



## Master of Science in Nonprofit Management

---

# Course Descriptions

Published Spring 2011

Spertus is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), 230 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604.

Contributing to the Community

# Master of Science in Nonprofit Management

---

## Curriculum

The **Spartus Master of Science in Nonprofit Management (MSNM)** program is delivered in a cohort format, which starts throughout the year. Students can complete the program in a variety of formats, and while the core curriculum remains fairly consistent, students should refer to their individual program type to determine exact curricular content and completions options.

## MSNM Requirements

- ◆ **Core Courses** (38 credit hours)
- ◆ **Program Capstone and Synthesis Sessions** (2 credit hours)
- ◆ **Completion Options: Concentration Area or Independent Project** (10 credit hours)

**Total: 50 quarter-hour credits**

---

## Core Courses

### Module 1

- ◆ **Overview of Nonprofit Organizations and the Management of Nonprofits** (3 classes)

### Module 2

- ◆ **Essential Skills for Thinking Critically** (4 classes)

### Module 3

- ◆ **Written and Oral Communication Skills** (8 classes)

### Module 4

- ◆ **Management and Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations** (8 classes)

### Module 5

- ◆ **Organizational Culture and Governance** (6 classes)

### Module 6

- ◆ **Management of the Work Environment** (8 classes)

### Module 7

- ◆ **Strategic Planning** (6 classes)

### Module 8

- ◆ **Applied Research and Program Evaluation** (8 classes)

### Module 9

- ◆ **Budgeting and Finance** (8 classes)

### Module 10

- ◆ **Revenue Development for Nonprofit Organizations** (6 classes)

### Module 11

- ◆ **Legal and Human Resources Issues** (8 classes)

### Module 12

- ◆ **Writing for the Professions** (6 classes)

### Module 13

- ◆ **Knowledge Management** (6 classes)

### Module 14

- ◆ **Ethics in Nonprofit Organizations** (6 classes)

### Program Capstone

- ◆ (5 classes)

## Program Completion Options

### Option A

#### **Concentration Area Courses\***

#### **Fundraising Management Concentration**

- ◆ **History and Infrastructure of Philanthropy** (4 classes)
- ◆ **Individual and Institutional Donor Cultivation** (6 classes)
- ◆ **Entrepreneurial and Earned Income** (5 classes)
- ◆ **Grantwriting for Nonprofit Professionals** (6 classes)

#### **Human Services Administration Concentration**

- ◆ **American Social Policy and the Development of Human Services** (6 classes)
- ◆ **Analysis of Community Characteristics** (5 classes)
- ◆ **Special Issues in Human Services Administration** (4 classes)
- ◆ **Grantwriting for Nonprofit Professionals** (6 classes)

*\*The Concentration Area will be designated on transcript.*

### Option B

#### **Independent Project\*\***

- ◆ **Literature Review and Analysis**
- ◆ **Organizational Study**
- ◆ **Grant Proposal**

*\*\*The title of the Independent Project is not designated on transcript.*

*Students may either take courses in a Concentration Area (Option A) or do an Independent Project (Option B).*

# Core Courses Descriptions

The core course offerings and their descriptions are as follows in sequence:

## Module 1

### Overview of Nonprofit Organizations and the Management of Nonprofits

Course #4520

This course introduces new students to the Master of Science in Nonprofit Management program (MSNM). An overview of the program is provided. Keys to successful completion of the program are also addressed. In this course, students are introduced to nonprofit organizations, the contributions nonprofit organizations make to the larger society, and the management of nonprofits.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Relate management skills to the components of the MSNM program
- ◆ Understand support systems available to students
- ◆ Be prepared to self-reflect and synthesize learning outcomes

## Module 2

### Essential Skills for Thinking Critically

Course #4521

Managers of nonprofit organizations must be able to make sound decisions. This means using information wisely, recognizing opportunities, working with complexity, and expanding their thinking skills. The purpose of this course is to develop critical thinking skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference. Students will learn to explain what they think and how they arrived at that judgment. They will learn the skill of self-reflection in order to recognize their own critical thinking skills and improve them. The focus of this course is the attainment of these skills as well as the initial introduction of effective writing.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Describe essential critical thinking skills
- ◆ Use critical thinking skills in making managerial decisions
- ◆ Critically assess selected legal and policy issues
- ◆ Assess the credibility of information obtained from the Internet
- ◆ Reflect on personal critical thinking skills and improve on them

