

PSCI 10XX/PHIL 10XX: The Theory and Practice of Philanthropy

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While the desire to help others may be a universal impulse, the way in which that desire is translated into action varies substantially. Across nations, different cultures and laws create different patterns of charitable action. Within a single country, giving is shaped by different value systems, capacities, political orientations, and needs. Finally, any two individuals will have different orientations towards philanthropy based on their personal experiences, their background, and their interests. Yet despite these many differences, there is a “charitable sector” that exists in the United States and around the globe, united by a shared interest in promoting the public good and advancing the welfare of others.

This class is designed to help students achieve a deeper understanding of several questions. First, we will explore several ethical questions that surround the process of assisting others. Second, we will be introduced to the contemporary American charitable sector, with a focus on the key actors, regulations, resources, and processes. Third, students will have a chance to work through the practical challenges of philanthropy as grant-makers themselves. In sum, by the end of winter term, students should have knowledge and experience that will allow them to more deeply understand, question, and engage in philanthropy.

Because students take only one course during winter term, it is understood that students will be able to meet outside our scheduled times (given advance notification). This is particularly important for this semester, as we have a unique opportunity to not only study but also practice philanthropy. Through a generous gift from an outside donor, students in this class act as grant-makers of their own foundation. This will put demands on your time outside of our regular meeting times (M-Th 10 am-12 pm), but it also give you an experience like no other course at Middlebury!

COURSE MATERIALS

The following books are required for this course.

Patricia Illingworth, Thomas Pogge, and Lief Wenar, *Giving Well: Ethics of Philanthropy* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save* (Random House, 2009).

All the additional required readings will be posted on Ereserve. The e-reserve password is _____. Other documents (syllabus, paper assignments, etc) will be available in the “Handouts” folder of the class folder (PSCI 1024) on Middfiles or on Moodle.

CLASS POLICIES

This class will ask you to employ your critical thinking skills and draw upon your personal experiences. Your individual and collective input will determine the tone, pace, and ultimate success of the class. I encourage each of you to speak out and ask challenging questions while still being respectful of your peers and their opinions, consistent with the college's established standards.

Violations of the Middlebury honor code - cheating, falsification, fabrication, or plagiarism – are very serious matters. Students will *automatically fail* any assignment that violates the honor code and may be referred to the relevant college administrative committee for further penalties.

We will use email regularly to make class announcements. Students are welcome to contact via email or by phone. In case of emergency, you may reach me at my home phone (802-870-7055). Students requiring accommodation for disabilities should meet with me by the second day of class.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Students will earn their grade in this course through completion and mastery of the assignments below. The emphasis of all three critical papers, as political science papers, is on analysis, not description. All papers should be turned in to my office, Munroe Hall 317.

Paper 1 (critical paper, 3 pages)

20%

Due Thursday, 1/10, this critical essay will ask you to further explore one of the ethical problems identified in Wednesday's (1/9) reading.

Paper 2 (critical paper, 3 pages)

20%

Grant-Making Project – 50%

The final week of class will be dedicated to the completion of a research project that serves the needs of an international NGO based in Burlington, Bridging the Divide. As a class, we will research and write a 25-35 page research report on new patterns and new forms of charitable giving in America, which will help BTM in its mission of getting Americans involved in the strengthening of civil society organizations overseas, particularly its partner organizations in the Middle East. We will divide into teams for the research project, and your grade will be determined by two factors: the quality of your work and evaluations completed by your peers.

Class Participation

10%

There are many ways to participate in class, and some students are naturally more vocal than others. At the minimum, however, all students must come to class on time with the day's reading completed, ready to engage in discussion. Because of the intensive nature of the winter term at Middlebury, class attendance is crucial. Each student is allowed a single absence that will not affect their participation grade. In the case of an absence, students must notify me and are responsible for all missed announcements, assignments, and lecture notes.

GRANT-MAKING PROJECT

This course offers you an amazing opportunity to both study philanthropy and to engage in it. Through an external donor, this class will have the opportunity to give away a sizeable amount of money to one or more charities (501(c)3 organizations).

There are a number of big questions that we have to explore as a group in order to make this happen. Because of that, even the seemingly simple task of planning the term is challenging. We reserve the right to change assignments and meeting times as necessary, with the important caveat that we will aim to give you a reasonable amount of warning before doing so.

In general (except for the first week) we will spend the bulk of Tuesdays and Thursdays on our grant-making project, while Mondays and Wednesdays will be focused on lecture and discussion of the course material. The academic and practical components of the class are equally weighted over the course of the term, but the balance of time that we spend on each will change over the four weeks.

Generally, the project is divided into three stages. The first stage involves deciding on a short list of organizations and delegating responsibilities among the members of each research team. The second stage will focus on learning about particular finalist organizations. The third stage will focus on comparing the finalist organizations, assessing their strengths, weaknesses, ambitions, and potential.

LECTURE AND READING

I. WHY WE GIVE

1/7 (M) Introduction (VINER AND STROUP)

1/8 (Tu) Altruism and Charity - why we give (VINER LEADS)

Kristen Monroe, "A Fat Lady in a Corset: Altruism and Social Theory,"
American Journal of Political Science 38 (November 1994): 861-893.
Kristen Monroe, *The Heart of Altruism* (Princeton, 1996): Chs 2, 5 (42 pages)
Lee Cronk, "Strings attached." *The Sciences* 29.3 (1989): 2-4.

