Advanced Seminar in Nonprofit Management
MTCH, 6520, #1017
Fall 2010
September 2, 2010 – December 16, 2010
Thursdays, 6-7:50pm
Location: 6 East 16th Street, Room 1108

Professor Michele Kahane
kahanem@newschool.edu
72 Fifth Ave., Room 405
212-229-5400, ext. 1217
Office Hours: By Appointment
[It is best to be in touch with me via e-mail]

Course Description
The Advanced Seminar is designed to integrate the concepts studied throughout the nonprofit management program, to engage students in informed discussion of how these concepts are applied in authentic management and leadership situations, and to hone research strategies and skills. To that end, students will be expected to carry out a Masters' Level researchproject as they refresh their methodological skills. The professional decision report (PDR), the paper of publishable quality (PPQ), or the Masters Research Thesis (Thesis) is the culmination of an individual student's work in the seminar. A description of each is attached to the end of this syllabus. In addition, students will be assigned to read, in the first few weeks of the semester, PDR and research thesis examples submitted by former students.

It is expected that every Advanced Seminar student will have access to the Internet, access to the course on-line platform [BlackBoard], and the ability to carry out electronic communication.

Course Requirements
The Professional Development Report (PDR) is your major work product, and must be submitted no later than the beginning of the last class. Later submissions will be docked up to one full grade a day.

In addition to the final PDR, you must complete three other assignments, as follows: Project Synopsis [Part 1 -4], Draft PDR, and PDR PowerPoint Presentation of Key Findings.

These assignments are described in greater detail further below. We will also discuss each assignment in class.

This course is not expected to take more work than other NPM courses. The key is to manage the project well and to start working on the project front the first day (or earlier) of class. You should expect to enjoy your project and the course.

Attendance in class on days that we are scheduled to meet is required.

Grading Formula

Project Synopsis 1-4	[25% of course grade]
Draft of PDR	[25% of course grade]
Presentation of PDR findings and peer feedback	[15% of course grade]
Finished PDR	[35% of course grade]

Schedule of Class Sessions

Session 1 September 2

- Introduction to the Seminar and Discussion of PDR, PPQ, and Research Thesis
- Managing Client Interactions

Note: As needed, to arrange for a discussion about your project

***No class on September 9 – Rosh Hashanah**

Session 2 September 16

- Review of Major Research Design Strategies
- **Due: Description of the Client [organization], Problem Statement and Larger Context Section of Synopsis**

Session 3 September 23

- Data Collection Options and Common Pitfalls
- Secondary Data Collection and Analysis
- Collection data via Questionnaires, Focus Groups, Cases Studies, Observation
- Ethical Issues in Data Collection
- **Due: Methodology Section of Synopsis**

Session 4 September 30

- Small Group Peer-to-Peer Sessions re: project with Professor
- **Due: Reading List [i.e. Bibliography] and Other Sources of Information**

Session 5 October 7

- How to do Analysis and Report Writing
- **Due: Project Week-by-Week Timetable**

Sessions 6, 7, 8, October 14, 21, 28 RESEARCH PHASE

- At least one scheduled, individual Student Consultation with the Professor is required during the Research Phase. The professor will be available for individual project consultations during a mutually convenient time for both parties. Please schedule an appointment with the professor during class time in September and share written work prior to meeting via email.

Session 9 November 4

- Major Issues Confronting the Non-profit Sector
- **Due: Draft PDR/PPQ/Thesis**

Sessions 10, 11, 12 November 11, 18, Tuesday, Nov. 23 [Tuesday will follow Thursday schedule because there are no classes on November 25 for Thanksgiving]

- **Individual PDR PowerPoint Presentations – on three dates – as well as discussion of drafts**
- Draft PDRs Returned on November 18

Session 13 December 2

- Competencies Clusters for Effective Managers
- Individual Management Styles

Session 14 December 9

- Small Group Peer-to-Peer Job/Career Session

Session 15 December 16

- Summary of Course
- **Due: Final PDR/PPQ/Thesis**

Weekly Course Readings

Session 1 September 2

- No readings but come to class prepared to discuss your client or your efforts to find a client. I will also post resources on managing clients on blackboard that you can use as necessary during the semester.

***No class on September 9 – Rosh Hashanah**

Session 2 September 16

- Sample PDR: "New York City Food and Fitness Policy Scan" by Miriam M. Ackerman for NYC Food Fitness Partnership, Dec. 2008
- Read Posting on Black board [BB] under "Resources" titled "Research Design Strategies" Rodriguez lecture.