## Module 3

### Written and Oral Communication Skills

Course #4522

This course focuses on attainment of written and oral skills for preparing and presenting persuasive and clear arguments. It builds on the concepts learned in Module 2 and includes content on basic organizational communication, and preparing and delivering presentations.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Describe effective organizational communication
- ◆ Improve professional writing skills
- ◆ Prepare persuasive and clear written arguments
- ◆ Develop skills in creating professional documents
- ◆ Develop skills in public speaking
- ◆ Interpret scholarly works
- ◆ Analyze statements of particular viewpoints

## Module 4

### Management and Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations

Course #4523

Effective managers maintain positive relationships with various organizational stakeholders, encourage productivity, achieve organizational objectives, resolve conflicts, and balance a variety of other responsibilities. The purpose of this course is to provide theoretical perspectives on management and leadership as well as insight into management styles.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Understand the nature of management and leadership
- ◆ Describe various management models and their impact
- ◆ Discuss the origins and impact of power and influence
- ◆ Understand the connection between interpersonal relationships and productivity
- ◆ Understand the impact of teamwork and how to build teams
- ◆ Discuss selected problem-solving techniques
- ◆ Apply principles of conflict resolution to real-life situations
- ◆ Develop and assess personal strengths, management and leadership skills

# Core Courses Descriptions

## Module 5

### Organizational Culture and Governance

Course #4524

This course examines the creation and management of organizational culture. Students learn the impact of managers on the culture, effectiveness, and growth of an organization. They also examine governance and its impact on culture, with special attention given to the function and development of boards. Students learn the elements of group process, skills in facilitating groups, and the politics of working with internal and external constituents.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Define organizational culture and describe dimensions of culture
- ◆ Describe how organizational cultures develop and affect nonprofit organizations
- ◆ Analyze and compare various organizational cultures and their impact on the ability to manage
- ◆ Understand the impact of nonprofit governance on the culture of an organization and the roles and responsibilities of a board of directors
- ◆ Apply skills related to facilitation of group processes

## Module 6

### Management of the Work Environment

Course #4537

This course focuses on the attainment of people management skills. Utilizing communication and self-awareness skills attained in previous courses, students learn how to form and nurture teams and develop the coaching skills to bring together many different personalities, attitudes, values, talents, and expectations. Students learn outcomes-based performance evaluation of staff and the intricacies of human resources-related laws and regulations. Students also explore methods of creating a more diverse workforce.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Describe the difference between teams and teamwork and how to lead a high-performance work team
- ◆ Develop an effective performance evaluation system that includes personal goal attainment
- ◆ Relate laws that impact the management of employees
- ◆ Discuss the nature and effective strategies of employee recruitment and supervision
- ◆ Discuss coaching skills needed by managers
- ◆ Relate factors critical to the creation of a diverse workforce

## Module 7

### Strategic Planning

Course #4525

Strategic planning is a management process through which a nonprofit organization can effectively accomplish its mission. In this module, the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes for an organization's strategy are presented, along with the process for developing an organizational action program. Students learn how to develop a strategic plan that flows logically from the mission and goals of an organization.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Evaluate the strategic planning process and resulting outcomes
- ◆ Analyze an agency's strategic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)
- ◆ Determine appropriate short and long-term planning goals
- ◆ Understand the importance of a strategic vision
- ◆ Develop and prioritize strategic goals
- ◆ Measure the outcomes of strategic planning

## Module 8

### Applied Research and Program Evaluation

Course #4526

A manager's role is to systematically and objectively assess countless factors related to organizational efficiency, client needs, program development, and other related issues. In this module, students learn how to conduct a program evaluation, design a needs assessment, develop a research proposal, and utilize published research findings and other data.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Investigate scholarly literature to clarify theory and research on the topic
- ◆ Analyze research data published in professional journals
- ◆ Evaluate program outcomes
- ◆ Analyze demographic data
- ◆ Design a needs assessment
- ◆ Understand sampling methodology and the interpretation of results
- ◆ Design appropriate instrumentation for program evaluation
- ◆ Develop an evaluation plan
- ◆ Develop a research proposal

