

INTD 1126 – Philanthropy: Ethics & Practice

Winter Term 2015
10:30-12:30, Mon-Thurs
Warner 203

Prof. Sarah Stroup
Office: Munroe 317
Office Hours: 1-2 Tu, 1-3 Th
sstroup@middlebury.edu
(802) 443-3276

Prof. Steve Viner
Office: Twilight 313
Office Hours: 1-2:30 M, 1-2:30 Tu
sviner@middlebury.edu
(802) 443-5708

Many people have the desire to help others. Many believe that we have a moral duty to help others who are less fortunate. How this desire or duty is translated into action varies substantially. Across nations, different cultures and laws create different patterns of charitable action, as well as varying understandings of gift-giving. Within a single country, giving is shaped by different value systems, capacities, political orientations, and needs. Any two individuals may have different perspectives on philanthropy based on their experiences, their background, and their interests. Often, it is their history and cultural values that play a large role in helping them decide whether to help others at all, and if they do help, how to help and who to help.

This course has three components. First, we will explore several ethical questions that surround the process of assisting others. Second, we will examine the contemporary American charitable sector, with a focus on the key actors, regulations, resources, and processes. Third, together we will work through the practical challenges of philanthropy; we will have to decide as grant-makers who to help and why.

Because students take only one course during winter term, it is understood that students will be able to meet outside of our scheduled times (given advance notification). In particular, our philanthropy project will involve substantial time spent on research and meetings, but this unique opportunity will allow each of you to develop an intimate understanding of the actual practice of philanthropy. We look forward to helping you put in this time - an experience like no other course at Middlebury!

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Respect for Others. It is likely that students will have different beliefs and intuitions about Philanthropy, e.g. who to help and why. There may even be some students who have a cautious or negative view of Philanthropy, e.g. they think it makes people more dependent or creates more victims. Clearly, this course is no different in that students come from different backgrounds with different political and moral perspectives. Some of you likely already have strong views about Philanthropy, while others may not have thought about it that much. In a class such as this, where Philanthropy is often deeply tied to one's political, ethical or religious views, it is important to maintain the kind of respect that is fruitful for discussion. *This is not a class where you are being trained to "win" an important discussion for your particular charity – instead, it is a collective, deliberative exercise in evaluating the merit of charitable activities.* The only way this course will provide an experience that we will all be excited about is by respecting other students in the classroom and making all persons feel comfortable enough to contribute, even when and if they know that students will disagree with them. Direct your thoughtful responses to the argument or position being offered, not the person.

Violations of the Middlebury Honor Code. Cheating, falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism are, of course, very serious matters. Students will *automatically fail* any assignment that violates the honor code and may be referred to the relevant college administrative committee for further penalties.

Questions and Accommodations. Please come talk to us during office hours, after class or make an appointment if you have any questions at any time about the course, issues raised in the class, or anything else. We welcome your comments and questions both inside and outside of the classroom. We enjoy thinking about the issues being raised in this class, and we welcome your input. Students requiring accommodations for any reason, e.g. due to religion or certified medical conditions, should meet with one of us in the first week.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Paper 1 (critical paper, 3-4 pages)

20%

This critical essay will ask you to further analyze one of the ethical issues identified in the readings. You are to take a stand in this paper. Argue for or against an ethical position on an issue raised in the readings.

Paper 2 (critical paper, 3-4 pages)

20%

This critical essay will ask you to further examine a key challenge for the American charitable sector. You will explicitly consider counterarguments and respond using the course readings.

Grant-Making Project

40%

The final weeks of class will be dedicated to the completion of small group research projects that help decide what charities should receive funds. There are a number of components to this project and together they are worth 40% of your grade:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| - Peer Evaluation | - Presentation |
| - Briefing Paper #1 | - Briefing Paper #2 |

Class Participation and Attendance

20%

Participation in small groups, as well as when we meet as a class as a whole, is required. All students must come to class on time with the day's readings completed, ready to engage in discussion. Some students are naturally more vocal than others; if you believe that you did not have a chance to participate as much as you would have liked, you may write a one page reflection after the class meeting and send it to us by the end of the day.