Session 3 September 23

- Sample Research Thesis: "Adolescent Development and Civic Engagement: Implications for Successful Youth Development Programs" by Julie Beck, March, 2010
- Sample Research Thesis: "Tapping the Fountain of Youth: Marketing and Engaging Generation Y" by Alison Hoffer, May 2010

Session 4 September 30

- Sample PDR: **"**Non-Profit Management Curriculum" by J. Edward Szendrey for Fathers and Brothers Maryknoll General Council, December 2008

Select one of the following books on "writing" to read by the time of your individual meeting with the Professor in October:

- Elbow, Peter. Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process, Oxford University Press, New York: 1998.

- Zinsser, William. On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction. Quill, New York: 2001.

- Zerubavel, Eviatar. The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertation and Books, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1999.

- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Columb and Joseph M. Williams, The Craft of Research. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995.

Session 5 October 7

- Sample Research Thesis: "The Market for CSR Data" By Marianne Bellotti, May 2010

Sessions 6, 7, 8, October 14, 21, 28 RESEARCH PHASE

- Read the readings on your individual "reading list/bibliography" and continue your data collection and data analysis

Session 9 November 4

- Look for posting on Blackboard under "Resources" title ""Major Issues Confronting the NP Sector"

Sessions 10, 11, 12 November 11, 18, Tuesday, Nov. 23 [Tuesday will follow Thursday schedule because there are no classes on November 25 for Thanksgiving]

- Present individual powerpoint presentation of PDR/PPQ/Thesis findings (dates for each presentation will be determined)

Session 13 December 2

- Jonathan Gosling and Henry Mintzberg, "The Education of Practicing Managers", MIT Sloan Management Review, Summer 2004, 19-22.
- Richard E. Boyatzis, Elizabeth C. Stubbs, and Scott N. Taylor, "Learning Cognitive and Emotional Intelligence Competencies Through Graduate Management Education", Academy of Management Learning and Education, 2002, Vol.1, No.2, 150 – 162.

Session 14 December 9

- Work on Final PDR

Session 15 December 16

- **Finish PDR**

Assignment Descriptions

Project Synopsis – [***alias*** Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) with Client]

Your project synopsis will consist of four sections as described below. Note: Each section is due to the Professor on a specific date as indicated in various places in this syllabus.

A. Client Description, Problem/Issue Statement and Larger Context:

A brief narrative description of your client and the policy or organizational issue you intend to treat and the context in which this issue resides. For example, you may be developing a fundraising plan for a multi-service youth organization in the Bronx. The issues or organizational problems are "lack of funds" and need for greater diversity of funding sources. The context includes the national [and sometimes global] factors that will impact the resolution of the "issue" – both positive and negative factors. In this case, the context is the dismal national and global economic crisis, the decrease in philanthropic giving predicted for 2010, the decreased government support for any services; on the positive side, the organization has an impressive record of achieving its goals.

What I want you to do is think about the problem (issue) you have been asked to solve in a larger context.

B. Methods Statement

Brief statement explaining what sources you will use to gather data for your problem solving. Be as specific as possible. Sources may include: personal interviews; e-mail communications; unpublished or internal papers; documents and correspondence; and published materials, book, articles, and monographs.

C, Reading List Bibliography and other Sources of Information

Describe the primary reading materials you will use to collect background research information on your issue. Please list your bibliographic sources using a standard bibliography format and separately, list the websites you will use for this project.

D. Project Week-by- Week Timetable: A time table that shows what specific objectives you need to accomplish and by which date each step must be completed. Your time table or project work plan should start on September 2 and end on December 16 when the PDR/PPQ/Thesis project I due.

Draft PDR

All students are expected to submit a draft of their final PDR/PPQ/Thesis. This draft should be as close to a finished paper as possible. In other words, all sections of the paper should be included in the draft. The assumption is that all data collection and data analysis will have been completed by this date. It is likely that the draft will be longer than the final paper; the Professor will read the draft very carefully and give each student detailed comments/suggestions/edits. The draft must be carefully proof-read before it is submitted for grading. The grading will be based on the follow criteria: 1) Logical, well-researched solution(s) to the issue area has been presented; 2) All information is carefully referenced – i.e. footnote with source of information – including survey or interviews conducted by the student; 3) Bibliography is included and formatted using a

standard bibliography format; 4) Tables and graphs have been used to present information; 5) No typos, missing words, and grammatical errors are present

PowerPoint Presentation
Each student will be asked to make a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation. The presentation should be a concise summary of the problem addressed, the methodology, major findings and final recommendations. Each student will be given no more than 10 minutes (around 15 "PP slides"). After each presentation the class will provide feedback (both verbally and in writing).