# Core Courses Descriptions

## Module 9

### Budgeting and Finance

Course #4527

Nonprofit managers and leaders have important financial responsibilities. It is therefore necessary to understand appropriate procedures in budgeting and financial management. This course introduces content in organizational financial management and budgeting, presenting basic tools and emphasizing strategies to effectively use fiscal resources.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Describe the components of nonprofit organization budgets
- ◆ Construct and interpret spreadsheets
- ◆ Interpret cash flow and budget variations
- ◆ Define accrual and cash basis accounting
- ◆ Calculate program costs
- ◆ Describe the financial audits process
- ◆ Understand the impact of tax regulations
- ◆ Understand budgeting as a tool of strategic planning

## Module 10

### Revenue Development for Nonprofit Organizations

Course #4528

The financial health of many nonprofit organizations depends on the ability to generate resources (funds, volunteers, and in-kind support) to support programs, services, and organizational infrastructure. Organizations require a variety of funding streams to insure cash flow and avoid reliance on any one particular source. The staff and board must develop a long-term strategy to expand funding sources and maintain relationships with current donors. This course is an introduction to the role of development, including the development of earned income within a nonprofit organization. It also covers development and implementation of a fundraising plan, and management of fundraising operations.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Understand the role of different funding sources, including but not limited to individuals, corporations, government, and federated campaigns.
- ◆ Develop skills to identify, cultivate, and solicit funding sources
- ◆ Learn how to develop and sustain relationships with foundations
- ◆ Learn how to develop a fundraising plan
- ◆ Recognize effective marketing and public relations techniques

## Module 11

### Legal and Human Resources Issues

Course #4529

Nonprofit organizations operate within a legal framework that regulates governance, human resources, confidentiality, employee labor relations (paid and volunteer), and other issues such as unionization and advocacy. In addition to broader recruitment and supervision issues, this course introduces specific content related to personnel issues. The creation of laws, regulations, and organizational policies, and the impact of tax-exempt status in nonprofit organizations are also addressed. Laws that impact the administration of nonprofit organizations will also be covered.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Recognize effective strategies of employee recruitment and supervision
- ◆ Understand how laws, regulations, and policies are created and enacted
- ◆ Identify the relationship between tax-exempt status and the functions of an organization
- ◆ Become familiar with the laws that impact administration of nonprofit organizations
- ◆ Understand legal issues related to written agency policies
- ◆ Become aware of the legal and ethical responsibilities required of board members

## Module 12

### Writing for the Professions

Course #4530

This course helps students further develop communication and management skills through extensive writing exercises. The course focuses on professional writing that may include personnel job performance evaluations, media releases, and organizational reports. Students practice various writing styles and expand their knowledge of writing in the nonprofit sector.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Demonstrate competency in professional writing
- ◆ Utilize writing as an essential tool to manage nonprofit organizations
- ◆ Enhance public relations skills through effective writing

# Core Courses Descriptions

## Module 13

### Knowledge Management

Course #4531

In today's technological world it is relatively easy to locate a wide range of general and specialized information. Nonprofit professionals need the ability to assess and utilize information and the expertise of others. In this course students learn strategies to determine what knowledge they need. They discover ways to find information and acquire knowledge in useful and effective ways. In the process students refine critical-thinking and decision-making skills through exercises related to synthesis and analysis of various forms of information.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Understand how to isolate information needs and narrow knowledge resources
- ◆ Know how to assess available information
- ◆ Be able to present information effectively
- ◆ Demonstrate expanded competency in critical thinking and decision-making

## Module 14

### Ethics in Nonprofit Organizations

Course #4532

When faced with difficult decisions in problem resolution, managers frequently make choices among competing interests, often in situations where there may be more than one correct solution. The voices of conflict may be either internal or external. Learning how to make tough choices among competing interests requires a deeper understanding of professional ethics as well as the development of a firm moral foundation. Building on all previous modules, this course addresses the impact of personal values on management decisions, as well as methods of ethical decision-making and ways of making choices among competing interests.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Discuss basic ethical philosophies
- ◆ Describe the nature of ethical dilemmas
- ◆ Explain how values, both personal and organizational, affect ethical decision-making
- ◆ Identify key principles for resolving dilemmas

## Program Capstone

Course #4533

In the Program Capstone, students work both independently and in collaboration with teams to develop organization-focused strategies based on their work in the MSNM program. The Capstone also includes sessions on the importance of, and strategies for, enhancing self-assessment and lifelong learning. Students also learn how to think about, develop, and manage their professional careers.

