

Master's in Public Administration
Nonprofit Fundraising and Development – Pre-Class Syllabus

Instructor – M. Elaine Vradenburgh | vradenbm@evergreen.edu

Winter Quarter 2019 – 2 Credits

Feb 22, 5-9pm | Feb 23 9am-5pm | Feb 24 9am-5pm

SEM 2 D2107

Course Description

How can we cultivate a philanthropic tradition within our organizations that builds more resilient and equitable communities? What fundraising models foster those outcomes?

Philanthropic giving is a foundational part of our American tradition and culture. In this course, we will consider what values underpin this tradition in the United States and explore how philanthropy can unintentionally reinforce the very power dynamics that it is trying to address. We will examine a variety of fundraising models and approaches, with an emphasis on grassroots fundraising, and consider the barriers fundraisers face when trying to transform social structures.

Class time will consist of a combination of seminar discussion, group work, films, and guest speakers. Students will engage in a variety of skill building exercises, as well as have the opportunity to engage in community-based learning by exploring a fundraising program in their own community. At the end of class, students will walk away with both practical skills in grassroots fundraising, as well as a critical lens through which to consider their work as fundraisers, organizers, and/or nonprofit administrators.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will understand:

- Why donors give and how to create and sustain a *culture of giving* within an organization.
- The relationship between mission, vision, and values and strategic fund development.
- Standard tools, methods, and models to raise money.
- Key elements of a successful fundraising appeal – in person, online, or through the mail.
- Power dynamics that can serve to either support or undermine the social change that the sector is trying to steward.

Primary Reading Materials

Please complete the following reading by our first class – 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 22nd:

- **Strategic Fund Development**, 3rd edition, by Simone P. Joyaux. Our text will be available at the Evergreen bookstore. If you choose to order it online, please be sure you get the 3rd edition.

- We will also read *select essays* from **The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Nonprofit Industrial Complex and Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History**. Essays will be available to download from our class Canvas site.

Credit Requirements (2 credits)

This is an intensive class which will meet for one weekend block only. Please read the entire syllabus and plan accordingly to be sure you can accomplish the pre-readings and assignments and attend each day. To receive full credit for this course, students must do the following:

- 1) Complete all the assigned readings.
- 2) Attend all classes (entire weekend intensive).
- 3) Actively participate in class discussions, exercises and group work.
- 4) Complete all written assignments, including in-class assignments, and a final presentation.
- 5) Consistent with MPA program requirements, students will prepare a self-evaluation and an evaluation of their instructor. Students should include in their self-evaluation at least one important lesson or idea that has influenced their thinking relative to the courses learning objectives.

About the Instructor

Elaine Vradenburgh is a multimedia storyteller, educator, and community engagement strategist with over fifteen years of experience working in the public sector. She has managed organizational communications, outreach, marketing and fundraising for arts and human service agencies in Washington and Oregon, and has coordinated community-based and service learning programs at high schools in Oregon and New Mexico. Elaine is skilled at collaborating with communities and organizations to gather and share stories in a variety of formats to amplify underrepresented cultural traditions, histories, and social movements. Her work has been presented through exhibits, video and audio productions, and academic papers. In 2016, Elaine founded Window Seat Media, an Olympia-based nonprofit that uses the arts, and story in particular, as a catalyst for social change. Elaine holds a Master's degree in Folklore from the University of Oregon and a BA in Cultural and Community Studies from The Evergreen State College. She has taught in Evening and Weekend Studies at Evergreen since the 2016-17 academic year.

Assignments

Students are expected to complete the following assignments by the due dates listed below:

- 1) YOUR GIVING STORY | approx. 2 pages | Due Friday, February 22 at 5pm

Read the "Seven Faces of Philanthropy" and "Values" handouts on the course canvas site. Write a two-page (approx.) paper sharing your story around giving. Consider what motivates you to give, or not give. What "face of philanthropy" most characterizes you? What values underpin

those motivations or that face? Where do those values come from – your family of origin, your community, your cultural heritage? What is the relationship between your attitude toward giving and your attitude toward money?

2) SOCIAL ISSUE PAPER | approx. 5 pages | Due Sunday, March 10 at 5pm (via Canvas)

Joyaux suggests: “Without a doubt, the nonprofit/NGO sector plays a critical role in creating and sustaining democracy. Through voluntary association, citizens gather together and question, rally, and act.” Select a current issue of interest to you where people in your community are gathering together to “question, rally, and act.” How and why did the issue surface? What role do local nonprofits play in mobilizing that community and how, specifically, does the nonprofit’s fundraising program help or hinder the goals of that movement. Explore a specific concept or idea put forth in one (or more) of our readings. Focus your paper on a specific issue and a specific nonprofit in your community seeking to address that issue. Draw conclusions based on a combination of a literature review of the nonprofit’s communications materials (web, print, social media), an interview(s) with key staff members at the organization, your reading for class, and any additional source material you need to describe the history and dynamics of the issue.

3) FUNDRAISING APPEAL + THANK YOU LETTER | 2 pages | Due Sunday, February 24 at 9am

Write a one-page fundraising appeal and corresponding thank you letter – for the organization you are researching for #2 above – that is based on best practices materials/samples reviewed in class and posted on our Canvas site.