

**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:

Aseem Prakash and Mary Kay Gugerty. Editors. 2010. *Advocacy Organizations and Collective Action*. 2010. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

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).

<https://eres.lib.washington.edu/eres/courseindex.aspx?error=&page=search>

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, fund raising, etc. Make sure to relate this to the relevant readings in the course. One page paper outline is due **November 14**.

### **Evaluation**

Article Memos	20 points
Key Questions Memos	25 points
Class Participation	25 points
Research Presentation	10 points
Research Paper	20 points

### **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**

- Putnam. 1995. Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1): 65-78.
- Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson. 2000. A Nation of Organizers. *American Political Science Review*, 94(3): 527-546.
- Sabine. 1952. The Two Democratic Traditions. *The Philosophical Review*, 61(4): 451-474.

Monday, October 1

### **Problematizing Civil Society**

- Bob. 2002. Merchants of Morality. *Foreign Policy*, March-April: 36-45.
- Berman. 1997. Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic. *World Politics*, 49 (3): 401-429.
- Chambers and Kopstein. 2001. Bad Civil Society. *Political Theory*, 29 (6): 837-865.

Wednesday, October 3

### **NGOs: Theoretical issues**

- Sell and Prakash. 2004. Using Ideas Strategically. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(1): 143-175.
- Salisbury. 1969. An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups. *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 13(1): 1-32.
- Walker. 1983. The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America. *American Political Science Review*, 77(2): 390-406.

Monday, October 8

### **Global NGOs**

- Reimam. 2006. A View from the Top: International Politics, Norms, and the Worldwide Growth of NGOs *International Studies Quarterly*, 50: 45-57.
- Bartley, 2007. How Foundations Shape Social Movements. *Social Problems*, 54(3):229-255.
- David S. Brown, J. Christopher Brown and Scott W. Desposato, "Who Gives, Who Receives, and Who Wins?: Transforming Capital Into Political Change Through Nongovernmental Organizations," *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 1 (Jan. 2007): 24-47. (E) (C)

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**

- McAdam. 1983. Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency. *American Sociological Review*, 48: 735-54.
- Ron, Ramos, and Rodgers. 2005. Transnational Informational Politics: NGO Human Rights Reporting. *International Studies Quarterly*, 49: 557-587.
- Carpenter. 2007. Studying Issue (Non) Adoption in Transnational Advocacy Networks. *International Organization*, 61(3): 643-667.

Monday, October, 22

**Accountability**

- Grant and Keohane. 2005. Accountability and Abuses of Power in World Politics. *American Political Science Review*, 99(1): 29-43.
- Wapner. 2002. Defending Accountability in NGOs. *Chicago Journal of International Law*. 3(1): 197-205.
- Ebrahim, 2005, Accountability Myopia: Losing Sight of Organizational Learning. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 34(1): 56-87.

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
- Weber. Modernity, Civil Society, and Sectarianism: The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and the Takfir Groups. *Voluntas*. 2012, DOI: 10.1007/s11266-012-9299-4
- Chahim and Prakash, NGOization, Foreign Funding, and the Nicaraguan Civil Society. Draft. To be emailed.

Monday, October 29

**Transparency**

- Burger and Owens. 2010. Promoting Transparency in the NGO Sector. *World Development*. 38(9): 1263-1277.
- Dainelli, Manetti and Sibilio. 2012. Web-Based Accountability Practices in Non-profit Organizations: The Case of National Museums. *Voluntas*, DOI: 10.1007/s11266-012-9278-9.
- Prakash and Gugerty. 2010. Trust but Verify? Voluntary Regulation Programs in the Nonprofit Sector. *Regulation & Governance*, 4(1): 22-47.

Wednesday, October 31

### **Social Movements**

- Andrews. 1997. The Impacts of Social Movements on the Political Process: The Civil Rights Movement and Black Electoral Politics in Mississippi. *American Sociological Review*, 62: 800-819.
- Koopmans and Olzak. 2004. Discursive Opportunities and the Evolution of Right-Wing Violence in Germany. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110 (1): 198-230.
- McCarthy and Wolfson. 1996. Resource Mobilization by Local Social Movement Organizations: Agency, Strategy, and Organization in the Movement Against Drinking and Driving. *American Sociological Review*, 61: 1070-1088.

Monday, November 5

### **International NGOs**

- Laidler-Kylander, Quelch and Simonin. 2007. Building and valuing global brands in the nonprofit sector. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*. 17(3): pages 253–277.
- Ahmad. 2007. The Careers of NGOs Field-Workers in Bangladesh, published in the journal, *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*. 17(3). 349-365.
- Edwards and Hulme. 1996. Too close for comfort? the impact of official aid on nongovernmental organizations. *World Development*. 24(6): 961–973.
- Kabeer, Mahmud, and Castro. 2012. NGOs and the Political Empowerment of Poor People in Rural Bangladesh: Cultivating the Habits of Democracy? *World Development*. 40(10): 2044–2062.

Wednesday, November 7

### **Nonprofits**

- Ortmann and Schlesinger. 1997. Trust, Repute and the Role of Non-Profit Enterprise. *Voluntas*, 8(2):97-119.
- Susan A. Ostrander. 2007 “The Growth of Donor Control: Revisiting the Social Relations of Philanthropy.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*; 36; 356.
- Minkoff, Debra C. 2002. “The Emergence of Hybrid Organizational Forms: Combining Identity-Based Service Provision and Political Action.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 31(3) p.377-401

Monday, November 12

**HOLIDAY: VETERANS DAY**

**Paper outline is due**

Wednesday, November 14

### **Social Capital**

- Wollebaek and Selle. 2002. Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 31(1): 32-61.
- McFarland and Thomas. 2006. Bowling Young: How Youth Voluntary Associations Influence Adult Political Participation. *American Sociological Review*, 71 (3): 401-425.
- Casey and Christ. 2005. Social Capital and Economic Performance in the American States. *Social Science Quarterly*, 86(4): 826 – 845

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**