## Synthesis Sessions

Students will solve a complex pre-assigned case study problem in groups as a culminating exercise of the module series. These synthesis exercises will occur after Modules 3, 7, and 11.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Curriculum synthesis
- ◆ Refine problem-solving skills
- ◆ Increase case analysis skills

# Program Completion Options

## Option A: Concentration Area Courses

### Fundraising Management Concentration

Organizations require a variety of funding streams to insure cash flow and avoid reliance on any one particular source. The staff and board must develop a long-term strategy to expand funding sources and maintain relationships with current donors. This concentration area provides in-depth knowledge and skills related to the role of fundraising within a nonprofit organization, the development and implementation of a fundraising plan, and the management of the fundraising operation. This concentration area expands on the exploration of various sources of funds, including foundations and corporations, government entities, and individuals. Students learn strategies for identifying potential donors, relationship-building, and growing donor relationships over time.

### History and Infrastructure of Philanthropy

Course #4580

This course examines the history of U.S. philanthropic tradition in the United States, the role of philanthropy in the nonprofit sector, and the growth of philanthropic institutions. Laws and regulations pertinent to philanthropy and charitable giving are also explored.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Describe the historical development of philanthropy and fundraising in the United States
- ◆ Discuss the various types of philanthropic organizations, their structures and missions
- ◆ Understand the rudiments of philanthropic and fundraising initiatives

### Individual and Institutional Donor Cultivation

Course # 4581

This course explores the fundraising process in-depth, including annual giving programs, major gift awards, planned giving, and capital campaigns. The cultivation of foundation, corporate, and individual donors will be presented in detail. Fundraising, strategic planning, and building donor relationships will also be addressed.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Apply skills to identify, cultivate, and solicit funding sources
- ◆ Utilize skills to develop and sustain relationships with foundations
- ◆ Identify appropriate granting foundations, corporations, and other funding opportunities
- ◆ Use marketing and public relations techniques effectively
- ◆ Discuss the ethical context of fundraising

## Entrepreneurial and Earned Income

Course #4582

The financial health of many nonprofit organizations depends on the ability of organizational leaders to be creative in their approach to generating resources. One way to supplement the contributions from donors, foundations and corporations, and other funding sources is to create sources of entrepreneurial and earned income. Such initiatives need to be explored by organizational leaders with staff, and proposed to members of the board. Skills needed to generate this type of income for nonprofit organizations will be discussed along with ideas on how to generate earned income.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Understand the rudiments of fee-for-service and how nonprofit organizations start a business
- ◆ Recognize funding streams appropriate to an organization's mission
- ◆ Examine income-producing possibilities for organizations
- ◆ Understand regulatory and legal issues regarding entrepreneurial and earned income
- ◆ Become more familiar with marketing and small business development

## Grantwriting for Nonprofit Organizations\*

Course #4583

Every year hundreds of foundations, corporations, and government agencies have millions of dollars available to be distributed to nonprofit organizations. To access these funds, fundraising professionals must know how to write and submit grants. Grantwriting is a competitive process that requires knowledge of the politics of grantwriting, the art of grantwriting, and the mechanics of grantwriting. In this course, students learn how to identify potential funding resources, how to satisfy the needs of grantors, and how to write winning grants.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Have knowledge of the application and grant review process
- ◆ Understand the concepts of relationship-building with potential grantors
- ◆ Understand the importance of grant-seeking research
- ◆ Explain the differences between private and government funding
- ◆ Know the parts of a grant and how to write a grant
- ◆ Know what grant reviewers look for in a grant

*\*This course is offered in both the Fundraising Management and Human Services Administration concentrations.*

## Human Services Administration Concentration

Human services professionals manage and lead organizations that address some of the most important and critical societal needs. The Human Services Administration concentration area enables present and future human services professionals in the public and private sectors to effectively develop and shape their organizations to facilitate and improve services. Courses in this concentration area provide students with a better understanding of the United States human services delivery system. Students also strengthen management skills that are critical to success within the human services administration arena.

