

Understanding and Managing Volunteers

NPLD781: Spring 2022

Mondays 7:30 – 9:00 pm;

January 25 - March 15

Location: online

Instructor: Prof. Ram A. Cnaan

cnaan@upenn.edu

[542 McNeill Bld. 215.898.5523](#)

Class TA: Lauren E. Graham

legraham@upenn.edu | 516.850.1786

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

Aesop

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Course Content

Volunteers are the backbone of many human service organizations and nonprofits; they make many social programs possible and fill the void created by the withdrawal of the welfare state system. Without volunteer participation, the services that are offered by many nonprofit organizations would be unavailable or provided at a higher cost to government, clients and taxpayers. However, only few organizations know how to face the challenges of managing unpaid staff and how to motivate volunteers without offering material benefits.

This course will focus on understanding and managing volunteers. We will start with conceptual understanding of what volunteering is and will discuss its complexity. We will discuss issues of recruiting, motivating, and supervising volunteers. During the course, an introduction will be made to theories and research from the general organizational research field and from the field of volunteer management, and we will examine the various aspects of the integration of volunteers into an organizational system.

We will discuss the definition of volunteering, the characteristics of the volunteers, the latest trends in volunteering, and the motives for volunteering and in volunteering as a basis for getting to know this unique content world. We will discuss the various stages of recruitment, screening, training, monitoring, and firing of volunteers. We will deal with aspects of mobilizing

volunteers: the rewards from volunteer work and the difficulties involved, volunteer satisfaction and its effects, what cause volunteers to persevere and stay, how to set goals, and how to provide evaluation and support. We will also deal with two special categories of volunteerism: 1. volunteering for specific populations and volunteer leadership; and 2. Long-term traditional volunteers and episodic volunteers,

Each pair of students (about 10 pairs) will be responsible to select one concept related to volunteering and present it in class.

Topics to be covered (partial list)

1. An introduction: defining volunteerism, who volunteers and how much.
2. Volunteerability: the barriers to volunteering and overcoming them.
3. The recent trends of volunteering, such as virtual or episodic volunteering and how they are addressing volunteerability.
4. The “volunteer spirit”: why people volunteer (motivations), what they gain from it (benefits) and what makes it difficult (costs).
5. The on-going process of managing volunteers:
 - The recruitment of volunteers: using marketing strategies to have more unpaid workers in the organization.
 - Selection of volunteers: why and how decide who is suitable to volunteer in our organization.
 - Getting the volunteer into the organization: placement, training and organizational socialization.
 - Facing the challenges of volunteering and volunteer management.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will understand:

1. Familiarity with the unique world of volunteer and volunteer content;
2. A better understanding of the need for professional volunteer management and receiving tools for this purpose;
3. Studying theories and research both from the world of employee motivation and from the content world of volunteering;
4. Linking theories and empirical studies to the students' work in the field;
5. Students will be able to demonstrate and apply volunteer concepts to real life scenarios.

Class Participation

You are expected to attend every class on time and be fully prepared to discuss the material assigned for the session. That is, you should have completed all assigned readings and be ready

to discuss the readings. You are also expected to participate in on-line groups assignments outside class time and contribute to class Canvas-based discussion.

Please note: Attendance will be taken at the start of each class.

Missing more than two classes (out of the 8 listed below) will result in failing the course.

Grading Policy

Assignments will all be graded on conceptual clarity, responsiveness to the assignment, use and appropriate citation and reference of the literature, and completeness. Assignments must be complete to be graded. That is, sections may not be skipped or omitted. All assignments are due on the specified date at the start of class. All assignments must be completed to receive a final grade for the course. Please consult the MSW Student Handbook (www.sp2.upenn.edu/handbooks/msw/index.html) for details about grading policy.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves consistent with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, which presents standards regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions and other actions. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, which can be found at <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>

Improve Your Writing

Writing is an essential professional skill for social workers. Even the best writers always have room for improvement. In some cases, instructors may suggest that students seek out help with their writing; in other cases, students might decide on their own, that professional help is in order.

The Marks Family Writing Center (http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/graduate_students/help_with_your_writing.php) has a variety of services for those who would like help with their writing. The School also offers writing workshops.

