

**PA771 Research on Nonprofit Organizations**  
**SYLLABUS**  
**Spring 2008**

Revised 1/18/08

**Class Sessions: Tuesday 3:00 – 5:45pm; Burlington Labs 02111**

**Instructor: Richard Clerkin**

E-mail: [rmclerki@ncsu.edu](mailto:rmclerki@ncsu.edu)

Office: Caldwell 227

Phone: (919) 515-5037

Office Hours: Monday 4:00 – 5:00, or by appointment

**Texts:** *The Nonprofit Sector, A Research Handbook (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, edited by Walter W. Powell & Richard Steinberg, (2006), Yale University Press

**Articles:** Available on Vista.

**Course Objective:**

By the end of the course, successful students will:

- know the major theoretical foundations of nonprofit organizations, voluntary action, and the nonprofit sector.
- be able to discuss and critique the competing theoretical foundations of nonprofit organizations, voluntary action, and the nonprofit sector.
- be able to identify emerging areas of research concerning the nonprofit sector
- be able to choose a theoretical base for their own research on the nonprofit sector.
- demonstrate awareness of potential sources of data with which to undertake their research.
- develop an understanding of the scope and depth of the academic literature on nonprofit organizations, voluntary action and the nonprofit sector to be able to teach undergraduate and graduate courses on the nonprofit sector.
- produce a paper that is the front end of a research article.

**Overview of Course Requirements and Grading:**

- Reaction papers (30% of grade)
- Discussion leadership (20% of grade)
- Book abstract/oral critique (5% of grade)
- 10-12 page final paper (25% of grade)
- Presentation of final paper (10% of grade)
- General class participation (10% of grade)

**Detail of Assignments:**

Students are expected to read all assigned material and take an active part in class discussions.

- Readings (55% of grade): Student responsibility for reading material is divided into three parts:

- Reaction paper (30% of grade): Students are required to complete two reaction papers. In these papers (3 pages each, double-spaced), the author critically reacts to a reading assigned for a given week. The paper should briefly review some of the key ideas explored in the reading, connect them to ideas offered in other course readings, and present a critique of the ideas. Proper citation of others' work and complete references must be included in the paper. Students have a choice about which weeks to write the three papers; they may submit three papers, with the one receiving the lowest score being dropped from the calculation of their final grade. *These papers are due at the beginning of the class session for which the readings are assigned.*
- Discussion Leadership (20% of grade): Each student will have three opportunities to lead a class discussion. One of these will be an opportunity to lead a discussion based on literature in their area of research; two others will be on either assigned topics or serving as a discussant during the presentations of final papers.
  - § Assigned materials (5% of grade per role): Discussion leaders should present an overview of the readings, introduce discussion questions and issues for examination, and facilitate the discussion. Discussion leaders should submit about 7 discussion questions to the class the **Friday** prior to their leadership role.
  - § Panel discussant (5% of grade): Discussant introduces the papers in our student conference and provides a 5-7 minute presentation on the session's papers. This presentation includes discussion the linkages between the papers as well as a critique of the authors' works.
  - § Student led class period (10% of grade): Students are responsible for assigning the class 3-4 key articles on their paper topic. Students will have about 75 minutes to facilitate a discussion on these readings. The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: 1) to educate the class about your research interest, 2) to generate feedback from the class about the direction of your paper and/or to discuss theoretical or methodological issues you are encountering as you develop your paper.
- Summary/Presentation of a book on nonprofit research (5% of grade): This assignment involves two tasks. 1) A one-page abstract of the assigned book. 2) An oral critique of the book. The oral critique is a 10-15 minute presentation that presents the class with an analytic assessment of the worth of the book, not merely a rehash of the abstract distributed to the class.
- Final Paper (35% of grade)
  - Paper (25% of grade): The final paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced) is due at the end of the semester. The purpose of this paper is for the students explore a research question they develop on their area of interest of the nonprofit sector. In this paper, the author should introduce a research question, review relevant literature, propose two or three hypotheses or propositions related to the question,

and present arguments for the hypotheses or propositions. The format of the paper should be that of either: 1) empirical papers published in top-ranked journals, minus the sections on methodology, results, and findings or 2) a theory-only article ending with propositions to be tested by other scholars. The final paper should be treated as a polished draft of a potentially publishable manuscript.

- Presentation (10% of grade): Students will give a 12 minute presentation of their final paper. The presentations are modeled after conference paper sessions. There will be time for discussion of papers after each panel session. In an effort to make the experience as “real as possible,” members of the faculty and students with research interests in nonprofits will be invited to attend the session.

### **Attendance and Late Assignments:**

While I expect all students to attend each class period, life sometimes intervenes in our plans. Notify me as soon as possible if you will be unable to attend a class period. Excessive excused absences (i.e., more than 1) and any unexcused absences will result in a full-letter grade reduction in your final course grade. While absences can be excused, late assignments are not. Each day an assignment is late will result in a half-letter grade reduction in the assignment grade.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. Student must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. [http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/offices/affirm\\_action/dss/](http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/offices/affirm_action/dss/)

## **Academic Integrity**

Students should familiarize themselves with the university policies regarding academic policy found in the Code of Student Conduct ([http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/student\\_services/student\\_discipline/POL11.35.1.php](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/student_services/student_discipline/POL11.35.1.php)) that apply to this class. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please feel free to discuss it with me.

