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Board Leadership Development
PA 5108
Fall 2017
1 Credit and S/N Only

Saturday, September 16, 2017
9:00 – 4:30 pm, Hubert H. Humphrey School, Room 35

Fridays, October 20, November 3, December 1, 2017, 9-11 am
Hubert H. Humphrey School, 280B3

Nonprofit organizations are increasingly adding young professionals to their boards of directors, however, they are rarely investing in opportunities for board leadership development. Our purpose is to directly address this challenge by spending time reading about governance, and sharing among ourselves the challenges of serving on boards to improve board leadership skills.

More specifically, the practicum focuses on distinctive features of nonprofit board governance and uses research and concepts along with students' current board experiences to illuminate challenges and explore solutions to build board leadership competencies. The course will cover legal requirements of nonprofit boards, their basic roles and responsibilities, important issues of recruitment, composition and diversity, intra-board and board-staff dynamics, and life cycle changes. Other topics may be added, depending on student experiences and interests.

Teaching Method and Course Materials

The course's teaching methods will be a mix of discussion, guest speakers, and reflection related to students' experiences on boards. Students will be evaluated on their participation as well as performance on the reflection papers and final paper assignment. Because this course is largely experiential and reflective, *students' consistent attendance and participation are critical to the learning environment. Students must also complete all assignments and have regular attendance to receive credit for this course.*

We have a Moodle site for the course, and all course readings are on the site for students to download. There are no textbooks.

Some sections will have additional resources and tools to supplement the primary readings. These are not required readings.

Course Requirements

All students in this course must currently hold (or be actively seeking) a position on a nonprofit board or board committee or be a staff person who directly works with a board. The course is graded on an S/N basis. Your final grade will be made up of the following:

- Reflection papers 20%
- Final short paper 30%
- Class attendance and participation 50%

Reflection papers

No later than 1 week after the class meeting, please upload to our Moodle site a 1-page, single-spaced reflection on the readings and class discussion *relevant to your board experiences*. You must choose to write these short papers on 2 of the 3 regular class sessions (Sessions 2-4).

Final paper

Due no later than the final class or a date mutually agreed upon by the class and me, please write a 2 page, single-spaced paper that provides **a brief analysis of the strengths and challenges facing your board, based on the most important insights from the course, and a description of recommendations for how your board could be more effective.**

Class attendance and participation

Students' attendance at monthly course sessions is mandatory (absence from more than 1 class session may adversely affect your S/N grade). Additionally, a student or small team of students may lead a class session in lieu of doing one of the two required reflection papers and be responsible for summarizing the readings, preparing discussion questions and leading the discussion.

Course Topics

Session One: September 16, 2017, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm [See attached tentative agenda for this all-day session]

Introduction to board governance in nonprofit organizations: Theory, research and practice

Readings

- Renz, David O. 2010. "Leadership, Governance, and the Work of the Board." In (D.O. Renz and Associates, ed.) The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Pp. 125-156.
- Ostrower, Francie. 2007. Urban Institute's "Nonprofit Governance in the United States." Available on-line at Urban.org.
- Jeavons, Thom. 2010. "Ethical Nonprofit Management." In (D.O. Renz and Associates, ed.) The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Pp. 178-205.
- Ryan, W. Chait, R. Taylor, B. 2017 "Problem Boards or Board Problem?" Nonprofit Quarterly. Accessed August 1, 2017 <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2017/05/08/problem-boards-or-board-problem/>
- *Case: East Coast Orchestra*

Session Two: October 20, 2017

Governance roles, responsibilities, and representativeness

Readings:

- Stone, Melissa Middleton and Francie Ostrower. 2007. "Acting in the Public Interest? Another Look at Governance Research in Nonprofit Organizations." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Vol. 36(3): 416-438.
- Fredette, Christopher, Bradshaw, Patricia, and Krause, Heather (2016) "From Diversity to Inclusion: A Multimethod Study of Diverse Governing Groups." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Vol.45(IS) 28S-51S.
- Gazley, B., Change, W.K., and Bingham, L.B. 2010. "Board diversity, stakeholder representation, and collaborative performance in community mediation centers." *Public Administration Review*. Vol. 70(4): 610-620.
- Review roles and responsibilities in Renz chapter from Session #1
- *Case: Ripe for Change: Just Food's Recovery from Executive Misconduct Hubert Project, View all modules*
<https://hubert.hhh.umn.edu/RipeChange4/index.html#screen/a3b5203a-b014-4e71-918d-3e739d316126>

Resources:

Leonberger, K. and Ballow, J. (2017) "Risk and Reward: Positioning Your Nonprofit for Sustained Impact" *Nonprofit Quarterly* article accessed August 7, 2017.
https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2017/08/07/risk-and-reward-positioning-your-nonprofit-for-sustained-impact/?utm_source=Daily+Newswire&utm_campaign=e390827076-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_8_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_94063a1d17-e390827076-12285669

Session Three: November 3, 2017

Board dynamics, power and life cycle differences

Relationship between board members and CEOs/EDs

Readings:

- Stevens, Susan. 2001. *Nonprofit Life Cycles*. Long Lake, MN: Stagewise Enterprises, Inc. Ch. 3, "Seven Stages of Nonprofit Capacity," and Ch. 4, "Diagnosing Nonprofit Capacity."
- Classen, Julia. 2011. "Here we go again. The cyclical nature of board behavior." *Nonprofit Quarterly*, April.
- Reid, Wendy and Johanne Turbide. 2014. "Dilemmas in the board-staff dynamics of nonprofit governance." In C. Cornforth and W. Brown (eds.), *New Perspectives on Nonprofit Governance*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.

Session Four: December 1, 2017

Determining board effectiveness, assessing performance and community engagement

Readings:

- Brown, Will. 2005. ‘Exploring the association between board and organizational performance in nonprofit organizations.’ *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*. Vol. 15(3): 317-339.
- Freiwirth, Judy. 2014. “Community-Engagement Governance.” In C. Cornforth and W. Brown (eds.), *New Perspectives on Nonprofit Governance*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Harrison, Y. and Murray, V. 2012 “Perspectives on the leadership of chairs of nonprofit organization boards of directors: A grounded theory mixed-method study.” *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*. Vol.22 (4): 411-437
- Case: Board Facilitation and Engagement, Hubert Project, view all modules and have a chuckle! <https://www.hubertproject.org/hubert-material/393/>

Resources:

Board Checkup An online board assessment. Murray, V. and Harrison, Y. Accessed August 1, 2017 <https://www.boardcheckup.com/>

Session #1, 9:00 – 4:30
Saturday, September 16, 2017
Hubert H. Humphrey School, Room 35

Time	Topic(s)	Questions
9:00 – 10:15	Welcome and Introductions, Syllabus Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why are you taking this class? What do you hope to learn? 2. What are your expectations about being on a board? Why do you serve as a member? 3. What have been your best and worst experiences? [Confidentiality agreement among all members of class]
Break		
10:30 – noon	Conceptualizing governance Legal basics Ethical and accountability challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is governance? 2. Does the work of the board = “governance?” 3. Why have a board (beyond legal requirements...)? 4. To whom are they accountable? For what?
Lunch	On your own	
1:00 – 2:15	Roles and responsibilities What is governance and what is management?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does the research tell us that is especially important about board roles and responsibilities and the division of responsibilities between management and the board? 2. Look carefully at Ostrower’s Urban Institute study – what is most/least surprising to you here?
Break		
2:30 – 3:15	Case discussion: East Coast Orchestra	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the governance challenges here? What has led to these issues? 2. How would you begin to change the board?
3:15 – 4:00	Begin to develop your board - Board capacity building model	Work through components of Renz’s model for your board (or your “ideal” board). Share and compare.
4:00 – 4:30	Discussion leaders for sessions, wrap-up	