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Curricular Guidelines

Graduate & Undergraduate Study
in Nonprofit Leadership, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy

Third Revised Edition 2015 (Graduate guidelines)
Second Revised Edition 2015 (Undergraduate guidelines)

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NONPROFIT ACADEMIC CENTERS COUNCIL

July 2015

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The formal study of the nonprofit sector, philanthropy, private organizations of civil society and the institutions of voluntarism around the globe is approaching its fifth decade. Throughout these years, the steady march toward an independent field of pedagogy has given us a string of important benchmarks. These include the founding of the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) in the early 1990s and NACC's creation of the original set of curricular guidelines for graduate and undergraduate study in nonprofit leadership, the nonprofit sector and philanthropy.

Building upon the work of the early and middle 2000s, input for these guidelines included the NACC constellation of institutional members, but also involved input from a much broader community of theory and practice experts. This third revision of the graduate curricular guidelines and this second revision of the undergraduate curricular guidelines reflect the cumulative pedagogy of formal and informal learning contributed by our members and the larger sphere of nonprofit sector stakeholders.

Among the salient changes in both the graduate and undergraduate guidelines are topical categories involving the expansion of technology in the field and in course delivery, more pronounced global and international perspectives, an accentuation of social innovation and social enterprise content areas, to name a few.

As the fast evolving field of nonprofit and philanthropy pedagogy deepens and the institutional delivery knowledge diversifies, our vision is that the academy and the field of nonprofit sector practice will innovate using the curricular topics and framework provided in these guidelines. From the benefit of experience drawn from multiple iterations of NACC's curricular guidelines, we urge users in the U.S. and around the world, to approach these revisions as guidelines to help in the development of courses, programs and degrees.

Clearly, for those of us who study, teach, perform research and work in the nonprofit sector, the benchmarks offer indication that the time for a "nonprofit/philanthropy first" perspective of the discipline is upon us. To that end, we hope you will find the guidelines useful in your work. Please continue to assist us through broad dissemination of these guidelines and by helping to inform future guidelines. We anticipate more frequent revisions of these guidelines made possible through real-time opportunities to share your recommendations through a NACC web portal developed for such a purpose.

Most sincerely,

Stuart C. Mendel
NACC President, 2014–2016
Cleveland State University

Robert F. Ashcraft
Chair, NACC Curricular Guidelines Revision Project
Arizona State University

A HISTORY OF NACC'S CURRICULAR GUIDELINES INITIATIVE

The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) is a membership association comprised of academic centers and/or programs at accredited colleges and universities that are devoted to the study of the nonprofit/nongovernmental sector, philanthropy and voluntary action to advance education, research, and practice that increase the nonprofit sector's ability to enhance civic engagement, democracy, and human welfare. Given its mission, it is appropriate that NACC's leaders have continued to advance comprehensive curricular guidelines to assist its members and build the field.

NACC's leadership in developing and disseminating curricular guidelines began in 2001 made possible thanks to the generous financial support of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. As a result of extensive discussions from a variety of scholars and practitioners, led by a NACC appointed task force, the first-ever graduate guidelines were released in 2003.

The initial graduate guidelines were immediately well received and prompted a call for NACC to continue evolving such guidelines to include not only subsequent revisions of the graduate document, but also for the development of undergraduate guidelines. Again, a task force was appointed and, in 2007, the second edition of the graduate guidelines and the first edition of undergraduate guidelines were released. As before, the documents were well received and their release coincided with the continued explosive growth of nonprofit education programs around the United States and across the world.

In evaluating NACC's dual mission of serving its members and advancing the field(s) it was clear to the organization's leadership in 2013–2014, that the value of the curricular guidelines is indisputable; the need to update the documents, and revise them is essential as the fields of study continue to evolve. To that end, NACC's board authorized a "Curriculum Revision Project" and Robert Ashcraft of Arizona State University, was recruited to chair the effort. Unlike prior methods used for developing and revising the guidelines, involving a defined task force assembled for such purposes, this most recent effort utilized a crowd-source process. Guided by the NACC Board of Directors, wide-spread input was sought from informed academics and practitioners through a web-platform and survey, launched in August 2014. In addition, input was solicited through special NACC sessions established at the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA, arnova.org) and the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR, istr.org) conferences held during the 2013 and 2014 years, respectively. Following a vetting and review process, NACC's board adopted the revised guidelines at its board meeting in June 2015.

