The nonprofit sector in the United States is estimated to be well over 1 million organizations and growing. These organizations are an important part of society and are often important for the initiation and implementation of many government programs. Nonprofit organizations continually evolve through a lifecycle and are affected by their environment.

A wide variety of trends and events require attention be given to the critical areas of nonprofit management and governance. Unique opportunities and challenges often face leaders/managers of nonprofit organizations – tensions between pursuing the nonprofit’s historical mission or responding to dynamic funding markets; the need to be autonomous and avoid mission drift while depending in large part on outside sources of financial support; and questions concerning who does the leading/managing and who does the governing because of the part-time, volunteer nature of boards.

This course focuses on distinctive features of leading/managing and governing nonprofit organizations and draws on current theories, concepts, and real-world examples to explore management changes. This course is designed to provide current and future nonprofit managers and leaders with an overview of a range of nonprofit management concerns and practices. Course projects and discussions expand learners' management skills, analytical tools, and knowledge. In this course learners are asked to take the perspectives of nonprofit leaders/managers, volunteers, board members, policy makers, donors, and clients.

As much as possible, material and cases drawn from the international context of nonprofits (or nongovernmental) organizations are included in the course. Additionally, more current readings will be supplied throughout the semester.

Generalizing about management in the nonprofit sector is difficult because the sector in the United States and elsewhere contains so many different types of “industries” and organizations. We will be sensitive to many of these differences through the use of examples drawn from a variety of industries (including the performing arts, health, and human services, and international development and from nonprofits that are large as well as those that are small and grassroots in origin and purpose).
Course Learning Objectives
1. Develop an understanding of the nonprofit sector and explore its current and potential impact on society in the United States and globally.
2. Question and analyze governance and management strategies considering call for accountability, transparency, effectiveness and impact.
3. Be conversant in some of the most important current issues facing nonprofit organizations in the United States and around the globe.
4. Enhance management skills through memo writing, opinion writing, presentations, team discussions, case analysis, issues framing and analysis.

Learning Approach
1. We will address these objectives through a mix of readings, class discussions, lecture-discussion sessions, case analysis, and presentations (as possible) from the local nonprofit community.
2. The teaching method is based on an active learning model.
3. This approach requires that students prepare by reading the substantive course readings and cases and come ready to engage in lively conversation about the materials.
4. Class sessions will not be used to summarize the readings but rather will provide the larger systemic context, integrate the materials, offer additional insights and encourage direct application.
5. Any student who finds it difficult for any reason to engage in full class participation should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure participation and optimum learning.

Required Texts and Materials
2. Other readings:
   • May be links listed in this syllabus
   • May be listed on Canvas
   • May be distributed in class

Course Requirements
1. A student must complete all written assignments (see below), attend class and participate in class discussions to receive a grade in this course.
2. Regular class attendance is essential, and the student’s final grade will be affected if they miss more than two (2) classes. Please speak with me if you must miss a class for professional or personal reasons.
3. Participate in classroom activities. This includes preparing for class sessions, contributing to discussions and engaging in case analysis and other exercises.
Assignments Portfolio

1. Complete a total of four assignments throughout the term of the course.
   - Op Ed piece 1
   - Management Memos 2
   - Reflective Essay 1

Management Memos
- The memos are based on management cases
- Each assignment asks you to:
  a. Analyze the situation
  b. Use course concepts, readings and discussions to support your work
  c. Develop feasible recommendations/approaches for actions
- Each memo assignment consists of:
  1. 1-page, single spaced memo detailing your recommendations/approaches for action
  2. And a 1-2 page “logic” memo to me that:
     - Summarizes your analytical thinking
     - Demonstrates your use of the course concepts
- These memos are designed to help you master the communications of complex information within space constraints.

Op Ed Piece
- Choose a timely topic/issue confronting the nonprofit sector (either locally, nationally, or internationally).
- The Op Ed piece must summarize:
  a. The core issue and what the debate or controversy is.
  b. What is known about the issue from research?
- The piece should offer your personal reasoned argument (also backed up by research) that advocates your point of view about the issue or controversy.
- You must use course concepts to develop your argument.
- The piece should be 1 page, single spaced in length.