### American Social Policy and the Development of Human Services

Course#4540

This course traces the emergence and evolution of human services in the United States. Students are introduced to the broader field of social welfare policy. The development of social policy will be examined from social, economic, and political perspectives, as well as perspectives on issues of race and gender.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of the historical development of the human services system in the U.S.
- ◆ Describe the dominant ideologies, values, and beliefs that have influenced the development of social welfare systems
- ◆ Demonstrate conceptual clarity of policy making
- ◆ Explain the role of human services professions in influencing social policy
- ◆ Identify the social, economic, and political factors that influence social policies
- ◆ Understand how social policy is created
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of social policy responses to identified problems
- ◆ Analyze the response of the social welfare system to the needs of populations at-risk

### Analysis of Community Characteristics

Course #4541

Students learn how to assess community needs through an analysis of community demographics, economics, institutions, and power structures. Common community problems such as homelessness, racism and prejudice, violence, unemployment, and access to health care are explored.

#### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Objectively assess demographic, social, and economic patterns in a local community
- ◆ Examine the various power and economic dynamics of the community
- ◆ Delineate needs of a local community
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of holistic perspectives on community and its place in the larger context of society

## Special Issues in Human Services Administration

Course #4542

Issues unique to human services agencies are explored, including working with cultural, educational, and regional differences. Problems of supervision unique to human services are also explored. This course covers how to start a nonprofit organization that provides direct services. Students will also learn about the increased demand for accountability in the public sector.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Discuss skills in communication, team building, and coaching needed by human services administrators
- ◆ Understand laws and regulations that impact human services organizations
- ◆ Describe strategies to alleviate common causes of stress in organizations
- ◆ Explore legal and economic issues related to starting a new nonprofit human services organization
- ◆ Affect changes in organizations to meet increasing demand for accountability in the public sector

## Grantwriting for Nonprofit Organizations\*

Course #4583

Every year hundreds of foundations, corporations, and government agencies have millions of dollars available to be distributed to nonprofit organizations. To access these funds, fundraising professionals must know how to write and submit grants. Grantwriting is a competitive process that requires knowledge of the politics of grantwriting, the art of grantwriting, and the mechanics of grantwriting. In this course, students learn how to identify potential funding resources, how to satisfy the needs of grantors, and how to write winning grants.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ Have knowledge of the application and grant review process
- ◆ Understand the concepts of relationship-building with potential grantors
- ◆ Understand the importance of grant-seeking research
- ◆ Explain the differences between private and government funding
- ◆ Know the parts of a grant and how to write a grant
- ◆ Know what grant reviewers look for in a grant

*\*This course is offered in both the Fundraising Management and Human Services Administration concentrations.*

# Program Completion Options

## Option B: The Independent Project

Students may elect to complement their coursework with an Independent Project to fulfill their degree requirements. Students selecting this option will work with the Academic Advisor to complete their project. Students who do the Independent Project may begin to work with the Academic Advisor any time after completion of Module VII of the MSNM program.

### Independent Project Options

Course#4536

- ◆ Grant Proposal
- ◆ Organizational Study
- ◆ Literature Review and Analysis

#### Grant Proposal

The *Grant Proposal* option provides students with an opportunity to identify a specific need, and to write a grant proposal to request funds from a private funder, foundation, or corporation. The Grant Proposal begins with an in-depth review of the problem based on the results of research found in the literature. Other sources of information may include U.S. census data, government reports, and local demographic and socioeconomic statistics. The Academic Advisor will help guide students toward the sources of literature to be consulted.

#### Literature Review and Analysis

A *Literature Review and Analysis* enables students to identify a social or organizational problem of interest and conduct an in-depth review of the literature on the subject. The review may include the history of developments on a particular topic, theoretical perspectives on a problem, and proposed solutions. Both qualitative and quantitative sources may be used. The Academic Advisor will help guide students toward possible sources of literature to be consulted.

#### Organizational Study

An *Organizational Study* enables students to identify a particular problem of interest connected to the operation or management of a particular nonprofit sector organization. An in-depth review of the literature is conducted on topics related to the problem. The sources collected for the literature review should include relevant research on the problem of interest. The Academic Advisor will help guide students toward possible sources of literature to be consulted.



610 S. Michigan Avenue | Chicago  
312.322.1700 | [spertus.edu](http://spertus.edu)

Spertus is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), 230 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604.

Spertus is a partner in serving our community, supported by the JUF/Jewish Federation.