

HODC 3352: PHILANTHROPY & SOCIAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Spring 2023 / 3 credit hours / T/Th 9:30am-10:45am Room: Payne 105

Professor: Beth Shinn / TA: Sally Gairhan

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Most people think that Americans are generous because we are rich. The truth is that we are rich, in significant part, because we are generous. — Claire Gaudiani

Every man goes down to his death bearing in his hands only that which he has given away. — Persian proverb

The true friend of the people should see that they be not too poor, for extreme poverty lowers the character of the democracy. — Aristotle

The hell with charity, the only thing you'll get is what you're strong enough to get. — Saul Alinsky

I can testify that it is nearly always easier to make \$1,000,000 honestly than to dispose of it wisely. — Julius Rosenwald

This course provides you an opportunity to engage in the practice of philanthropy while learning about charitable giving, social problem solving, and the philanthropic and non-profit sectors. Working in teams, you will distribute \$25,000- \$50,000 or more (donated by the Philanthropy Lab, with totals depending on bonuses you earn, to local non-profits. To do so, you will analyze community needs, consider approaches to social problems, investigate the effectiveness of organizations in solving them, and make plans to evaluate your gifts in the future. At the same time, you will read about different approaches to philanthropy including both philosophic approaches and organizational structures in the philanthropic sector and critiques of that sector.

The course is part of the Community Leadership and Development track of the HOD undergraduate program, which prepares students to “find solutions to human problems in organizations and communities.” The program, rooted in the philosophy of American Pragmatism and John Dewey, emphasizes linking academic knowledge and theory to personal and professional practice through tackling organizational and community issues and concerns.

The class will be run as a seminar, with much of the work done in student teams. The semester will be divided into four sections: I. Problem identification: How do community needs and student values shape selection of problems? II. Approaches to change: How do different problem definitions imply different solutions? What is the evidence for different approaches? III. Evaluating organizations: How do the efforts of non-profit organizations working in the area fit with theories of change? How effective and efficient are the organizations? How would the organizations use a donation to address the problem? How should their efforts be evaluated? IV. Decision making. Students will serve as the Board of Directors of the HOD Philanthropy Lab Foundation to decide how and where to donate the funds, but you will actually make a series of decisions throughout the term.

Prerequisites

In the same or a prior semester, students must have taken courses in group processes, organizations, and systematic inquiry/research methods (HOD 1300, 2100, 2500 or equivalent), so that they are prepared to work in teams and to analyze both social problems and the organizations that aim to deal with them. Exceptions made with permission of the instructor.

Office Hours

Professor Shinn: Wednesdays 3:30-5:00. **Sally Gairhan**

Course Structure

- Part 1: Issue Identification. Class members will be broken up into teams based on interest in particular issue areas (4 to 5 groups expected). Each team will identify problems and/or opportunities in their area and research conditions within Nashville. For example, if your broad area is education: dropout rates; college admissions; gifted and talented programs; opportunities for advanced study; absenteeism; suspensions; teacher turnover; test scores; performance differentials by neighborhood, race, gender, etc.). Individual students will pitch their preferred issue to the team based on a firm empirical grounding in the area selected, and teams will select an issue to pursue.
- Part 2: Approaches to Change. Teams will conceptualize potential interventions to address problems or promote opportunities in the areas identified. What interventions align with different definitions of the problem or opportunity: services or advocacy? prevention or remediation? Incremental or transformative change? individual options or organizational or systems-level interventions? What is the evidence for the different theories of change? What is the role of the non-profit sector with respect to the problem? What leverage

might philanthropic dollars have? Individual students will pitch particular approaches to the team, based on the evidence they assemble, and teams will select one or two to pursue.

- Part 3: Evaluating Organizational Approaches. Drawing on the issue identified and the conceptual approaches to addressing this problem, teams will identify a small pool of local organizations (defined as anywhere you are willing to visit) that fit the selected approach, analyze these organizations to determine those likely to have the greatest impact. You will conduct site visits with three to four finalists, and select an organization to propose to the class for funding. Teams will prepare briefing books that reflect their decision and all the stages that led up to it. Teams will also decide how to evaluate the success of their grant.
- Part 4: Decision-making. Students will make decisions at several stages in the class (e.g., choosing the problem or issue to pursue), and at the end will make final decisions about how they, acting as a Foundation, will allocate their resources for maximum impact on the issues identified. Groups will make presentations to the class to make the case for funding based on their research and analysis, and the class will decide.
- Throughout: We will discuss and critique the philanthropic sector.

