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U N I V E R S I T Y

STUDENT
PHILANTHROPY
A Handbook for College and University Faculty

PLANT IT NURTURE IT HARVEST IT

Compiled and edited by
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Second edition

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STUDENT
PHILANTHROPY

A Handbook for College and University Faculty

🌱 **PLANT IT**   🌿 **NURTURE IT**   🌾 **HARVEST IT**

ABOUT THIS PHOTO: Hosea House serves hot meals to needy families in Newport, Ky. Some of the menu comes from its garden, which NKU students have helped plant and nurture. Over the years, Hosea House has received several grants from student philanthropy classes at NKU.

The power of
STUDENT PHILANTHROPY

Student philanthropy is an experiential education approach that uses the power of giving to teach course material. Students begin with a sum of money provided by a donor. Then, working as a class, they explore community needs, learn about nonprofits addressing those needs and, in the end, decide collaboratively where to invest their funds. Each step is integrated into the course and designed to complement learning outcomes while also nurturing a commitment to stewardship of place.

The authors are grateful to the NKU professors and instructors who have taught Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project classes. Their labor, their wisdom, their dedication and their counsel made this handbook possible.

This is the second edition of this handbook. While the format is similar to the original handbook, this edition represents a substantial revision. The primary authors of this edition are:

- **Mark Neikirk,** executive director, Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement, NKU. The center is home to the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, the nation's oldest and broadest university-based experiential philanthropy program.

- **Kajsa C. Larson, Ph.D.,** faculty coordinator, NKU's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, and an associate professor of Spanish in NKU's Department of World Languages and Literatures.

- **Megan S. Downing, Ed.D.,** associate professor of organizational leadership in NKU's Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice and Organizational Leadership.

Other contributors to this edition include the staff of the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement: Melanie Hartzel, Felicia Share and Michael Stulz and our interns, Keyah Ard and Isabella McClintock.

We are indebted to Julie Cencula Oldberding, Ph.D., who directs NKU's Master of Public Administration program, and Dana Ng, then a graduate student at NKU, who helped produce the original handbook in 2010. None of this would be possible without the work of NKU sociology professor Joan Ferrate, Ph.D., who designed the structure for NKU's student philanthropy program in 1999 and launched the program in Fall 2000 with four classes – an inventory that grew to 20 classes per semester 20 years later.

CONTENTS

Cover and design by Leigh Ober, NKU office of Marketing and Communications.

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AN IDEA WAS PLANTED. NURTURED. AND GREW.

Students in SPI 481: Hispanic Women Writers discuss how to invest their funds (Spring 2018).

In the classroom, learning by giving is...
Creative. Educational. Impactful.

Student philanthropy is all of those. But in 1999, when Northern Kentucky University began designing a program, it was barely more than an idea to be tried and tested.

In the years since, the idea has proven itself. It has expanded on our campus and nationally. Thousands of students have taken classes built with this experiential, impactful pedagogy.

Adding philanthropy to classes is not something universities do simply because giving money to nonprofits is good – though, of course, it is. It also is a smart way to teach course content.

Bottom line: The value of student philanthropy is both external (it has civic value) and internal (it has academic value).

This handbook is intended to help you achieve those benefits.

From the start, we imagined a program designed at NKU but readily replicated on other campuses. We wanted to plant a seed, nurture it, and hope for a bountiful harvest.

To that end, our faculty became the nation's most active scholars of student philanthropy, presenting at conferences and publishing in peer-reviewed journals. This handbook is based on their experience and research.

Today, there are student philanthropy classes at dozens of universities. There also are at least four multi-university programs. Additionally, a high school version of student philanthropy in our region, Magnified Giving, was patterned after NKU's program.

All of those accomplishments matter, but perhaps nothing speaks more to the value of student philanthropy than the words of our students, who, year after year, talk of the experience as something special. Life-changing even. Awakened to community needs, they graduate ready to succeed in their professional lives – but also in their civic lives.