Course Assignments

Class participation (10%)

Critique of a Volunteer Experience (10%)

Write a one-page (500 words) critique of a volunteer experience you have had -- what would you have done better? It should be a case where you were a volunteer (not, for instance, a volunteer coordinator). We will then share these with the class.

Class presentation of a Volunteering concept (15%)

In pairs, you should select one volunteer concept or one volunteer article and present to the wide class (7-10 minutes). The presentation should add to the class knowledge above and beyond the class material that was already covered.

If you select a topic, make sure to get an approval from the class instructor, at the latest, by the end of second week of class. Note: You will be expected to present this concept comprehensively and not based on article/source only.

If you select to cover an article chose one that has a star sign next to it and get as soon as possible approval from the class instructor.

Approvals are needed to avoid duplications and to better plan the class lectures for the remainder of the course.

List of possible topics: (Students are encouraged to offer additional topics)

Recruitability	Volunteerability
Psychological contract	Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI)
Stipended volunteering	Volunteering & activism
Micro volunteering	Disaster volunteering
Legal protection of volunteers	Political volunteering
Mandatory volunteering	Court ordered volunteering
Skilled-based volunteering	
National (and international) day of volunteering	

Video Interviews (15%)

Watch three interviews with volunteer managers discussing their organizations and write a one-paged single spaced/500-word reflection paper.

Canvas discussion participation (20%)

Every week there will be a topic to discuss and comment about in the Discussion section of Canvas. Students are expected to contribute to the discussion based on their experience and the assigned reading.

Final paper (30%)

Each student is expected to write a final paper on a topic related to volunteering and/or volunteer management. Students are encouraged to speak with the class instructor on their chosen topic.

Paper specifications:

Ten-page paper with an additional two page-bibliography using one-inch margin on all sides and 12 fonts is expected. The paper must be logically argued and well copy-edited before submission.

10+ references from the course bibliography; more optional.

Dealing with a major volunteering issue.

Contact class instructor for topic approval.

Class schedule¹

Class 1	January 25 7:30-9:00 pm	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Introductions and course goals and rules Student and professor’s personal introductions Student’s expectations of the course</p>
		<p>Assignments:</p> <p>Watch first recorded lecture under “Class Recordings”</p>
		<p>Readings:</p> <p>Cnaan, R. A., Jones, K., Dickin, A., & Salomon, M. (2011). Estimating giving & volunteering: New ways to measure the phenomena. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly</i>, 40(3), 497-525.</p> <p>Cnaan, R. A., Handy, F., & Wadsworth, M. (1996). Defining who is a volunteer: Conceptual and empirical considerations. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly</i> 25, 364-383.</p> <p>Einolf, C., & Chambré, S. M. (2011). Who volunteers? Constructing a hybrid theory. <i>International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing</i>, 16(4), 298-310.</p>
		<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Definitions of volunteering What is volunteering? Who is a volunteer? Who volunteer? A profile for typical volunteers Who does not volunteer: Discussion on those unwanted in volunteering</p>

¹ Topics are tentative and subject to change. The same applied for the order of presentation of the listed topics.

<p>Class 2</p>	<p>February 1 7:30-9:00 pm</p>	<p>Assignments: Watch second recorded lecture under “Class Recordings”: Provide your reaction to vignette No. 1 on the discussion section on Canvas</p> <hr/> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Rogelberg, S. G., Allen, J. A., Conway, J. M., Goh, A., Currie, L., & McFarland, B. (2010). Employee experiences with volunteers: Assessment, description, antecedents, and outcomes. <i>Nonprofit Management and Leadership</i> 40, 423-444.</p> <p>Haski-Leventhal, D., Meijs, L. P. C. M., Lockstone-Binney, L., Holmes, K., and Oppenheimer, M. (2017). Measuring Volunteerability and the capacity to volunteer among non-volunteers: Implications for social policy. <i>Social Policy & Administration</i>, 52(5), 1139-1167. doi: 10.1111/spol.12342.</p>
<p>Class 3</p>	<p>February 8 7:30-9:00 pm</p>	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Volunteer recruitment Volunteer orientation Retention</p> <p>Assignments: Week 1 discussion (January 31)</p> <hr/> <p>Assignments: Provide your reaction to vignette No. 1 on the discussion section on Canvas (February 7)</p>