### **To: PBS and Graduate Students in Public Administration Courses**

**Public Administration faculty members have observed that some students may be unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty. The following statement (used with permission) describes a range of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty**

“Plagiarism, or presenting another’s works or ideas as one’s own, is a form of stealing. The instructor reserves the right to examine any source used by the student before giving a grade on a paper, and to give an “incomplete” in the course if necessary, to allow time to obtain sources. Students should be prepared to show source material to the instructor for the purpose of verifying information. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

“Academic dishonesty includes the following offenses:

- 1) Claiming as your own work a paper written by someone else (including unpublished papers).
- 2) Turning in a paper that contains paraphrases of someone else’s ideas but does not give proper credit to that person for those ideas.
- 3) Turning in a paper that is largely a restatement in your own words of a paper written by someone else, even if you give credit to that person for those ideas. The thesis and organizing principles of a paper must be your own.
- 4) Turning in a paper that uses the exact words of another author without using quotation marks, even if proper credit is given in a citation, or that changes the words only slightly and claims them to be paraphrases.
- 5) Turning in the same paper, even in a different version, for two different courses without the permission of both professors involved.
- 6) Using any external source (notes, books, other students, etc.) for assistance during an in-class exam, unless given permission to do so by the professor.”

Kendra Stewart et al., Columbia College

Further details on academic integrity are in NC State University’s Code of Student Conduct ([http://www.ncsu.edu/student\\_conduct](http://www.ncsu.edu/student_conduct)).

The public administration faculty has agreed that violations of academic integrity must have consequences. Consequently, students who cheat (behaviors cited in point 1 and 6 or similar behavior) may receive at least an F in the course; other forms of dishonesty, similar to those covered in points 2 through 5 may result in at least a 0 for the assignment.

**Course Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Things Due</b>
1/15/2008	The nonprofit academic: Journals/Positions/Agendas	Strom (2005), Boris(1998)	
1/22/2008	History of American Nonprofits	Hall(NPSRH), Boylan(1984), Berkeley(1985), Netting(2005), Hammack(2002)	
1/29/2008	Defining Charity and Philanthropy	Robbins(NPSRH), Curti(1990), Carnegie(1889), Knight(1992)	<i>The Commons: New Perspectives on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action</i> , Roger Lohmann
2/5/2008	Religion and Religious Nonprofit Orgs	Smith & Sosin(2001), Jeavons(1998), Chaves(1999), Clerkin & Gronbjerg(2007) Skocpol(2000), Wood&Hougland(1990), Cadge & Wuthnow (NPSRH)	<i>Saving America? : Faith-Based Services and the Future of Civil Society</i> , Robert Wuthnow
2/12/2008	Charity/Philanthropy/Wealth	Havens et al (NPSRH), Ostrander & Schervish(1990), Odendahl(1989), McCarthy(2004), Brooks(2005), Steinberg&Rooney(2005), Horne, et. Al(2005)	<i>The foundation: a great American secret: how private wealth is changing the world</i> , Joel L. Fleishman.
2/19/2008	Theories of the Sector	Steinberg(NPSRH), Clemens(NPSRH), Smith&Gronbjerg(NPSRH), Brody(NPSRH), Simon, et.al(NPSRH), Dimaggio&Anheier(1990), Roelofs(1995), Estes&Alford(1990)	
2/26/2008	Governance	Minkoff&Powell(NPSRH), Jeavons(1992), Brown(2005), Toepler(2005), Brudney&Nobbie(2002), Taylor, et. Al(1996),	<i>Boards that make a difference : a new design for leadership in nonprofit and public organizations</i> , John Carver
3/4/2008	<b>No Class (Spring Break)</b>		
3/11/2008	Data in Nonprofit Research	Brint(2002), Chaves(2002), Gronbjerg(2002), Lampkin(2002), Salamon(2002), Gronbjerg&Clerkin(2005)	Developing a list on nonprofit journals

3/18/2008	Research Preview	Students spend 20 minutes discussing papers	Abstracts for ARNOVA; Annotated Bibliography
3/25/2008	Accountability	Clerkin(in progress), Ebrahim(2005), Kearns(1994), Tuckman&Chang(NPSRH),	<i>Making nonprofits work : a report on the tides of nonprofit management reform</i> , Paul Light
4/1/2008	Nonprofits in Community/Nonprofits and Government	Deschenes, et. al.( NPSRH), Schlesinger&Gray(NPSRH), Jones(1987), Gronbjerg(1998), Salamon(1993), Ehrenreich(1997), Nathan(1996)	<i>Social capital and welfare reform: organizations, congregations, and communities</i> , Jo Anne Schneider.
4/8/2008	Student Led 1/2	Students assign 3-4 Key Articles	Johnnie/Kristin
4/15/2008	Student Led 3/4		Dawn/Allyson
4/22/2008	Student Led 5/6		Michael
4/29/2008	<b>Paper Presentations</b>		
5/1/2008			<b>Final Paper Due 4:30 pm</b>