Acting as donors who invest in change contributes to students' grasp of community needs and to their long-term commitment to stewardship. Simultaneously, the experiential, real-world components of student philanthropy amplify course content across disciplines.

STUDENT
PHILANTHROPY

A Handbook for College and University Faculty

This handbook is Northern Kentucky University's effort to share what we have learned about student philanthropy. It is meant to be used. So tatter the pages. Use a highlighter. Write in the margins. Copy pages you want to share with students or colleagues. Visit the web-based resources listed in the back.

To produce this guide, we have consulted our faculty as well as faculty from other institutions, both when we produced the first handbook in 2010 and in updating it 12 years later.

The first edition of this handbook led to the growth of student philanthropy. It's our hope that this new edition does the same.

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If this creative way of teaching interests you, this handbook is a foundation. However, it is not the last word. Each year, scholars are publishing new research and analysis in journals. We urge you to stay abreast of this vibrant work.

PLANT IT   NURTURE IT   HARVEST IT

What is Student Philanthropy?

"As a group of college students, we were able to make a difference. One does not need to be rich or famous to donate time, money and energy for people in need."*

*Each section of our handbook begins with the student voice, a quote from one of the hundreds of students who have taken a Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project class at Northern Kentucky University.

Across the country, student philanthropy is transforming students, classrooms and communities.

CREATIVE

Faculty keep finding new ways to introduce student philanthropy into the classroom across disciplines and with new models, including online classes.

IMPACTFUL

Classes are distributing thousands of dollars each year to nonprofits. As they do, they are learning firsthand about community needs and issues and how to address them.

INSPIRING

Student philanthropy classes turn experience into learning. It transforms students into active learners – and the learning carries over into their professional careers and into their lifelong commitment to being stewards of place.

SECTION ONE: CONTENTS

SECTION ONE TITLE PAGE PHOTO: Professor Ronnie Chamberlain worked with her theater students as they learned costume construction by sewing clothes for dolls donated to nonprofits. More info on page 8.

WHAT IS STUDENT PHILANTHROPY?
First and foremost, it is a way to teach

**Let's start by saying what student philanthropy is not.
It is not an after-school activity. It is not an add-on. It is not an afterthought.**

Rather, it is integral to the classes that incorporate it. It is a way to teach. It is classroom-based but reaches out to the community to understand needs and how to address them.

Julie Olberding, a public administration professor at Northern Kentucky University who has published extensively on student philanthropy, defines it as "an experiential learning approach that provides students with the opportunity to study social problems and nonprofit organizations and then make decisions about investing funds in them."*

Here is another way of defining it: Student philanthropy uses the process of investigating community needs and how to address them to teach course material across disciplines, while simultaneously teaching students to be stewards of place now and after they graduate and begin their careers.

Generally, a student philanthropy course is not GIVING 101, created from scratch as a new course focused on philanthropy. More often, it is an existing course in which experiential philanthropy has been woven in alignment with existing learning outcomes. A philosophy course? Sure. A comparative religions course? Sure. A counseling class? Sure.

STUDENT PHILANTHROPY'S GOALS

Students will…

- Deepen their understanding of the academic content of the course by integrating theory and practice.
- Advance their critical thinking, communication, leadership, and other work-life skills.
- Build on their awareness of social problems and nonprofit organizations in the community.
- Nurture their attitudes related to social responsibility and civic engagement.
- Cultivate their knowledge of philanthropic processes, particularly grant seeking and grant making.

What about a Japanese language course? Or classes in theater or history or neuroscience? Sure again. The opportunity to use this way of teaching extends across all disciplines, whether in the arts, the humanities, the sciences, education, health, business or law.

How does it work?

Typically, a class starts with an appropriation from a community funder. Those donors become co-educators, teaching by example. Professors routinely invite funders to class to talk about why they give. What motivates them? What do they hope to effect or change by giving? What drew them to philanthropy?

At NKU, the typical sum is $2,000 per class. Other universities

start with less, others with more. Regardless of the amount, the task for the students is to decide where to invest the money in a way that will benefit the community.

