

## Template for a Philanthropy-based course



*Non-profit agencies and students celebrate a philanthropy project that was developed and administered by undergraduate business students at Otterbein University*

### Acknowledgements

Professors Huber and Mafi want to thank Roger Grein, CPA for his generous contribution to Otterbein College to make this project possible. Roger Grein is a philanthropist and CPA in the Cincinnati, OH, who partnered with the Kentucky Campus Compact to encourage philanthropy at colleges in Ohio and Kentucky. We also want to thank the Kentucky and Ohio Campus Compact for the guidance they provided through the grant process.

## Projects

This project has been taught in a variety of disciplines but mainly in management and in accounting at Otterbein.

The general format is as follows:

- Students join teams based on their passion for a social cause. The class formed teams with each team creating a wiki.
- The students decide on the criteria to be included on the wiki for each agency. This includes the organization's mission, key contributors, a link to its website, and contact information. Students also confirm with their chosen agencies that they will submit a proposal, if invited.
- Upon visiting the agencies, the students decide to invite some agencies to submit requests for proposal (RFPs). The class then collectively writes the guidelines for the RFPs. The professor will then send e-mails to each agency with the RFP guidelines and due date.
- After the RFPs arrive, the students score them per a rubric, again developed by students. During a class meeting, students decide on which agency to award the money to and then contact the winner as well as the runner-ups. They must explain their decision to all agencies involved.

*This Philanthropy-based project goes beyond service learning or volunteerism. Students make real decisions with real money that have immediate impacts on their community.*

### Step-by-Step Guide

#### For Professors

- 1) Locate funding sources (internally and externally)
- 2) Identify a list of local NFP organizations
- 3) Manage the weekly activities. Expect the unexpected
- 4) Determine evaluation methods

#### For Students

- 1) Create a wiki for the agency
- 2) Select agencies that you want to invite to submit RFPs
- 3) Determine criteria for the RFPs and score the proposals accordingly
- 4) Invite organizations in for a presentation
- 5) Decide on the winners and amount of awards

## Five "Cs" Model Benefits

### Collaboration and Communication (A)

- Collaborative decision-making that has a meaningful impact.
- Learn how to negotiate and compromise which are skills needed by professionals.
- Learn to succinctly articulate the project to the right person in the agency.
- Understanding time constraints and project management.

### **Critical Thinking (B)**

- This is not a simulation – it is making real decisions that have immediate consequences.
- Making choices by allocating scarce resources by saying “no” to agencies with worthy causes.
- Seeing a real organization from a different viewpoint.

### **Conceptual Understanding (C)**

- Resource allocation decisions- It is important to force students to make choices with some agencies not being funded. In tough economic times, decisions regarding resource allocation are common in business. This project forces students to make the difficult decision of selecting one agency over another for funding, even though all agencies are working in support of worthy causes.
- Introduced to nonprofit management and being able to draw a comparison between the for-profit which is the model they are most familiar and the nonprofit that a typical business student would never see.
- Opportunity to evaluate proposal per grant guidelines.

### **Character Building (D)**

- Real-life education in diversity.
- Education on major social issues in the community.
- Exposure to different types of people who are motivated by something other than money.
- Ethics and social responsibility understanding the consequences of business and government decisions on the community’s welfare.
- Sensitivity concerning the needs of the community.
- Taking ownership of the project and being accountable to the agencies.
- Learning how even one person can make a difference.

### **Community Engagement (E)**

- Volunteering for a minimum of 15 hours a term
- Transforms students and faculty to become better citizens
- Spillover effects on other courses, donation, fundraising and volunteering.
- Starting campus organizations dealing with nonprofits such as the Association for Fundraising Professionals (AFP)

## **Rewards**

The rewards make the project worthwhile. It is exciting to see students become passionate about their civic duty. Watching the decision-making process is also rewarding as we heard students work through their values as they decided which agencies to fund. For example, after looking at the financial statements for one large NFP, the students felt that their contribution would not really “make a difference,” thus they funded a smaller agency. They rejected another agency because the application was not filled out properly. Finally, the entire class was touched by the students’ creative presentations on behalf of their agencies, some even moved to tears. Many of us were exposed to a world that we were not familiar with. Students commented on how they had a renewed appreciation of their own lives as they were learned about the lives of others who were less fortunate.

## **Challenges**

There are challenges to this project. The primary challenge is raising funds for future philanthropy projects. Dr. Mafi started a philanthropy fund at her institution. In 2011, Dr. Huber donated \$500 to her introductory financial accounting class so the project could be continued there.