Reflective Essay
- This essay should be integrative across the topics discussed during the course.
- The essay may:
  1. Be on a nonprofit governance or management topic that is particularly important to you and your career. (Examples could be fundraising in a start-up organization; creating my own nonprofit; applying a topic to a NGO, etc.)
     The essay should be 2 - 3 pages, single spaced in length
     - An analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, gaps, values statements, and so forth
     - Plan to focus your analysis only on only a few Principles.
     - Include recommendations for changes to those Principles and Practices you focused on and/or inclusion of additional Principles and Practices that reflect important trends or issues facing Minnesota nonprofit organizations.
     - You must use course concepts to back up your analysis.
     - This assessment is to be 2-3 pages, single-spaced in length.
Grading

- Course grades will be assessed by student performance on assignments and weighted as described below. **Remember there are four assignments due.**
  1. Classroom Participation 15%
  2. Memo #1 20%
  3. Memo #2 20%
  4. Op Ed Piece 20%
  5. Reflective essay 25%
- Examples of grading rubrics will be included on the Canvas course site.
- **Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized 5 points for each 24-hour period that it is late**
- **Incompletes** are strongly discouraged, rarely given, and only granted after a student and I have mutually agreed upon a timetable for completion of all course work.
- No **extra credit** is allowed.
- I will give students who receive a grade of lower than 78% on a written assignment a **rewrite option.** I will re-grade the new written assignment up to a maximum grade of 78%.

Disability Services

- It is the University’s policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disability conditions (for example, physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements.
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services and their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located in Suite 180, McNamara Alumni Center, and 200 Oak Street. Staff can be reached by calling 612/626/1333 voice to TTY. Additional information is available at [http://www.ds.umn.edu](http://www.ds.umn.edu)

Mental Health

- As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol or drug problems, concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experience.
- You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health web site at [http://www/mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www/mentalhealth.umn.edu)
COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that this schedule is flexible and we may move ahead with topics or stay on a topic for a longer period of time. Keep reading according to the syllabus and turn in assignments as scheduled.

WEEK 1:
9/5
TOPIC(S):
INTRODUCTION
Class member introduction
Course introduction
Syllabus review
What do we know?
What do we want to know?
Background to the course and the sector

ACTIVITIES:
1. Class discussions

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Written background on self - place in personal folder
2. Consider keeping a “Management Journal” or assemble a “Management Toolkit” during the semester.

SECTION 1. THE ROLE(S) OF NONPROFITS IN SOCIETY

WEEK 2:
9/12
TOPIC(S):
THE DISTINCTIVE CHALLENGE
How unique is the nonprofit sector?
Legal basics
Scale and scope of United States nonprofits

TEXT READINGS:
1. Managing Nonprofit Organizations (MNO): Chapters 1, 3 and 4

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
4. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/08-041.pdf
ACTIVITIES:
1. Guest Lecturer
2. Class discussion

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

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WEEK 3:
9/19
TOPIC (S):
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND THEORIES OF THE SECTOR

TEXT READINGS:
1. None

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
2. Why Has the Number of International Non-Governmental Organizations Exploded since 1960? [https://escholarship.org/uc/item/97p470sx](https://escholarship.org/uc/item/97p470sx)

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion session

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions
WEEK 4:
9/26
TOPIC:
The Importance of the Environment
Understanding how the environment influences and is influenced by nonprofits

TEXT READINGS:
1. None

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion session

ASSIGNMENTS: Assignment #1 Management Memo is due
1. Review Case: The Right to be Human: The Dilemmas of Rights-Based Programming at Care-Bangladesh” (A) and (B)
Submit a management memo to address the following questions:
• What was the overarching social and political context in which SHAKTI operated?
• Who were the major stakeholders in the case?
• How did Enamul and CARE – Bangladesh’s views differ regarding each stakeholder?
• What options were available to Enamul at the end of the (A) case?
• What is your assessment of these?
• Which should he pursue?
• At the end of the (B) case, what is your assessment of the overall success or failures of Enamul and SHAKTI’s endeavors?
• Did they change CARE? How?
Follow the format for writing Management Memos
WEEK 5:
10/3
TOPIC:
The Ethics and Accountability Challenge
Self- Regulation and the Nonprofit Sector

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 2

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion session
2. Brief case studies of ethical conflicts in fundraising
3. Comparing and contrasting principles, standards/criteria

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions
SECTION 2. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

WEEK 6: Assignment #2 Management Memo is Due
10/10

TOPIC:
STRATEGIC THINKING; STRATEGIC PLANNING

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 5

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0c43/154fa38143aa078a8b1513ef02ecf3afcd53.pdf
2. Strategic Thinking. (no date) University of Florida. Training and Organizational Development.
http://training.hr.ufl.edu/resources/LeadershipToolkit/job_aids/strategic_thinking.pdf
https://ssir.org/articles/entry/when_good_is_not_good_enough
https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/brochure_4.pdf
https://books.google.com/books?id=q6YdAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA169&lpg=PA169&dq=bROW%2C+aNALYZING+OPERATING+DOMAINS&source=bl&ots=WVLhFS7KLP&sig=1d2x7m5wCB2fa9G6-WNLYGpn2cg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjngbf7iNvYAhWoS98KHb93DG1Q6AEIIzA#v=onepage&q=bROW%2C%20aNALYZING%20OPERATING%20DOMAINS&f=false

