

**PADM 6980 Spring 2019  
Strategic Planning for Nonprofits  
Tennessee State University, College of Public Service**

**Instructor Information**  
Dr. Ken Chilton

**This is a sample for prospective students. Current students should NOT purchase books based on this - consult your instructor!**

**Course Information**

Strategic planning is transformative for both public and private sector organizations. The process is critical to navigate changing market conditions, take advantage of emerging opportunities and to reassess a nonprofit's role in the community. Numerous consultants and organizations compose an industry of strategic planners who promise to revolutionize how nonprofits operate and succeed.

In this class, we will focus on the purpose, methods and outcomes of strategic planning. In addition, we analyze the promise and pitfalls of strategic planning. In particular, we will focus on strategic planning theories, measuring strategic planning outcomes and engage in an applied strategic planning process.

**Learning Outcomes**

Strategic planning is a critical function of nonprofit organizations. Organizations must be able to adapt to changing business cycles, external environments, social disruption and customers to remain relevant.

This class will expose you to the fundamental processes of strategic planning. At the end of this course, students should be able to develop and evaluate strategic plans that capitalize on organizational strengths and positions organizations for long term success. Students will develop and hone the following core competencies:

Strategic Learning Outcome 1: Each MPA graduate will be competent to lead and manage in public, nonprofit or public affairs governance.

Program Level Competency 1.1: Analyze organizational behavior to improve systems and manage performance

Assignment: SWOT Analysis

Strategic Learning Outcome 3: Each MPA graduate will be competent to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions appropriate to public or nonprofit administration settings

Program Level Competency 3.1: Identify and apply appropriate decision tools to support data-informed management, evaluation and policy choices

Assignment: Strategic Plan

**Policies**

Students are expected to participate in all discussions, turn in assignments on time and communicate with the instructor in advance of absences or problems with assignments. In addition, students are expected to submit original work; academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. All assignments will be reviewed through *Turn-it-in* software. Students are expected to read and understand policies on academic dishonesty.

All assignments are due by midnight on the due date via Dropbox. Late assignments will **NOT BE ACCEPTED**. Likewise, discussions placed in the dropbox AFTER a module closes will not be counted!!! Students are also expected to attend classes. This is a hybrid course and every in-class meeting is important.

Students are expected to regularly check Elearn for important class announcements, supplemental readings/articles, and discussion. Students can also use the discussion board to ask questions about assignments, concepts and course material.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor to discuss special accommodations that may be needed for successful participation in this course.

*Incomplete Policy:* Students are expected to meet all individual and group project deadlines. Incompletes will only be given when the quality of work has been satisfactory but the student has a legitimate excuse for missing a minor requirement of the course.

## Required Texts

**This is a sample for prospective students. Current students should NOT purchase books based on this - consult your instructor!**

## Assignments

This class combines weekly assignments with ongoing project assignments. It is critical that students stay up-to-date on readings, quizzes, discussions and research assignments. This course consists of the following assignments:

*Participation:* Students are expected to attend in-class sessions, actively engage in discussions and interact civilly with colleagues and peers. I will actively engage in classroom discussions to cover important issues and challenge your perceptions.

I expect students to prepare, at a minimum, a paragraph response to weekly questions on the syllabus (also posted on the discussion threads). Excellent participation grades will be based on the quality of your input over the volume of your input. For example, students who use materials from the readings or external resources to clarify points or move the discussion forward will receive better participation grades than students who post "I agree" or "good post" type comments. I also expect students to read the comments of other students. Keep in mind, in a traditional classroom you would spend 3 hours per week in the classroom. Dedicate a similar amount of time weekly to discussion boards!

## Hypothetical Strategic Plan: SWOT Analysis

This assignment will require you to conduct research on a nonprofit in the Nashville region. You are required to write a 5-page SWOT analysis of a nonprofit that includes the following sections:

- Introduction and Overview (use literature to define strategic planning and variables associated with it)
- Current mission and vision. Suggested changes and justification
- Budget trends (990 Analysis)
- Fiscal sustainability
- How is ROI measured?

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats
- Transparency & cultural diversity

Each of these sections should be written into a narrative—not just bullet points. You can determine SWOTs by conducting research on current nonprofits that work in the area of interest of your selected organization. You can compare your organization to similar ones elsewhere. Do not contact and or interview leaders at your chosen organization. This is purely for educational purposes.

### **Short Writing Assignments (3)**

Students will be given practical assignments on three different topics related to strategic planning. Students will receive directions one-week in advance of the due dates.

### **Group Project**

You will work in teams to produce a strategic plan for a nonprofit organization. To accomplish this, students will be assigned to different groups, and potentially different projects, to work on strategic plan components. Each group will be graded on the quality of their component and its contribution to the success of the overall project.

### **Group Presentation**

Each group will be responsible for participating in a presentation of the strategic plan. Keep in mind, the group presentations must be coordinated to maintain style. In both the group project and the group presentation, peers will assess the individual quantity and quality of other group members anonymously to the instructor. Thus, students who fail to produce in their groups will be held accountable for their actions.

The Group presentation will be made at the final class meeting. The section Draft Reports for each group are due on April 5, 2018.

These will be critiqued and returned to each group. At that time, Final edits must be made. I expect HIGH QUALITY, professional narrative, graphics and recommendations.