There was also one disconfirming comment regarding the philanthropy project. Given the other class requirements, one student felt overwhelmed by the addition of the philanthropy project. With class time being allocated to the project, there was less time for lecture. Thus, there is a trade-off between the benefits of philanthropy-based education and the loss of in-class lecture time.

First-time faculty will probably experience a higher level of stress when they adopt the project. First, it takes time to cultivate relationships with agencies and sponsors. And then sometimes the “unexpected” occurs. For example, one of the agency directors could not come in for her presentation due to a family illness. Fortunately, the class could accommodate her request even, allowing her to present at a later date.

## AACSB Core Competencies for Management

The core competencies are addressed in the following ways and tied in to the five C's Model by matching the appropriate letter(s) (A, B, C, D, and E):

<b>Functional Competencies</b>	
Decision-making (A,B,C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must make choices between agencies to invite to submit proposals, to present, and how to allocate funds.</li> </ul>
Risk Analysis (B, C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had to weigh the risk commensurate with choices and decisions.</li> </ul>
Reporting (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct wikis for agencies and well as construct and fill out reporting forms.</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research agencies for wikis including searching websites, collecting literature, and press releases.</li> </ul>
Leverage technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use technology to communicate agency information and to develop collaborative documents</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Competencies</b>	
Professional demeanor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students had to contact agencies to explain the RFP process and to invite the agencies to apply.</li> </ul>
Problem solving and decision-making (A, B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students had to discuss their own values in selecting which agencies to fund.</li> </ul>
Communication (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate decisions with the group, class and agency personnel</li> </ul>
Leverage technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use technology to improve efficiency and communication</li> </ul>
<b>Broad-Based Perspective Competencies</b>	
Strategic/Critical thinking (C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had to make choices of who to fund, even though all agencies had worthy causes</li> </ul>
Industry and sector analysis (C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learned about the nonprofit sector</li> <li>Learned about the impact of different variables on nonprofit sector</li> </ul>
Resource management (A, B, C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongest aspect of the project had to deal with resource allocation.</li> </ul>
Legal and Regulatory perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learned about 501(3) status</li> </ul>
Leverage technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use technology to communicate information about each agency</li> </ul>

## Template: Wiki Pages

**Here is some possible information to include in your wiki agency profiles\*:**

- What is the mission and purpose of the agency? What services does this agency provide?
  - What audience does the agency cater to, i.e., demographic information? How does this agency manage the diversity of the public it serves?
  - What are the agency's sources of revenues? How does the agency recruit donors?
  - Explain the structure of the agency/its organizational design: # of full and part-time employees & # of volunteers used & number of volunteer hours per year. How does the agency recruit volunteers?
  - What are the trends this agency follows? Have there been any recent changes in their environment that have caused the agency to change or are areas of concern for them, especially in their products/services provided and their processes?
  - How does the agency motivate its employees and volunteers?
  - What are the leadership challenges of running this agency?
  - What are some examples of financial and non-financial measurements the agency uses to gauge its performance? How does the agency measure its impact on the community in the short-term and in the long-term as well?
  - What are some of your own reflections about what you've discovered about this agency?
- \*Add any pictures/graphics, web links that might help us understand the agency better.

## Schedule of events for a 10-week course

It is imperative that faculty adopt the schedule with their **course objectives**. This schedule provides a description of activities with target deadlines.

- Week 1      *Discussion of Philanthropy project and needs for our community. Formation of Community Boards.*
- Week 2      *Create a list of non-profit organizations as possible candidates for the grants. Begin to work on profiles for these organizations. Find articles on the local charities you are investigating. Create a wiki for each agency you plan to nominate for the grant (see wiki guidelines for required information).*
- Week 3      *Create a list of agencies to invite in the RFP process. Contact agencies and invite them to submit a proposal for the grant. Determine what should be in the request for funding.*
- Week 4      *Send out invitations to agencies to submit an RFP.*
- Week 6      *Organizations' requests for funding are due this week.*
- Week 7      *Portions of the proposals are posted to the wikis. Students are to read the various proposals before class. Groups will be assigned certain proposals to look at in-depth. In this class, students will break into your groups to do an in-depth analysis of your particular charities. Then we will get together as a class to decide which charities to invite the following week.*
- Week 8      *Agencies are asked to give a 20-minute presentation about (1) describe the agency's mission and programs; (2) explain how they will spend the investment of \$1000 - \$2000; and (3) conduct a Q and A sessions.*
- Week 9      *Students deliberate about organizations to award funds to.*
- Week 10     *Awards ceremony and reception.*

## Template: Invitation Letter

Dear Agency Director;

This class is participating in the Student Philanthropy Project in which they will be awarding from \$500 to \$1000 to one or more local nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organizations. With this project, students learn about community needs and the efforts of local organizations to meet those needs. A team of students have identified your nonprofit organization as one they would like to learn more about. They have already prepared an essay about your organization which is posted on our class wiki (a collaborative website) for all the students to read.

