



HCOL 41163: GIVING AND PHILANTHROPY

Course

Perfecting Your Pitch, HCOL 41163: 655 *

Spring 2025 *

Seminar *

T: 2-4:40pm *

SAD 420

Instructor *

Dr. Sarah Vartabedian*

Office: SAD 431

Office Hours: T/TH: 12:25-1:55pm and by appt.

Please contact me through email and allow for 12 hours on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends *

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**FINAL REFLECTION DUE MAY 6
2 - 4:30PM**

Note for students: The syllabus is your first course reading. It provides an orientation to, overview of the flow, and expectations of the course. You should turn to the syllabus for details on assignments and course policies.

Student Resources & Policy Information *

Click or scan QR code for resources to support you as a TCU student. Please note section on [Student Access and Accommodation](#) and [Academic Conduct & Course Materials Policies](#).



COURSE DESCRIPTION *

Catalog Description *

Few universities offer courses in philanthropy. An even fewer number offer those courses in areas outside business schools, public policy/management programs, and graduate courses. Think of it in these terms: eight years ago, a rough accounting of

curricula at the top 100 universities revealed that over 4000 classes on Economics exist; only 250 classes (approximately) on philanthropy could be found.

The basic premise of this class is that you are now stewards of \$100,000, and your job is to give it all away thoughtfully. The decisions about where that money will go reside with you, not me. You are in charge of the decisions. You are a foundation. You are responsible for making the decisions and giving the money away; I serve only as your Director in this process responsible for setting guidelines and providing advice. You are responsible for determining what it means for your foundation to do good. You are responsible for determining where we focus attention. Will it be on homelessness, hunger, health, education, the arts, research, refugees, domestic violence, or something else? You will decide whether or not we should consider giving internationally, to communities where needs may be more dire, where your money might go further but evaluation is difficult to secure. You are responsible for determining if we will give to solving the causes of problems or the symptoms and effects of problems. You are responsible for achieving good, and this responsibility—though it sounds simple—is incredibly complex and difficult.

John V. Roach Honors College students taking this course are fortunate to have this class. TCU was the first university in the nation to work with The Once Upon A Time Foundation... who has founded "The Philanthropy Lab." Starting with TCU's syllabus and course experience, The Philanthropy Lab now funds similar classes at Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Duke, Princeton, Northwestern, the U of Michigan, the U of Pennsylvania, the U of Texas, the U of Chicago, the U of Virginia, the U of Wisconsin, the U of Washington, Tulane, UCLA, Texas A&M, and Baylor, among others. Students in this course are also fortunate because TCU Donors like Jeff and Kelly Dillard and Jay and Karen Case have taken an interest in the course and support it financially. Students also benefit from alumni of the course who have donated funds.



Because of this remarkable support, you will have the opportunity to both study *and* practice philanthropy by making substantial grants to a small group of nonprofit organizations. This year represents another first: the JVR Honors College will host two

sections of Giving and Philanthropy. At various times throughout the semester, we will collaborate with the section taught by Dr. Ron Pitcock.

This semester will operate much like previous giving courses. Over the course of Phase 1 (the first 7 weeks), studies of current and historical philanthropists will shape how students evaluate the operational strategies and goals of local philanthropies. Students will conduct due diligence research on nonprofit organizations, picking personal favorites and assessing the potential of those organizations' suitability for receipt of a grant. Guest speakers—including representatives from the Once Upon a Time Foundation, TCU Advancement and Development staff, the Fort Worth Zoo, TCU Donors, and the Amon Carter Foundation—will inform our research of regional nonprofit organizations during this time and throughout the rest of the semester. For Phase 2 (weeks 8-11), students will produce and read persuasive written descriptions (briefing documents) about nonprofit organizations and vote for 15 finalist organizations. For Phase 3 (weeks 12-16), students will divide into teams and complete background research (including site visits) on the finalist organizations, and then prepare a formal publication and group presentation for the benefit of other students in the class.

In week 15, teams will present cases for donating either all or a part of the \$100,000 fund to their assigned organization. Finally, during week 16, the class will debate the merits of each organization and reach a consensus on which 4-5 organizations will receive funding.

On **Friday, 2 May at 4:00 pm**, students will arrange a public presentation of the award(s) to the nonprofit organization(s) and reflect on what they have learned and experienced.

Prerequisites & Concurrent Enrollment*

Completion of lower division Honors coursework

COURSE MATERIALS *

Required Materials *

Selected articles and chapters are all available on TCU Online

LEARNING OUTCOMES *

Course Learning Outcomes *

“Giving and Philanthropy,” an upper-division Honors colloquium, will concentrate on two primary learning outcomes.

