

POLS 4710/5710
Topics in Nonprofit Management & Leadership
Spring 2009

Instructor

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Course Description

This online course will explore a range of contemporary management and leadership issues, as they relate to the nonprofit sector. Emphasis will be on considering practical implications for the individual nonprofit organization as well as for the sector as a whole. Assignments will engage the student, individually and as member of the class learning community, in critical analysis of the issues, including their impact on nonprofits' ability to fulfill their missions. *Internet, iTunes, and e-mail access are required.*

Course Outcomes

By the end of the semester, the student will have accomplished the following:

- Demonstrated an ability to describe and evaluate several major issues related to nonprofit management and leadership -- articulating the key challenges and the stakeholders affected, and analyzing potential paths to addressing them.
- Demonstrated personal leadership in developing the class learning community.
- Demonstrated an ability to reflect on the learning experience, both in terms of understanding and applying content and evaluating individual participation and leadership.

Required Texts

Herman, R. (ed.) (2004). *The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management* (2nd edn.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Prince, R., and File, K. (2001). *The Seven Faces of Philanthropy: A New Approach to Cultivating Donors*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kunreuther, F., Kim, H., & Rodriguez, R. (2008). *Working across Generations: Defining the Future of Nonprofit Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Graded Assignments

Active participation in group knowledge building and reflection on the experience (and your individual contributions) drive the assignments for this course. You will find a healthy portion of both in the assignments that follow:

Undergraduates (4710):

Journal entries (14, 20 points each)	280
Discussions (14, 30 points each)	420
Midterm reflection	50
Class nonprofit management wiki	250
<i>Individual participation in group work (100)</i>	
<i>Your group's wiki page(s) (150)</i>	
Total	1000

A=1000-900
 B=899-800
 C=799-700
 D=699-600
 F=599 or less

Graduates (5710):

Journal entries (14, 20 points each)	280
Discussions (14, 30 points each)	420
Midterm reflection	50
Class nonprofit management wiki	250
<i>Individual participation in group work (100)</i>	
<i>Your group's wiki page(s) (150)</i>	
Case study evaluation project (120 for group report, 30 for self-assessment)	150
Total	1150

A=1150-1035
 B=1034-920
 C=919-805
 D=804-690
 F=689 or less

Journal Entries (Units 1-14)

By noon each Wednesday (first entry due January 21), you will submit a journal entry reflecting on our readings, discussions and other thoughts related to the topic at hand and the class in general. There are two required elements that must be included in each journal:

- Your reflection on the top two to three ideas from the unit's readings, lecture and/or discussions (e.g., why they stood out for you, their implications for the sector, your own experiences that match or contradict the content).
- Your reflection on your contributions to the learning community for that unit.

Journals offer a safe space to reflect on what you're learning and how you're contributing to the group learning process. While these are the "bottom line" for each entry, you are not confined to those two topics. I welcome your thoughtful analysis of this learning experience and your interaction with the content we're covering.

Each journal entry is worth a maximum of 20 points. If you submit the entry by noon on deadline day, you will receive 10 points. The second 10 points will recognize your attempt to fully address the assignment and to reflect upon your learning experience. *If you fail to address one of the two core elements described above, you will automatically lose five of the remaining 10 points.* To access your journal, go to the "dropbox" tab, then click on "journal." Please be sure to select "share with instructor," so that I will be able to access what you have written.

You may find it helpful to compose your entry in a word processing program, then paste it into the journal tool. Also, while I don't count words, I've found that journal entries of less than one single-spaced page of type usually do not offer the thoughtful reflection and analysis that this assignment requires. *Please be sure to check your spelling and grammar. (20 pts. each. Total points available: 280)*

Threaded Discussions (Units 1-14)

