

**PSCI 460**  
**Intro to Nonprofit Board Management**  
**Spring Semester 2012**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Terry Profota, Masters in Nonprofit Management

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*Building an Effective Nonprofit Board* is a six week course that explores the components inherent in creating and maintaining a governing body that promotes a healthy and successful nonprofit organization. Critical governance, leadership, and management elements are studied including: strategic planning; policy-making; fundraising and financial roles and responsibilities; strategies for board recruitment, orientation and evaluation; and Executive Director/Board relationships.

**LEARNING AND COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The course objectives for PSCI 460 are as follows, students will be able to:

1. Define and explain basic theory and application of the three primary duties and four primary roles of a nonprofit board of directors.
2. Define and explain board responsibilities and how they correspond to their primary board roles.
3. Relate and apply nonprofit board roles and responsibilities to a nonprofit organization.
4. Identify, analyze, and transfer nonprofit board principals to real-world issues.
5. Demonstrate critical-thinking and problem solving ability in the nonprofit environment.

**METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:**

PSCI 460 objectives will be accomplished through a variety of methods. These include on-line research, reading posted textbook sections, mini-lectures, individual research and writing, and participating in on-line class assignments and discussions designed to stimulate critical thinking and application.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

All students are required to read the assigned readings, complete assignments and discussion questions and respond weekly to classmates' postings on both the Assignment and Discussion Boards by the due dates. In general, original discussion and assignment postings are due on Thursday. All students are required to read classmates' assignments and make a minimum of one reply posting by Saturday.

See Course Information - Grading Requirements for posting grading criteria.

**TEXTBOOKS**

Reading assignments are drawn from three sources. Class internet research, Web Site links, and the required textbook:

The Nonprofit Handbook by Gary M. Grobman. White Hat Communications, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition  
ISBN 1-929109-20-3

You may order it on Amazon or at your local bookstore if you wish.

## **REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL**

Request for Withdrawal from the course must be submitted in writing to Janie Spencer, School of Extended and Lifelong Learning (formerly Continuing Education) prior to the last week of the course. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the full UM policy on Withdrawal from the University. Refunds are not granted for withdrawals made after course registration deadlines.

## **SCHEDULE OF LESSONS**

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### ***Week 1***

Objectives are to study and understand:

1. How a governance board model differs from a traditional model
2. The three basic duties of a nonprofit board
3. The four roles of a nonprofit board
4. Basic responsibilities of a board of directors
5. Individual board members' responsibilities

#### **Getting Started - Introductions**

#### **Assignment #1 – Board Governance**

#### **Discussion Question #1**

#### **Reading Assignment #1**

Grobman, Gary M. (2008), *The Nonprofit Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. White Hat Communications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Chapter 7 - A Transforming Model for Nonprofit Board Leadership* pp. 63 - 69.

Web Research Reading Assignment – Board Governance

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### ***Week 2***

Objectives are to study and understand:

1. The dynamics of board formation and recruitment
2. Committees, Task Forces, and Councils
3. Effective Board Meetings

#### **Assignment #2 – Committees & Task Forces**

#### **Discussion Question #2**

#### **Reading Assignment #2**

Grobman, Gary M. (2008), *The Nonprofit Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. White Hat Communications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Chapter 4 - Nonprofit Boards of Directors*, 41- 47

Web Research Reading Assignment – Effective Meetings

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### ***Week 3***

Objectives are to study and understand the basic responsibilities of board leadership in:

1. Mission and vision development
2. Annual strategic planning
3. Setting an example through personal giving
4. Promoting the organization's public image.

**Assignment #3 – Create a personal public relations story**

**Discussion Question #3**

**Reading Assignment #3**

Grobman, Gary M. (2008), *The Nonprofit Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. White Hat Communications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

*Chapter 5 - Mission and Vision Statements*, pp. 49 - 53.

