



# Philanthropy & the Common Good

Fall 2021

Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30-1:45pm / Room 225 DeBartolo Hall  
HESB 30348 / POLS 30142 / CNST 30423

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“Very little good can be accomplished, or evil avoided, without the aid of money.” – Catherine McAuley

“This college cannot fail to succeed. Before long, it will develop on a large scale. It will be one of the most powerful means for good in this country.” – Edward Sorin

## **Course Description:**

The primary objectives of this course are to learn about the role philanthropy plays in society, and to make real philanthropic grants to local Michiana nonprofit organizations. The funding comes from our partner organization, The Philanthropy Lab, generous individual benefactors, Notre Dame’s Office of Public Affairs and Communications, the Center for Social Concerns, and the Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government. The total sum of our awarded grants will depend on a few factors discussed on the first day of class, and will likely fall somewhere between \$60,000 and \$80,000. This is a serious responsibility and students are expected to conduct thoughtful analysis in the decision making process.

The grant funding decisions will ultimately be made by the students. Each student will be a member of the Board of Directors, and each student will have equal weight when voting. I, as instructor, serve as Advisor to the Board and have no voting authority or privilege concerning the board.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I reserve the right to veto any nomination or award to a nonprofit organization that blatantly disrespects the mission of Notre Dame and our Catholic character. The class may not award grants to the University of Notre Dame or nonprofit organizations where there is a conflict of interest, such as familial employment. Additionally, the class may not award grants to the five nonprofits selected by the 2020 class. All recipients must be 501(c)3 organizations with at least two years of activity.

In order to execute this grant-making process, each student will have two team based responsibilities. First, each student will join a site visit group team that consists of three or four members. Second, each student will sign up to be on a programmatic team that carries unique opportunities. The programmatic teams are (1) Board of Directors Leadership Team, (2) Social Media & Stewardship Team, (3) Awards Ceremony Team, (4) In-House Counsel Team, (5) Development Team, (6) Evaluation Team, and (7) Giving Book Team. Instructions regarding the responsibilities for site visit teams and programmatic teams will be outlined in a separate document and distributed on the first day of class.

Site visit teams are expected to conduct two site visits with local nonprofits that will be invited to apply for funding. All nonprofits must be in the Michiana area, defined as Elkhart, La Porte, Marshall, St. Joseph, and Stark counties in Indiana, plus Berrien and Cass counties in Michigan. Site visits may be conducted either in person or in a virtual manner.

All nonprofits engaged must have certified nonprofit status and accessible 990 forms submitted to the IRS. As a class we will use the semester to explore local nonprofits and then carefully and systematically award between three and seven grants. The minimum grant award will be \$4,000, and the maximum will be \$25,000. Some classes in this syllabus are labeled as Board Meetings and will serve as the venue for these decisions.

During other class days we will gather and discuss how philanthropy shapes society. We will look at philanthropy and charity first through the lens of the founders and early Americans, and then from different religious and philosophical traditions. We will then examine how philanthropy evolved throughout American history and how it works today. This will allow us to discuss serious questions as a class. What is the role of philanthropy in 21<sup>st</sup> century America? Why are nonprofits needed today? How do nonprofits function in relation to each other and the layers of government?

### **Reading Assignments:**

Most reading assignments will be timely articles related to philanthropy or the Common Good. The readings in this syllabus are the required primary readings. Most weeks, the instructor will email the class with a few hypothetical questions to think about while completing the readings, as well as some additional short and timely readings on the subject. Students are expected to read the following book and submit a review paper.

David Callahan, *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age* (Knopf, 2017)

### **Grading:**

Students will be graded as follows:

Class participation and site visits	20%	200 possible points
Programmatic Team assignments	20%	200 possible points
Book Review (5 pages, due 9/24)	20%	200 possible points
Common Good essay (4 pages, 10/15)	15%	150 possible points
Research Paper (8 pages, 12/3)	25%	<u>250 possible points</u>
		<b>1,000 possible points</b>

## Grading Scale

A 1000-930    A- 929-900    B+ 899-885    B- 829-800  
C+ 799-785    C 784-730    C- 729-700    D+ 699-685  
D 684-630    D- 629-600    F 599-000

No extra credit will be given.