LO1: students will gain an understanding and appreciation for the philosophical differences between philanthropy and charity, which will help them identify competing philanthropic strategies.

Students will examine the scope and diversity of the philanthropic sector through historical figures like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller and current philanthropists like MacKenzie Scott and the cofounders of The Giving Pledge, Warren Buffett and Bill Gates, who challenge the wealthy with high capacity to give away a majority of their wealth to charitable causes. This work will introduce students from a range of disciplines to the complex roles various foundations and donors currently play in US society and culture and encourage them to examine further the intersections of philanthropy with policy, the arts, business, law, and society.

LO2: students will solve problems associated with philanthropy by participating in real philanthropic endeavors and gain a deeper understanding of the role of philanthropy in the Fort Worth community.

Students will research various nonprofit organizations located in both Fort Worth/Tarrant County and international locations, visit and conduct interviews, develop various memoranda/briefing notes, and ultimately, in Scharbauer Hall’s Debate Chamber, argue the merits of each organization under consideration. Students taking the course will help determine the goals of our philanthropy, the number and size of our gift(s), the mode of our awarding the gift(s), and our plans for evaluating the success of our gift(s). The work in this course will affect real lives in meaningful ways, and students will discuss and make moral and ethical judgments as they engage micro-decisions while considering macro-consequences. Students will direct and control \$100,000 (donor-funded gifts to the course); it is up to the students’ collective wisdom to grant these funds responsibly under rules we create as a class and with the guidance of TCU.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS *

Assignments *

Class Dedications: Every member of our class will provide a 4-5-minute presentation that dedicates our focus and efforts to a human being, event, or moment. These will take place at the beginning of each class.

One-page reflection, responses, discussion points (LO1 & LO2): Over the course of the semester, you will have one-page, single-spaced statements and responses. These exist to help you reflect and make meaning from key events/moments in class. These documents will be turned in via TCU Online in a drop box.

Phase 1: Initial Nomination Papers: You will produce four one-page papers nominating nonprofits for consideration. These white papers should provide contact information (in case a reader wants to see more) and summarize purpose, achievements, financials (if readily available), pros, and cons. To write these nomination papers, students will not need to visit the nonprofits or make contact. These documents will be turned in via TCU Online in a drop box. Examples available online.

Phase 2: Top 30+ Briefing Documents: These 3-page small-group studies of assigned nonprofits dig deeper than the one-page white paper and provide a greater sense of due diligence. A closer examination of financials and a discussion of needs (based on site visit and communication with the nonprofit) is key to this document. These documents will be turned in via TCU Online in a drop box.

Phase 3: Final Group Briefings and Presentations: Groups of 3-4 students will produce these materials, which are extensive 10-15 page documents analyzing finalist organizations. The documents should reflect complete due diligence and clearly communicate the specific needs of nonprofits. The presentation should use multimedia and last 10 minutes.

Final Personal Reflection/Letters to Donors (LO1 & LO2): Final reflections turned in via during the final exam period.

Grading Philosophy & Course Policies

Here's how your participation is graded: Every day at the end of class (you can also do it during break) I will give you a few minutes to write down what you contributed—the question you asked, the answer you gave, the comment you made, etc. Make notes on how you participated in every class. I expect every course member to read all the assigned texts in advance of class and prepare for discussion by taking notes. As you read, plan to make at least **three contributions every class (at least two statements and one response)**. A planned contribution is mulled over in advance of class and can

take the form of a question, illustration of a point in the reading, a disagreement, or a contrast with other readings. **At midterm I'll ask you to submit a document that lists the dates and the contributions you made (even on DEBATE days). At the end of the course, I'll ask you to send me a second note which summarizes your contributions across the second half of the course. I will give updated contribution rules for the FINAL DEBATE.**

Course Policies

Be dependable and present: Because class progress will often depend on your work, it is important to provide assignments on time by whatever means necessary. Even if you have to miss, the class needs your work product—notes, memorandums, and evaluations. Regular attendance is crucial to success in this course. Only official university-sanctioned absences are excused. Students missing class either to represent TCU in a university-mandated activity or attend conferences for professional development should provide official documentation of schedules and turn in work in advance. One class period equals a full week of classes; consequently, **two unexcused absences will result in your failing the course. Missing the final debate will result in a failing grade.**

Respect your colleagues: If you disagree with a colleague, clarify your position using appropriate evidence or explanation.

TCU Online: We will use the TCU Online learning platform extensively in this course. We will share all documents, have multiple threaded discussions, and track your grades on our class site.