Since its beginning in 1991, NACC remains steadfast in its support of centers and programs that provide education and research about, and academically based services for, the nonprofit/nongovernmental sector and philanthropy. NACC's desire is for these curricular guidelines to be actively used as academic programs continue to evolve.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

As with prior releases, these guidelines can be used in a variety of ways and for a number of purposes involving the diversity of stakeholders involved in nonprofit education programs. They are intended to serve as a model curriculum for full graduate and undergraduate degrees in nonprofit leadership, nonprofit organization management, nonprofit sector studies and philanthropy.

This document provides the user with opportunities to:

- Align existing core faculty, and others (e.g., faculty associates, teaching assistants, etc.) to the curricular content and to inform and educate faculty in other programs, schools and departments about the curricular framework.
- Provide a framework within which the study of the nonprofit/nongovernmental sector and philanthropy can be structured as independent programs or embedded in existing programs (e.g., public administration, business or social work, etc.).
- Inform and educate university leaders, groups and systems (e.g., provosts, deans, curriculum committees, etc.).
- Communicate content, learning goals and objectives to potential students.
- Act as a resource to community stakeholders who may serve on program advisory boards or councils.
- Inform funders more fully about the content, goals and intent of academic programs in the field.
- Serve as the evaluation benchmarks and/or standards of excellence for NACC members' own academic programs and curricular content.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REVISED GRADUATE & UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULAR GUIDELINES (2015)

Over the past 8 years, since the last release of these guidelines, it is encouraging to learn about the number of individuals and institutions who have benefitted from NACC's Curricular Guidelines. The sort of dialogue and commentary that has ensued over the years has helped with the expansion and sustainability of educational programs around the world. The structure for prior revisions has involved an identified Task Force, appointed by NACC's president, that has taken on the responsibility for determining the document's content. For the 2015 revisions, a different approach was taken to crowdsource input from informed academics and practitioners through a web-based portal and survey, in addition to input gleaned from convenings organized at gatherings of academics and practitioners. In all, more than 70 informants completed surveys and dozens more attended sessions and provided input.

In introducing this revised set of Graduate & Undergraduate Guidelines, similarities and differences from prior editions were considered.

- Though the headings for both the Graduate and Undergraduate Guidelines reflect titles used in prior versions, noting the “. . .Study in Nonprofit Leadership, The Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy” it is acknowledged that various universities accentuate different verbiage when discussing their programs (e.g., Nonprofit Management, Civil Society Studies, Social Innovation, etc.).
- The **Graduate Curricular Guidelines** reflect 16 content domains, consistent with prior guidelines. However, three substantive title changes are noted that acknowledge continued evolution of education in the field, (e.g., 12.0 Leadership, Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship; 14.0 Nonprofit Marketing and Communications; 15.0 Information Technology, Social Media and Data Management). Other edits are found through each of the domains that addressed a call for further global perspectives, the increasing role of technology and the accentuation of social entrepreneurship and innovation as subject areas deemed essential for educating students in the field.
- The **Undergraduate Curricular Guidelines** reflect 13 defined content areas that mirror those found in the first edition. In addition to various clarifying edits throughout the document, changes found in this second edition of the Undergraduate Curricular Guidelines include an expanded treatment of Social Entrepreneurship and Enterprise (e.g., Sections 2, 7 and 8), Ethics (Sections 3 and 9), Technology (Sections 8 and 11) Strategic Human Resources Management (Section 10), Social Impact Measurement (Section 12) and Assessment and Evaluation for continuous improvement (Section 12).
- As with prior guidelines, relevancy across differing cultural, language and institutional contexts remains a concern. The continued reality that words used in one part of the world may have a different meaning in another part is acknowledged. Culture and context matters and readers are urged to consider “cultural translation” as needed to realize the full promise of the guidelines.

- The matter of diversity of language and terms is acknowledged. For the purposes of this document, the word “nonprofit” is used to include non-governmental, nonprofit, civil society, voluntary and philanthropic organizations. The word “voluntarism” is used to include all action – both individual and collectives – that is not government or business. And, as before, the word “philanthropy” is used to include individual giving (e.g., time, money and know-how) and/or collective voluntary action for the greater common good.

