

Hunter College

**Philanthropy, Public Policy and the Nonprofit Sector**

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Maria Mottola

**Objectives/Learning outcomes**

In this course, students will learn:

- To place the non-profit sector in context, examining where government, business and the voluntary sector intersect and where they diverge
- To understand the history and evolution of philanthropy in the United States
- To explore the power of philanthropy – past and present – to influence public policy, and to act as both a bridge and a barrier to social change

**Description**

Today's urban affairs students must have broad knowledge of what drives and shapes the voluntary or non-profit sector. This "third sector" accounts for a significant share of the urban economy and ecology, affecting neighborhood quality of life, the distribution of resources and services, and the overall health of our urban centers. Discussion will cover topics including the origins of the US voluntary sector, the rise of faith-based and civic organizations, the distinctions between charitable giving and strategic philanthropy regulation and the development of foundations, accountability and oversight of foundations, the responsibility of government and the voluntary sector to address social issues, the growth of social entrepreneurship, and foundation support of social movements.

**Class requirements**

Students will meet once a week; class will be conducted in a seminar format. Class participation will count for a significant part of students' overall grade and students are expected to come prepared with all reading and written assignments completed for that week.

Five short essays (two, type written pages) will be required throughout the semester. In these students will analyze and explore critical issues demonstrating cumulative knowledge gained through class discussions and reading.

The final research paper (ten type written pages) will require students to choose a topic from several overarching themes including:

- contemporary philanthropic approaches to current social problems,
- examining a specific non-profit or group of non-profits and how they are supported,

- analyzing a particular social crisis and the corresponding philanthropic response, exploring public/private partnerships where government, business and the third sector attempted to address social issues in tandem

**Required reading**

Lester M. Salamon, *The State of Non-Profit America* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2003)

Frumppkin, Peter, *On Being Nonprofit* (Harvard University Press, 2002)

Course reading packet (articles will be available to be downloaded in PDF format)

**Evaluation**

Class participation	30 percent of grade
Short essays	30 percent of grade
Final research paper	40 percent of grade

**NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN FOR LATE PAPERS.**

**Attendance**

Attendance will be taken at each class. Students who miss more than three out of 13 classes will have their grade lowered by at least one full grade, regardless of reason for absence.

**Plagiarism**

Any presentation of someone else’s words, ideas or work as one’s own creation will be considered plagiarism and no credit will be given for the work. Original authors must be cited and acknowledged. Paraphrasing or summarizing or using direct quotes requires citation of an original source. Be especially cautious when using websites to find information; the web address alone is not a sufficient identification of a source and cutting and pasting from a web site without proper citation of the source will not be accepted.

**Instructor’s contact information**

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