The threaded discussion is the heart of our group learning experience. New units open every Sunday; your instructor will make available discussion questions related to the lesson's theme. By noon each Friday, you must submit AT LEAST TWO responses (deadline A on the calendar) to one or more of the questions. By noon the following Tuesday, you must submit AT LEAST THREE additional responses (deadline B on the calendar, total of FIVE minimum for the unit) to what others have written. Each unit, a maximum of 30 points will be awarded for your participation in these discussions. If you submit the minimum two responses by noon on Friday and at least three more by noon the following Tuesday, you will qualify for 15 of those points. How many of the remaining 15 points you receive will depend upon your attempt to actively contribute to group understanding of the subject. Criteria for awarding those additional points will be:

- **Expanded understanding** – Your attempt to engage others in a meaningful dialogue that builds our group understanding of the topic being discussed.
- **Productive** – Your attempt to move the discussion forward or in a new direction that expands group understanding of the issue.

- **Respectful** – Your contributions to developing a collegial atmosphere that promotes trust and group learning.
- **Written communication** – Your appropriate use of the written language, including spelling and grammar.

Please don't panic as you read the posting directions outlined above! It's simply a routine designed to encourage and reward active participation – a routine that should soon become transparent as we get acquainted and immerse ourselves in the course content.

(30 pts. each. Total points available: 420)

Mid-Term Reflection

In unit 8, you will submit a 3-4 pp. (double-spaced) guided reflection on your experience in our learning community to that point. Your instructor will post the questions to assist you in this task in document sharing. Assessment of this reflection will be based on your completion of the assignment by NOON on Monday, March 2, and your thoughtful analysis of your experience. Please e-mail your submission to debbeck@uwyo.edu (**Total points available: 50**).

Class Nonprofit Management Wiki

Because I believe that learning is enhanced when students are engaged in authentic work that has practical implications for themselves and others, and because I believe in the value of collaborative learning (even while acknowledging the inherent messiness that comes with group work), I have adjusted the course this year to include a group wiki. Our goal in this endeavor will be to create an online resource that will be available to Wyoming nonprofits (and, of course, anyone with web access) at the end of the semester. We will discuss, in the wiki, what that means and how we will accomplish it as a group in this setting in the early weeks of the class. The wiki site is:

<http://wyomingnmgtnleadership.pbwiki.com/>

You will receive log-in instructions from PBWiki when I add your e-mail address to the list of approved authors. If you do not receive that invitation by the start of Unit 2, e-mail me.

This is the first time I have used a wiki for group work, though collaborative projects have been standard components of my courses. I have set up a tentative schedule, to ensure that progress on this project is spread across the semester. I also will be monitoring the group sites regularly and will be evaluating your *individual* participation at each of the scheduled check-in points. Your active involvement *across the project* will be a component of your wiki group grade. To accommodate what I anticipate will be more active participation (and even distribution of work), I have eliminated a final reflective assignment that had been a standard assignment.

Scheduled check-ins include (NOTE: my evaluation of your individual participation will be on what is posted by NOON each day. As with the discussions and journals, anything posted after noon will not be seen or reviewed for grading at that evaluation point.):

- Jan. 29 – Check-in on wiki and your individual group space

- Feb. 5 – Rough outline of your group’s work plan
- Feb. 19 – Topics confirmed and assignments (who’ll lead creation of what components) made
- March 12 – Group status reports (where you all are on your assignments) posted to your group wiki page
- Week of April 5 – Peer feedback of wiki spaces. You will visit each other’s wiki pages and offer constructive feedback on what you like, what is missing, what you would want to know as a nonprofit consumer of the information we will be providing.
- Week of April 26 – One last class review of what you have created. We will conduct this discussion in our course shell, so that we can avoid disrupting what should be (almost) complete and ready to be made public. Changes can be made based on feedback from your peers as you anticipate the last check-in day...
- May 4 – Wiki goes live! And I grade your final effort!

(Group wiki page[s]: 150. Individual participation across the semester: 100. Total points available: 250).

