NGO Politics (POL S 403b)  
Aseem Prakash  
Fall 2012

Class Time: Monday and Wednesday, 1:30-3:20 p.m.  
Class Location: Smith 115  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Office: 39 Gowen  
E-mail: aseem@uw.edu  
Home Page: http://faculty.washington.edu/aseem/

Course Objective  
Non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGNPOs) have emerged as important actors in local, national, and international politics. As units of collective action, they advocate policy positions and produce collective goods. They are often viewed as crucial building blocks for democracy and economic growth. NGNPOs compete and cooperate with governments and with firms. Importantly, they compete and cooperate with one another for membership, external funding, and media attention. Although they are termed as ‘non-governmental’ organizations, many of them rely on governments for much of their funding. And, some NGNPOs have highly questionable and normatively inappropriate goals. In sum, there is a scholarly need to systematically examine NGNPOs as units of collective action, and answer key questions such as under what conditions they emerge, how they structure their organization, how they function, and how they influence policy.

Several literatures study the advocacy and collective good provision functions of NGNPOs. These are:  
• the NGO politics and civil society literatures in political science,  
• the social movement literature in sociology, and  
• the non-profit (NP) literature in public policy/administration/management.

This course will investigate key theoretical and empirical issues raised in these literatures pertaining to NGNPO goals, strategy, politics, and efficacy. We will focus on topics that are theoretically and empirically interesting, and have attracted scholarly attention.

Readings  
Book:  

Articles  
I have created an electronic reserve for the assigned articles. You will need your UW email password to access the course electronic reserve (click on Seattle Campus).  
Select “Instructor” in the drop-down menu. Type in my name and the course reserve will appear.
If you are off campus, then first log in via “off-campus access log in” located in the top right corner of the library page: http://www.lib.washington.edu/

Course Expectations
This course requires active student participation. You are expected to energetically and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions in the following ways.

Student Presentations
For every session, students will present and critique the assigned articles. The discussant-presenter should prepare a two page (single-spaced) “Article Memo” which summarizes the article, examines its strengths and weaknesses, and identifies questions it raises for future research. Please email this memo to the class by Sunday noon for the Monday class, and by Tuesday noon for the Wednesday class. The discussant-presenter should budget about 10 minutes for the in-class oral presentation. I anticipate that every student will be assigned two or three articles to present.

Class Participation
Needless to say, I expect seminar participants to review all the assigned readings prior to the class. Based on these readings, for any 5 sessions (one session per week), please will email me two questions or issues you want to discuss in the class (students assigned a specific article will not do so; they will email their “Article Memo” only). Instead of listing your questions, please briefly explain how these questions contribute to our understanding of the article(s) under discussion. Your “Key Questions Memo” should be about one page (single-spaced) and reach me by Sunday noon for the Monday class, and by Tuesday noon for the Wednesday class.

Research Paper
A five page (single-spaced) research paper is due December 6. Identify an NGO and explore any two of its salient dimensions such as organizational structure, advocacy or service delivery strategies, fundraising, etc. Make sure to relate this to the relevant readings in the course. One page paper outline is due November 14.

Evaluation
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Note
I reserve the right to change the readings or my scheme for course evaluation without prior notice.
Class Schedule
Monday, September 24
Introduction to the course

Wednesday, September 26
The Civil Society Debate

Monday, October 1
Problematizing Civil Society

Wednesday, October 3
NGOs: Theoretical issues

Monday, October 8
Global NGOs

Wednesday, October 10
Advocacy Organizations and Collective Action
• Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 1, Introduction
• Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 5, Bob
• Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 8, Ron and Cooley
• Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 10, Henderson
Monday October 15

**Advocacy Organizations and Collective Action**
- Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 3, Gill & Pfaff
- Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 4, Bloodgood
- Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 6, Barakaso
- Prakash and Gugerty, Chapter 7, Pralle

Wednesday, October 17

**Advocacy Strategies**

Monday, October 22

**Accountability**

Wednesday, October 25

**Transformation**
- Rikmann and Keedus. Civic Sectors in Transformation and Beyond: Preliminaries for a Comparison of Six Central and Eastern European Societies. Voluntas. DOI: 10.1007/s11266-012-9305-x
- Chahim and Prakash, NGOization, Foreign Funding, and the Nicaraguan Civil Society. Draft. To be emailed.

Monday, October 29

**Transparency**
Wednesday, October 31
Social Movements

Monday, November 5
International NGOs

Wednesday, November 7
Nonprofits

Monday, November 12
HOLIDAY: VETERANS DAY

Paper outline is due

Wednesday, November 14
Social Capital
Monday November 19
In-Class presentation

Wednesday, November 21
No Class; Thanksgiving

Monday, November 26
In-class presentations

Monday, December 3
In-class presentations

*Paper turned in*

Wednesday, December 6
In-class presentations