Laptop computers and tablets may be used in the classroom for the purposes of research and notetaking. Please keep phones turned off during class.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. I shall follow and enforce the university's policies regarding academic integrity.

Honor Code: Class members are expected to understand the principles and procedures set forth in the University of Notre Dame Academic Code of Honor (<http://www.nd.edu/~hnrcode/>) and abide by its pledge: "As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty."

COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols: In this class, as elsewhere on campus, students must comply with all University health and safety protocols.

Students with disabilities will be accommodated as extensively as possible. Please talk directly with the instructor regarding any necessary arrangements.

### **Tentative Class Readings and Schedule**

*Note: This Schedule is subject to change. Because this course incorporates guest speakers, site visits, and entails an organized grant-making component, the schedule will most likely have some adjustments throughout the semester.*

Class 1 (August 24)

#### **Introduction & Overview**

We will review the syllabus, talk about expectations for the course, and discuss the partnership with the Philanthropy Lab. We will also have a brief conversation about the role of philanthropy in society. Students should come to class prepared to discuss societal problems they have noticed, and have a conversation about ways philanthropy might help solve those problems.

Students should acquire a copy of *The Givers* and finish reading the book by mid September.

Class 2 (August 26)

#### **Origins of Philanthropy**

Assigned Readings

Alexis de Tocqueville, "[Political Associations in the United States](#)"

Alana Semuels, "[The Founding Fathers Weren't Concerned With Inequality](#)," The Atlantic, April 25, 2016.

George Washington, "[Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1789](#)"

Browse [A History of Modern Philanthropy](#) timeline from the National Philanthropic Trust

Note: We will also review the grant agreement from the Philanthropy Lab. Site visit teams of 3-4 students should be formed by the end of class on this date. Students must send the instructor their preferred programmatic team assignments by 9am on 8/27.

Class 3 (August 31)

### **Individuals & Philanthropy**

#### Assigned Readings

Peter Singer, "[What Should a Billionaire Give – And What Should You?](#)," The New York Times Magazine, December 17, 2006

USCCB, [Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching](#)

Justin Wheeler, "[How Millennials Are Changing Philanthropy](#)," Forbes, August 15, 2018

Robert D. Putnam & David E. Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (Simon & Schuster, 2010). Required: Chapter 13, Religion and Good Neighborliness (will be provided in a PDF document)

Arthur C. Brooks, "[Why Giving Matters](#)," Speech delivered at Brigham Young University, February 24, 2009

Note: Students will receive programmatic team assignments during this class. Nonprofits for site visits will be selected.

Class 4 (September 2)

### **Commerce & Philanthropy**

#### Assigned Readings

Milton Friedman, John Mackey & T.J. Rodgers, "[Rethinking the Social Responsibility of Business](#)," Reason, October 2005

Michael E. Porter & Mark R. Kramer, "[The Competitive Advantage of Corporate Philanthropy](#)," Harvard Business Review, December 2002

Suntae Kim, Matthew J. Karlesky, Christopher G. Myers & Todd Schifeling, "[Why Companies Are Becoming B Corporations](#)," Harvard Business Review, June 2016

Class 5 (September 7)

### **Rise of the Foundations**

#### Assigned Readings

Andrew Carnegie, "[The Gospel of Wealth](#)," The Century Co. (Digitized by Cornell University)

Bill Gates, "[Harvard Commencement 2007](#)," The Harvard Gazette

By this date, students should have read most of *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age* (Knopf, 2017)

Class 6 (September 9)

### **Is Philanthropy Fair?**

#### Assigned Readings

Alana Semuels, "[The Problem with Modern Philanthropy](#)," The Atlantic, March 28, 2017

Annika Neklason, "[Philanthropy Serves the Status Quo](#)," The Atlantic, July 1, 2019

Malcolm Gladwell, "[My Little Hundred Million](#)," Revisionist History Podcast Season 1 Episode 6, July 21, 2016

Class 7 (September 14)

### **Government & Philanthropy**

#### Assigned Readings

Adam Smith, "[The Theory of Moral Sentiments \(Part VI\)](#)"

John Rawls, "[The Main Idea of the Theory of Justice](#)"

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "[The Social Contract and Discourses, Book IV, Chapter 1](#)"

Marco Rubio, "[Common Good Capitalism and the Dignity of Work](#)," Public Discourse, November 5, 2019

Class 8 (September 16)

### **What is the Common Good?**

The term *The Common Good* has origins in Christian and Catholic thought. It is now used, often interchangeably, with terms such as *The Public Good* or *The Greater Good*. During this class, we will explore the roots of *The Common Good*, and see how it has evolved over time. Questions to think about for our discussion: Is there a universal definition of the Common Good? Does it matter if people somewhat disagree about what the Common Good is? How do we promote the Common Good? Is Philanthropy an efficient vehicle to promote the Common Good?