Philanthropy Fridays: Because speakers have some availability concerns, we will meet during some Fridays during the lunch hour this semester. During these sessions, we will spend time with a speaker who will give a short presentation and answer questions regarding their work and thoughts on philanthropy, as well as your work in this class. We will provide lunch. **Participation in Philanthropy Fridays is expected and not optional.**

*Liberality lies
not in the
multitude of the
gifts but in the
character of the
giver.*

--Aristotle

Computers and Phones cannot be a distraction, or I will ask you to work on paper.

Submitting Papers: All papers, drafts, and briefing documents are due at the time designated on TCU Online. **Any material handed in after the assigned time will be counted a day late, resulting in a 10-point deduction. It will be an additional 10 points off for every day that it is late.** Only university-approved absences are exempt from this policy.



Make-up work: Except for university-approved absences, students are not allowed to make up missed daily assignments. This includes activities missed by being late for class or leaving early.

Absences: When an absence is not university approved, I will not provide you with information, notes, handouts, or other class materials that you have missed. Thus, if you must be absent, make arrangements with another member of the class to get materials. **Again, 2 absences will result in your failing the course. Missing the final debate is an automatic failure.**

Course Assignments & Final Grade *

Assignments	Percentage or Points
Class Participation/ Contributions	130 pts
Nominations for 4 Initial Charities	51 pts
Briefing documents: Top 35 Charities	51 pts
Group Briefings and Presentations: Top 15 Charities	110 pts
One-page reflections (Giving Goals and Group Evals, etc.)	132 pts
Class Dedication Assignment	10 pts
Letter to Donors	26 pts
Total	510

Grading Scale *

Plus/Minus	
Grade	Undergraduate
A	477-510
A-	457-476
B+	442-456
B	426-441
B-	406-425
C+	391-405
C	375-390
C-	355-374
D+	340-354
D	324-339
D-	304-323
F	0-303

Course Policies

Technology Policies

See [Student Resources & Policy Information](#) for university policies.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Ethical Considerations and Consequences for Misuse

Artificial intelligence (AI) and other unapproved assignment-help tools MAY NOT be used for course assignments except as explicitly authorized by the instructor.

Acknowledging this, if you turn in work that you did not personally write, I have the right to consider it plagiarized. If I give you the option to use these tools, you must cite wherever you have incorporated them into your written work. A word of caution: ChatGPT/Gen AI tools can produce erroneous information, so you should critically assess their output because I will grade your work (including any AI elements) for accuracy. You should also be cautious about “voice/style” changes when using these tools because your written work should have a consistent voice.

Specific examples of prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting all or any part of an assignment statement to an AI or unapproved assignment-help tool
- Incorporating any part of an AI-generated response in an assignment
- Submitting your own work for this class to an AI or unapproved assignment-help tool for iteration or improvement.

You MAY use AI to:

- Brainstorm or outline your own ideas.

If you are in doubt as to what constitutes AI, or whether an assignment-help tool is suitable for use in this class, then it is your responsibility to discuss your situation with the instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE *

This calendar represents current course plans. Plans may need to change to enhance the learning opportunities and will be communicated via TCU Online and in class. Items listed in **bold** mean something is DUE that day.

CLASS		IN CLASS WORK	WORK YOU NEED TO DO TO PREPARE TO GIVE AWAY OVER \$100,000	REQUIRED READING, PREPARATION, ASSIGNMENTS, Due on this date (unless notified otherwise)
WEEK 1 PHASE 1	14 January	<p>Introduction to class, syllabus, and The Philanthropy Lab</p> <p>This is not your typical course; it is a rare opportunity.</p> <p>What is the goal of giving? What concerns do you have about this responsibility?</p>	Start identifying nonprofits and causes that interest you.	<p>Read <i>the Price of Humanity</i> (interview)</p> <p>Austrian heiress Marlene Engelhorn announces plan</p> <p>Personal Introduction and Philanthropic statement</p> <p>Due Jan 20 by 10am</p>
WEEK 2 PHASE 1	21 January	<p>How to begin Evaluating Nonprofits</p> <p>How to research and write-up nonprofits for one-page evaluation papers</p> <p>\$10K activity</p>	<p>Start identifying and choosing your initial nonprofits. Each student is responsible for identifying and writing a one-page nomination paper on 4 local nonprofits and an <u>optional</u> international nonprofit.</p> <p>You may not repeat another person's nomination. Students may claim a nonprofit on the discussion board</p>	<p>Readings & Viewings Include</p> <p>(all readings and viewings are online)</p> <p>Assign "Do Good" in class</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>Gulati-Partee, "A Primer on Nonprofit Organizations"</p> <p>Myths About Nonprofits</p> <p>https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/myths-about-nonprofits</p> <p>Payton and Moody, "Understanding Philanthropy: Voluntary Action for the Public Good"</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Sara Lomelin: Giving Circles and Disrupting Philanthropy</p>
WEEK 3 PHASE 1	28 January	<p>Philanthropy Lab</p> <p>Discuss: What is a Nonprofit?</p> <p>Discuss: What is Philanthropy</p> <p>Discuss: What do you care about and look for in a nonprofit?</p>	Continue to identify nonprofits, announce your intended nonprofits, and write initial nomination papers.	<p>Readings & Viewings Include</p> <p>(all readings and viewings are online)</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>Gunderman, "Imagining Philanthropy"</p> <p>Four Traditions of Philanthropy</p> <p>Browse "A History of Modern Philanthropy" timeline</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Fulton, "You are the Future of Philanthropy" (Ted Talk)</p> <p>Due by 2pm: Do Good</p>
WEEK 4	4 February	History and Thought on Giving and Philanthropy	Continue to identify nonprofits, announce your intended	<p>Readings & Viewings Include</p> <p>(all readings and viewings are online)</p>

