UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS
Masters
Spring 2018  PADM 5700-002
Capacity Building in Nonprofits
Location: Chilton 274
Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Instructor: Lisa Dicke, Ph.D.
Office location: Chilton Hall, Room Chilton 274
Office hours: Tuesday 11:00 – 1:30,
               Wednesday 3:30 – 5:30, or by appointment
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Course Contents

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of one of the most important
topics in nonprofit management—building organizational capacity. Subtopics include
building organizational capacities, board development, human resources including
volunteers, and fiscal management. The course will also provide students with
opportunities to develop skills in each of these areas that can be used to help assess the
need for, and build capacities necessary for effectively managing contemporary nonprofit
organizations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION:

The Department of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Disability
Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable
accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written
accommodation request (obtained at the Office of Disability Accommodation, Room 322A Union),
to the instructor if an accommodation is needed. No requirement exists that accommodations be
made prior to completion of this approved University process.
**Texts—Required**


**Other required readings are listed on the syllabus [RR]**

**Assignments and Course Expectations**

Reading assignments, written assignments, lectures, class discussions and case studies will be used to facilitate mastery of the course content. Grades will be based on examinations, written assignments, and on the quality of class participation. Examinations and written assignments will test demonstrated knowledge, integration, and evaluation of the course material. The midterm and final examinations will consist of essay questions.

**Exams**

Exams (midterm and final) will consist of essay questions. Exam questions will address all reading materials assigned, as well as classroom lectures and discussions. The final will cover materials assigned in the second one-half of the course—it is not comprehensive.

**The final grading for the course will be based on the following:**

- Midterm: 20%
- Final examination: 20%
- Class Participation: 10%
- Article Presentation: 5%
- Weekly Blackboard Posting: 15%
- Capacity Building Assignment (Group project): 30%

**Class Participation**
Students are expected to have completed all readings prior to class. Failure to meaningfully participate in the classroom discussions will result in a significant reduction in your classroom participation score. Attendance is not the same as participation.

**Weekly Blackboard Posting**

Students will post a 150-200 words weekly to the Blackboard discussion area involving information related to the Capacity Building Assignment. Each posting should identify specific activities he/she is involved in and reflections on the processes, group activities, benefits, challenges, networking outcomes or information related to the substantive public service area (associated with the organization’s mission) as researched by the student. Postings are due by noon on the Tuesday prior to class.

**Individual Article Assignment and Presentation**

Each student will present an article or chapter to the class and the presentation will constitute 5% of the overall course grade. In addition, 20% of the class participation score will be related to the discussions that involve the weekly readings (adding to the discussion of the articles presented by your classmates). The individual articles will be taken from readings assigned on the syllabus. Presentations should include a brief overview of the content of the article and the relevance of the information for the contemporary nonprofit manager. Presentations will be time-limited (6-8 minutes), so clarity is of the essence. Your presentation should include a summary the key points presented in each article followed by a discussion of the material and the approaches taken by the authors. Everyone is expected to have read the material and participate in the classroom discussion that follows the presentations. (Article assignments will be made the first evening of class).

**Capacity Building Assignment**

Each student will work in a group with a nonprofit organization to assist with a capacity building project for the agency. Projects will be approved by the instructor but may include a special event, an assessment (such as an analysis of a volunteer management program or a succession plan for board or staff members), a grant related project, the construction of an organizational plan, an advisory report on how to strengthen a particular area of a nonprofit organization (fund development, social media use, leadership, volunteer management), or other related project (subject to my approval). Whatever improvement project you work on will include a component that allows you to do research into best practices. These require citations and documentation to substantiate. Projects should not be overly time consuming but challenging (meaning that you must contribute in a meaningful way and you also must control the scope of it). All project groups and project must be presented in writing to me no later than February 7 for approval prior to finalizing any agreement with an agency. This activity constitutes a service learning opportunity which means that you will not be compensated for your service, but rather, your project is a gift. On March 7 a draft of what has been completed will be submitted by the group. Students will prepare a copy of the project for the agency and turn in one to me for grading on April 25, 2018. We will discuss student progress on the projects throughout the semester.
Policies and Procedures

**General expectations:** I expect students to attend all course sessions: complete all required readings prior to class time, participate in class discussions and case studies, and complete the written assignments, mid-term and final examinations.