### **Assessment & Due Dates**

Grades are determined by the quality of your performance on individual and group assignments. You are expected to turn in ALL assignments at the appropriate time. Late submissions will only be accepted with prior approval by the instructor. Students are expected to inform the instructor of problems in advance of submission dates/times. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in severe penalties for individuals AND groups

#### Assignments

Participation & Discussion (50 points): Due weekly

Short Writing Assignments (60 points)

- Feb. 6
- March 13
- April 10

Individual SWOT Analysis (50 points)

- Feb. 27

Group Work DRAFT (25 points)

- April 5  
Final Group Work (100 points)
- April 24  
Final Presentation (20 points)
- May 1  
TOTAL POINTS (305 points)

All assignments are due in the Dropbox by midnight on the due date.

#### *Grade Scale*

- A** (274.5 - 305 points)
- B** (244 – 274.9)
- C** (213.5 - 243.9)
- D** (183 – 213.4)
- F** Less than 183 points

### **Academic Integrity & Graduate Student Expectations**

Students are expected to *submit original work*. When in doubt, CITE it properly. If you do not know how to cite properly, the internet and libraries provide plenty of resources. All of your work is reviewed by Turn-it-in software to detect instances of plagiarism. This [resource](#) provides detailed examples of how to properly cite the work of others and it also provides valuable information on the subtleties of academic honesty versus dishonesty.

Students are also expected to “mature” as social science writers by synthesizing the work of academics and nonprofit scholars. Many students simply stitch together a variety of “quotes” to avoid plagiarism; however, this practice is not acceptable in graduate level course work. In addition, students are expected to use “peer reviewed” research in literature reviews. Newspapers, blogs, editorials and magazines are not acceptable sources for scholarly research.

### **Disabilities**

It is the policy of Tennessee State University (“TSU” or “University”) to provide equal access to education and employment to all, regardless of disability. TSU fully complies with all laws, orders, regulations and policies promulgated for promoting and ensuring equal opportunity for persons who may have a disability, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Under TSU Procedure No. 6.6.1, it is the expressed policy of the University that discrimination or harassment based upon a disability is prohibited. If an applicant for employment, employee, student, or applicant for admission believes s/he has been discriminated against or harassed because they have a disability, they should contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) at 615-963-7435 or visit our office in the McWherter Administration Building, Suite 260.

TSU's Disability Policies can be accessed [here](#).

### **Harassment**

The Office of Equity and Inclusion ensures that the University complies with federal and state equal opportunity and affirmative action laws and regulations. OEI is also responsible for ensuring faculty, staff and students comply with TSU Policies regarding harassment and discrimination.

TSU's Harassment Policies can be accessed [here](#).

## Weekly Content

### Module 1: January 14 (Avon Williams Campus)

- Class Introduction
- Read Syllabus & Review
- Class Requirements
- Introductions
- Complete Weekly Discussion

### Module 2: January 21

#### Overview of Strategic Planning

- Bryson, John. 2010. [The Future of Public and Nonprofit Strategic Planning in the United States](#). Public Administration Review.
- Mintzberg, Henry. 1994: [The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning](#). Harvard Business Review.
- Etzioni, Amatai. 1986. [Mixed-scanning Reviewed](#). Public Administration Review, V. 46, 1: pages 8-14.
- Lindblom, Charles. [The Science of Muddling Through](#). Public Administration Review, v. 19, 2: pages 79-88.
- Complete Weekly Discussion

### Module 3: January 28 (Avon Williams Campus)

#### Approaches to Strategic Planning

- Frederick Gluck, et al. [Strategic Management](#)
- [Trends Impacting Monterey County Nonprofits](#). Skim this to see the PESTLE model in action.
- Complete Weekly Discussion

### Module 4: February 4

#### Project Teams and Expectations

Students divided in to work units. Initial discussions of final product.

- SHORT writing assignment #1 Due Feb. 6
- Complete Weekly Discussion

### Module 5: February 11 (Avon Williams Campus)

#### Organizational Overview & Introduction

Meet with Local Nonprofit Leadership to Develop Strategic Planning Framework

- Complete Weekly Discussion

### Modules 6-7: Feb. 18, Feb. 25

#### Work in Groups

#### (Feb. 25 at AVON WILLIAMS CAMPUS)

- Articulate Mission, Vision & Values
- Situational Awareness (SWOT)
- Consensus on Priorities
- Create Goals & Objectives
- Identify Sources of Information (internal & external stakeholders; funders; clients)
- Gather information from sources

- Summarize Findings
- INDIVIDUAL SWOT ANALYSIS DUE FEB. 27!!**
- Complete Weekly Discussion

**SPRING BREAK March 4-8**

**Modules 8-10: March 11, March 18, March 25**

**Work in Groups**

**(March 11 & March 18 weeks at AVON WILLIAMS CAMPUS)**

Write the Plan

- Executive Summary & Introduction
- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Values Statement
- Summary of SWOT
- Core Future Strategies
- Program Goals & Objectives
- Administrative Goals & Objectives, Revenue Potential, and Resources Required
- Policy Recommendations
- Evaluation Strategy & Plan
- Short Writing Assignment #2 due March 13

**Module 11: April 1 (Avon Williams Campus)**

- Refine plan
- GROUP FIRST DRAFTS DUE APRIL 5
- Complete Weekly Discussion

**Module 12: April 8**

- Work on Presentation
- SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE, April 10
- Complete Weekly Discussion

**Module 13: April 15 (Avon Williams Campus)**

- Work on Edits for Presentation & Final Report
- Complete Weekly Discussion

**Module 14: April 22**

**Final Group work with edits due APRIL 24**

- Complete Weekly Discussion

**FINAL CLIENT PRESENTATION: MAY 1**