<p>PHASE 1</p>		<p>Peter Singer: Effective Altruism</p> <p>Developing an SROI</p>	<p>nonprofits, and write initial nomination papers.</p>	<p>Read:</p> <p>“Hard Trade-Offs,” from <i>Doing Good Better</i></p> <p>“How You Can Save Hundreds of Lives”, from <i>Doing Good Better</i></p> <p>“What is Effective Altruism” from <i>The Most Good You Can Do</i></p> <p>MOROZOV, “ROCKEFELLER GAVE AWAY MONEY FOR NO RETURN. CAN WE SAY THE SAME OF TODAY’S TECH BARONS?”</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Brooks, Why Giving Matters</p> <p>Peter Singer, “The Why and How of Effective Altruism”</p> <p>DUE: What are you looking for in a nonprofit?</p>
<p>WEEK 5</p> <p>PHASE 1</p>	<p>11 February</p>	<p>Debate: How do we care for society? Taxes or individuals?</p> <p>The Cases of Steve Jobs, Warren Buffett, Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, and Mackenzie Scott</p> <p>The Case of Eli Broad (Watch in class)</p> <p>The Giving Pledge: A New Club for Billionaires—60 minutes (Watch in class)</p>	<p>Continue to identify nonprofits, announce your intended nonprofits, and write initial nomination papers.</p>	<p>Readings & Viewings Include</p> <p>(all readings and viewings are online)</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>“Materialist Philanthropy,” from <i>We Make a Life by What We Give</i></p> <p>Schiller, “The Anti-humans of effective altruism,” <i>Price of Humanity</i></p> <p>Singer, “What Should a Billionaire Give—And What Should You?”</p> <p>Lee, Trelstad, and Tran, “\$15 Billion in Five Years: What Data Tells Mackenzie Scott’s Philanthropy”</p> <p>Browse The Giving Pledge (website)</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Bill Gates, Harvard Commencement</p> <p>Bill and Melinda Gates, “Why giving away our wealth has been the most satisfying thing we’ve done.”</p>
<p>WEEK 6</p> <p>PHASE 1</p>	<p>18 February</p>	<p>Developing SROI</p>	<p>DUE: Finish nomination papers turn in before the start of class.</p> <p>Start reading initial nominations and rank them by what interests you and what does not, by what nonprofit you want to support and why not, by what nonprofit you believe in and don’t.</p>	<p>Readings & Viewings Include (all are online)</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>Gunderman, “Whoever Has Will Receive More”</p> <p>Tierney & Fleishman, “Introduction,” <i>Give Smart</i></p> <p>Tierney & Fleishman, “What are my Values?”</p> <p>Bridgespan Group: Defining Success</p> <p>Hoyt, “Introduction to SROI”</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in your community” Ted Talk</p>

