PSC511V Perspectives in Volunteer Management

Department of Political Science

Summer 2016 Session I

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Dates: May 12 - June 15

Office Hours: Please contact the instructor via email or phone to schedule a meeting time if you have questions or concerns to discuss. In person meetings can be arranged at the request of the student.

Required Text:

Ellis, S.J. (2010). *From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success.* Philadelphia: Energize, Inc. (Available as an e-book - it will not be available in the UNCG bookstore).

Course Description: This course is designed to provide an overview of volunteer administration as a profession and as a critical component of managing nonprofit organizations. The formation of a philosophy of volunteer management is an important component of the course design as well as a critical evaluation of existing volunteer programs. Participants will actively engage in online discussions, assignments, and readings in order to better understand vital components as they relate to volunteer management.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

1. Develop an understanding of the historical context of volunteerism in America.

2. Discuss contemporary trends in volunteerism and assess the impacts of these trends on agencies and organizations involving volunteers.
3. Understand best practices and approaches when applying the ISOTURE model to a volunteer program.
4. Through interaction with experienced volunteer administrators, gain an understanding of the broad array of skills necessary to succeed in the field of volunteer administration.

Course Requirements:

1. Each student is expected to participate in online forums and discussions. Please notify the instructor in advance of any expected conflicts.
2. Students are expected to read the text and other reference materials as provided through the online Assignments area. This will be critical to active participation in the online forum discussions.
3. Students will prepare a personal philosophy of volunteer management as shaped by their personal and professional experiences.
4. Students will be given a current issue faced by a volunteer manager or administrator. The student will apply problem-solving methods in a decision maze to create an action plan for resolution of the issue.
5. Students will conduct a group collaboration that provides a generalized assessment of an organization's volunteer program applying the appropriate models and practices learned through the course.

Course Schedule:

DUE May 18 - Section One: Historical Context & Trends of Volunteerism

1.Text Reading Assignment: Chapters 1-2, 7,Suggested Reading: Ellis, S. J. & Katherine Campbell (2005). *By the People: A History of Americans as Volunteers.* Philadelphia: Energize Inc.

2.Writing Assignment Due: Philosophy of Volunteer Management

3.Online Lecture: Historical Context & Trends of Volunteerism and Supplemental Article: Howe, Jeff (2006). The Rise of Crowdsourcing, Wired Magazine, 14(6).http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds.html

4.Complete Forum Discussion & Questions

DUE June 2 - Section Two: ISOTURE Model of Volunteer Management

1.Text Reading Assignment: Chapters 3-4, 6, 11,Suggested Reading: Eisner, D., Grimm, R.T., Maynard, S., & Susannah Washburn, S. (2009). The new volunteer workforce. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 7(1): 32-37.http://www.ssireview.org/pdf/TheNewVolunteerWorkforce.pdf

2.Group Collaboration Assignment Due: Volunteer Program Assessment

3.Online Lecture: ISOTURE Model

4.Complete Forum Discussion & Questions

DUE June 14 - Section Three: Volunteer Management Best Practices & Issues

1.Text Reading Assignment: Chapters 5, 8 – 10, 12,Suggested Reading: (2004). Volunteer management capacity in America's charities and congregations. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. Available at:http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410963_VolunteerManagment.pdfMartinez, J.M.

(2003). Liability and volunteer organizations: A survey of the law. Nonprofit Management & Leadership, 14(2): 151-169.

2.Writing Assignment: Problem Solving Decision Maze & Action Plan

3.Online Lecture: Volunteer Management Best Practice & Issues

4.Complete Forum Discussion & Questions

Course Assignments & Evaluation Criteria:

A. Philosophy of Volunteer Management10%

In two pages, examine and defend your philosophy of volunteer management. Give reflection to how that philosophy was shaped through your personal service as well as through your professional experience.   Include in the reflection the specific historical eras and events that shaped your philosophy of volunteerism (50% off your grade). Your paper should be uploaded to the Assignments Tool online by **May 18.** Please do not email your paper.

B. Volunteer Program Assessment Group Collaboration30%

You will be assigned into small groups of 2-5 people (size depends on enrollment). Each group will select an organization's current volunteer program for assessment. This should be a program that is

available to be interviewed by a group member. The group will conduct a program assessment using the ISOTURE Model of Volunteer Management.   The program assessment should be developed based on interviews with the volunteer manager, staff and information gathered from the organization. The assessment should include information about the volunteer program's history, mission/vision, structure, and scope. You should evaluate the program's best practices and management of issues as well as their incorporation of the ISOTURE model. The assessment should conclude with your recommendations for growth, sustainability and/opportunity. Assessments (as well as the progression of group collaboration) should be presented in the group collaboration work area online. There is no formal paper or presentation; therefore your collaboration must demonstrate each step of your assessment. Please see the Assignments section for information on starting your Group Collaboration. Assessments should be complete by**June 2**.

C. Practitioner Problem Solving Decision Maze & Action Plan30%

Practicing volunteer managers and administrators will identify specific aspects or issues of volunteer management they are experiencing. In the third section, Volunteer Management Best Practices & Issues, students will understand specific accounts of a volunteer manager/administrator to develop an understanding of the nature of their issue. Students will then participate in the online decision maze, plotting the appropriate course of action and solutions. Using materials presented in the readings and your decision maze, you will develop a plan of action based on best practices for addressing the issue. The place of action will be due the subsequent class period in lieu of the class session. The Decision Maze should be completed and action plans should be uploaded to the Assignments Tool online by **June 14**.

Action plans must be at least 3 pages; citations should be used to justify the suggested plan of action. The paper should include:

- Issue presented by volunteer manager/administrator in the decision maze
- Identification of best practices related to the issue (literature review)
- Suggested plan of action for the volunteer manager
- References

D. Assigned Readings, Forum Participation & Questions30%

Each student should read the required readings from the text as well as each section provided online. Students will be required to post **3 separate 200-word discussions** in the forum for each section.   Students may pose questions to other students or share insight that from the assigned

readings that is relevant or applicable to their field or experience. This incorporation of assigned readings will be critical to active discussion.

Assignment Policy:

1. All written assignments must be typed in 12 pt font and double-spaced with 1-inch margins.
2. All written assignments must follow APA writing style.
3. Assignments must be submitted by 11pm on the day due. Assignments late will be penalized regardless of excuse or reason.