5710 Enrollees Only: Case Study Evaluation Project

Students enrolled in 5710 will be split into small groups and assigned a case study that addresses aspects of nonprofit management before Unit 6 opens on February 15. Together, you will analyze your case and prepare a group report (components will be outlined in a separate document) summarizing your findings. Your group will need to assign one person to submit the report on your behalf via e-mail by NOON on Friday, March 27. IN ADDITION, each individual student must submit (also by noon that day) a one-page assessment of his or her participation in the group process, both contributions and challenges. **(Total points available: 120 for group report, 30 for self-assessment – 150.)**

iTunes U

I’ve long recognized that text-based format of online courses does not fully accommodate the learning styles of many students. I’ve also learned (the hard way) that there can be a big gap between the ideal online environment and technological reality.

New user-friendly tools have emerged since I began teaching online, allowing us to move away from an exclusively text-based format. Podcasting is one technology that seems to offer significant potential to enhance learning, though research to date is scant. In addition to the usual text-based tools that are the foundation of my online courses, I will be incorporating audio and video lectures and updates throughout this class. The goal is to mix things up a bit, for you as the learner and me as the instructor.

Accessing Podcasts on UW’s iTunesU:

1. Open your browser to <http://www.uwyo.edu/itunesu/>

2. Choose:

iTunes U Member Access

3. Use your WyoWeb credentials to login to iTunesU.
 4. If you **do not** have iTunes installed on your computer you will now see this:

I Have iTunes

I Do Not Have iTunes

- a. Choose “I Do Not Have iTunes” and you will be taken to a website to download iTunes **for free**. *You must have administrative access to the computer you are using to access the iTunes podcasts. Please contact your instructor if you are unable to download iTunes.*
5. If you have iTunes installed on your computer you should now see:

OK

The page you requested was opened in iTunes, and you can close this window.

6. This will open iTunes on your computer.
7. You will see the University of Wyoming iTunes “Store.” Find your class on the list and click on it.
8. You will now see a list of the podcasts that are available for the class. At this time you may:
- Listen/watch the podcast directly on your computer through iTunes. This requires an Internet connection for the entire podcast.
 - Download the podcast to your computer for offline listening or transfer to a portable device to listen away from the computer.
 - Subscribe to the podcast. When you choose this option you do not have to access the iTunesU site to get new episodes of the podcast. Instead when you open iTunes it will automatically download any new episodes.

NOTE: If you are unable to download the iTunes software to the computer that you use, please let me know ASAP.

Policy on Late Submissions

Deadlines are inherently arbitrary, whenever we set them. A noon deadline fits my needs as the instructor of this course. I acknowledge that noon may not be your ideal time of day, for a variety of reasons. To accommodate both of us, I have taken care to ensure that you have at least a unit – usually far longer – to complete each assignment. Please find the routine that fits your life

demands and allows you to submit your work by these generous deadlines. Long lead times are my contribution to the effort; completing work in a timely manner is yours. (Note: early submissions are *always* welcome!)

There are no “late” journal entries. If you have not posted your journal entry by the deadline (Wednesdays at noon), you will not receive your points for that unit.

General threaded discussions: Each unit, you will receive one set of points for providing the minimum number (or more) of postings by each deadline. I will check at noon each Friday for the first set of responses. If you have not posted at least two responses by that time, a notation will be made and points deducted at the end of that unit’s discussion period. Similarly, if you have not posted the minimum five responses (cumulative) by noon on Tuesday, you will be docked points for the unit’s discussions. If you do not participate in a unit’s discussion, you will receive no points for that unit.

Evaluations and reflective assignments that are submitted late will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per day (e.g., 5 points for a 50-point assignment) for each day late.

Accommodation Process

If you have a physical, learning, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please e-mail me as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to, University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, Room 330 Knight Hall.

My Approach to Online Teaching and Learning

I believe in the potential of the online environment as a place to learn and grow. While limitations inherent in the technology exist, this platform also offers significant opportunities that match or exceed what is possible in a face-to-face setting. Among the biggest benefits is the opportunity to interact with students across Wyoming, across the country, and even around the world. Meeting online will allow us access to perspectives and voices that couldn’t be present if we were sitting together in a room on the UW campus.