Final PDR/PPQ/Research Thesis instructions are attached to this syllabus. The final paper is usually around 20-25 pages in length, excluding Appendices.

The choice between PDR, PPQ, or Research Thesis is up to the student [in consultation with the professor] and should reflect the student's future interests. A student interested in pursuing a management/practitioner career might be best served by the traditional PDR which hones crucial organizational decision-making skills with a hands-on approach. A student interested in following a research path, pursuing an eventual Ph.D., or wishing to leave a Master's Program with a published document, might want to consider the Research Thesis or PPQ option instead.

Students are expected to select their PDR client (organization) and topic prior to the beginning of the semester and, in any event, **no later than the second week of class.**

Students are responsible for the selection of a PDR client, project or topic. This is a major responsibility that usually takes time and consultation. In some instances, it may be possible to refer a student to an organization known to the instructor. However, this is only a possibility, and no assumptions should be made. As much as possible, it is up to the student to select his or her client.

Instructions for Submitting the PDR:
1. Please submit the PDR by e-mail, and also a hard copy, to me on the last day of class. Late submissions will be penalized.
2. Submit one copy by e-mail to NPM program office – i.e. Suzanne Bostwick.
3. Please be sure to keep a copy on line, and in hard copy, for yourself.

A proposed outline for the PDR will be distributed in class. Students may adhere to any generally accepted style sheet, but should be consistent throughout. Please double space, with a left margin of 1.5 inches; footnotes should appear on the page to which they refer. A bibliography, or source references, must be included, as well as the interview schedule (or survey questionnaire) used - if any, and the names and affiliations of persons interviewed and consulted.

Readings: It is expected that because the students in this semester are at the end of their Masters training they will have on their bookshelves most of the relevant reading materials, subscriptions to significant journals, on line references, and ready access to sources of information. In addition, the students are expected to dedicate the bulk of their preparation time in pursuit of their PDR – and readings relevant to successful completion of this project.

Please note the following New School policy on a grade of incomplete:
"A grade of 'I' (incomplete) is a temporary grade indicating failure to complete assigned work. The mark is given only upon request of the student and at the discretion of the instructor. A completed 'Request for a Grade of Incomplete' form must be signed by the student and faculty

member before the final class session. The ‘I’ must be removed within one year after the end of the semester in which the student received the grade. Students seeking an extension of this time limit must have the approval of the instructor and successfully petition the chair of their program. If no petition is made, or if it is unsuccessful, the grade is changed to an ‘N’ – permanent incomplete – which remains on the student’s permanent record.”

Revised 2010 [August, 2009 original]

Instructions
The PROFESSIONAL DECISION REPORT

A Professional Decision Report (PDR) must be written and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Science (M.S.) degree from the Robert J. Milano Graduate School of Management & Urban Policy at the New School University. The PDR required of students in the New School's Nonprofit Management Program is an analysis of a specific managerial decision problem, opportunity, or policy issue of substantial relevance and importance in the leadership of management of nonprofit organizations. The PDR is the principal graded product of the Advanced Seminar in Nonprofit Management, which is taken near the end of a student's program of studies.

Purposes, Standards, and Organization of the PDR

The PDR is an important opportunity for the student to address important real-world issues faced by professionals in nonprofit management and leadership positions. The PDR should also be a significant professional learning experience enabling the student to integrate substantial parts of the knowledge and skills acquired during the course of the M.S. degree program in Nonprofit Management in direct response to a nonprofit client's management issue.

The PDR should measure up to the rigorous academic and professional standards established by the Robert J. Milano Graduate School of Management & Urban Policy. These include evidence that the PDR establishes and utilizes a sound analytical framework that:

- Precisely defines the managerial problem, opportunity, or policy issue to be addressed,
- Describes the research methodology that will be applied to the problem
- Identifies how the data or evidence will be collected,
- Generates and describes a range of alternative possible solutions to the problem or issue being addressed,
- Carefully analyzes each of these alternative courses of action using whatever analytic techniques are appropriate, and
- Makes a carefully reasoned recommendation for action that is built logically and persuasively on the foregoing analysis.

Choosing a PDR client

In most cases, a PDR is "client-oriented." That means that a PDR is written by the student with the purpose of making a contribution to someone else's (a client's) solution of the decision problem at hand. Therefore, as this strongly suggests, a sound respectful student-client relationship is an important ingredient for the production of a good PDR.