As you review these Guidelines, be mindful of the following:

- Consistent with prior releases, it is noted that that defined sections and suggested topics within each rubric are not assumed to become separate classes in a curriculum. Rather, the ways in which topics are treated within a particular curriculum should reflect the identified mission, purpose(s) and audience(s) for the degree that is being offered. Additionally, the topics should not be viewed as sequentially related. The treatment of content based upon the defined topics will necessarily vary across programs for any number of reasons. Moreover, the adaptation of these guidelines to specific cultural and institutional contexts is assumed and encouraged.
- It is acknowledged that while some programs in the field are evolving separately, but with historical tradition to disciplines often associated with nonprofit/philanthropic studies, that each academic discipline brings with it a body of knowledge, theories, conceptual frameworks and a language that is particular, and sometimes specific, to that discipline. As such, articulating guidelines relevant across disciplines means that NACC acknowledges users of these documents will, at times, need to re-frame the information into a language that resonates with stakeholders.
- This document affirms guidelines for full degrees, named as such by the sponsoring institution. Programs offering a specialization, certificate, etc., within another academic discipline will need to consider how best to adapt and appropriate the content offered here.
- There remains sensitivities about the extent to which these Guidelines accentuate the U.S. experiences and influences of content. As previously noted, more than ever before, the guidelines fully acknowledge a larger global context for the field and affirms the realities that include diversity of language, forms and practices. However, the current thinking and research remain dominated by English-speaking countries (e.g., the U.S., Canada, England and Australia) where academic programs in the nonprofit and philanthropic sector remains most concentrated. NACC acknowledges that there are alternative models and ways of thinking about, studying, teaching and advancing the nonprofit sector, voluntary action and philanthropy. As future documents are developed such diverse voices are urged to provide input to the guidelines.



Graduate Curricular Guidelines

in Nonprofit Leadership, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy

Third Revised Edition 2015

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1.0 COMPARATIVE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE NONPROFIT SECTOR, VOLUNTARY ACTION AND PHILANTHROPY

- 1.1 Relationship of global social, economic and political trends on the role, function and impact of voluntary action, civil society, the nonprofit sector and philanthropy
- 1.2 Theoretical frameworks for societal value and socioeconomic dynamics in philanthropy and volunteering in a global context
- 1.3 How individual philanthropy, voluntary action and volunteerism is expressed in different cultural and global contexts
- 1.4 Structure and regulation of philanthropic and voluntary behavior within different political contexts, including formal, informal and alternative associational forms
- 1.5 Role of various religious and cultural traditions in shaping philanthropy and voluntary behavior

2.0 SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR, VOLUNTARY ACTION AND PHILANTHROPY

- 2.1 Evolving role and function of philanthropic, nonprofit, voluntary and civil society organizations in relation to other sectors including the emergence of new forms of social enterprise
- 2.2 Size, impact of, and global/cultural contextual influences on philanthropy, voluntarism and the nonprofit/ nongovernmental sector
- 2.3 Diversity of types, forms and language that is used to describe voluntary action within society
- 2.4 Diversity of activity undertaken by nonprofit, voluntary and civil society organizations, including both charitable and mutual benefit organizations, as well as those formally and informally structured
- 2.5 Relationship and dynamics among and between the nonprofit, government and for-profit sectors including public private partnerships and hybrid forms of structure to achieve social purpose
- 2.6 Comparative global trends distinguishing civic engagement and voluntary action from nonprofit direct service providers and other nonprofit/nongovernmental forms

3.0 HISTORY AND THEORIES OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR, VOLUNTARY ACTION AND PHILANTHROPY

- 3.1 History and development of philanthropy, voluntarism, voluntary action, and the nonprofit sector within particular contexts and how this experience compares and contrasts to the development of comparable sectors in various parts of the world
- 3.2 Civil society, social movements and related concepts that are important to understanding philanthropic behavior and voluntary action
- 3.3 Theoretical explanations for the nonprofit sector, philanthropy and social entrepreneurship including (but not necessarily limited to) political, economic, religious and socio-cultural perspectives

4.0 ETHICS AND VALUES

- 4.1 Values embodied in philanthropy and voluntary action, such as, trust, stewardship, service, voluntarism, civic engagement, shared common good, freedom of association and social justice
- 4.2 Foundations and theories of ethics as a discipline and as applied in order to make ethical decisions including, but not limited to an understanding of measuring impact for social mission outcomes as an indicator of trustworthiness, transparency and competence
- 4.3 Issues arising out of the various dimensions of inclusion and diversity, income inequality and their implications for mission achievement
- 4.4 Trends associated with social responsibility, sustainability and global citizenship within cross-cultural and global contexts
- 4.4 Standards and codes of conduct that are appropriate to paid and unpaid staff working in philanthropy and the nonprofit sector

