

Organizations and Social Change

CMST 4350 Section 001

Spring 2017

8:30 – 9:20 Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Old Main 117

Instructor: Matthew L. Sanders, Ph.D.
Office: Old Main 202C / 338B
Office Hours: W 9:30 - 11:00, and by appointment (in 202C)
E-mail: matt.sanders@usu.edu
Phone: (435) 797-8409

Required Texts

- Frumkin, P. (2002). *On being nonprofit: A conceptual and policy primer*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wood, J. (2007). *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World: An Entrepreneur's Odyssey to Educate the World's Children*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Additional readings are available in PDF format on Canvas.

Course Description and Objectives

Nonprofit organizations, both in the United States and internationally, have long been agents of social change. Over the past 50 years, there has been tremendous growth and innovation in the nonprofit sector as the number of nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations has grown dramatically. This growth has made nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations a powerful economic and social force around the world. Health care, education, poverty, human rights, disease, and economic development are some of the issues that these organizations are addressing. Studying organizations and social change offers us the opportunity to enrich our understanding of how communication and organizing play out in the distinct characteristics and cultures of nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations. Our objectives in this class are to:

- Develop a theoretical understanding of the scope and purpose of nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations.
- Develop conceptual and critical awareness of international social change efforts from both nonprofit and business perspectives.
- Critically examine organizational communication concepts within the nonprofit context through scholarly research and community engagement.
- Engage in and reflect upon participation in social change/volunteer efforts with specific nonprofit organizations.
- Foster social and personal development, community responsibility, and values clarification related to social justice and social responsibility.

This course is specifically designed as a service-learning course. Service learning “is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (Service Learning Clearing House, 2006). Service learning enables the construction of academic knowledge through engagement in an organizational context. My goal is to enable you to develop practical applications for

your academic knowledge of nonprofit organizations and augment your understanding of social change. However, it is important to note that this course is not focused on practical managerial issues. The purpose of this course is to give you exposure to this area of organizational life, provide an opportunity for you to experience this kind of work, and help you think conceptually and critically about local, national, and international social change efforts.

Teaching Philosophy

I believe good teaching and learning come from engaging real-life situations and experiences. Therefore, I do not lecture extensively, and my teaching requires you to go beyond the readings as you study and prepare for class discussions. I will ask you to examine your own experiences and share them when appropriate, participate in group projects, and engage in experiential learning as we examine the nonprofit sector together. If you are not comfortable with this approach to teaching, I encourage you to find another course that will better meet your needs.

The purpose of meeting together as a class is to enable you to have experiences and conversations that you cannot get on your own. In other words, class will not be a review of the readings. Consequently, there are two kinds of work I need you to do in order for this class to be successful. First, do the reading for each class. A study guide is provided for each reading that highlights the concepts and key ideas that I want you to know and the important questions that I want you to consider. I will hold you responsible only for material on the study guides and topics discussed in class. Second, do all preparation assignments (e.g., study guides) and actively participate in class. Completing the preparation assignments and participating in class enables us to have conversations and activities that move us beyond the readings.

In addition, my goal in this class is not just for you to learn a set of concepts and discuss a set of issues. I am most interested in helping you develop a certain way of thinking about communication, organizations, and social change. It is this more sophisticated type of thinking that will come from our work together that can enable you to become a different kind of person – more capable, understanding, aware, and competent.

Course Assignments and Assessment

Grading. Please note that the grade of A is given for consistently excellent work that demonstrates an in-depth understanding of all course materials. B's are given for work that demonstrates instances of excellence with a very good understanding of course materials. C's are given for work that demonstrates a consistent satisfactory competence in course materials. D's are given for incomplete work, missed assignments, too many absences, etc. Please talk with me for further understanding of the grading criteria. If you have questions or concerns throughout the semester regarding your grades, please visit with me.

Course evaluation is based on the following assignments:

Group Research Project	25%
Service Learning Project	25%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	10%

Grade assignments will be as follows:

A	93% and above	C	73 – 76%
A -	90 – 92%	C -	70 – 72%
B +	87 – 89%	D +	67 – 69%
B	83 – 86%	D	63 – 66%
B -	80 – 82%	F	62% or below
C +	77 – 79%		

Exams (40%; 20% each)

You will have two exams. Each will consist of application and analysis questions regarding course concepts. Additional detail will be given during the semester.

Group Research Project (25%)

One of the primary goals of this course is to explore how research can inform how we understand and engage nonprofit organizations and the causes they serve. For this project, you will complete a group research project on an assigned topic. Each group will present the findings of their research to the class on assigned dates throughout the semester. Specific guidelines and instructions will be provided.

Service Learning Project (25%)

One of the key elements that define the nonprofit sector and social change is contributing to the common good. Such efforts seek to improve the conditions (in any number of ways) of those who lack resources, knowledge, access, or voice. Part of your grade in this course will be based upon a project of your choosing in which you seek to improve the common good. You will be required to spend 25 hours in a volunteer project and write a 12-page paper outlining what you did and how your participation helped you learn course concepts. You will also be required to complete weekly reflections of your experiences. Specific guidelines and instructions will be provided.