				DUE: All White Paper Nominations
WEEK 7 PHASE 1	25 February	Final Day of Phase 1: DEBATE, DISCUSS, DECIDE	Determine your interest level in the top 40. We will narrow the list of eligible nonprofits. After class, groups will be announced, and they will start developing stronger 3-page briefing documents for assigned nonprofits.	Readings & Viewings Include (all are online) Read: Preston, "Steve Jobs Found Much to Dislike about Philanthropy" All one-page grant initial nominations Watch: Norton, "How to Buy Happiness" Due in class: Ranking of top nonprofits based on Initial Nominations
WEEK 7 Philanthropy Friday	Friday, 28 February 12pm-1:30	990 Tax forms with David Dena	Learn essential information about reading and evaluating 990 tax forms. This material is key to doing successful work in Phase 2.	Materials are online
WEEK 8 PHASE 2	4 March	Reading 990 Tax Forms Group Work	Continue writing and researching briefing documents	Readings & Viewings Include (all readings and viewings are online) Read: "Overhead Costs, CEO Pay, and Other Confusions," from <i>Doing Good Better</i> BREST & HARVEY: 2 ESSAYS FROM <i>MONEY WELL SPENT</i> Due: Reflection on Phase 1 process
WEEK 9 PHASE 2	11 March	Group Work	Finish and submit briefing documents by 10am on 24 March. Start reading the briefing documents.	Readings & Viewings Include (all are online) Read: Penley, "Giving Poorly Can Be Worse Than Not Giving at All" CASE STUDIES Watch: Pallotta, "The Way We Think About Charity is Dead Wrong" Okonjo-Iweala, "Want to Help Africa? Do Business Here" Due: _Wednesday (March 12 @ 10am)_Top 30+ Briefing Documents Due: Thursday (March 13) Midterm Participation Report

WEEK 9 Philanthropy Friday	Friday, 14 March TBD	Kelly and Jeff Dillard	Join major philanthropists from Fort Worth, hear their giving story, and understand why they support your work in this course	Materials are online
Week 10		SPRING BREAK		
WEEK 11 PHASE 2	25 March	Phase 2: DEBATE, DISCUSS, DECIDE Narrow to 15 nonprofits	Read the extended briefing papers. Determine the top 15 finalists based on materials in extended briefing papers.	Readings & Viewings Include Read Dichter, "The Generosity Experiment" Schiller, <i>The Price of Humanity</i> , "Philosopher King James" DUE IN CLASS: PREFERENCES FOR PHASE 3 WORK
WEEK 12 PHASE	1 April	Phase 3: Research and Work Giving Goals	You should be in process of researching and developing briefing books and presentations for your finalists.	Readings & Viewings Include (all are online) Read: "More Than an ATM," from <i>Generation Impact: How Next Gen Donors are Revolutionizing Giving</i> " Due Diligence Done Well, GEO Reich, "A Failure of Philanthropy" QUICK GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A SITE VISIT Watch: Gough, "We Can All Be Philanthropists" (TED Talk)
WEEK 12 Philanthropy Friday	Friday, 4 April TBD			Materials are online
WEEK 13 PHASE 3	8 April	Phase 3: Research and Work Group Work	You should be in process of researching and developing briefing books and presentations for your finalists.	Readings & Viewings Include (all are online) Read: "A Monday Morning Checklist," Tierney and Fleishman Due: Giving Goal (post in two places: Course site and Philanthropy Lab portal)
WEEK 14 Philanthropy Friday	Friday, 11 April TBD			Materials are online

<p>WEEK 14</p> <p>PHASE 3</p>	<p>15 April</p>	<p>Phase 3: Research and Work</p> <p>Group Work</p>	<p>You should be in process of researching and developing briefing books and presentations for your finalists.</p>	<p>Readings & Viewings Include (all are online)</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>Gunderman, "How Much, How Well,"</p> <p>Schambra, "The Ungodly Bright: Should They Lead Philanthropy in the Future"</p> <p>Payton and Moody, "Philanthropy, Democracy, and The Future"</p> <p>Due: Evaluation of Group Members</p>
<p>WEEK 15</p> <p>PHASE 3</p>	<p>22 April</p>	<p>Phase 3: PRESENTATIONS OF FINALISTS</p>	<p>Read briefing books and provide questions needing clarification</p>	<p>Due: 23 April at 6 pm: Final Briefing Books</p> <p>Due: 24 April at 10am: Final Presentation PPTs</p>
<p>WEEK 16</p> <p>PHASE 3</p>	<p>29 April</p>	<p>Phase 3:</p> <p>DEBATE, DISCUSS, DECIDE</p> <p>FINAL DEBATE: THE BEGINNING</p> <p>This will likely be a late night ... plan for it.</p>	<p>Read briefing books and provide questions needing clarification</p> <p>Develop framework for discussion and decision-making.</p> <p>Finish making decisions</p>	<p>Due: Final evaluation of Group Members</p>
<p>GIVING Ceremony</p>	<p>Friday, 2 May 4:00 PM</p>			<p>Due:</p> <p>Sunday 4 May: 12:00 (Noon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Donors • SPOT (After Giving Ceremony)
<p>WEEK 17</p> <p>FINALS WEEK</p>	<p>6 May @ 2pm</p>	<p>Final Exercise</p>		<p>Final Participation Reflection</p>