Texts for Course

We will use one textbook with supplemental readings to be posted on Brightspace:

Brest, P. & Harvey, H. (2018). *Money well spent: A strategic plan for smart philanthropy*. Stanford University Press

Assignments and Grading

Course assignments are structured around group projects, although some assignments will be completed by individuals. For group assignments, group members will be asked to assess individual contributions to the group product, and the group grade *may* be adjusted accordingly.

1. Each student will initial the grant letter and either register and complete the pre-course survey or decline registration (1%, ungraded). **Due January 19.**
2. Each student will submit a paper, pitching a *particular problem or opportunity* to their group, with documentation of a) the magnitude of the problem or scope of the opportunity and changes over time; b) the importance of this issue (using whatever criteria you choose); c) who is affected; and d) who is being served. **Due January 26.** [15% of grade] [Individual assignment]
3. Each student will submit a paper considering at least two alternative conceptual approaches to the issue that their GROUP has selected for focus, each of which is

embodied by a local organization. How does each approach define the issue, and how do different definitions imply different courses of action? What is the theory of change? Include a logic model for each approach. Cite high-quality evidence from the research literature. Indicate where you must make assumptions for lack of direct evidence. Note – you are NOT expected to contact organizations for this assignment. The sole point of identifying organizations is to make sure that your approach exists. You should use the research literature to evaluate approaches, although you may, optionally, include evidence from organizational websites. **Due February 9** [20% of grade] [Individual assignment]

4. Groups will prepare for visits to organizational finalists. To do so, a) describe your criteria for evaluating organizations b) develop an interview guide, including questions you want to answer for all organizations, as well as specific questions for each finalist organization. **Due February 23.** [5% of grade] [Group assignment]
5. After the group narrows the list of organizations under consideration each student will participate in AT LEAST one in-person or virtual group visit to an organizational finalist. [Ungraded, but member participation will influence the final grades of the briefing books. Visit reports are included in an Appendix to the briefing book.]
6. The group will prepare a *briefing book* describing the need or opportunity identified (with evidence), the definition of the issue and the theory of change (with evidence), the funding strategy, the evaluation of organizational finalists (with evidence), the recommended organization, why it was selected, how money would be used at different levels of funding, and how the change efforts should be evaluated. (Keep these realistic!) An appendix should a report about each organization visited including the date of the visit, who at the organization was interviewed, and who in the team participated. **Due March 30** [25% of grade] [Group assignment]
7. For each briefing book other than your own, list at least one pro, one con, and one question. **Due April 6** [3% of grade] [Individual]
8. Each group will make a *presentation* to the class about their issue, and the organization they nominated for funding (based on that organization's anticipated impact on this issue in Nashville), and how impact should be evaluated. Each member of the group must participate in this presentation. **Due April 11 & 13** [5% of grade] [Group assignment]
9. Complete post test-survey (if registered) and Vanderbilt evaluation (1% ungraded). **Certify completion by April 20.**
10. Develop an evaluation plan for your organization. Think about your busy selves 1-2 years in the future, as well as how much you are contributing to the organization's budget. Propose a *modest* plan for how you will evaluate your grant. **Due April 25.** [5% of grade] [Group assignment]

11. Complete a group member contribution form that rates and describes the contributions of each group member, including yourself. This form is ungraded, but your contribution to your group will be 10% of your grade. **Due April 25.** [Individual assignment]

12. Weekly Reading Quizzes. Unless otherwise specified, you are expected to complete the readings due each week by the start of class on Tuesday of that week, allowing us to build on the readings in class discussions and group work. The instructor will provide questions to guide your reading in advance. Each week (during weeks 1-11) at the start of class, the instructor will select one of these questions for you to answer. If you have to miss class and want credit for the weekly quiz, submit answers to ALL of the quiz questions by e-mail BEFORE the start of class on Tuesday. Questions will be graded check plus (for exceptional answers), check (for thoughtful, correct answers), or check minus (for weak or incorrect answers) or missing. If you complete all 11 quizzes, we will drop your lowest quiz score. [10 % of grade]

Late Work Policy:

You are expected to turn in your assignments by 9:30 am (or in class) on the date they are due. Your teammates depend on your timely submission of work. In the event that you turn your assignment in after the due date, 10% will be deducted from your grade for each 24-hour period (or part thereof) that the assignment is late. Quizzes cannot be late.