#### Assigned Readings

Michael Novak, "[Three Precisions: Common Good](#)," First Things, December 2, 2009

Robert Reich, "[Why the common good disappeared \(and how we get it back\)](#)," Salon, February 26, 2018

V. Bradley Lewis, "[Is the Common Good an Ensemble of Conditions?](#)" Archives of Philosophy, 2016

Michael Sandel, "[What Happens to the Common Good in a Culture of Winners and Losers?](#)" Literary Hub, September 30, 2020

Class 9 (September 21)

### **Site Visit Presentations #1**

Each site visit team should be prepared to deliver a twenty five minute presentation (including Q&A) on its first of two site visits this week.

Class 10 (September 23)                      **Site Visit Presentations #1**

Note: Book review papers are due September 24th at 11:59pm.

Class 11 (September 28)                      **Recap Site Visit Presentations #1**

Class 12 (September 30)                      **Philanthropy in Practice**

Guest Speaker or insights into careers in philanthropy. TBD.

Class 13 (October 5)                              **Common Good Roundtable Discussion**

Essays on the common good are due October 15th. Come to class prepared to discuss the central idea of your essay.

#### Assigned Readings

Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Simon & Schuster 2020 paperback edition). Required: Chapter 7, Altruism, Volunteering, and Philanthropy (will be provided in a PDF document)

Class 14 (October 7)                              **Site Visit Team Day Off**

Teams should use this extra time to conduct site visit #2 if necessary.

Class 15 (October 12)                              **Site Visit Presentations #2**

Each site visit team should be prepared to deliver a twenty five minute presentation (including Q&A) on its second of two site visits this week.

Class 16 (October 14)                              **Site Visit Presentations #2**

#### **Mid-term break, October 16-24**

Class 17 (October 26)                              **Philanthropy & Taxes**

#### Assigned Readings

Jonathan Hannah, "[A tax policy for the common good: renew the CARES Act's charitable tax deduction permanently](#)," Public Discourse, December 13, 2020

Philanthropy News Digest, "[Philanthropy divided over legislation to accelerate DAF grants](#)," June 11, 2021

Class 18 (October 28)

### **Philanthropy Gone Wrong**

We will discuss instances where philanthropy failed to some extent. Examples include situations where nonprofits disregarded the intention of their donors. Readings to be assigned.

Class 19 (November 2)

### **Philanthropy and the Constitution**

#### Assigned Reading

[\*Americans for Prosperity Foundation v. Bonta\*](#)

Class 20 (November 4)

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

This class begins a series of three consecutive board meetings. Students should come to this meeting having read all grant applications.

Class 21 (November 9)

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Class 22 (November 11)

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Class 23 (November 16)

### **Philanthropy in Practice**

Guest Speaker or insights into careers in philanthropy. TBD.

Class 24 (November 18)

### **Plan Awards Ceremony**

Class 25 (November 23)

### **The Future of Philanthropy**

We will discuss the future of philanthropy. How will courts, laws, and tax policy continue to shape philanthropy? Will your generation fundamentally change philanthropy?

#### Assigned Reading

Robert D. Putnam & Jonah C. Hahn, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Simon & Schuster 2020 paperback edition). Required: Afterword, Has the Internet Reversed the Decline of Social Capital? (will be provided in a PDF document)

Class 26 (November 30)

### **Awards Ceremony**

Our Awards Ceremony will most likely be held on this date, which falls on the National Day of Giving. We will plan the awards ceremony logistics throughout the semester.

Class 27 (December 2)

**Reflection Class**

On our last day of class we will discuss what we learned during the semester and how we might participate in philanthropy moving forward.

Note: Research papers are due on December 3rd at 11:59pm.