		<p>Readings:</p> <p>Cnaan, R. A., & Goldberg-Glen, R. S. (1991). Measuring motivation to volunteer in human services. <i>Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences</i>, 27(3), 269-284.</p> <p>Stukas, A. A., Worth, K. A., Clary, E. G., & Snyder, M. (2009). The matching of motivations to affordances in the volunteer environment an index for assessing the impact of multiple matches on volunteer outcomes. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly</i>, 38(1), 5-28.</p>
Class 4	February 15 7:30-9:00 pm	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Motivation to volunteer Motivation in volunteering Issues of retention Issues of evaluation</p>
		<p>Assignments:</p> <p>Provide your reaction to vignette No. 2 on the discussion section on Canvas; Video Interview 1 (February 14)</p>
		<p>Readings:</p> <p>Kreutzer, K., & Jäger, U. (2010). Volunteering versus managerialism: Conflict over organizational identity in voluntary associations. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly</i>, 40(4), 634-661. https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764010369386</p> <p>Cnaan, R. A., & Cascio, T. (1999). Performance and commitment: Issues in management of volunteers in human service organizations. <i>Journal of Social Service Research</i>, 24(3/4), 1-37/</p>

Class 5	February 22 7:30-9:00 pm	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Volunteers and employees: similarities and differences Business HR and managing volunteers Episodic volunteering Generational differences in volunteering (from senior to Gen X volunteering)</p> <p>Assignments:</p> <hr/> <p>Assignments: Provide your reaction to vignette No. 3 on the discussion section on Canvas, Video Interview 2 (February 21)</p> <hr/> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Evans, V., Curtis, D., & Cnaan, R. A. (2013). Volunteering among Latter-day Saints. <i>Journal for the scientific Study of Religion</i>, 52(4), 827-841.</p> <p>Lim, C., & MacGregor, C. A. (2012). Religion and volunteering in context: Disentangling the contextual effects of religion on voluntary behavior. <i>American Sociological review</i>, 77(5), 747-779. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412457875</p>
Class 6	March 1 7:30-9:00 pm	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Group discussion and insights from the volunteer experience Religious volunteering Volunteering groups</p> <hr/> <p>Assignments:</p> <p>Watch third recorded lecture under “Class Recordings”. Provide your reaction to vignette No. 4 on the discussion section on Canvas, Video Interview 3 (February 28), Critique of a Volunteer Experience (March 1)</p>

		<p>Readings:</p> <p>Cnaan, R. A., Heist, H. D., & Storti, M. H. (2017). Episodic volunteering at a religious megaevent: Pope Francis’s visit to Philadelphia. <i>Nonprofit Management & Leadership, 28</i>(1), 85-104.</p> <p>Hyde, M. K., Dunn, J., Bax, C., & Chambers, S. K. (2016). Episodic volunteering and retention: An Integrated theoretical approach. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 45</i>(1), 45–63.</p>
Class 7	March 8 7:30-9:00 pm	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Volunteering and social equality & social inclusion New forms of volunteering The future of volunteering Episodic volunteering Micro volunteering</p>
		<p>Assignments:</p> <p>Week 7 Discussion: Volunteer Response to COVID 19 (March 7)</p>
		<p>Readings:</p> <p>Hustinx, L., Cnaan, R. A., & Handy, F. (2010). Navigating theories of volunteering: A hybrid map for a complex phenomenon. <i>The Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 40</i>(4), 410-434.</p> <p>Wilson, J. (2012). Volunteerism research: A review essay. <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 41</i>(2), 176-212.</p>
Class 8	March 15	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <p>Wrap up Students short presentations Class assignment reassessed</p>

	7:30-9:00 pm	Assignments: Week 7 Discussion: Debrief of COVID 19 Module (March 14) Final papers are due at 11:59pm, Sunday, March 21. Papers submitted later than that date will be penalized by 10 grade points per week of late submission.
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Recommended bibliography

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- *Cho, H., Wong, Z., & Chiu, W. (2020). The effect of volunteer management on intention to continue volunteering: A mediating role of job satisfaction of volunteers. *Sage Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020920588>
- *Choi, N., & Kim, J. (2011). The effect of time volunteering and charitable donations in later life on psychological wellbeing. *Ageing and Society*, 31(4), 590-610.
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