Grading Scale:

There is a total of 100 points possible for the assignments from this class. Final grades will represent the percentage of these points that you earned. Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

94% or higher:	A
90-93.9%	A-
87-89.9%:	B+
83-86.9%:	B
80-82.9%	B-
77-79.9%:	C+
73-76.9%:	C
70-72.9%	C-
60-69.9%:	D
59% or below:	F

Grades may be moved up or down one notch based on class attendance and participation.

Grading Concerns:

It is the responsibility of each student to submit work that is on time, original, complete, and done to the best of his or her ability. It is the responsibility of the instructor to evaluate your work with fairness and honesty, and to provide you with constructive and timely feedback to assist you in your development as a student. If you feel that we have failed in our responsibilities to you, within a week of receiving graded materials, you should:

- 1) Submit in writing, via e-mail, an explanation of your disagreement with the grade you have

received, and a proposal for the grade that you believe you deserve.

2) Schedule an appointment with Professor Shinn. When we meet, you should bring a copy of the graded material and your written submission. I will re-grade the project: grades may move up or down.

Additional Policies:

Classroom Health and Safety

Our mutual commitment to health and safety is vital. Toward that end, all students are expected to adhere to Vanderbilt Health and Safety protocols. Guidance may be updated throughout the semester.

Honor Code

All work submitted in this course is governed by provisions of the Vanderbilt University Honor Code, found in the student handbook: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/the-honor-system/. If you have any doubts about how the Honor Code applies to your work in this class, please ask me for clarification. Uncertainty about application of the Honor Code does not excuse a violation.

In particular, creative work including papers and presentations must assign credit to the sources you use. Material borrowed from another--quotations, paraphrases, key words, or ideas-- must be credited following appropriate citation procedures (footnotes and bibliography). Individual assignments should be your own work; group assignments should be the work of the group.

It is permissible, and, in fact, encouraged for you to discuss the material covered in class and in the readings with one another. It is also permissible for you to critique one another's written assignments before turning them in for grading. However, any individual written work that you turn in is expected to be your own. It is not permissible to copy from another person's paper or quiz, nor to turn in as your own a paper or quiz answer that has been largely written by someone else. As fair warning, I will be using "TurnItIn" to screen papers before I grade them. This is a program that will identify stretches of text that match, verbatim, known sources, as well as papers previously submitted for credit in this class.

An important exception is the briefing book, which can incorporate earlier papers by members of the group. The earlier papers are intended to build to the briefing book.

Classroom Accommodations

Vanderbilt is committed to equal opportunity for students with disabilities. If you need course accommodations due to a disability, please contact [VU Student Access Services](#) to initiate the process. After SAS has notified me of relevant accommodations, we will discuss how these accommodations may best be approached in this class, and I will facilitate the accommodations.

Mental Health & Wellness

If you are experiencing undue stress that may be interfering with your ability to perform

academically, Vanderbilt's Student Care Network offers a range of support services. The Office of Student Care Coordination (OSCC) is the central and first point of contact to help you navigate and connect to appropriate resources. You can schedule an appointment with the OSCC at <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/carecoordination/> or call 615-343-WELL. You can find a calendar of services at <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/studentcarenetwork/satellite-services/>.

If you or someone you know needs to speak with a professional counselor immediately, the University Counseling Center offers Urgent Care Counseling. Students should call the UCC at (615) 322-2571 during office hours to speak with an urgent care clinician. You can also reach an on-call counselor after hours or on the weekends by calling (615) 322-2571 and pressing option 2 at any time. You can find additional information at <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/ucc/>.

Mandatory Reporter Obligations

All University faculty and administrators are mandatory reporters. What this means is that all faculty, including me, must report allegations of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence to the Title IX Coordinator. In addition, all faculty are obligated to report any allegations of discrimination. I am willing to discuss with you such incidents but can only do so in the context of us both understanding my reporting obligations. If you want to talk with someone in confidence, officials in the Student Health Center, the University Counseling Center, and the Office of the Chaplain and Religious Life (when acting as clergy) can maintain confidentiality. In addition, officials in the [Project Safe Center](#) have limited confidentiality, in that they must report the incidents but can do so without providing identifying information. The Project Safe Center serves as the central resource for those impacted by sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence and can assist with navigating all facets of the University's resource and support network and other processes.

Names and Pronouns

If you would like to use a different name or pronouns than those provided through YES, please let me know at any time prior to or during the semester. Information is available through the [LGBTQI Life offices](#) about how to change either or both of these in YES.

