COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to advance students’ understanding of the management and operation of organizations in the nonprofit sector. In particular, it examines issues unique to the governance and administration of nonprofits, including charity law, strategy, innovation, technology, capacity, nonprofit accounting, leadership, and network management. Students will learn both the theories and practical techniques required for an effective manager in nonprofit organizations through selected cases.

Furthermore, this course implements an experiential learning project funded by Gallant Ho Experiential Learning Centre. The project provides an innovative learning model for students to utilize multimedia tools to promote social values created by nonprofit organizations or social enterprises. It gives students the opportunity to implement their managerial skills and tools and produce a multimedia project that champions a newly founded nonprofit or social enterprise in Hong Kong. The final projects will be featured in Youtube and Facebook. Through working with the partner organizations, students also have the opportunity to recognize challenges faced by the nonprofits, understand the social impacts of their actions, communicate their knowledge through creative forms, and improve their leadership and teamwork skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Acquire knowledge from the nonprofit literature and to understand issues involved in the governance and management of nonprofits.
2. Adopt the necessary skills and analytical techniques in coping with various management challenges in nonprofit organizations.
3. Apply management knowledge to real-life problem-solving in managing nonprofit organizations.
READINGS
There is a course package and three recommended textbooks. The course package is available at the front desk of the PPA department. All case reading materials are in the course package. You can also find some of the readings online. You are not required to buy those textbooks. But, they are useful for students who want to advance their knowledge in nonprofit management.


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Course Participation: Students are expected to read the weekly assignments and to participate actively in class and case discussion.

2. Case Memo: Each student will be expected to analyze TWO real world cases and to discuss each of the cases in class. Each student will prepare a ONE-page written case memo for each case individually. All memos are due before the class time (see case discussion dates). You can turn in the memo in class or by email. Note that no late memo will be accepted. (See guideline for case memo writing in Appendix A).

   Due Dates: Case I Memo (Oct. 11); Case II Memo (Nov. 1)

3. Group Project: Students will work in a team of five or six. Each team will be placed with one partner organization. Students will work closely with the partner organizations examining critical issues and identifying the social values created by their partner organizations. Students will create an 8-10 minute multimedia film to promote their partner organizations. The multimedia project should incorporate innovative and persuasive arguments based on research, solid evidences from the academic curriculum, field visits, and observations of the operation of the nonprofits. The final project will be featured on Youtube and Facebook for
The multimedia project serves as a learning showcase tool integrating nonprofit management enquiries with experiential learning.

Due Date: Multi-media film (Nov. 8)

4. Tutorial Participation: Each student will be expected to participate and contribute to the discussion of their group project during the tutorial sessions. There will be a total of SIX tutorial sessions and students will be graded on their contribution in tutorial activities in FIVE of them (ONE session will be field visit). Students will turn in a two-page reflective journal (see tutorial handout for details).

Due Date: 2-page journal (Nov. 30)

5. Final Exam: Final exam will be a one week take-home, in an essay format, and comprehensive.

Grades will be based on a composite of the assignments above. The weighting of these assignments is:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial Participation/Journal</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Memo</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Topic 1** (Sep. 6): The Development of Nonprofits


*Example:*


**Discussion Questions:**

- What is social origin theory? How can it be used to compare nonprofit sectors in different culture, political, and economic contexts?

**Topic 2** (Sep. 13): Managing Nonprofit for Values


**Discussion Questions:**

- What are the failure theories? How can they be used to explain the differences between nonprofits and public/private organizations?
- What are the major functions of nonprofits?
- What is the strategic triangle? How can it be used to help nonprofits to achieve their missions?

*No Class Sept. 20*
**Topic 3 (Sep. 27): Nonprofits in the Social Media World**


Example:

Changemakers ([https://www.ashoka.org/changemakers](https://www.ashoka.org/changemakers))

Kiva ([http://www.kiva.org/start](http://www.kiva.org/start))

**Discussion Questions:**

- What are the pros and cons of using social media for nonprofits to promote social changes?

**Topic 4 (Oct. 4): Integrating Missions and Strategies**


**Discussion Questions:**

- What are the limitations and strengthens of those decision-making tools (strategic triangle and logic model)?

**Topic 5 (Oct. 11): Case I: L plus H (Module 1, 2 and 3)**

**Discussion Questions:**

- Using the Logic Model to answer the following question: Can Mr. Charles Chong’s decision about setting up a knit wear company as a Community Interest Company achieves the social impacts that his organization intends to create?
• Recall building a logic model requires you to obtain information on input output, outcome and impact of setting a knit wear industry.
  ▪ To answer the question, whether building a Community Interest Company (CIC) factory can create social impact, you need to figure out the process of creating value through this strategy, and think about the assumptions and conditions to be fulfilled in order for this strategy to work.'
  ▪ Hits: you might not need all material from the case to build a logic model, be selective.