**Attendance:** Attending class sessions is an important part of the learning process. Although you will not lose grade points specifically for nonattendance, you will certainly lose opportunities to earn credits for participation in the classroom.

**Examinations:** Students must take examinations when they are given to the class; makeup exams will be scheduled only for extraordinary circumstances. No one can be excused from an exam without notifying the instructor prior to the scheduled exam. **If you miss an exam, I will assume that you have chosen to receive a "0" for your grade on that exam. The final exam is mandatory; no one will receive a passing grade without having taken it.** The final exam will not be returned to students but may be reviewed by the student after the instructor has submitted final grades.

**Withdrawals:** Students have the right to withdraw from courses. I urge you to maintain your commitment to this course, however, if you decide to withdraw, please see the instructor.

**Behavioral Expectations:** Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result minimally, in a request to leave the class.

**Academic Honesty:** I sincerely trust and expect that academic dishonesty will not be an issue in this course. Unfortunately, it has become a very serious problem on many campuses. The purpose for including the following statement is to prevent any misunderstandings about what constitutes academic dishonesty and what I will do if I should encounter or seriously suspect it. An act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero on the assignment, a possible failing grade in the course and a recommendation of additional disciplinary action. In the event of suspected academic dishonesty, I may substitute a quiz, examination or assignment for the work in question. These are my guidelines concerning what constitutes a violation of ethical standards for course work. Any of these violations will be considered academic dishonesty and treated as such. These guidelines are in addition to any University-wide guidelines concerning academic honesty or dishonesty that may be in effect.

1. **Cheating.** The giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance on any academic work.

2. **Plagiarism.** Presenting the language, structure or ideas of another person or persons as one's own original work. Please note that plagiarism will not be tolerated! Failure to
reference is plagiarism. Referencing the ideas of others over and over again without adequate analysis or discussion of the material also constitutes plagiarism. Massive amounts of quoting and referencing without adding to the discussion is plagiarism. The idea in using the work of others is to help YOU show your reader the movements, arguments, findings or other concerns associated with the topic. You are expected to bring something to the table yourself, however! An analysis requires you to understand the work of others and evaluate their contributions so that you may then contribute to our understanding of the topic using your own thought processes. PLEASE SEE ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT PLAGIARISM or what constitutes an appropriate analysis!

3. **Falsification.** Any untrue statement, either oral or written, concerning one's own academic work or the academic work of another student, or the unauthorized alteration of any academic record.

4. **Original work.** Unless specifically authorized by the instructor, all academic work undertaken in a course must be original, i.e., it must not have been submitted in a prior course, “borrowed” from the workplace or the Internet, or be submitted in a course being taken concurrently.
Course Outline:
Students are responsible for any changes made to the outline or assignments announced in class.

**Wednesday, January 17: Welcome and Introduction**

Distribution of syllabus, overview of the course, assignment of articles for student presentations. Topic: Nonprofit organizations and the management of them

**Wednesday, January 24: Nonprofit Organizations**


**Wednesday, January 31: What does it mean to “Build Capacity?”**


**Guest speaker:** Catherine A. Oleksiw, PhD, PCC, coach, consultant and owner, Measured Transitions LLC.

**Wednesday, February 7: Collaborations**


**Wednesday, February 14: Building Capacity in Boards**


Wednesday, February 21: **Building Capacity in Boards**


**Wednesday, March 7 -- Draft of group project due and MIDTERM EXAM**

**Wednesday, March 14—Happy Spring Break!**

**Wednesday, March 21: **Human Resources, Volunteers and Succession Planning**


**Wednesday, March 28: **Capacity Building in Different Types of NPOs**


Wednesday, April 4: **Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data to Change the World**


Wednesday, April 11: **Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data to Change the World**


Wednesday, April 18: **Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data to Change the World**

**Book:** Kanter and Paine, *Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data*, Chs. 8-12

Wednesday, April 24: **Nonprofit Sustainability**


Chapters

Wednesday, May 2: **Managing Financial and Fiscal Capacities**


Wednesday, May 9 - **FINAL EXAM**