For the professor teaching the class, the task is to align the student philanthropy component with the learning outcomes of the class because, as Dr. Olberding also points out, student philanthropy is "a teaching strategy designed to engage students actively in the curriculum."

Her graduate classes are in nonprofit management, so the "fit" is natural enough. But as the discipline changes – and even as the courses change within a discipline – the learning

outcomes change. To succeed as a teaching strategy, student philanthropy must be adaptable and adjust to any course that incorporates it. At NKU and other universities, student philanthropy has proven malleable in that way.

Consider a course in NKU's Theater Department where Ronnie Chamberlain teaches costume design. How might philanthropy align with the learning outcomes of a class that revolves around sewing? Professor Chamberlain made it work very well. First, she used donor funds to buy dolls. Her students next designed and made costumes for each doll. Then they searched for local nonprofits where the dolls would be valued by the recipients. Naturally, they gravitated toward agencies that serve children.

Student philanthropy is best taught with service learning pedagogy, a well-established category of academic community engagement that builds classroom/community partnerships to benefit both. Service learning classes typically include a reflection component so that students can unpack their experiences. Sewing is often done in a circle and conversation is part of it. So there is a reflection component built in.

In their circle, the costume design students began talking about their first doll. One student shared her experience as a foster child. She moved from home to home. Early on, she was given a doll. It went with her as she moved. The doll was a rare constant in her often unstable life.

Hearing their classmate's story, the students paid extra attention to each stitch, knowing their handiwork would be going to a child for whom the gift of a doll might have lasting meaning. Students at once gained greater connection to their course material (design and fabrication of costumes) and to the needs of their community and how to meet them. Therein lies the power of student philanthropy.
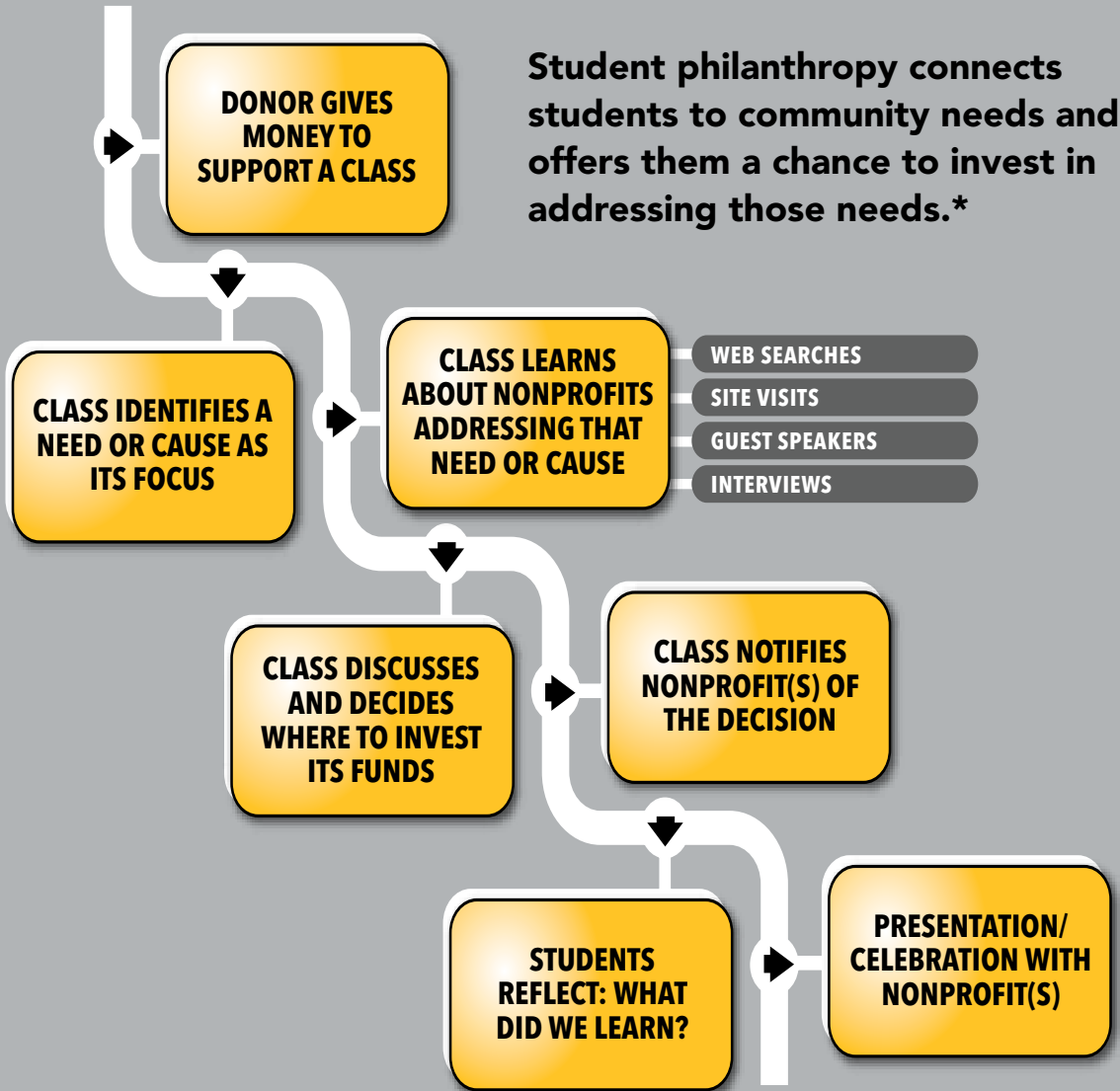
Looking back on the class, Professor Chamberlain said, "The power to decide where the clothes were going changed everything in terms of the output. Students took great care to design clothing a child would like and think is cool. They took the time to sew the costumes with quality."

