 12) due on November 21*
13. Both service and change: transforming the sector from within (Nov 28) **Guest – Michelle de la Uz**
14. Putting it all together (December 5)
    *Set # 7 journal entries (for classes 13 & 14) due on Dec 5*

[Second memo due December 14th, midnight]

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

### PART I: The nature of the nonprofit world

1. **Introduction: The state of the nonprofit sector (September 5)**

   **The Nonprofit Sector in Brief: Facts and figures from the Nonprofit Almanac, 2010** [on blackboard and sent by mail]

   **Nonprofit Inquirv Thrusts Fundraising Costs Into the Spotlight**

   **The Social Innovation Fund web site:**
   [http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/sicp/initiatives/social-innovation-fund](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/sicp/initiatives/social-innovation-fund)

   **Social Innovation Fund Awards $42-Million**

   **Instructions to prepare for class 1:**

   1. Please browse *The Nonprofit Sector in Brief: Facts and figures from the Nonprofit Almanac, 2010*, 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 it and the motivation behind it in class. *Please bring the question in writing, to hand it in.*

   2. Read “Nonprofit Inquiry Thrusts Fundraising Costs into the Spotlight” and come to class prepared to discuss your opinion of the issues at stake. What called your attention most? Why?

   3. Please go to the Social Innovation Fund site and read the general description of this Federal program. Complement this by reading the “Social Innovation Fund Awards $42-Million” article. How does, in your personal view, the Social Innovation Fund respond to the needs of the nonprofit sector today? What do you think of the SIF as the federal government’s way to support nonprofits? If you have any information about how the previous four years of SIF implementation have fared, please be prepared to share.

2. **The distinctiveness of the nonprofit sector (Sept 12)**


**Set # 1 journal entries (for classes 1 &2) due September 12**

Supplement (not required but recommended):

** Lester M. Salamon and Stephanie L. Geller and S. Wojciech Sokolowski, 2011, *Taxing the Tax-Exempt Sector: A growing danger for nonprofit organizations.* Johns Hopkins University, COMMUNIQUÉ NO. 21

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

3. **A focus on expressive functions: political theories  (Sept 19)**

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

** Bass, Gary. “Advocacy in the Public Interest”, Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership, Georgetown University, 2009, pp. 2-17


Supplement (not required but recommended):


4. **A focus on expressive functions (2): community theories (Sept 26)**

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

** Set # 2 journal entries (for classes 3 & 4) due on Sept 26

5. A focus on instrumental functions: economic theories (October 3)

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


Supplement (not required but recommended)


6. A focus on instrumental functions (2): entrepreneurial theories (October 10)

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


** Set # 3 journal entries (for classes 5 &6) due on October 10
7. Integrating theories: implications for governance & management (October 17)

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

*First memo due on Friday October 19, noon*

**PART III: Issues of sustainability and capacity in nonprofit organizations**

8. Shifting roles, opposing tensions and divergent views of the sector (October 24)


** Salamon, Lester. 2012. The resilient sector: The future of nonprofit America. In Lester Salamon (Ed.). 2012. *The State of Nonprofit America.* 2nd Edition. Washington DC: Brookins Institute. (pp. 3-39) [*Please note that the chapter has 86 pages, but we will read it in two parts, the first 36 for this class and the rest for our final class.*]


** Slavoj Zizek, on Cultural Capitalism and Charity: [*please be aware that most likely you will have to see this twice to really grasp the argument]*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpAMbpQ8J7g


*Set # 4 journal entries (for classes 7 & 8) due on October 24*

Supplement (not required but recommended)
VERY critical views of the sector:

[please note that entire issue is available but the recommendation is for this article]

** Kivel, P. 2007. “Social service or social change?” In INCITE (ed). The Revolution will not be funded: Beyond the Nonprofit Industrial Complex. (pp. 129-149).

9. The changing landscape of institutional philanthropy (October 31)

GUEST SPEAKER: Jason Franklyn, Executive Director, Bolder Giving, www.boldergiving.org


** Council on Foundations “Philanthropy on Trial”. April 12, 2011. Opening Statements and “Philanthropy on Trial Overview”


Set # 5 journal entries (for classes 8 & 9) due on October 31

Supplement (not required but recommended)


10. Replicating and scaling up results (November 7)

GUEST SPEAKER: Surita Sandosham. Senior Director, Synergos http://www.synergos.org/


11. Accountability, legitimacy and performance measurement
(November 14)

** Guest Speaker: ** Amparo Hoffman, Deputy Director, Research Center for Leadership in Action [http://www.wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/index.php](http://www.wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/index.php) (and lead researcher of the Institute of International Education commissioned evaluation)


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


(November 21)


** John’s Hopkins Global Civil Society Index (2 pages)

13. **Both service and change: transforming the sector from within (November 28)**

GUEST SPEAKER: Michelle De la Uz, Executive Director, Fifth Avenue Committee, http://www.fifthave.org/


** Electronic Hallway: Engaging traditionally disenfranchised residents in community development: Changing the terms of the struggle. Fifth Avenue Committee, Inc. (FAC). The Electronic Hallway and Research Center for Leadership in Action, 2005.


14. **Putting it all together (December 5)**

** Salamon, Lester. 2012. The resilient sector: The future of nonprofit America. In Lester Salamon (Ed.). 2012. The State of Nonprofit America. Washington DC: Brookins Institute. (pp. 39-73) [Please note that the chapter has 86 pages, we read, the first 30 earlier and we will finish it for this final class].


Additional assignment: Bring to class a hard copy of a draft of your team’s 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 to close the course).

Set # 7 journal entries (for classes 12 & 13 and 14) due on December 5th

Second memo (team project) (with final picture of your cognitive map) due Friday December 14th, noon