**Topic 6 (Oct. 18): Nonprofits and Government Relationships**


**Discussion Questions:**
• Who should be responsible for delivering public goods and services?
• How do Young and Van Slyke conceptualize the relationships between nonprofits and government?

**Topic 7 (Oct. 25): Collaboration and Networks**


**Examples:**

**Discussion Questions:**
• What are the major factors that affect an effective collaboration?

Class Simulation: Collaboration Gone Awry: A Struggle for Power and Control
over Service Delivery in the Non-Profit Sector

Discussion Questions:

- Should this collaborative initiative be funded? In other words, given the current circumstances, should the group continue their collaboration effort?

**Topic 8 (Nov 1):** Case II: A Field Divided: Challenges in Collaboration

Discussion Questions:

- As the social service seeker, May was telling her story of finding a social service agency in her community to resolve her day-to-day problem, it unfolds a more complex issue resulted from failures of collaboration among a group of social service agencies in her community. What essential factors for effective collaboration are missing among those social service agencies?

**Topic 9 (Nov 8):** Student Presentations of Video / Discussion on Promotion

Discussion Questions:

- What are the core values that the video delivers?
- What are the best ways to distribute the video? (Who? Where? How?)
- How will you evaluate the success of your promotion?

**No Class Nov. 15 & Nov. 22** (Teams should use these two weeks for promoting the videos and their partner nonprofits)

**Topic 10 (Nov 29):** Student Sharing of Outcomes/Briefing and Review

Discussion Questions:

- What are the outcomes of your promotions? Success? Failures? Improvements?
- What are the most valuable lessons learned from this experiential projects?

**Take Home Final: Dec. 2~ Dec. 7**
Appendix A

POLI 3098_1 Nonprofit Management Memo Assignment Guidelines and Tips

Length, Style, and format

➢ One page (no more than 450)
➢ Memos must be typed on 8.5 X 11” or A4 paper with margins of one inch on all sides.
➢ Paragraphs should be single-spaced
➢ You may use any standard conventions for the layout of your memo, including numbering, bullets, indentation, etc. Do address the memo to your audience at the top of the page. See the attached sample for a suggested layout.

Getting help

I strongly recommend that you exchange your memos with other students in the class for proofreading and editing before you submit them. You can help one another with suggestions for clarity and content of your assignments.
TO:  
FROM:  
DATE:  
RE:  

Introduction

To reiterate, in your first paragraph you need to take a stance. One distinguishing characteristic of a memo is that a summary of the document’s conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) is placed right at the beginning of the memo.

Remember that the purpose of the document is generally to provide your audience advice about a particular decision, project, or policy stance. Thus, you open the memo by summarizing the problem or situation about which you are writing, and by providing a very brief summary of the conclusions/recommendations you have reached during your analysis.

Situation and Analysis

The rest of the memo is designed to support the conclusions or recommendations you present.
The second paragraph should give the strongest reasons for the recommendation you chose. The third paragraph will address the strongest reasons against your recommendation. You need to thoroughly justify your decision by addressing its strengths and weaknesses given the facts of the case. Also, be specific. You can not possibly justify a decision such as “we will make a ton of money if we do x.” Instead, you should estimate how much money would be made with option x and the obstacles in the way of doing so. Finally, do not include extraneous information, like case background or flowery introductions. This merely distracts from the substance of your argument.

Future Issues or Implementation

Due to the limited information that you are given, what are other potential issues your audience should be aware of in order to make better decision? Or, you could predict some obstacles when implementing your recommendations so that your audience knows what to expect.
Sources: NYU Student Guideline in Memo Writing & More Tips on Writing a Policy Memo by Peter Wilcoxen

- **Begin by stating the purpose of your memo.** The first sentence should identify the problem you are trying to solve or remind the reader of your assigned task. Effective ways to begin the first sentence include: “The purpose of this memo is…” or “In response to your request, this memo provides recommendations on…”

- **Summarize your conclusions in the introductory paragraph.** A memo is not a mystery novel, nor is it a joke—do not wait until the end to deliver the punch-line! Since your reader may be too busy to read the entire memo, you must get your main point across immediately. Journalists refer to this style of writing as an “inverted pyramid”—the most important information appears at the top and is followed by less important details, so that the reader can leave the story at any time and still understand the main point.