The online platform provides flexibility that allows busy students to determine when/where they do their class work. Most students are fitting this class into already full lives. You will have regular deadlines for completing course assignments, but when you actually do the work in anticipation of those deadlines is up to you.

You may be wondering why our units end on a Tuesday (for discussions) and a Wednesday (for journals). I’ve done that to ensure that you have a weekend to catch up and participate more fully, recognizing that this is prime study time for adult students. It will feel odd at the beginning, but the routine should eventually become natural.

I require multiple postings in those discussions and weigh individual participation heavily in your overall grade, for it is in this interaction that we will learn and grow. Think of these discussions as the equivalent of the three hours of class time we’d be spending together in a different setting. With full lives and multiple responsibilities, it would be tempting at times to

wait until the weekend or even just before the final (Tuesday at noon) deadline to participate in these discussions. Obviously, if everyone took that approach, the interactions would fall short on the “quality” side of the equation. Having two deadlines for each discussion ensures some basic movement toward a meaningful conversation across the unit.

Additional Course Notes

A learning community of this type requires a certain level of trust to fully develop. While certain aspects of that trust must evolve over time, we can set ground rules to lay the foundation for that to occur. One core rule I have as part of that foundation: what individual members of the community say/write in our discussions remains within the group. Copying and forwarding comments made within those discussions to parties outside of our class would violate that baseline level of trust.

The best way to reach me is via e-mail. I check my account several times daily during the work unit. Naturally, you also are welcome to call my office. Barring illness or other events that take me away from my office, I intend to respond to e-mail messages within 24 hours (Monday-Friday). If I am in my office, my e-mail program generally is open. Most responses are fairly immediate.

Online courses require that instructors spell out everything in advance, predicting how each assignment will work and how the temporarily anonymous list of names will work together as a learning community. Most of the time, I come close. Occasionally, for reasons we can't predict, the way a course is designed in advance doesn't quite fit our circumstances. While maintaining the integrity of the framework presented at the beginning of the semester, I may make adjustments to improve the overall experience for you and your fellow students. I won't add unnecessarily to your workload; but I might adjust the approach to assignments, reading lists, etc., if we find that what I outlined during course development ultimately does not fit our circumstances.

To help you track your progress on class discussions and your journal entries, I will set up a partial online gradebook using that course tool. Click on “gradebook” to access your grades on these two assignments. If you have questions at any time about your standing in the course, please contact me and I will provide that information.

I do not use the “dropbox” tool for submitting other assignments (e.g., the mid-semester reflection and group presentations). All non-journal assignments should be e-mailed directly to me at debbeck@uwyo.edu. I will return assignments to you, via e-mail.

If you have never taken an online course, or have never taken a course using the eCollege platform, please spend some time exploring the tutorial. That will help you become acquainted with the various components of our website and begin your experience on the right foot.

Course Website –Technical Assistance

Technical support is available 24 hours per day by clicking the “help” link on the class home page.

Tentative Spring 2009 Calendar

Note: Links to online readings are available at: http://delicious.com/debbeck/course_readings. You'll need to look for them by title – links for both of my classes are included at that tag. These URLs are working as of the start of class. Things may move, however, during the semester. Use your favorite search engine first; if you can't find it, let me know.

Unit 1 (Opens Jan. 12) – Getting Started

Readings:

Available in Doc Sharing:

- Grant & Crutchfield. *Creating High-Impact Nonprofits*.
- Silverman & Taliento, *What Business Execs Don't Know – but Should – About Nonprofits*.