5.0 NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

- 5.1 Role of nonprofit boards and executives in providing leadership at the organizational, community and societal levels through various structures and authority models
- 5.2 Theories of nonprofit boards and governance

- 5.3 History and function of nonprofit governing boards and how these roles and functions compare to governing boards in the public and for-profit sectors
- 5.4 Distinctive roles and responsibilities between nonprofit boards and nonprofit executives and the role of boards and the executive team in stewarding and achieving the mission and vision of nonprofit organizations
- 5.5 Role, function and structure of boards that serve to advance networks of nonprofits and through multi-sector partnerships to achieve a mission
- 5.6 Process of board development as a tool to not only create effective governing boards but also to ensure a successful board-executive relationship, succession planning and board renewal
- 5.7 Role of structures and policies in effective governance

6.0 PUBLIC POLICY, ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

- 6.1 Various roles of nonprofit organizations and voluntary action in effecting social change, including but not limited to, influencing the public policy process in local, national and international contexts
- 6.2 Public policies of significance specific to the nonprofit sector and their past, current, and potential impact on the sector, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic behaviors
- 6.3 How individuals as well as nonprofit organizations can shape public policy through strategies such as community organizing, association and movement building, public education, policy research, lobbying, and litigation
- 6.4 Role of board members, staff and volunteers as agents of and for social change, grounded in particular mission-driven effort
- 6.5 Framework and guidelines for lobbying, as allowable, within different types of nonprofits as delineated across local, national and international contexts

7.0 NONPROFIT LAW

- 7.1 Legal frameworks within which nonprofit organizations and philanthropy operate and are regulated across jurisdictions

- 7.2 Legal rights and obligations of directors, trustees, officers and members of nonprofit and voluntary organizations
- 7.3 Legal and tax implications related to charitable giving, advocacy, lobbying, political and commercial activities of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations
- 7.4 Legal implications for nonprofit operations including, but not limited to risk management, financial reporting and board level fiduciary roles
- 7.5 Oversight responsibilities of national and sub-national regulatory bodies

8.0 NONPROFIT ECONOMICS

- 8.1 Economic theory as it applies to the nonprofit sector and as understood in multi-sector economies
- 8.2 Impact of market dynamics on the sector as a whole, within nonprofit sub-sectors and between and among the public, for-profit and nonprofit sectors
- 8.3 Economic impact of the nonprofit sector
- 8.4 Managerial economics for effective social enterprise and nonprofit management including the use of economic tools such as cost-benefit analysis and social impact measurement

9.0 NONPROFIT FINANCE

- 9.1 Theory and practice of nonprofit finance, including knowledge of concepts such as liquidity, solvency and cash flow strategies and the various types of revenues pursued by nonprofit organizations, the strategic choices and issues associated with each type of revenue, and the methods used to generate these revenues
- 9.2 Relationship between and among earned income, government funding and philanthropic gifts and grants as sources of revenue, and how each can influence fulfillment of an organization's mission
- 9.3 History and function of philanthropic gifts and grants as distinctive dimensions of the nonprofit sector
- 9.4 Emergence, growth and implications of government funding as a significant source of sector revenue

9.5 History, expansion and implications of earned income as a significant source of nonprofit sector revenue

9.6 Recent and emerging trends in sources of sector revenue, e.g., micro-enterprise, social enterprise and entrepreneurship, use of capital markets, and a critical examination of their use as a means for mission achievement

10.0 FUNDRAISING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Various forms and structures in and through which organized fundraising and resource development occurs within philanthropy

10.2 Components and elements that are part of a comprehensive fund development process

10.3 Ethical processes and practices of different fundraising strategies to be considered such as annual fund, planned and major giving, foundation and corporate fundraising and special events

10.4 Understanding of generational and cultural differences in giving and implications for fundraising

10.5 Trends in fundraising approaches such as the role of on-line giving, the use of social media and crowdsourcing strategies

11.0 NONPROFIT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

11.1 Role and function of financial literacy, transparency and stewardship in the effective oversight and management of nonprofit organizational resources