1/9 (W) The Ethics of Giving (VINER LEADS)

Selections from Ilingworth, Pogge, and Wenar

1/10 (Th) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 1

Small group work – perhaps 8 teams of 5 each
•Divide up into groups based on interests (ex: poverty, social services; disaster relief, human rights, education, environment, arts, animal rights, medical research)
•each group will choose 4-5 organizations to research

II. WHY WE GIVE II

1/14 (M) Critiques of Altruism (VINER LEADS)

William Diaz, "For Whom and For What? The contributions of the nonprofit sector," in Salamon, ed. *The State of Nonprofit America* (2002): 517-35.
Ivan Illich, *To Hell with Good Intentions*, Address to the Conference on Inter-American Student Projects, Cuernavaca, Mexico, April 20, 1968.
Charmie Gholson, "Charity Display?" *New York Times Magazine*, January 2, 2005.
Ann Vogel, "Who's making global civil society: philanthropy and US empire in world society," *British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2006): 635-655.
Heather MacDonald, "The billions of dollars that made things worse," *City Journal* 6 (Autumn 1996).

1/15 (Tu) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 1

presentation of groups – choose 12-15 organizations as finalists
Plan due diligence and research
Contact finalist organizations

1/16 (W) The United States in Perspective (STROUP LEADS)

Lester Salamon, "The Nonprofit Sector at a crossroads: the case of America," *Voluntas* 10 (March 1999): 5-23.
Karen Wright, "Generosity vs. Altruism: Philanthropy and Charity in the United States and United Kingdom," *Voluntas* 12 (Dec 2001): 399-416.
Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America*, selections from book

1/17 (Th) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 2

all-class meeting – what are the different ways to divide the money?
research and due diligence

III. CHARITABLE ACTION IN THE UNITED STATES

1/21 (M) What it means to be an American Charity (STROUP LEADS)

David Hammack, "Nonprofit Organizations in American History: Research Opportunities and Sources." *American Behavioral Scientist* 45 (July 2002): 1638-1674.J.
Steven Ott, "Part 10: The Blurring and Blending of the Sectors," in *The Nature of the Nonprofit Sector*, J. Steven Ott, ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001).
Paul C. Light, "What it takes to make Charities effective," *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* Sept 1, 2005.

1/22 (Tu) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 2

Background memos on organizations due
site visits as/when necessary

1/23 (W) Case Study: International Assistance (STROUP LEADS)

Tomohiso Hattori, "The moral politics of foreign aid," *Review of International Studies* 29 (2003): 229-247.

Harvard case study on Oxfam America

My book chapter on humanitarian assistance organizations?

Stephen Hopgood, "Saying 'No' to Walmart?" in *Humanitarianism in Question*, Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, eds (Cornell, 2008).

Thomas Pogge, "How International NGOs should act," in Illingworth, Pogge, and Wenar, eds, *Giving Well* (Oxford, 2011).

1/24 (Th) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 2

research and due diligence

notification of finalist organizations (as necessary)

IV. MAKING CHOICES IN CHARITABLE ACTION

1/28 (M) Accountability: to whom and for what

Potential guest speakers – Chuck Mason, director of corporate and foundation relations, Middlebury College; Carolyn Fox '11, community philanthropy associate at Vermont Community Foundation

Anderson, Kenneth. "What NGO Accountability Means - and Does Not Mean." *American Journal of International Law* 10:1 (2009): 170-78.

Selection from Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl, *NGO Accountability: Politics, Principles, and Innovations* (2006).

1/29 (Tu) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 3

final group meeting, preparation of presentations

1/30 (W) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 3

group presentations (all day – need extra meetings after lunchtime)

1/31 (Th) PHILANTHOPY PROJECT – Stage 3

Final selection of grant recipient(s)

Write-up of presentation letter to recipient

Write-up of justification letter to foundation

2/1 (Fr) presentation luncheon

RESOURCES FOR STUDYING NONPROFITS

The following list is by no means exhaustive, but it will help you in your initial forays into research on charities based in the United States. We will set up a forum on the Moodle site that will allow us all to share resources and information.

Guidestar provides basic data about nonprofits, including the legally required annual 990 forms filed by most charities www.guidestar.org

Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly – an academic journal that publishes a lot of charitable giving and nonprofits. Also available through a college subscription.

The Center for the Study of Philanthropy at the City University of New York Graduate Center
www.philanthropy.org

The Indiana University Center for the Study of Philanthropy <http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/>

The Urban Institute has a research section devoted to nonprofits and philanthropy www.urban.org

The Philanthropy Journal Online <http://www.pj.com>.

The Foundation Center has helpful resources on private philanthropy: [http:// www.fdncentgr.org](http://www.fdncentgr.org)

Council on Foundations provides information and expertise www.cof.org

Chronicle of Philanthropy – An important weekly. The website, <http://Philanthropy.com> has some of its articles. All print articles are available through Middlebury College's access to Academic OneFile.