While it is possible to write a good PDR without having a good relationship with a client-and to learn useful lessons by making the best of a bad relationship-the most valuable learning comes from working constructively with a good client.

A good PDR client is one whose actions and decisions will have a significant impact on the question at hand. Good clients may thus include:

- Executive Directors, board members, and other leaders and senior managers of nonprofit organizations;
- Staff members and outside consultants who advice them;
- Elected and appointed public officials;
- Leaders and managers of for-profit businesses.

Such a person may be someone already known to you and, in fact, may be leader or manager of the organization or agency in which you work. Alternatively, a PDR client may be previously unknown to you and have no other professional relationship to you.

A good client is one who knows how to use your analysis and recommendations. This means appreciating the strengths and understanding the limitations of formal methods of analysis and decision-making. It means understanding enough about the historical, institutional and political contexts of the problem to recognize when formal analysis and decision-making can make a difference, and when it may not.

A good client is one who is open to different a perspective, who views the PDR as a way of exploring a problem, highlighting trade offs, and determining whether differences of view turn on facts or values. The client may prefer, for tactical or strategic reasons, to keep the results of the analysis private. But the client should want to know the strongest arguments for and against each option, even if the client decides to pursue an option other than the one the analysis suggests and the students recommend.

Since some PDR clients may already be advocates of a particular decision alternative or policy position, the PDR itself may be an advocacy document. Effective advocacy, however, requires anticipating and responding to opposing arguments and alternative approaches. This may be done in the advocacy document itself, or in separate memoranda to the client. If done separately, both the advocacy document and the separate memoranda should be submitted together and together will constitute the PDR.

<u>The Student's Responsibilities to the Client</u>

The student's basic responsibility to the client is to try to put herself or himself in the client's shoes. What does the problem look like from the client's point of view? What can the client do about it? What leverage does the client have with which to work? Under what constrains is the client operating?

Part of the advantage the student brings to the client, however, is the student's independence. The student should therefore not hesitate to look at the problem from points of view other than those of the client, and to bring those differing perspectives to the client's attention. One of the most

useful services a student can perform is to keep the client informed of facts, arguments, and perspectives that might not have seemed important at the outset, but later turn out to be so.

Another of the student's comparative advantage is time. Busy clients normally have not had time to think through carefully the problem being addressed. That is usually one reason clients want advice on what they should do. Therefore, as the student learns more about the issue and the client's perspective, the student should not hesitate to suggest that the focus of the PDR be modified. While the client may ultimately disagree, the discussion will almost certainly help to clarify the problem.

The student's relationship with the client should be governed by the highest standards of professional courtesy and commitment: keep the client informed, seek guidance when appropriate, be respectful of competing demands on the client's time, preserve confidences, protect the client's relationship with others, and generally act in a way that brings credit to both the student and the client.

A PDR involves more than a routine gathering and delivering of information on a problem predefined by the client. Ideally, it should enable the student to share the responsibility with the client for defining the problem, grappling with its ramifications, and delivering scenarios or recommendations which offer reasoned solutions to the decision problem or policy question as defined together by the client and the student.

While the student should gather evidence omnivorously, it should be used in the PDR with great selectivity to: highlight central issues, bolster crucial arguments, and illustrate specific points. A PDR is an exercise in marshalling evidence that illuminates and helps to solve a problem. It is not an exercise in gathering or manipulating data for its own sake, to advance theory, or to display mastery of a technique. Nonetheless, while simplification and selectivity are necessary for purpose of presentation, the underlying techniques and uses of data should meet appropriate disciplinary standards of rigor and integrity. Detailed demonstrations of this, however, may be reserved for appendices to the main report.

Specific examples are crucial elements in both analysis and presentation. General propositions that sound correct are probably incorrect if the writer can cite no specific case in which they apply. Generalizations come to life and become memorable if illustrated with a good example. Statements about size, amounts, and relationships become more concrete and understandable if they include specific numbers to which readers can relate.

A good PDR successfully carries the burden of persuasion. It leaves the reader who begins as a skeptic or an opponent with the feeling that a case has been made strongly and fairly. A good PDR should persuade the reader that the framework for analysis that has been established is legitimate and compelling, and that the options suggested or recommendations for action flow logically from the analysis.

As a final test in evaluating a PDR, readers should themselves this question. If you had to make a decision that had important real-world consequences, would you be prepared to act on the basis of the PDR you have just read? If so, it is probably a good PDR.

Communicating the Results

Professional written communications is a critical element of the PDR. Good analysis poorly communicated (assuming such a thing exists) is without value in a PDR. A good PDR must be clearly written and well organized. It should be written with the audience clearly understood and constantly in mind.