11.2 Application of accounting principles and concepts including financial and managerial accounting systems (including fund accounting) in nonprofit organizations

11.3 Analysis and use of accounting information in financial statements and other reports to stakeholders as needed for responsible stewardship, including an understanding of social accounting

11.4 Financial management, including financial planning and budget development and controls, management of cash flows, short- and long-term financing, investment strategies, and grants, contracts and endowment management policies and practices

- 11.5 Use of financial information as related to such operational considerations as marketing, pricing, cost structure and sustainability when considering new ventures, mergers and other strategies
- 11.6 Understanding financial decision making that includes, but is not limited to, portfolio and grants (from government and non-government sources) management systems, operations, reporting and oversight
- 11.7 Role of external agencies related to financial scrutiny of nonprofits and implications for transparency and accountability

12.0 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- 12.1 Theories of leadership and an understanding of the role of volunteer and paid staff nonprofit leaders in building effective and sustainable organizations
- 12.2 Theories of nonprofit and philanthropic organizational development and behavior
- 12.3 What it means to “manage to the mission,” i.e., how management and accountability are different within nonprofit and voluntary organizations
- 12.4 Role, value and dynamics of multiple stakeholders and structures and policies in carrying out activities and fulfilling the mission
- 12.5 Practice of managing collaborations and partnerships within and across sectors as acts of leadership to expand and sustain a nonprofit
- 12.6 Role of research and effective nonprofit leadership and management practices to inform strategic thinking and action, organizational planning and project management, including an ability to identify, assess and formulate appropriate strategies and plans
- 12.7 Models and frameworks for both social entrepreneurship and social enterprise
- 12.8 Role of nonprofit leaders in generating new ideas and innovative strategies to meet societal needs that includes incubating and implementing new forms of organization
- 12.9 Theory and practice of leading innovation in organizations

13.0 NONPROFIT HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- 13.1 Human resource issues within both formal and informal nonprofit organizations and involving paid and unpaid staff and how human resource issues in nonprofit organizations are different from the experience in public and for-profit organizations
- 13.2 Role, value and dynamics of volunteerism in carrying out the work and fulfilling the missions of nonprofit organizations as part of strategic human resources management
- 13.3 Supervision and human resource management systems and practices relevant to both paid and unpaid employees in nonprofit organizations
- 13.4 Dimensions and dynamics of individual and organizational inclusion and diversity practices within the nonprofit sector and their implications for effective human resource management
- 13.5 Talent management practices from recruitment of entry level staff through career advancement to executive levels in the nonprofit sector, including compensation practices, evaluation processes and professional development considerations

14.0 NONPROFIT MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- 14.1 Marketing theory, principles and techniques, in general, and as applied in a philanthropic and nonprofit environment, including the dynamics and principles of the marketing “mission” in a nonprofit context
- 14.2 Specific application of marketing theories to the development of financial and non-financial sources of support, e.g., fundraising, social marketing and entrepreneurial ventures
- 14.3 Link between marketing theories and concepts and their use in nonprofit organizations, e.g., strategies in organizational communication and public relations
- 14.4 Stakeholder theory and its effective use and function in the nonprofit context and in relation to marketing theory
- 14.5 Interrelationship between services marketing and donor marketing and resultant uses of social media and other means for advancing communications and public relations to internal and external stakeholders

15.0 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL MEDIA AND DATA MANAGEMENT

- 15.1 Roles of information technology, social media and “big data” in advancing the causes of civil society
- 15.2 Appropriate and ethical use and application of information technology, social media and data in order to increase productivity and effectiveness in the pursuit of a nonprofit organization’s mission
- 15.3 Types, sources and location of information that are useful to the effective operation of nonprofit organizations
- 15.4 How various technologies can be used to assess nonprofit performance and effectiveness
- 15.5 Trends in technology use including innovations that affect nonprofits being able to meet their mission and within the context of privacy and security concerns

16.0 ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND DECISION-MAKING METHODS

- 16.1 Methods and modes to evaluate performance and effectiveness at both organizational and programmatic levels
- 16.2 Decision-making models and methods and how to apply them in nonprofit organizational settings
- 16.3 Use and application of both quantitative and qualitative data for purposes of leading and managing nonprofit organizations, the nonprofit sector and the larger society through mixed method approaches
- 16.4 Trends in social impact measurement within the context of evidence based practice approaches including logical models and theories of change