Attendance & Participation:

Much of the work of this class will be done in the class. As members of a classroom community, we are all responsible for our own and each other's learning. In order to fulfill your responsibility to yourself and your fellow classmates, you are expected to come to class on time, fully prepared, and ready for discussion. Attendance will be taken at each class and may impact final grades. If you need to quarantine, or you are too ill to participate, please notify the instructor. Please be in touch with your group to cover what you have missed.

Laptop Policy:

Please bring laptops to class because some classroom activities and exercises will require them, as will communication with colleagues who are in quarantine. **However, please put laptops away after the quiz unless the professor instructs otherwise.** If you have questions about this policy or the research that supports it, please see: Barbash, F. (2014). Why students using laptops learn less in class even when they really are taking notes. Washington Post, April 28.

Students Needing Schedule Accommodations:

If you need a schedule accommodation due to a religious holiday, please note this on the information card filled out in the first class. If a later need arises, please let both me and (if it affects group work) the other members of your group know as soon as possible.

Respect for Diversity

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I call on you to be respectful of your fellow students and encourage you to let me know how to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

Policies adapted from Peabody policies, other HOD faculty, and <https://education.uiowa.edu/coe-policies/syllabus-checklist>

Course Calendar and Readings

Week 1 1/10 & 1/12: <i>Introduction to Philanthropy and Issue Identification</i>	READING <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Metro Social Services (2021). Community Needs Evaluation: The State of Economic and Social Well-Being. Nashville & Davidson County https://www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/CNE-2021.pdf?ct=1656523128• Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. <i>Harvard Educational Review</i>, 79(3), 409-427. READING QUIZ ONE (1/12)
Week 2 1/17 & 1/19: <i>Strategic Giving and Issue Analysis</i>	READING <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brest & Harvey Ch. 1 The Promise of Strategic Philanthropy (pp. 5-27)• Brest & Harvey Ch. 2 Problem Analysis (pp. 29-47)• O'Connor, A. (2001). <i>Poverty knowledge: Social science, social policy, and the poor in Twentieth-Century US history</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Introduction).• Reich, R. (2005, Winter). A failure of philanthropy. American charity shortchanges the poor, and public policy is partly to blame. <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>.• Burton, D O. & Barnes, B.C.B (2017, Jan 3.) Shifting philanthropy from charity to justice. <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>. READING QUIZ TWO (1/17) ASSIGNMENT ONE: Initial grant letter; register and complete pre-course survey or decline registration. (Due 1/19)

<p>Week 3 1/24 & 1/26: <i>Approaches to Philanthropy</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carnegie, A. (1900). <i>The gospel of wealth and other timely essays</i>. New York Century Co. pp 1-43. In the public domain. (skim) • Parker, F. (1994). The creation of the Peabody Education Fund. <i>Peabody Journal of Education</i> 70 (1) 149-156. • Singer, P. (2013, August 10). Good charity, bad charity. <i>The New York Times</i>. • Gates, B. (2007). Remarks at Harvard Commencement, 2007. • Kolbert, E. (2018). Gospels of giving for the new gilded age. <i>Shaking the Foundations</i>. The New Yorker, August 27, 2018. • Scott, M. (2021) Seeding by ceding. Blog post, Medium.com https://mackenzie-scott.medium.com/seeding-by-ceding-ea6de642bf • Chiu, A. (September 14, 2022) Patagonia founder gives away company: “Earth is now our only shareholder.” <i>The Washington Post</i>. https://wapo.st/3f8O8wi <p>READING QUIZ THREE (1/24) ASSIGNMENT TWO: Problem/Opportunity Pitch (Due 1/26)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to convince your group
<p>Week 4 1/31 & 2/2: <i>Theories of Change and Logic Models</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brest & Harvey Ch. 3 Developing Solutions (pp. 48-60) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 4 From Theory to Action (pp. 61-75) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 7 Preparing to Open for Business (pp.115-128) • Rappaport, J. (1977). <i>Community psychology: Values, research, action</i>. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, pp. 160-166. (Strategies and tactics of social intervention) • Seidman, E. (1983). Unexamined premises of social problem solving. In E. Seidman (Ed.) <i>Handbook of social intervention</i> (pp. 48-67). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. • W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2004). Logic Model Development Guide. Ch. 1: Introduction to Logic Models. (pp. 1-14). <p>READING QUIZ FOUR (1/31)</p>
<p>Week 5 2/7 & 2/9: <i>Philanthropy, Welfare, and Justice</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finn, J. (2021). Imagining social work and social justice. <i>Just Practice: A Social Justice Approach to Social Work</i>. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. pp. 13-19. • Singer, P. (2006, December 17) What should a billionaire give – and what should you? <i>The New York Times</i>. • Walzer, M. (Fall 1982). Socialism and the gift relationship. <i>Dissent</i>, 431-441. <p>READING QUIZ FIVE (2/7) ASSIGNMENT THREE: Alternative Approaches Paper (Due 2/9)</p>