The PDR should have an executive summary of 1-3 single-spaced pages that highlights for the busy reader everything in the PDR that the reader absolutely needs to know. This summary should be capable of standing alone, and should be written on the assumption that the reader will read nothing else in the PDR. It is thus one of the most important parts of the PDR and should not be written as an afterthought.

The PDR should also include an introduction of 1-3 pages that identifies the problem being addressed, and tells the reader why it is worth the reader's time to read the rest of the paper. This introduction should also describe briefly what each section of the paper covers, thereby serving as a guide to someone who wants to read selectively.

The PDR should always include a table of contents and the main body of the text should make extensive use of headings, subheadings, bulleted paragraphs, and the like to aid the reader and make the logical and organization of the repost as clear as possible. Appendices should be used to detail technical, analytical and methodological information for the reader who wishes to understand these aspects of the analysis in more depth.

When standards for "Good" Analysis are in Conflict

While the PDR is primarily designed to help the client with a specific managerial decision, the document should also measure up to independent standards for good analysis. A major part of the student's own responsibility is to make certain that those standards are met. In most cases, there should be little conflict between those standards and the client's needs. However, in the event that conflicts do arise, students may wish to consult an appropriate faculty member for assistance in making decisions about any trade-offs which might be necessary and striking a balance that is both professionally and intellectually responsible.

What the PDR is NOT

The PDR is not a conventional Master's Thesis. This does not mean that the analysis that goes into the report, or the communication of the analysis, should be less rigorous, less carefully supported or less well presented than would be expected in a master's thesis.

Similarly, the PDR is not a mini doctoral dissertation. You do not need to do an exhaustive review of the relevant literature (although certain citations and bibliographic references may be necessary). You do not need to create or advance "theory" to do a good PDR (although you may). And you do not need to view this report as a Herculean task that will consume all your energies for a significant chunk of the rest of your life.

You should plan to do a significant, high quality piece of work, write it into final form, and be able to submit it at the beginning of the class on week 14. Any topic proposed for the PDR that realistically cannot be accommodated within this timetable must be modified into one that can.

THE PPQ

There are few boundaries established regarding the PPQ subject as long as it addresses an area of the nonprofit management profession and the product reflects critical and insightful thinking. Some potential avenues that might be considered…

- You believe that the readings done for a prior course or the writings that are currently available on a particular topic of nonprofit management are not reflective of your experiences in the real world – you can use the PPQ as a vehicle for critically exploring this topic

- A topic exists that you think requires more in-depth coverage than is currently being provided in the professional literature – you can use the PPQ to take a closer look at the subject

- Generally speaking, a publishable paper is one that presents a new point of view, looks at an existing topic critically, takes an opposing point of view from the mainstream thinking on a topic, examines an emerging trend, or in some way takes a unique viewpoint. It is also possible to write a case study that might prove beneficial to others reading it.

As such, the PPQ is a publishable report of a specific piece of work culled from a student's courses, research and experience in the preceding semesters. It is a piece of work of substance and length requiring research which draws together the ideas developed in the course of a candidate's studies. Students find their topics in their readings, in other course material, and in communities. The research PPQ requires students to focus on an area of interest, define a problem, find and use appropriate measures, analyze the findings and present the contextual significance of these findings.

A written proposal or project synopsis is submitted within the first two weeks of class, and should contain a one-sentence statement of the problem and an explanatory paragraph. Preliminary references, a detailed outline, and a detailed methodology section; as well as a tentative report outline. Proposals may be altered as required during the process.

Usually the PPQ is a formal written report of publishable standards, but students should feel free to experiment with educational videotapes and other such innovations. The PPQ is the summary expression of what students have achieved during the program.

If publication of the PPQ is anticipated, the medium of publication likely to be used should be considered when preparing the manuscript. If it is known in advance that the PPQ will be published by a particular publisher or journal, the editorial practices of that publisher or journal should be followed. The form of footnotes and bibliography, in particular, may vary with different publishers and journals.

The Research Thesis

This option permits students to write a research report that closely resembles a conventional Master's Thesis. A thesis will not require interaction with a client and will be based primarily on primary or secondary research. This option may be attractive to students who want to pursue a Ph.D. or those who want to or need to prepare a rigorous research project for their current employer. This option poses a challenge because of the one-semester time constraint. If a student wishes to pursue this option, they must meet with professor for a private consultation. During the meeting, the professor will provide the appropriate information and advise to insure successful completion of a thesis in the imposed time frame.