Undergraduate Curricular Guidelines

in Nonprofit Leadership, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy

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INTRODUCTION TO THE REVISED UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULAR GUIDELINES (2015)

In the release of the first-ever guidelines for undergraduate study in nonprofit leadership, the nonprofit sector and philanthropy in 2007, NACC established its firm commitment to advance the field through a distinctive approach across levels of education. In this second edition, acknowledging eight years of evolving undergraduate programs since the release of the initial Undergraduate Curricular Guidelines, NACC affirms the duality of focus and intent for undergraduate education. That is, these guidelines offer a stance about what an educated undergraduate student should know about the nonprofit/philanthropic sector without regard for declared degree and/or field of study. Then, for those students with declared interest in studying the field in anticipation of a career in the nonprofit sector, these guidelines offer a framework for content that should assist those responsible for academic programs designed to prepare students for their chosen career field.

The Context of Undergraduate Education

NACC's initial efforts to articulate curricular guidelines for undergraduate academic programs were defined by an essential characteristic in approach. That is, the undergraduate guidelines were not to be viewed as a "less in-depth version" of the graduate guidelines. Rather, NACC affirmed the distinctive characteristics of undergraduate education as follows:

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS AFFIRMED AS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION.** It is NACC's position that a high quality undergraduate experience involves learning through serving by engaging with stakeholder communities in thoughtful, intentional, and mutually beneficial ways.
- **APPLICATION OF PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR AN UNDERGRADUATE POPULATION IS APPROPRIATE.** Whether or not an undergraduate student has worked professionally in the nonprofit sector, high quality academic programs or courses focused on the nonprofit sector involve the integration of academic and experiential learning.
- **THE USE OF SERVICE-LEARNING METHODS IS AFFIRMED, NOT ONLY TO BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF THE NONPROFIT AND PHILANTHROPIC SECTOR BUT ALSO TO FOSTER NEW SKILLS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENGAGED CITIZENRY.** Service-learning modalities are frequently cited as an effective strategy to bridge the academic and nonprofit/philanthropic practice communities. The use of case studies, a hallmark of some graduate level approaches to education, are increasingly used as a means by which problem solving skills are built and theories are understood. Similar teaching tools and methods for students with some prior work experience can be adapted accordingly to successfully serve an increasingly diverse pre-service student population.

- **INTERNSHIPS ARE AFFIRMED AS A MEANS TO BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WHILE CREATING ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT.** Undergraduate student populations vary from younger pre-service students to older returning students, or some blending of the two. Internships help undergraduates connect curricular content to “real-world” practice and builds skills and experiences that help employability of graduates of nonprofit/philanthropic education programs.

UNDERGRADUATE GUIDELINES ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

In keeping with the format introduced in the first edition of this document, the revised Guidelines are separated into two parts.

Part I

Affirms NACC’s assertion that all undergraduate students, despite field of study, should have knowledge of philanthropy and the nonprofit sector before they graduate with a baccalaureate-level degree. How the content in Part I is treated varies widely across different types of institutions given variation in mission, undergraduate student population and organizational structure. Therefore, the content identified in Part I may be captured in a single course, a minor within a larger concentration or degree. Lessons learned from the first edition of these Guidelines acknowledges that such curricular content may be reflected in a number of different courses that would satisfy a student’s General Education requirements. The approach used and depth that is addressed in a course would necessarily vary according to specific academic program requirements (e.g., business vs. history vs. one of the physical sciences, etc.). It is NACC’s assertion, however, that ALL college graduates, regardless of academic field of study, would benefit from a working knowledge of the nonprofit/nongovernmental and philanthropic sector so that each student is prepared to effectively contribute to society as an educated, active and engaged citizen.

Part II

Affirms NACC’s assertion that the knowledge and skills for students desiring to work in the nonprofit sector begin first with a grounding in the curricular content detailed in Part I. Then, by extending the core knowledge embodied in Part I to topics addressed in Part II, the content prepares students with the applied knowledge and skills necessary for success as practitioners working in the field of practice. Part II assumes that a student is enrolled in a course of study that is explicitly connected to nonprofit leadership, the nonprofit sector and philanthropy. Since release of the first edition of these Guidelines in 2007, NACC acknowledges the growth of undergraduate majors, minors, and certificate programs along with the growth of the competency-based Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) credential offered through campus affiliates of the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance (formerly American Humanics, Inc., nonprofitleadershipalliance.org). These undergraduate Guidelines are offered as a framework for content that can be adapted across the varying programs and institutional forms found in higher education.

