Syllabus

PUAD 505: INTRODUCTION TO NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT

Fall 2017 online

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4-6pm or by appointment

I. Course Description

Over the last four decades or so, the American nonprofit sector has developed into a veritable economic and social force that is increasingly drawing the attention of policy makers, the media and the public alike. The high degree of visibility that the sector has gained has come with greater scrutiny, new opportunities and challenges, and a growing awareness of the need for better management practices. In order to become effective leaders in the face of growing expectations and increasingly turbulent policy environments, nonprofit managers will not only need managerial skills, but also a firm understanding of the underlying historical, economic, and legal forces that have shaped the evolution of the sector, its special and unique contributions to society, and the distinct requirements of managing organizations on a not-for-profit basis. After placing nonprofit management into this larger context, the course introduces students to the basic functions and tasks of nonprofit management in preparation for the pursuit of more specialized courses later on. Students will learn about key concepts relating to governance and leadership, planning, service delivery and political activities, and basic principles of human resource and volunteer management, resource development, financial management and organizational collaborations and partnerships.

II. Course Format and Requirements

Format and Participation: The course will be a virtual seminar and thus requires active student participation in online discussions and projects and familiarity with the assigned readings for each week. Demonstrated familiarity with the readings as well as active participation in the discussion fora will be reflected in student evaluations.

Students will be randomly assigned to smaller working groups, which will carry the bulk of the course discussions over the course of the semester. I will periodically monitor the group discussions, but not generally intervene. Each week, each group will report out on its discussion
of the week’s readings and topic in a shared forum so that all students have the opportunity to review, and learn from, the findings of the other groups.

For our purposes, each week will start on Wednesday and last until the subsequent Tuesday. There is no specific time where everyone needs to be logged in, but students are expected to visit the Blackboard course site several times a week.

**Group Discussions starting Wednesdays:** On Wednesdays, I will usually start off the week’s topic with questions, comments or assignments. Within their groups,
- students are expected to address (where appropriate) my posting, but, importantly, contribute their own questions about reading materials, notes and comments; students are also expected to react to (and try to answer) the comments and queries of other students in the group. Keep revisiting the group discussion until the end of the week.

**General Group Reports on Monday:** The individual group discussions will not be accessible to students from other groups. Each group will therefore prepare a weekly report on its own discussions. The weekly deadline for posting these is Monday evening, 9pm to allow everyone to review and comment on the group reports on Tuesday. The report/post should cover the following four areas:

1. The group’s answers to questions or assignments from my initial posting (if any);
2. The group’s main takeaways from the readings for the week;
3. Questions that came up during group discussions regarding issues from the readings and/or regarding news items/external materials in relation to the readings; and
4. The group’s attempt to answer those questions itself.

All groups are required to work out a fair schedule for the semester, assigning responsibility for taking the lead on preparing weekly reports to individual group members. This should be a major group discussion issue in the first week!

In addition to the general class discussion, expect a small individual assignment in some weeks. This will typically be a short reflection of the readings.

A few pointers concerning evaluation:

- Participation will be evaluated both in terms of quantity and quality of contributions to all three types of discussions.
- In determining your participation grade, I will look at your postings across the whole semester as compared to your fellow students.
- Quality counts more than (mere) quantity. Higher quality contributions are typically those that go beyond personal opinion to reflect readings and other relevant literature and material in a meaningful way.
- You are encouraged to conduct web and literature searches on any given topic to enrich discussions. If you do, please disclose sources in your postings. Noting of authors and
the article, book or report and/or providing web links will do; full formal citations are
not necessary in your postings.
● Always keep in mind that a good question is at least as valuable as a smart answer.
● The small occasional weekly assignments will count towards your participation grade.

Writing Assignments. The main writing assignments are:

1. Writing Assignment I: Select a nonprofit agency or group of your own choice. You may
choose an organization you are working for or with; you are volunteering for; or in which
you are generally interested. Familiarize yourself with the agency, its activities and history.
In sessions 3-4, we will discuss various economic rationales/theories for why we have
nonprofits and why they are important.

Prepare a double-spaced 5-6 page paper (12 pt. font), comprising (a) a description of your
agency (history, size and structure, services and activities, funding) [1-2pp.]; (b) brief
summaries of the main economic rationales [2-3pp.]; and (c) a discussion of which of these
rationales, if any, seem to apply to this agency [2pp.]. In making your argument, make
specific references to, and cite, the readings as well as relevant agency information.

- The paper is due on the first day of Session 6.

2. Writing Assignment II: Prepare a double-spaced 12-15 page literature review (12 pt. font;
incl. bibliography), focused on a nonprofit management topic of your choice. Scan the
academic nonprofit and public admin journals for articles relating to your chosen topic.
Focus on the past three years (longer only if not much is written on your topic), compile a
comprehensive list (= bibliography) of all articles you identified, and choose five articles to
discuss in our review essay. See appendix for additional guidance.

- The paper is due on the first day of Session 14.

Midterm: There will be a mid-term, which is scheduled for Session 7 and will cover the readings
and discussions of the first part of the course.