<p>Week 6 2/14 & 2/16: <i>Influence and Impact</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brest & Harvey Ch. 8 Inviting Proposals and Conducting Due Diligence (pp. 129-147) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 9 Forms of Philanthropic Engagement and Funding (pp. 148-163) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 10 Impact Investing and Mission Investments (pp. 164-187) • Gregory, A. G., & Howard, D. (2009). The non-profit starvation cycle. <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>, Fall, 2009, 49-53. <p>READING QUIZ SIX (2/14)</p>
<p>Week 7 2/21 & 2/23: <i>Evaluation Overview</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brest & Harvey Ch. 5 Evaluating the Impact of your Philanthropy (pp. 76-91) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 6 Using Outcome Data to Increase Your Impact (pp. 92-128) • W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2004). Logic Model Development Guide. Ch. 4 Using your logic model to plan for evaluation. (pp. 35-48). • Fitzsimmons, K. (2015, March 16). Getting the most out of evaluation. <i>Non-Profit Quarterly</i>. <p>READING QUIZ SEVEN (2/21) ASSIGNMENT FOUR: Prepare for visits to organizational finalists (Due 2/23)</p>
<p>Week 8 2/28 & 3/2: <i>Critical Perspectives on Philanthropy</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barkan, J. (2013, Fall). Plutocrats at work: How big philanthropy undermines democracy. <i>Dissent</i>. • Knight, B. & Ruesga, A. (2013, June 11). The view from the heights of Arnstein’s Ladder: Resident engagement by community foundations. <i>National Civic League</i> • Leah, R. (2019, March 26). Dirty money and museums: Refusing Sackler family donations is just the beginning. <i>Salon</i>. • Reich, R. (2013, Mar. 1). What are foundations for? <i>The Boston Review</i>. • Schambra, W. (2013). Escaping philanthropy’s house of mirrors: Foundations and engagement. <i>Nonprofit Quarterly</i>. • Bubola, E. (October 21, 2022). She’s inheriting millions. She wants her wealth taxed away. <i>The New York Times</i>. <p>READING QUIZ EIGHT (2/28)</p>
<p>Week 9 3/7 & 3/9: <i>Operating as a Foundation: Part 1</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brest & Harvey Ch. 11 Working with Others in the Field (pp. 188-209) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 12 Principles and Practices of Effective Philanthropy (210-214) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 13 Promoting Knowledge (pp. 215-238) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 14 Improving Individual Lives (pp. 239-261) <p>READING QUIZ NINE (3/7)</p>
	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>

<p>Week 10 3/21 & 3/23: <i>Operating as a Foundation: Part 2.</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brest & Harvey Ch. 15 Influencing Policy Makers and Businesses. (pp. 262-290) • Brest & Harvey Ch.16 Structures of Philanthropy (pp. 293-303) • Brest & Harvey Ch. 17 Principal and Principle (pp. 304-314) • Brest & Harvey Afterword: The Responsibilities of Strategic Philanthropy (315-317) <p>READING QUIZ TEN (3/21)</p>
<p>Week 11 3/28 & 3/30 <i>Whither Philanthropy?</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy. (2023). 11 Trends in Philanthropy for 2022. (Note, will probably update to 2023, but 2023 not published yet.) <p>READING QUIZ ELEVEN (3/28) ASSIGNMENT FIVE: Briefing Book (Due 3/30)</p>
<p>Week 12 4/4 & 4/6 <i>Prepare for Board</i></p>	<p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing Books from other groups <p>ASSIGNMENT SIX: Pros, Cons, and Questions (Due 4/6)</p>
<p>Week 13 4/11 & 4/13 <i>Group Presentations</i></p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT SEVEN: Group Presentations to Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Groups will be assigned to either Tuesday or Thursday)
<p>Week 14 4/18 & 4/20 <i>Board Meeting</i></p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT EIGHT: Certification: Post class-survey (if registered) and Vanderbilt evaluation (Due 4/20)</p>
<p>TBA</p>	<p>Giving Ceremony</p>
<p>Finals Week</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT NINE: Evaluation Plan for Organization (Due 4/25) ASSIGNMENT TEN: Group Member Contribution Form (Due 4/25)</p>