PART I

The Role of the Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector in Society

The curricular content offered in this section outlines what NACC believes all undergraduate students should know before completing their course of study. This foundational knowledge promotes an awareness of society as an integration of public, private, and volunteer behaviors and structures – all necessary to prepare and active and engaged citizenry. These Guidelines reflect a strong theoretical base that can be adapted to various disciplines and pedagogies.

1.0 COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON CIVIL SOCIETY, VOLUNTARY ACTION AND PHILANTHROPY

- 1.1 Structure – both formal and informal, individual and collective – of civil society and philanthropy across cultures and global contexts
- 1.2 How individual philanthropy, voluntary behavior and volunteerism is expressed in different cultural and global contexts
- 1.3 Role of civil society, voluntary action and nonprofit/nongovernmental organizations in social movements and social change
- 1.4 Role of various religious traditions in shaping civil society and philanthropy

2.0 FOUNDATIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY, VOLUNTARY ACTION AND PHILANTHROPY

- 2.1 History, role and functions of civil society and voluntary action organizations (nonprofit, nongovernmental, voluntary) across time and place
- 2.2 Size, impact and trends in philanthropy, nongovernmental organizations and associational development in a global context
- 2.3 Diversity of forms of philanthropic action and the diversity of fields of activity
- 2.4 Relationship and dynamics among the governmental, nonprofit, for-profit and household sectors and evolving forms of social sector forms
- 2.5 History and role of social entrepreneurs and innovators in contributing to societal advancement
- 2.5 Various theoretical explanations for the nonprofit/voluntary sector such as economic, political, sociological and anthropological

3.0 ETHICS AND VALUES

- 3.1 Values embodied in philanthropy and voluntary action, such as trust, stewardship, service, freedom of association and their implications for societal advancement
- 3.2 Foundations and theories of ethics as a discipline and as applied in order to make ethical decisions
- 3.3 Standards and codes of conduct that are appropriate to professionals and volunteers working in philanthropy and the nonprofit sector
- 3.4 How values and ethics are identified and advanced that affect strategic decisions of a nonprofit in meeting its mission

4.0 PUBLIC POLICY, LAW, ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

- 4.1 Key public policies and their past, current and potential impact on the nonprofit sector, nonprofit organizations and philanthropic behaviors
- 4.2 Legal frameworks under which nonprofit organizations and social enterprises operate and are regulated
- 4.3 Legal and tax implications related to various kinds of nonprofit activity, including but not limited to charitable giving, advocacy, lobbying, and any commercial activities of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations
- 4.4 Roles of individuals and nonprofit organizations in effecting social change, social movements and influencing the public policy process
- 4.5 How individuals and nonprofit organizations shape public policy through strategies, including but not limited to public education, policy research, community organizing, lobbying, and litigation

5.0 NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

- 5.1 Role of nonprofit boards and executives in providing leadership at the organizational, community and societal levels
- 5.2 History, role and functions of nonprofit governing boards and how these roles and functions compare to governing boards in the public and for-profit sectors

- 5.3 Role of boards and executives of some nonprofits as agent(s) of and for social change and social justice at both the organizational and societal levels

6.0 COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 Value of community service and civic engagement in the development of civil society
- 6.2 Direct exposure to nonprofit organizations through internships, service learning, community service and/or experiential learning

PART II

Leading and Managing Nonprofit Organizations

The curricular topics in this section build on the foundational knowledge articulated in Part I and should be offered to those students who wish to focus at least part of their undergraduate study on the nonprofit sector or philanthropy. It is assumed such students have either an exploratory or definitive interest in a nonprofit sector career. However, it is acknowledged that having students exposed to topics that comprise this “Leading and Managing” section should, as a result, make them a more informed board member, volunteer, and/or donor even if they choose to not work as a practitioner upon graduation. Whatever motivation drives the focus, the content may be realized through a full named degree, as a “major” or “minor” within a degree, and/or a certificate that is not specific to any degree or major course of study. The topics that are addressed and the depth of coverage necessarily should reflect the particular goals and context of the academic program being offered.

