

Community-Based Nonprofit Organizations

CRN 30183

4 Credit Hours

Spring 2026

Michael Crow

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Class time: Mondays 6:00 – 8:50 pm (March 30 – June 1)

Class room: Tacoma 104

Canvas Page: <https://canvas.evergreen.edu/courses/8034>

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Course Objectives

Community-based organizations (CBOs) fill critical roles in local governance. They help serve those who are underserved by other elements of the public sector; partner with state, local, and tribal governments to provide important public services; and help address neighborhood and metropolitan-scaled issues, where formal governments do not always exist. At the same time, CBOs face distinct challenges in organizing, accessing resources, developing collaborative relationships, and strategically pursuing their missions.

This course aims to provide insight into the nature of the challenges that CBO leaders confront and how they are managed. We start by considering the context in which community-based organizations do their work, which is characterized by fragmentation; entrenched patterns of income and racial segregation; and vulnerability to external economic forces. How organizations manage a dilemma at the heart of both seeking resources and working with other organizations: cooperation. We then consider the challenges in organizing and leading change at the community-level, both in historical context and in terms of cultivating neighborhood social capital. Finally, we consider the resource landscape in which CBOs do their work and the potential for collaborative governance to enhance the impact of CBOs on the community. By the end of this course, you will have demonstrated your ability to:

- Analyze the cooperation and collective action challenges that CBOs face in the urban context;
- Evaluate strategies for leadership for CBOs;
- Develop and employ tools for accessing resources and developing effective collaboration as a CBO leader

Communications

I encourage and expect contact from you over the quarter. The easiest way to reach me is by e-mail (crawm@evergreen.edu). You may also reach me at my office phone during business hours (9 am to 5 pm) and cell number before 9 pm. Or you may make an appointment with me for a one-on-one Zoom conference or phone call.

I use Evergreen's e-mail and the course Canvas system to conduct course business. If you do not use Evergreen's e-mail system, please be sure to forward messages from this account to the e-mail account that you use. I will also place course assignments, handouts, PowerPoint slides, and other course materials on the course Canvas site.

Course Materials

This course has no required books. Readings will be available on the course Canvas site.

Course assignments, credit, and evaluations

You will be evaluated in this course based on your progress in meeting the course objectives described above, as assessed by the following assignments and requirements. To earn full credit for the course, students must satisfactorily complete all the following requirements:

Course participation: One of the primary objectives of this class is to develop your ability to critically analyze budget policy issues. In class sessions and activities, we will engage in activities such as discussion and group work that will call on you to apply new ideas from the reading to policy problems. Thus, it is important for you to come to the class prepared to participate by having studied the assigned reading. Your participation will be assessed on the following criteria:

--- *Attendance:* Students are required to attend each class meeting. Attendance is especially important in this course since you must apply concepts and skills from prior class sessions to develop new skills in later class sessions. Missing a class, then, will significantly jeopardize your performance. **After one absence, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, on a case-by-case basis.** Make-up work must be completed by the end of the quarter for course credit. Three or more absences may result in no credit.

--- *Collegiality:* Showing respect for your peers by being in class on time, staying through the entire session, and respecting the views of others in class discussion.

--- *Preparation:* Completing reading before class, coming to class prepared with assignments and reading materials, active participation in discussion and small group work.

--- *Engagement out of class:* Our class sessions are not the only opportunity to discuss course ideas with the faculty. We want to know if you are having trouble with the material and what you

like and don't like about the course. You may reach me by e-mail or phone or schedule an in-person or Zoom chat session.

Pre-class Reading Responses: After you complete the reading for each class session, you may be asked to prepare a response of about 500 words (1-2 pages double-spaced) to a question, problem, or prompt about that reading assignment. These responses will serve as a starting point for discussion in class. Your pre-class reading responses are due at the beginning of class on Monday at 6 pm. You must complete at least five of the pre-class reading responses on time to earn credit in this course.

Analytic essays: Over the course of the quarter, you will complete two take-home essays. In these essays, you will apply the analytic tools you learn over the course to explain or evaluate issues confronting community-based nonprofit organizations. You will have one week to prepare your response to each question. Your response to the first essay question should be at least 1500 words (5 pages, double spaced). Your response is due **Sunday, May 10**. Your response to the second essay question will be at least 1500 words long (5 pages double-spaced). Your response is due **Monday, June 8** at 11:00 p.m.

Literature review: Community development requires that one be able to analyze, make connections between, and draw conclusions from the work of other professionals. You will demonstrate your skill at this by completing a literature review of at least 3000 words (10 pages double-spaced) that addresses a question or ongoing debate about neighborhood organization and development. A literature review does not merely summarize a set of readings on a topic. Rather, it must analyze by comparing and contrasting approaches to the topic and drawing conclusions about a thesis or research question posed by the readings. Your review may be either argumentative (such as by arguing for adoption or rejection of a particular theory, approach or method in community development or CBO management) or it may be analytical (such as by evaluating the causes or consequences of a community development or CBO management theory, approach or method). A paragraph explaining your research question or thesis and an annotated bibliography of at least five scholarly sources will be due on **Sunday, April 26th**. The completed literature review will be due on **Sunday, May 31**.