- **State the basis for your conclusions in the introductory paragraph.** Briefly summarize the considerations you took into account or the methodologies you used to arrive at your conclusions. For example, you might explain that your recommendations are “based on analysis of leading theories on education policy as well as empirical evidence on student performance in charter schools.

- **State winner and loser.** It's very important to figure out who would be helped and who would be hurt by a proposal. After all, the point of memo recommendation is to solve problems and thereby make people (at least some people) better off. No analysis is really complete until the winners and losers have been identified. In addition, knowing who gains and loses can be very helpful in anticipating how the process will play out.
  - Bad: "Eliminating rent control will benefit an average tenant by $75."
  - Problem: Too little detail; it sounds like everyone gains when really some tenants lose.
  - Better: "Eliminating rent control will cause rents to rise by $600 for 500 tenants currently in rent controlled apartments. However, it will also bring 300 new apartments on the market. The average value of each new apartment to its tenant will be $1,200 above the amount the tenant pays in rent."

- **Begin each subsequent paragraph with a thesis statement.** If you would like to be especially clear, write the thesis statement in **bold text.** The reader should be able to understand the entire outline of your argument by simply scanning the thesis statement of each paragraph. Ideally, the thesis statement should be concise enough to fit on a single line, or at most two lines. It should be action-oriented and written in an authoritative voice. An example of an effective thesis statement is: “Investing now in infrastructure improvements is desirable for both economic and political reasons.

- **Support the thesis statement in the body of the paragraph.** Supporting information might include more detailed arguments, statistics, citations, and so forth. After writing each paragraph, read it over carefully, asking yourself if every part of that paragraph supports the argument in the first sentence; if not, it does not belong there.

- **Be concise.** Flowery language has no place in a professional memo. If you find that a paragraph is taking up half a page or more, it is either not worded concisely enough or it contains multiple ideas that should be split into separate paragraphs. A typical single-spaced memo has five or more paragraphs per page, as this one does. (Professional memos are typically single-spaced, but if your professor asks for a double-spaced memo, be sure to follow instructions!)
Bad: "Some people will react to the increase in the gas tax by taking taxis, buses or other public transportation since those forms of transportation are now somewhat less expensive than using a private automobile. However, some people may not be willing or able to make such a change: they might live far from public transportation or might have medical conditions that made it necessary for them to drive. These people will continue driving but they would generally be likely to take fewer trips than before the tax."

Problem: Far too many words for the basic points being made!

Better: "A higher gas tax would reduce the amount of driving by people who can easily use other forms of transportation. People who can't switch would continue to drive, although they would probably drive fewer miles than before."

Avoid jargon. Use plain language that an intelligent nonspecialist can understand. When using technical language is unavoidable, provide a brief definition. For example, you might say “some health-reform advocates support the creation of a public option—a government run health insurance agency that would compete with private health insurance companies.”

Stay objective. To keep your arguments as objective and unemotional as possible, avoid referring to yourself in the first person (“I believe”, “I think”, “I feel”, etc.) unless absolutely necessary, and if you are the sole author of your memo, definitely avoid the imperial “we”!

Use active verbs. The passive voice obscures responsibility for making and acting on recommendations, and often makes writing unnecessarily wordy. Instead of saying “it is recommended that a reduction in U.S. military forces in Afghanistan be taken under consideration,” simply say “consider reducing U.S. military forces in Afghanistan.” (See the earlier point about using an authoritative tone.)

Anticipate counterarguments. Presumably your recommendation is not the only potential course of action, so explain why it is preferable to the alternatives. Do not pretend that your recommendation is perfect; acknowledge its imperfections but explain why the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. For example, you might begin a paragraph with: “Opponents argue that a cap-and-trade policy will not reduce carbon emissions significantly; however…”

Provide “road signs” as needed. It may be useful to provide brief headers for each of the memo’s main sections, especially if your memo is more than two pages long. A memo on housing policy, for example, might include the header Options for Funding Low-Income Housing Initiatives.

Cite your sources. As with any written assignment, you must not claim credit for other people’s original ideas. If your professor provides instructions on how to format citations, follow their instructions. Otherwise, it is typically acceptable to cite sources within the text of a professional memo. For example, you might say “… as reported in the Congressional Budget Office’s 2010 Budget and Economic Outlook.” Alternatively, if you have a large number of sources, you may put citations in footnotes or endnotes. Never include a “bibliography” or list of references at the end of a professional memo, however.