
Instructor: Dr. Jamie Smith
Class Time: Weekends
Class Location: 224 Learning Center

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Course Description

Catalog:

Prerequisites: graduate standing or permission of instructor. Examines how policy influences nonprofits and how nonprofits impact policy. It will address the role of nonprofits in public policy and how laws shape nonprofit involvement by reviewing state and federal policy including legal forms, fundraising regulations, and employee compensation. Students will gain an understanding of nonprofit activities within a basic legal framework.

This course largely broken down into three parts. The first weekend will cover the historical place of nonprofit organizations in America from the early days to their formalization in the American institutional process. The second weekend will cover the current policies that govern nonprofit organizations as well as how and why these policies emerged. The final weekend will be devoted to the ways in which nonprofit organizations can influence the law.

Learning Objectives

1. Assess the pervasive nature of nonprofit organizations in American Life
2. Examine the legal history of charitable enterprise
3. Evaluate how the nonprofit sector is legally structured to establish familiarity with the basic principles of nonprofit formation, operation, and dissolution.
4. Distinguish between the various types of nonprofit ventures, understanding the benefits and limitations of each.
5. Analyze how legal requirements shape nonprofit governance to understand the basic requirements for tax-exempt status and differentiate between nonprofit ventures and activities that are and are not tax exempt.
6. Assess the legal and ethical responsibilities of nonprofit corporate directors
7. Distinguish unethical behavior in nonprofit organizations
8. Demonstrate why ethical behavior is critical in nonprofit enterprise

9. Appraise how nonprofits govern themselves
10. Defend how boards divide work and how they organize themselves to accomplish their public service missions

Textbook and Course Readings

Boris, E. T., & Steuerle, C. E. (2006). Nonprofits & government: Collaboration & conflict. The Urban Institute. ISBN-13: 978-1442271784

Pekkanen, R. J. (2014). Nonprofits and advocacy: Engaging community and government in an era of retrenchment. JHU Press. ISBN-13: 978-1421413495

Additional readings may be required and will be made available on Canvas or distributed in class.

Assignments

Individual Participation

Active participation is one of the best and most reliable ways to demonstrate your understanding of ideas and concepts discussed in the readings and presented in class. My role (as the instructor for this course) is to provide you with a conceptual framework and to facilitate your learning. My role is not merely to deliver factual material to passive learners. The exercises and discussions in this course are intended to provide you with an opportunity to test your knowledge, formulate ideas and strategies, respond to strategic management dilemmas, and get feedback from peers. Therefore, weekly class attendance is necessary, but not sufficient for an excellent class participation grade.

Discussion Questions

Students, who are not leading discussion, will submit two discussion questions by noon on the day of class. These questions should be well developed and related explicitly to the readings. The instructor will choose from and order these questions to direct the discussion around the readings in class. When a given question is discussed, the student who submitted the question will be asked to read and explain/expand on the question. The class will then discuss the questions. These questions will be submitted via Canvas.

Policy Brief

Students are required to write a policy brief (3-4 pages, single spaced, ~1,500) that provides a concise summary of recent developments regarding a specific policy issue. The brief should be structured as:

1. Title and two sentence summary

2. 1-2 paragraphs summarizing the pertinent information and ideas, providing a background to the policy problem
3. 2-4 paragraphs outlining the current policy debate, present alternatives and challenges about the chosen policy issues as presented in the media and/or research reports (e.g., summarizing 4-5 sources on challenges this poses to nonprofits).
4. 1-2 paragraphs on recommendation for action or evolution of the policy options.
5. Complete bibliography

The brief should provide balanced information targeting government or nonprofit decision makers with a clear focus on a narrow and specific topic. The brief's goal is to inform on a recent trend or challenge to make the reader take a position. You are expected to demonstrate your skills of critical thinking. The brief should be concise and to the point. You do not need to do original research (e.g., gather original data or perform high level data analysis). For evidence, use sources such as *Nonprofit Quarterly*, the Nonprofit Advocacy Matters archive of the National Council on Nonprofits, the Urban Institute, research reports and regular news media like the New York Times. Policy Briefs are due Saturday April 29th at 11:59 pm. Briefs will be discussed (e.g., informally presented) in class the following day.

Final Paper

You will submit a **final paper** of about on a substantive theme explored in the course (or something very closely related). You are granted complete freedom in selecting the topic of your paper but you are encouraged to consult me regarding your choice. Some examples of feasible paper topics include: a comparative analysis of nonprofit-public policy interaction in two states or in the US and another country, expand your policy brief into a final paper, trace the development of a particular policy related to or regulating the nonprofit sector.

As a part of this assignment, you will submit a brief **paper proposal**. The proposal should concisely summarize the central question, the goal and possible structure of the paper, along with the scholarly literature you plan to cover (with preliminary bibliography of 3-5 non-required texts). If you plan to conduct original data analysis (you are not required to) include your data source. Proposals are due on April 16th by 11:59 pm. This entire proposal should be no longer than one (1) single-spaced page.