Unit 2 (Opens Jan. 18) – Management v. Leadership

Readings:

- Kotter, “What Leaders Really Do,” *Harvard Business Review*, 79(11), pp. 85-96 (in doc sharing).
- Stid & Bradach, “Strongly Led, Under-Managed,” <http://bridgespan.org/LearningCenter/ResourceDetail.aspx?id=312>. Note: download at the bottom of the page.
- Herman, Ch. 4
- Prince & File, Chapter 1, The Communitarian

Unit 3 (Opens Jan. 25) – Staff Concerns

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 23 & 25
- Williamson, Steve. *Design Principles for Engaged Workplaces*. <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/content/view/134/28/>
- Prince & File, Chapter 2, The Devout

Unit 4 (Opens Feb. 1) – Volunteer Management

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 13 & 22
- Eisner, Grimm, Maynard & Washburn, “The New Volunteer Workforce,” http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_new_volunteer_workforce/. Download available.
- Prince & File, Chapter 3, The Investor

Unit 5 (Opens Feb. 8) – Planning & Evaluation

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 8 & 14
- Prince & File, Chapter 4, The Socialite

Unit 6 (Opens Feb. 15) -- Accountability

Readings:

- Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations*.
http://www.nonprofitpanel.org/selfreg/Principles_Guide.pdf
- Prince & File, Chapter 5, The Altruist

Unit 7 (Opens Feb. 22) – Boards

Readings:

- Beck, “Boards 101” video. If you did not take the fall “Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector” course, watch the video presentation on basic board responsibilities at <http://laramieboardlearningproject.blogspot.com/2008/10/boards-101-video.html>.
- Bader, “Distinguishing Governance from Management,”
<http://www.greatboards.org/newsletter/reprints.asp>. Click on the article title to download.
- Prince & File, Chapter 6, The Repayer

Unit 8 (Opens March 1) – Fund-Raising

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 17
- Smith & Kivimaki, *How to Develop a Fundraising Plan*,
<http://www.coloradononprofits.org/fundraisingplan.cfm>. Click on “article” link at the end of the description.
- Prince & File, Chapter 7, The Dynast

Unit 9 (Opens March 8) – Legal/Ethical

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 3, 9
- Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations, *Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector*,
http://www.marylandnonprofits.org/html/standards/04_02.asp. Click on “download full text of the code”

iTunes:

- Open iTunes and click on the “Podcasts” bullet under the iTunes store (don’t worry – they’re free!). Search for “Nonprofit Law Podcast” and browse the list of shows posted. Download one or two of interest and be prepared to discuss what you learned about that aspect of nonprofit law.

March 15-21 – Spring Break

Unit 10 (Opens March 22) – Leadership Overview

Readings:

- Tierney, *The Leadership Deficit*.
http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_leadership_deficit/. Click on “Download PDF” under the abstract.
- E-RESERVE: Nanus & Dobbs, Ch. 1, “The Leadership Challenge,” 3-26.

Unit 11 (Opens March 29) – Mission & Vision

Readings:

- E-RESERVE: Jonker & Meehan, *Curbing Mission Creep*.
- Grantsmanship Center. *How to Write a Mission Statement*.
<http://www.tgci.com/magazine/98fall/mission.asp>
- National School Boards Association – *Creating a Vision*.
<http://www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/cav.html>
- TCC Group. *Mission Possible: Improving Your Organization’s Mission Statement*.
http://www.tccgrp.com/pdfs/per_art_mission.pdf.

Unit 12 (Opens April 5) – The Executive Director

Readings:

- Herman, Ch. 7
- E-RESERVE: Beck, “Who’s in Charge?” *CASE Currents Magazine*, October 1998, 30-34.

iTunes:

- In iTunes locate the podcast, “BoardStar,” and browse the list of episodes posted on the roles and concerns of the executive director. Download one or two of interest and be prepared to discuss what you learned about this key role.

Unit 13 (Opens April 12) – Multigenerational Leadership

Reading:

- Kunreuther, Kim & Rodriguez, Part I (Chapters 1-3)

Unit 14 (Opens April 19) – Multigenerational Leadership II

Reading:

- Kunreuther, Kim & Rodriguez, Part II (Chapters 4-6)

Unit 15 (Opens April 26) – Reviewing our Wiki

Readings:

- Herman, Conclusion