III. Evaluation and Grading

Grading Scale: A+ = 98-100; A = 94-97; A- = 90-93
   B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82
   C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 0-59

Evaluation: Class Participation 25%
             Writing Assignment I 20%
             Writing Assignment II 40%
             Midterm 15%
### IV. Course Schedule Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 30</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sep 6</td>
<td>Historical Evolution and Current Scope and Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sep 13</td>
<td>Economics and Fiscal Regulation</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sep 20</td>
<td>Economics and Fiscal Regulation cont’d</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sep 27</td>
<td>Government Relationship</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 4</td>
<td>Policy Presentations</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Mid-term</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Approaching Nonprofit Management: Overview</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>Board Governance and Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Survey of Management Topics: Marketing</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Survey of Management Topics cont’d</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>Survey of Management Topics cont’d</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td><em>No Session – Happy Thanksgiving!</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>Survey of Management Topics cont’d</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Course Review and Wrap-up</td>
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Note: The schedule of weekly topics (and associated reading assignments) remains subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Adequate notice of any changes will be given in class.

**Other Important Dates:**  
- Last Day to Add/Drop (no tuition penalty): Sep 5  
- Last Day to Drop with 33% tuition penalty: Sept 19  
- Last Day to Drop (67% tuition penalty): Sept 29
V. Readings

Required Books:


!! Books for online courses are available at the GMU Fairfax bookstore, not Arlington !!

Weekly Readings:
All listed materials are required readings, unless otherwise noted. Additional material may be assigned in the course of the semester.

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<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Historical Evolution and Current Scope and Structure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Anheier, Chapters 2 (Historical Background), 4 (Dimensions I), 5 (Dimensions II)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Renz, Chapter 1 (Historical Perspectives)</td>
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<td>• De Toqueville, Alexis. <em>Democracy in America</em> (excerpt)</td>
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<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Economics and Fiscal Regulation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Anheier, pp.80-87 (civil society and social capital)</td>
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<td>• Anheier, Chapter 8 (Theories)</td>
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<td>• Renz, Chapters 2 (Legal Framework)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Government Relationship</td>
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<td>• Anheier, Chapter 16 (State-Nonprofit Relations)</td>
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<td>• Renz, Chapter 20 (Government Contracts)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Policy Trends and Challenges</td>
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<td>• The assignment for this week is this: Study the following document <a href="http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/public-policy-agenda">www.councilofnonprofits.org/public-policy-agenda</a> In lieu of group discussion, write a memo (500 words), which of the policy items or sub-items seem the most important to you and why. Post your memo on the discussion thread for this week, by Sunday and read your classmates’ memos and briefly comment on at least two.</td>
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<td>• Recommended: Anheier, Chapter 18 (Policy Issues)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Approaching Nonprofit Management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Anheier, Chapters 11 (Org Behav/Perf.), pp. 272-293; 12 (Mgt. Models), 327-336</td>
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9  **Board Governance and Leadership**

- Anheier, Chapter 15 (Governance ...)
- Renz, Chapters 5 (Board Leadership); 6 (Exec Leadership)

10-13  **Survey of Management Topics**

- **Session 10:** Anheier, Chapter 12 (Management Models), 336-351
  Renz, Chapter 13 (Marketing)
- **Session 11:** Renz, Chapters 24 (Volunteer Programs); 22 (HR Mgt)
- **Session 12:** Renz, Chapters 18 (FR); 12 (Enterprise and Ventures)
  Anheier, Chapter 6 (Giving, ...)
- **Session 13:** Renz, Chapter 14 (Advocacy/Lobbying); Abramson, A.,
  Advocate.” In Cnaan, R. & Vinokur-Kaplan, D., eds., *Cases in
  Innovative Nonprofits: Organizations that Make a Difference.*
  Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 229-242

14  **Wrap-up**

VI.  **George Mason Academic Policies**

George Mason University policies are in effect. All your work must be your own, unless the
instructor for this course authorizes collaboration, in which case you must, in writing, acknowledge
the help you have received. Presenting as one's own the words, ideas, or expression of another in
any form is cheating through plagiarism, and will not be tolerated. The claim of ignorance is no
excuse.

**Honor Code:** The Honor Code Policy endorsed by members of the Department of Public and
International Affairs relative to the types of academic work indicated below is set out in the
appropriate paragraphs.

1. **Quizzes, tests, and examinations.** No help may be given or received by students during the
taking of quizzes, tests, or examinations, whatever the type or wherever taken, unless the
instructor specifically permits deviation from this standard.

2. **Course Requirements.** All work submitted in fulfillment of course requirements is to be solely
the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appears on it. Except with permission of the
instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work
previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor, no paper
or work of another type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course
may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement in the Department of Public and
International Affairs. No assistance is to be obtained from commercial organizations that sell or
lease research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper
footnotes and attributions are required.
3. **Required Reading.** A signed pledge that reading required for a course has been completed may be made a condition of receiving credit in this course. Inability to sign the pledge when required on the final exam will result in the assignment of a grade of "I."

**App.: Additional guidance for the second writing assignment**

First, remember that the assignment really has two components

1. the compilation of a bibliography (list of references) on your chosen topic of the academic literature over the past three years; and
2. a review essay, based on five journal articles that you select from your bibliography.

The bibliography itself should be focused on journal articles; including news and other media would likely make it too cumbersome and potentially distracting. You may include other media as additional supplementary sources in your review essay, but not as a substitute for the required five journal articles. Likewise, you may use the relevant Renz chapter to introduce your topic, but it’s not a substitute for one of the 5 articles.

So, where to find the articles?
There are a number of dedicated academic journals that focus on nonprofit issues. These include

- Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly
- Voluntas
- Nonprofit Management & Leadership
- Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing
- International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing
- Nonprofit Policy Forum

In addition, many of the public administration journals (eg, PAR, J-PART) also cover nonprofit issues.
There are different ways to approach this: 1) you can go to the Journal websites and look through the table of contents for the past three years; 2) you use one of the databases provided by our library such as ArticleFirst; or 3) you use Google Scholar to search.