*Chapter 6 - Strategic Planning*, pp 53 -62

Web Research Reading Assignment – Board Personal Giving

**Week 4**

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Objectives are to study and understand the infrastructure necessary for effective board of directors including:

1. By-laws
2. Policies
3. Legal Considerations
4. Ethical Considerations
5. Liability & Risk Management

**Assignment #4 – Nonprofit Policies**

**Discussion Question #4**

**Reading Assignment #4**

Grobman, Gary M. (2008), *The Nonprofit Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. White Hat Communications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Chapter 3 – By-laws*, pp 37-40

*Chapter 8 - Nonprofit Organization Ethics*, pp.71 – 81

*Chapter 10 – Liability, Risk Management & Insurance*, pp.91-96

Web Research Reading Assignment – Legal Considerations

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**Week 5**

Objectives are to study and understand the basic responsibilities of board governance as it pertains to providing oversight for resource stewardship and development – Financial Oversight and Fundraising.

**Assignment #5 – Board Members & Fundraising**

**Discussion Question #5**

**Reading Assignment #5**

Grobman, Gary M. (2008), *The Nonprofit Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. White Hat Communications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Chapter 11 – Financial Management*, pp. 97 - 113

*Chapter 16 – Fundraising*, pp 135 – 141

Web Site Articles

Web Research Reading Assignment – Financial Oversight

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**Week 6**

Objectives are to study and understand the basic responsibilities of board management:

1. Executive director supervision
2. Board/staff communications
3. Board evaluation.

**Assignment #6 – Governance Activities List**

## **Discussion Question #6**

## **Reading Assignment #6**

Web Article

Web Research Reading Assignment – Board Evaluations

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**FINAL FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS: Due Saturday of Final Class Week.** Create an Annual Board Governance Calendar.

## **Grading Requirements – Building an Effective Board**

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Since the assignments given in this course are integrated to achieve the best possible learning outcome for students, and since they are designed to build on and to test knowledge gained through comprehensive participation, the expectation is that all students will to the best of their abilities complete all assignments. Attention paid by the instructor to critiquing written assignments will be directly proportional to the amount of effort put forth by individual students on writing them, and on overall course participation as well. Late assignments will be critiqued at the discretion of the instructor.

### **PSC460 grading will be based on a total of 600 points**

600 – 558 = A

557- 540 = A-

539 – 522 = B+

521 – 498 = B

497 – 480 = B-

479 – 462 = C+

461 – 438 = C

437 – 420 = C-

- *Graduate Students must complete a Governance Calendar Project in addition to Lesson #6 Work for Graduate Credit.*

**Each week students will have three activities to complete for a total of 100 points. Posting/Grading Criteria**

### **Weekly Web Research Readings = 30 points**

- *10 points for timely posting (Thursday midnight, MST)*
- *Content - 20 points awarded as follows:*  
A brief summary of the high points of the article, specifically listing three learning points and their application to the week's lesson. Web link included.

### **Weekly Assignments = 35 points**

- *10 points for timely posting (Thursday midnight, MST)*
- *Content – A maximum of 15 points will be awarded for postings that are complete and address the assignment in a thoughtful manner.*
- *Response – A maximum of 10 points will be awarded*

- Each student must critique one classmate's assignment and give constructive feedback on the content of the assignment. Feedback must include two-three ways/areas for improvement.
- **Only one critique per CLASSMATE'S POSTING for credit.** Be respectful of other students and do not respond to additional assignments until a primary posting/critique has been made. That will allow each student to have the opportunity to improve their evaluation and feedback skills by giving primary feedback. Feel free to engage in discussion on all postings after the first/primary critique has been made.

### **Weekly Discussions = 35 points**

- *10 points for timely posting (Thursday midnight, MST)*
- *Content – A maximum of 15 points will be awarded for postings that are complete and address the assignment in a thoughtful manner.*
- *Response – A maximum of 10 points will be awarded.*  
*5 points will be awarded for each response posting that is thoughtful and contains relevant content that adds to or reflects on the conversation.*

The goal of response postings is to create classroom interaction and stimulate questions, generate feedback, and exchange ideas. Attempt to make your responses thoughtful and stimulating -- "points" are not awarded for postings that are of the "good idea or I agree" nature. Think, challenge, give examples, and learn. Limit yourself to one or two paragraphs of thoughtful response for each reply posting.

### **Graduate Student's Final Assignment.**

This assignment is graded "pass/fail". If you "pass" it will not change your total points for the class; those points will indicate your final grade. If you "fail"; 100 points will be deducted from your accumulated assignment points and your final grade will be adjusted downward.