Participation (10%)

Participation is an essential component of individual and organizational success. You cannot be successful in this class or in any organization without participating. My perspective on participation is based on the “Law of the Harvest.” The law of the harvest simply means you cannot plant corn in August and expect to eat it before winter. Successful participation in this class means doing what is necessary each day to ensure success. The several elements of your participation grade are outlined below:

Group and Individual Contributions: You will do work both in groups and individually in this class. Because of the nature of the class and the importance of class and group discussion for the learning that will take place here, a significant portion of the final grade will be determined by your participation in class discussion and group collaboration. Involvement is a necessary, important, and *required* part of this course. Showing up is the first step to class participation. However, good involvement is not equal to quantity of participation in class. Rather, I am looking for quality involvement (i.e., not only engaging fully in class discussion, but also listening effectively to/with others, participating in activities, asking helpful questions, integrating the reading into class discussions, providing examples of course content).

A baseline assumption for this class is that you attend. You do not receive any kind of grade for attending class. However, I will take role, and you will be penalized 0.5% of your total course grade for every class missed. You are allowed 2 absences without penalty. Please consider these days as “personal

time off.” You can use these days when you are sick, out of town, overwhelmed with other schoolwork, or just want to go to the mountains. However, when you have used your personal time off, you have no more and each subsequent absence results in a deduction from your final grade. Therefore, if for example you miss 4 classes, you will receive a 1% deduction from your final grade. Also, please remember that attendance and participation are not the same thing.

Study Guides/Preparation Assignments: As stated in my teaching philosophy, the purpose of meeting together as a class is to have experiences and conversations that you cannot get on your own. Therefore, you must come prepared. To ensure that we are prepared to work together each day, you will be required to complete and turn in a study guide (definitions and discussion questions) or preparation assignment each class period. These study guides are not graded for content, but I record that you completed them and they count toward your participation grade, and therefore equal points on your final grade. Study guides serve as a mechanism to ensure that we can have productive discussions, and also orient you to the things I want you to know for the exam. Study guides and preparation assignments must be typed and will be turned in at the end of each class. No late work will be accepted for credit.

Tentative Course Schedule CMST 4350: Organizations and Social Change Spring 2017

Please note that this class is scheduled to meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Because of the extensive service-learning requirement in CMST 4350, we will not meet as a class on Fridays after the second week of class. That time is reserved for you to work on your projects. Therefore, the course schedule below only lists Monday and Wednesday classes after Week 2.

Week 1: Course Introduction and Overview

Monday, January 8

- Course Overview

Wednesday, January 10

- Sanders, *Becoming a Learner*

Friday, January 12

- Frumkin, Chapter 1
- O’Connell, *Values that underlie the nonprofit sector*

Week 2: Project Proposals & Case Study

Monday, January 15

- **No Class: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday**

Wednesday, January 17

- Wood, *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World* (Parts 1 & 2; through page 177)

Friday, January 19

- Wood, *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World* (Part 3; to the end)
- **Service Learning Project Proposal Due (Submit on Canvas)**

Week 3: Theoretical Frameworks

Monday, January 22

- Frumkin, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 (selected sections)

Wednesday, January 24

- Frumkin, Chapter 6

Week 4: Nonprofit Marketization

Monday, January 29

- Eikenberry & Kluver, *Marketization of the Nonprofit Sector*
- Ruud, *The Symphony: Organizational Discourses and the Symbolic Tension*

Wednesday, January 31

- Sanders & McClellan, *Being Business-like While Pursing a Social Mission*
- Sanders, *Being Nonprofit-like in a Market Economy*

Week 5: Identity in Nonprofit Work

Monday, February 5

- *Group 1 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Wednesday, February 7

- Reading TBD

Week 6: Membership in the Organization

Monday, February 12

- **No Class: Professor at a Conference**

Wednesday, February 14

- *Group 2 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Week 7: Membership in the Organization

Monday, February 19

- **No Class: Presidents' Day**

Tuesday, February 20 (Monday Class Schedule)

- Reading TBD

Wednesday, February 21

- *Exam 1 Review*

Week 8: Exam 2

Monday, February 26

- **No Class: Professor at a Conference**

Wednesday, February 28

- **Exam 2**

Week 9: Spring Break

Monday, March 5

- **No Class: Spring Break**

Wednesday, March 7

- **No Class: Spring Break**

Week 10: Meanings of Work and Meaningful Work

Monday, March 12

- *Group 3 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Wednesday, March 14

- Reading TBD

Week 11: Volunteers

Monday, March 19

- *Group 4 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Wednesday, March 21

- Reading TBD

Week 12: Organizational Socialization

Monday, March 26

- *Group 5 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Wednesday, March 28

- Reading TBD

Week 13: Management in the Nonprofit Sector

Monday, April 2

- *Group 6 Presentation*
- Reading TBD

Wednesday, April 4

- Reading TBD

Week 14: Social Entrepreneurship and Social Business

Monday, April 9

- Yunus, *Creating a World Without Poverty* (selections)
- Bornstein, *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas* (selections)

Wednesday, April 11

- Nickel & Eikenberry, *A Critique of the Discourse of Marketized Philanthropy*

Week 15: Exam 2

Monday, April 16

- Rivoli, *Travels of a T-Shirt*
- *Exam 2 Review*

Wednesday, April 18

- **Exam 2**

Week 16: Course Conclusion

Monday, April 23

- Porras, Emery, & Thompson, *Redefining Success*
- Smith, *Someone to Lean On*

Wednesday, April 25

- Course Conclusion

Final

- **Service Learning Papers Due Friday, May 4 (Submit on Canvas, by 8:30 am)**