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture – in class discussion sessions
2. Critic sample strategic plans

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Assignment #2 Management memo due
2. An ethical dilemma at the Cumbrian Cultural Endowment Foundation (a)
3. Read the case.
4. Craft the memo following the instructions within this syllabus.
   2. The memos are based on management cases where a leader is facing a changing situation and must make important decisions.
   3. Analyze the situation
   4. Use course concepts, readings and discussions
   5. Develop feasible recommendations for actions
   6. Each memo assignment consists of:
   7. A 1- page, single spaced memo to an actual person
8. And a 1-2 page “logic memo to me that:
   - Summarizes your analytical thinking
   - Demonstrates your use of the course concepts
   - These memos are designed to help you master the communications of complex information within space constraints.

WEEK 7:
10/17

TOPIC:
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 7

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
   https://books.google.com/books?id=DiTTDAAAQBAJ&pg=PT804&lpg=PT804&dq=Stephen+Smith+management+the%20challenges%20of%20government%20contracts&source=bl&ots=1RjUH
   PK4gw&sig=aNqBBUDxMVSOLgXhMvekXXz4JDo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiL6ai
   1kNvYAhVOST8KHeK_DQoQ6AEIMzAC#v=onepage&q=Stephen%20Smith%20manage
   ment%20the%20challenges%20of%20government%20contracts&f=false

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture – class discussion sessions
2. Look at the revenue portfolio of a nonprofit organization you are interested in.
   a. Is it diversified?
   b. What vulnerabilities, if any do you see related to dependence on funding sources?

ASSIGNMENTS
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

WEEK 8:
10/24

TOPIC:
FINANCIAL RESOURCES
Philanthropy
Social Enterprise/Commercial Income

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapters 3 and 6

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture-class discussion sessions
2. Guest Lecturer

ASSIGNMENTS: Assignment #3 due: Op Ed piece due

Week 9:
10/31
TOPIC:
INTERNAL CAPABILITIES
Marketing and Communication
Human Resources

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapters 8 and 11

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture-class discussion
2. Guest Lecturer

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

Week 10:
11/7
TOPIC:
GOVERNANCE AND THE WORK OF THE BOARD

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapters 9 and 10

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
3. Renz, David (2007) “Governance and the work of the board.” This article is adapted from a chapter published in Philanthropy in the U.S.: An Encyclopedia (Dwight Burlingame, ed. published by ABC-CLIO 2004  

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture-class discussion sessions
2. Mini-Case Studies – in class
3. Guest Lecturer

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

WEEK 11:
11/14
TOPIC:
INTERNAL CAPABILITIES
Evaluating Effectiveness

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 13

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
http://www.drugs.indiana.edu/spf/docs/Evaluation%20Flash%20Cards.pdf
http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/CMR5603_07_Ebrahim_e3316477-8965-4287-be95-04642982b638.pdf

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion sessions
2. Case: Modifying Programs at New Tomorrow  

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

12
SECTION 3. NEW IDEAS AND CRITICAL ISSUES IN NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

WEEK 12:
11/21
TOPICS:
Hybrids
Social Enterprise
The Rise of the 4th Sector

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 17

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
   https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_nonprofits_of_2025

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion sessions

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to summarize the readings and offer follow-up questions

WEEK 13:
11/29/18
NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14:
12/5
TOPICS:
NONPROFIT ROLE IN PUBLIC GOVERNANCE
Domestic and international perspectives/

TEXT READINGS:
1. None

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
   https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/aacc/91f69399cede95cb0344d5df2d581203a18b5.pdf

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion sessions
ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class with your own research and questions about nonprofits role in governance.

WEEK 15: ASSIGNMENT #4: REFLECTIVE ESSAY IS DUE
12/12

TOPICS:
THE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE FOR NONPROFITS

TEXT READINGS:
1. MNO: Chapter 17 review

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

ACTIVITIES:
1. Lecture- class discussion sessions
2. Wrap-up course content

ASSIGNMENTS:
Come to class prepared to discuss your leadership challenges.
Reflective Essay is due