And when it came time to donate the dolls, they gave them – and some additional toys they collected – to a local home for children awaiting foster care placement.

...student philanthropy is "a teaching strategy designed to engage students actively in the curriculum."

*Julie Cencula Olberding, "Indirect Giving to Nonprofit Organizations: An Emerging Model of Student Philanthropy," *Journal of Public Affairs Education,* 2009, Volume 15, Issue 4, pages 463-492.

THE BASIC MODEL

DONOR GIVES MONEY TO SUPPORT A CLASS

Student philanthropy connects students to community needs and offers them a chance to invest in addressing those needs.*

CLASS IDENTIFIES A NEED OR CAUSE AS ITS FOCUS

CLASS LEARNS ABOUT NONPROFITS ADDRESSING THAT NEED OR CAUSE

- WEB SEARCHES
- SITE VISITS
- GUEST SPEAKERS
- INTERVIEWS

CLASS DISCUSSES AND DECIDES WHERE TO INVEST ITS FUNDS

CLASS NOTIFIES NONPROFIT(S) OF THE DECISION

STUDENTS REFLECT: WHAT DID WE LEARN?

PRESENTATION/ CELEBRATION WITH NONPROFIT(S)

* For classes at Northern Kentucky University, the standard amount is $2,000.
Some programs provide less per class while others provide more.

10 MODELS
A PEDAGOGY THAT INVITES VARIETY

Student philanthropy is a flexible pedagogy. There is more than one way to do it. Faculty have taken the basic idea and adapted it with creative ideas of their own.

THE INDIRECT MODEL: NKU Professor Julie Olberding's class (Spring 2016) presenting their recommendations to the Duke Energy Foundation.

1) Direct

This is the basic model. A class receives an appropriation (at NKU, $2,000) to invest in one or more community nonprofits. Students identify a need or issue as their focus, investigate nonprofits addressing that need or issue and then decide as a class where to invest.

2) Strings attached

This is similar to the direct model, with one key difference: Donors tell the class what area of needs or issues to target. Students learn that, in the world of philanthropy, donors often are trying to have an impact in some niche. At NKU, one of our funders, for example, asked us to focus on community arts programming. Another on literacy. Donors may also specify a geographic area where they want their money put to work. Donors tend to want local impact.