Evaluation: Students are encouraged to complete a self-evaluation and faculty evaluation and to participate in an evaluation conference with the faculty member. The evaluations must be submitted using the My Evergreen system (my.evergreen.edu).

Submitting Assignments

Assignments may be submitted to me either on Canvas and/or by email to me (crawm@evergreen.edu). I recommend both uploading your assignment to Canvas and emailing it to me to ensure I receive it. It is your responsibility to assure that I have received your work on time.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity standards will not be tolerated. Any student turning in work that is in violation of Evergreen's academic integrity standards will automatically receive a No Credit in the course and the matter will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for disciplinary action. Please be aware that including material generated by an artificial intelligence tool in work turned in for academic credit without appropriate citation or attribution is considered to be academic dishonesty. An overview of academic integrity standards and the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities are available at <https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/student-affairs/student-rights-responsibilities>

Accessibility

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of The Evergreen State College to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (360) 867-6348; accessservices@evergreen.edu) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. For more information, please visit the Access Services website at <https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/access-services-for-students-with-disabilities>

Bad Weather Policy

If weather or other event makes it difficult or impossible for the class to meet in-person at our scheduled class times, the faculty may change the format for the class to remote instruction, with the class meeting occurring over Zoom. The faculty will make every effort to make you aware of this change at the earliest possible time.

If it is likely that many students or faculty will be affected by a power or internet outage, faculty may choose to cancel a class session entirely. If we do this we will make every effort to send an all-class email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies [here](#).

Religious Holidays

Washington State law (RCW 28B.10.039) requires that institutions of higher education accommodate students by allowing two days of absence and make-up work for religious holidays per year. Please consult with me at the start of the quarter should you anticipate an absence owing to a religious holiday. While Evergreen moves toward putting religious holidays into the online campus calendar, check the University of Washington's [religious holidays calendar](#).

Other Expectations of Students and Faculty

We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student conduct code](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#). All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

MPA Mission Statement

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, embrace diversity, value fairness and equity, advocate powerfully on behalf of the public, and imagine new possibilities in order to accomplish positive change in our workplace and in our communities.

Course Schedule

These topics and reading assignments may change throughout the course of the quarter, depending on our speed and interests. Changes will be announced in class.

Date	Topic and reading assigned
Monday, March 30	Course Introduction Putnam, "The Prosperous Community"
Monday, April 6	Urban Fragmentation and Segregation Dreier, Mollenkopf and Swanstrom, "The Facts [and Costs] of Economic Segregation and Sprawl" Sharkey, "Neighborhoods and the Transmission of Racial Inequality" Oakerson, excerpt from <i>Governing Local Public Economies</i>
Monday, April 13	Neighborhood Change and Stability Schelling, "Sorting and Mixing: Race and Sex" Temkin and Rohe, "Neighborhood Change and Urban Policy" Sampson, excerpt from <i>Great American City</i>

Monday, April 20	<p>Community Leadership Briggs, "Doing Democracy Up Close: Culture, Power, and Communication in Community Planning" Kretzmann and McKnight, "Asset-Based Community Development: Mobilizing an Entire Community" Guest Speaker: Carol Mitchell, Institute for Black Justice</p>
Sunday, April 26	Annotated Bibliography Due
Monday, April 27	<p>Emergence of the CBO Sector Judd and Swanstrom, "National Policy and the City/Suburban Divide" and "Federal Programs and the Divisive Politics of Race" DeFilippis, "Community Control and Development: The Long View" Stoker, Stone and Worgs, "Neighborhood Policy in Baltimore: The Postindustrial Turn"</p>
Monday, May 4	<p>Neighborhood Cooperation and Social Capital Axelrod, "Effective Choice in the Prisoner's Dilemma" Jacobs, "The Uses of Sidewalks" Olson, excerpt from <i>Logic of Collective Action</i></p>
Sunday, May 10	Analytic Essay 1 Due
Monday, May 11	<p>Local Privatization, NIMBY and "Bad" Social Capital McCabe, "Homeowners Associations as Private Governments: What We Know, What We Don't Know, and Why It Matters" Meyer, Megan, and Cheryl Hyde. 2004. "Too Much of a 'Good' Thing? Insular Neighborhood Associations, Nonreciprocal Civility, and the Promotion of Civic Health." Dear, Michael. "Understanding and Overcoming the NIMBY Syndrome."</p>
Monday, May 18	<p>The Resource Landscape Bernholz et al, "On the Brink of New Promise: The Future of U.S. Community Foundations" Nichols et al, "Building Sustainable Organizations for Affordable Housing and Community Development Impact"</p>
Monday, May 25	Memorial Day (No Class)
Sunday, May 31	Literature Review Due
Monday, June 1	<p>Collaborative Governance and Decision-Making Katz and Nowak, "Rethinking Governance" Cooper, "Reimagining Revenue Measures by Centering Community Voices": https://belonging.berkeley.edu/reimagining-revenue-measures Kania and Kramer, "Collective Impact"</p>
Monday, June 8	Analytic Essay 2 Due
Monday, June 8 - Friday, June 12	Evaluation Week