My students would like you to complete a *Request for Funding Proposals* (RFPs). This term, we may have 3 potential RFPs to review. Upon the review of all the proposals, the class will narrow the pool down to one agency to give the award to. This is a *competitive* process. If your agency is the award winner, you need to send at least one representative from your organization to attend and participate in the ceremony to be held on (date and time). As students participate in this process, they gain decision making skills as well as civic responsibility – all while learning the subject matter of accounting as they look at your financial statements and budgets and interview executives.

We hope this will be a good experience for you. Please feel free to contact me at (professor's email), if you have any questions about the Student Philanthropy Project. Our RFP guidelines will be sent to you shortly after you accept to be our partner this term.

Thank you for considering our request to work with you.



**Template: Application Form -Funding requested\* (not to exceed \$2,000.00)**

RFP must be received by **no later than (date)** as a Word Document attachment to Professor's Email address

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_ Federal Tax I.D #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title of Authorized Agency Representative: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Agency Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please *briefly* answer the following questions. (Maximum of 5 pages excluding appendix)  
Please make sure you answer every question. Students will be evaluating your application**

1. Describe your proposed activities and projects you hope to accomplish if you receive this grant.
2. Indicate how this funding will allow you to enhance your current program. For instance, tell us the number of people (i.e., children) that will benefit from this grant.
3. What are the specific outcomes or goals for your project?
4. Give evidence of your efficiency. Efficiency in this context means - what percentage of your budget goes directly to support your programs? If affiliated with a national organization, what percentage of your funds stays local?
5. What is your main source of funding? What percentage of your total funding is provided by your board members and/or employees?
6. How much money are you requesting and how will it be spent (*please be specific*)? Submit a budget with a narrative. Will your organization commit any matching funds or in-kind donations to the project (not a requirement)?
7. Briefly tell us why your organization should be awarded a grant. Articulate your passion for your mission.
8. Attach a copy of your most current annual report or financial statements. Also, attach a copy of IRS Letter of Exemption or verification of 501 c (3) standing.
9. Feel free to include any additional information that you think might help us in our decision-making process.

\*Students themselves developed this RFP with the help of a facilitator.

## Template: Proposal Reviewer Checklist (An Example)

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

NEED/Program Narrative (10 points)	STRENGTHS (10 points)	WEAKNESSES (10 points)	Score (10 points)
FUNDING MANAGEMENT			
GOALS AND OUTCOMES			
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP			
BUDGET			
			Total Score:

Any additional notes:

### Reviewer Recommendation

- Recommend for funding
- Recommend for funding with specific changes to proposal as listed below:
- Do not recommend for funding

## Template: Award Letter

Dear Agency Director;

Congratulations! The students involved in the Student Philanthropy Project at Otterbein College have decided to award your organization a grant of \$     to fund the project outlined in your proposal.

Please know that the class was impressed by the level of commitment your organization has to the community and the quality of your funding proposal. The students especially liked the fact that you helped families become self-sufficient. The students appreciated the extra time you took to develop a chart and metrics regarding your success. Lastly, the students appreciated your contribution to the local economy.

An awards ceremony has been scheduled at the Community Center at Otterbein University, (Date and time). Please send a representative to accept this award on behalf of your agency. We ask that this representative and any other interested parties arrive by no later than 8:50 a.m.

Again, congratulations and thank you for participating in the Management Philanthropy Project. It has been a pleasure to learn about and meet people from your agency, and we look forward to honoring your agency's commitment at the upcoming awards ceremony.

## Template: Rejection Letter

Dear Agency Director,

We regret to inform you that your organization was not selected to receive the Student Philanthropy Project Grant. Please know that this was not an easy decision for the class to make. We recognize the *importance* of what you do and wish we had more funds to distribute.

This collected decision in no way diminishes the importance of what you and your dedicated staff do. All the nonprofit organizations the class considered showed a high level of commitment to their communities, and we are grateful to have learned about your organization. We thank you for the time you spent working with us on this project, allowing us to meet and learn about your organization and its excellent programs.

Again, we thank you for helping to educate our students about your mission, vision, and area of need.