Because of the intensive nature of the winter term at Middlebury, class attendance is crucial. In the case of an absence, students must notify one of us *in advance* and are responsible for all missed announcements, assignments, and lecture notes. Two unexcused absences will likely result in a penalty equal to a third of a letter grade (e.g. "A-" to "B+") on a student's final grade, while 3 unexcused absences will likely result in a final grade no higher than a "C."

COURSE MATERIALS

All of the required readings will either be posted on e-reserve, or they will be sent as PDF files to entire class via email. Make sure to check your email. The e-reserve password is **4166sv**.

SCHEDULE

The schedule below may be modified at any time. We will use email to share announcements and occasional reading and discussion questions, so please check email regularly.

1/5 (M) Introduction

1/6 (Tu) Duties to Aid Others

Please provide information on 2 Charities to midd.giving@gmail.com by 5 pm.

Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1:3 (1972): 229-243.

Peter Singer, "What Should a Billionaire Give?" in Patricia Illingworth, Thomas Pogge, and Leif Wenar eds. *Giving Well: The Ethics of Philanthropy*, (Oxford, 2011): 13-25.

John Arthur, "Famine Relief and the Ideal Moral Code," in *Ethics: History, Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Steven Cahn and Peter Markie eds. (Oxford, 2006): 797-809.

1/7 (W) Charity in America

Lester Salamon, "The Resilient Sector: future of nonprofit America," in *The State of Nonprofit America* (Brookings, 2012): 1-43, 64-73.

Karen Wright, "Generosity versus Altruism," *Voluntas* 12 (December 2001): 399-416.

1/8 (Th) Duties to Aid Others

Leif Wenar, "Poverty is No Pond: Challenges for the Affluent," in Patricia Illingworth et al., eds., *Giving Well: The Ethics of Philanthropy* (Oxford, 2011): 104-132.

Onora O'Neill (Onora Nell), "Lifeboat Earth," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 4:3 (1975): 273-292.

1/12 (M) Charities – Measurement and Evaluation

Stephanie Lowell et al., "The Ratings Game," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Summer 2005): 38-45.

Rebecca Szper and Aseem Prakash, "Charity Watchdogs and the Limits of Information-based Regulation," *Voluntas* 22 (2011): 112-41.

Alnoor Ebrahim, "Making sense of accountability," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 14 (Winter 2003): 191-212.

1/13 (Tu) Charities in Vermont

Meeting time/place: 10 am @Vermont Community Foundation, 3 Court St.
Contact: Carolyn Fox Weir '11, Special Projects Advisor

VCF, *Understanding Vermont: Vermont's Nonprofit Sector*, February 2011 (Middlebury: Vermont Community Foundation): 1-16.

1/14 (W) Charity and Justice

Allen Buchanan, "Charity, Justice and the Idea of Moral Progress," in *Giving: Western Ideas of Philanthropy*, edited by J.B. Schneewind, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.

Will Kymlicka, "Altruism in Philosophical and Ethical Traditions: Two Views" in Jim Phillips, Bruce Chapman and David Stevens eds., *Between State and Market: Essays on Charities Law and Policy in Canada* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001):87-126.

Thomas Pogge, "Real World Justice," *The Journal of Ethics*, 9 (2005): 29-53.

1/15 (Th) What's Wrong with Charity: Critiques

William Diaz, "For Whom and For What? The contributions of the nonprofit sector," in Salamon, ed. *The State of Nonprofit America* (2002): 517-35.

Ivan Illich, *To Hell with Good Intentions*, Address to Conference on Inter-American Student Projects, Cuernavaca, Mexico, April 20, 1968.

Charmie Gholson, "Charity Display?" *New York Times Magazine*, January 2, 2005.