The final paper may be completed either individual or as a group. The requirements for the paper differ based on the option chosen. If you chose to complete this option as an *individual*, your final paper must be roughly 8-10 single spaced pages. *Groups* of three to four (3 to 4) students must complete a paper that is roughly 15 to 18 single-spaced pages. As groups will have more people (and thus resources) to their disposal, there is an expectation that group papers will be more in-depth than those completed by individuals.

As a part of this project, individuals and groups will be expected to present a brief overview of their final paper on the last day of class. This can take a couple of forms. The paper presentation may take the form of a traditional in class presentation of roughly 5-8 minutes OR may take the form of a 3-5 minute video.

Summary of Graded Assignments*

Outcome/Deliverable	Type	Description	Value
Participation	Individual		15%
Discussion Questions	Individual	Two questions for each day	10%
Policy Brief	Individual	5 page single paged brief on issue of your choice	15%
Paper Proposal	Individual/ Group	A brief proposal covering the topic to be explored in the final paper	5%
Final Paper	Individual/ Group	A final paper on the topic presented in the paper proposal	40%
Presentation	Individual/ Group	In class presentation or video highlighting the key points of the final paper	15%

*The instructor reserves the right to add, remove, or reorder these assignments at her discretion and in accordance with university policy

**As a substantial part of the final grade for this course relies on group work, students will be given the opportunity to individually evaluate each group member's contribution to the final product after each assignment.

Information and Reminders

Accommodation Policy

The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations in this course are requested to speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course.

Religious Observance Policy

It is the policy of the University of Oklahoma to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. If

class conflicts with a religious observance, please notify me at least 24 hours before the class in question so we may schedule appropriate make up assignments.

Internet Information

This course will make use of Canvas. Internet access and access to this platform are required for success in the course. Slides, revisions to the syllabus, readings, announcements, changes to this syllabus, etc. can all be found in the appropriate folder on the Canvas page for this course.

The primary means of communication for this course will be email. Be sure to check your OU-issued email regularly.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

All assignments are due in the Canvas at the specified time. Late assignments will be accepted for four days after the due date with a late penalty of 10 percent assessed for each day, class or otherwise, that it is late. Illness, schedule conflicts, family problems, computer issues are not valid reasons for late assignments—plan/work ahead and back up your work!

Make-up exams will be given only in extraordinary circumstances. Students are permitted to take a make-up exam/presentation only in the case of documented illness, death in the family, and approved university activity. Notification of missed exams must be received prior to the due date.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Professors have to obey rules of honest scholarship, and so do students. For more information about academic integrity, including a statement of what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism, see OU's "A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity" at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/>. When writing about, paraphrasing, or quoting the work of others, you must give proper attribution in the form of parenthetical citations and quotation marks around directly quoted phrases or sentences. Using work in this class that you have completed for another class is plagiarism. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism. Any work not resulting from the student's own efforts will result in a grade of 0 and be turned in to the property authorities. This includes plagiarized papers, copied assignments, cheating on exams, or any other dishonest activity.

Course Schedule*

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
Overview and History			
4/14	Rise of Nonprofits	Salamon, L. M. (1994). The rise of the nonprofit sector. Foreign Affairs, 109-122.	Discussion Questions
4/15	The Historical Political Place of Nonprofits	- Chapter 5 of Democracy in America - Clemens, E. (2006). The constitution of citizens: Political theories of nonprofit organizations. The nonprofit sector: A research handbook, 2. - Hall, P. D. (2010). Historical perspectives on nonprofit organizations in the United States. The Jossey-Bass handbook of nonprofit leadership and management, 3-41.	Discussion Questions
4/16	Nonprofits and Civil Society	Nonprofits and Government Chapter 1 and 2	- Discussion Questions - Paper Proposal due 11:59pm
Public Policies Toward Nonprofits			
4/28	Accountability and Trust	- Fleishman, J. (1999). Public trust in not-for-profit organizations and the need for regulatory reform. Philanthropy and the nonprofit sector in a changing America, 172-197. - Adger, W. N., Brown, K., Fairbrass, J., Jordan, A., Paavola, J., Rosendo, S., & Seyfang, G. (2003). Governance for sustainability: towards a 'thick' analysis of environmental decisionmaking. Environment and planning A, 35(6), 1095-1110.	Discussion Questions
4/29	Regulating Nonprofits	Nonprofits and Government Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6	- Discussion Questions - Policy Brief Due by 11:59pm
4/30	S-OX Does regulation work?	- Ostrower, F., & Bobowick, M. J. (2006). Nonprofit governance and the Sarbanes-Oxley act. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. http://www.urban.org/url.cfm. - Irvin, R. A. (2005). State regulation of nonprofit organizations: Accountability regardless of outcome. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 34(2), 161-178.	Discussion Questions
Policy Advocacy			
5/5	Advocacy Overview	- Nonprofits and Advocacy Introduction - Nonprofits and Government Chapter 10	Discussion Questions
5/6	Advocacy in Practice	- Nonprofit and Advocacy Chapter 1, 2, 5 - Breakouts for Chapters 6-10	Discussion Questions

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
5/7		• Presentations	
5/10			Final Paper Due
*The Instructor reserves the right to add to, remove, or reorder these assignments as she sees fit and in accordance with university policy.			