7.0 LEADING AND MANAGING ORGANIZATIONS

- 7.1 Organizational theories and behavior as they apply in nonprofit and voluntary organizations including issues of work design and implications of operational policies and practices
- 7.2 Theories of leadership and leadership styles
- 7.3 Role of strategic management and organizational planning, including an understanding of ways to identify, assess and formulate appropriate strategies
- 7.4 Role of networks, partnerships and collaborative activity among and between nonprofits, government and for-profit entities in achieving organizational missions

- 7.5 Steps and processes involved in establishing a nonprofit organization, a social enterprise and other entrepreneurial forms of organization
- 7.6 Role of social entrepreneurs and social innovation and their implications for nonprofit leadership and management
- 7.7 How trends in nonprofit accountability expectations shape the strategic management of nonprofits

8.0 NONPROFIT FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING

- 8.1 Various sources of revenues in nonprofit organizations, the strategic choices and issues associated with each type of revenue, and the methods used to generate these revenues
- 8.2 Relationship between and among philanthropic gifts and grants, earned income, and government funding and how these influence fulfillment of an organization's mission within the context of stewardship and ethical practices
- 8.3 Fundraising and resource development process including, in part, commonly-used fundraising strategies, such as annual appeals, special events, non-cash contributions, major gifts, capital campaigns and planned giving
- 8.4 Trends in the evolving use of technology in nonprofit finance and fundraising
- 8.4 Evolving trends related to social enterprise, micro-enterprise and social entrepreneurship, and their implications for societal advancement, organizational performance and mission attainment

9.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 Application of accounting principles and concepts including financial and managerial accounting systems (including fund accounting) in nonprofit organizations
- 9.2 Financial management including financial planning and budgeting, management of cash flows, short- and long-term financing, and endowment management policies and practices
- 9.3 Ethical considerations of financial management such as transparency, honesty, and accountability to advance trust among stakeholders

10.0 MANAGING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 10.1 How human resource processes and practices in both formal and informal nonprofit organizations are different from the experience in public and for-profit organizations
- 10.2 Principles of strategic human resources management and their use in a nonprofit context and implications for recruitment, supervision, motivation, engagement, retention and development of paid and unpaid staff
- 10.3 Strategies for advancing teamwork and group dynamics and their implications for organizational performance and mission attainment
- 10.4 Dimensions of individual and organizational diversity within the nonprofit sector and their implications for effective human resource management
- 10.5 Role, value and dynamics of volunteerism in carrying out the work and fulfilling the missions of nonprofit organizations

11.0 NONPROFIT MARKETING

- 11.1 Marketing principles and techniques and their application in philanthropic and nonprofit settings, including the dynamics and principles of marketing the “mission” in a nonprofit context
- 11.2 Link between marketing theories and concepts and their use in nonprofit organizations
- 11.3 Use of social marketing as a tool for mission attainment of a nonprofit
- 11.4 How technology is used to advance the marketing and communication strategies of a nonprofit

12.0 ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND DECISION-MAKING METHODS

- 12.1 Methods that managers use to evaluate performance and social impact at both organizational and programmatic levels
- 12.2 Methods and modes of assessment and evaluation to develop a nonprofit’s culture that embraces continuous improvement strategies
- 12.3 Decision-making models and methods and how to apply them in nonprofit organizational settings

- 12.4 Use and application of both quantitative and qualitative data in measuring social impact and in improving the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations
- 12.5 Role of information and the use of technology in the pursuit of a nonprofit organization's mission

13.0 PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- 13.1 Role of field experiences and experiential learning that are grounded in and linked to curricular goals and projected outcomes
- 13.2 Role of professional associations and mentoring in professional development
- 13.3 Ways that various professionals contribute to and are engaged with philanthropic and nonprofit sectors
- 13.4 Opportunities for service and volunteerism that exist in the community
- 13.5 Standards and context of professionalism, e.g., conduct and speech appropriate to the (respective) profession

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The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) is a global membership association comprised of academic centers or programs at accredited colleges and universities that are devoted to the study of the nonprofit/nongovernmental sector, philanthropy and voluntary action to advance education, research, and practice that increase the nonprofit sector's ability to enhance civic engagement, democracy, and human welfare. Established in 1991, NACC is the first group dedicated to the networking and support of centers and programs that advance research, education and engagement across disciplines.

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Nonprofit Academic Centers Council

2121 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115-2214
Ph: 216.687.5233
nacc@csuohio.edu