Heather MacDonald, "The billions of dollars that made things worse," *City Journal* 6 (Autumn 1996).

Sara Mosle, "The Vanity of Volunteerism," *The New York Times Magazine*, July 2, 2000.

Lee Cronk, "Strings attached." *The Sciences* 29.3 (1989): 2-4.

1/16 (Fr) FIRST PAPER DUE

1/19 (M) Rights and Responsibilities

Charles Beitz, "What Human Rights Mean," *Daedalus* 132:1 (2003): 36-46.

Joel Feinberg, "The Nature and Value of Rights," in *Ethics: History, Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Steven Cahn and Peter Markie eds. (Oxford, 2006): 614-24.

David Miller, "Distributing Responsibilities," in *Global Ethics*, Keith Horton and Thomas Pogge, eds. (St. Paul: Paragon House, 2008): 481-506.

Richard Miller, "Moral Closeness and World Community," in *Global Ethics*, Horton and Pogge, eds. (St. Paul: Paragon House, 2008): 507-530.

1/20 (Tu)	Representation and Advocacy	SECOND PAPER DUE
	<p>Marc Lindenberg and Coralie Bryant, “The Evolving Role of Advocacy,” in <i>Going Global</i> (Kumarian, 2001): 173-208.</p> <p>Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl, “Political Responsibility in NGO Advocacy,” <i>World Development</i> 28 (2000): 2051-2065.</p> <p>Kenneth Anderson, “What NGO Accountability Means – and doesn’t mean,” <i>American Journal of International Law</i> 103 (January 2009): 170-178.</p>	
1/21 (W)	Group Project Work – Group Meetings with Instructors	
1/22 (Th)	Group Project Work – Group Meetings with Instructors	
1/23 (Fr)	5 PM - First Briefing Papers (6-8 pages) due on top 5 Charities	
1/26 (M)	Group Presentations on Top 5 Charities	
	<p>Prior to class, read all briefing papers submitted by each group</p> <p>15 Minute Presentations + 15 Min Q&A</p>	
1/27 (Tu)	Presentations – Second Briefing Papers (2 pages) due	
	(Reviews and Responses to Presentations to be used to facilitate class discussion)	
1/28 (W)	Decision Day	
1/29 (Th)	11:30-1:30 Award Day and Luncheon	

APPENDIX - Researching Charitable Organizations

There are many ways to get information on a charity's activities. The charity's website is a good first place to look for Annual Reports and Financial Statements. Beyond that, the following general resources may prove helpful. *This is not an exhaustive list* – we encourage you to consult with us as your research progresses.

Guidestar

www.guidestar.org

Guidestar is a repository of information on specific nonprofits. Free registration at the site will give you access to the most recent IRS Form 990s of individual nonprofits.

National Center on Charitable Statistics

nccs.urban.org

Run by the Urban Institute (a DC-based think tank), NCCS gives useful overview statistics and reports on the charitable sector. You can also explore the NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) coding system here.

Idealist.org

www.idealist.org

This website is most useful for finding jobs and volunteer opportunities in the charitable sector. Many small groups use it to post events and jobs, making it a nice complement to the larger databases above.

Giving USA

www.givingusareports.org

This annual report uses research from The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University to estimate all giving to all charitable organizations in the US. The executive summary is free and easy to read.

Independent Sector

www.independentsector.org

Coalition of 600+ nonprofits, engages in policy advocacy on behalf of nonprofits

Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org>

Leading info source on philanthropy, focused on grantmaking foundations.

various ratings agencies:

There are a number of groups that evaluate charities, including Charity Navigator, Charity Watch, GiveWell.org, and the Wise Giving alliance. We will discuss in class the strengths and weaknesses of different charity ratings systems. Armed with that knowledge, you may find their information useful.

www.charitywatch.org

www.givewell.org

www.charitynavigator.org

www.bbb.org/us/Wise-Giving