3) Matching

The difference here is that students start with zero dollars, but a donor matches what students raise. They may sell t-shirts, set up a silent auction or write solicitation letters to friends and family. More and more, students are using online crowdsourcing as a tool for this model.

4) Indirect

Students in these classes act in an advisory role to a foundation or corporation, which takes applications for funding from nonprofits and then passes those along to the class to review. Students make calls, go on site visits and pore over financial statements. In the end, they recommend which applications to fund. While students don't award money directly for this model, they get invaluable experience by working with an established, grant-making community partner. This model is often used in graduate courses.

5) Single contender

For this model, the professor preselects the nonprofit that will receive funding. Maybe the agency is a familiar, proven partner. What's not determined upfront is which program or initiative within that agency will be funded. That decision is driven by students and their interaction with the nonprofit's team.

NKU public history students

worked one semester with the Cincinnati Observatory. The students asked: What is something you are trying to accomplish but have not? The Observatory wanted to reach middle-school girls and interest them in science. The history students designed and held a science day at the Observatory and marketed it to middle-school girls and their parents.

6) Time, talent or both
Usually, a student philanthropy class involves students awarding money. But another model is to award volunteer time. A student organization might agree to 250 hours of volunteer time. A class awards those hours to a nonprofit selected by the students in the class. A class also can add the gift of talent into the mix. A web design class might help with a website. A business class might help with budget-writing. A history class might research a new exhibit for a local museum.

7) Learning community
Student philanthropy need not be one class operating alone. Imagine two, three or more classes from different disciplines with common readings, the classes together deciding what need they want to address (perhaps housing insecurity or maybe adult illiteracy), and then separately identifying nonprofits addressing those needs. The classes then jointly convene to decide where to invest.

NKU once did this with three classes — English, criminal justice and biology. The cause was social justice. The common reading was "A Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King Jr. The students invested in a field experience that provided environmental science education to at-risk high school students, seeing the program as one that gave access to an educational opportunity less available in underfunded schools.

8) Conjoined
Student philanthropy programs also exist in elementary and secondary schools. What if a P-12 class and a college class were conjoined?

NKU has pioneered this idea. In one instance, sixth-grade students were asked to identify a community need. Poignantly, they picked the opioid epidemic. Many had family experiences that had elevated this need for them. An NKU teacher education class then identified nonprofits addressing the epidemic. Together, the sixth-graders and the college students decided where to invest.

9) Online
Even before COVID-19 drove college classes into the virtual world, NKU was incorporating student philanthropy into online classes. Some adaptations are necessary. Visits to nonprofits might be virtual or involve one student visiting and reporting back to the others. But student philanthropy is adaptable to the online classroom.*

10) Noncurricular
While student philanthropy is best known as a teaching strategy within the confines of a course, it can also be incorporated into student activities outside the classroom while still using the classroom principles of service learning. NKU did this one year after a tornado hit our region. Students, meeting outside of their classes, awarded money to a tornado relief agency after learning about several such efforts.

*NKU's rapid adaptation of student philanthropy during the COVID-19 shutdown is explored in "How to Respond in a Pandemic: 25 Ideas from 25 Disciplines of Study" edited by Joan Ferrante and Chris Caldeira (Sage, 2020).

CONSISTENT COMPONENTS

Though student philanthropy has many models, there are consistent components across all of them:

- Selection of the nonprofits is student-driven, not professor-driven.
- Service learning principles are built into the course.
- The philanthropy component is not an add-on; it is integral to the course.
- The philanthropy component is connected to the learning outcomes of the course.
- In a successful class, students strengthen their commitment to being stewards of place.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Q **Why would I want to use student philanthropy in my classroom?**

A Because it works! It is effective. Evaluations of student philanthropy classes at NKU and elsewhere have found clear evidence of its impact:

- Students' participation in experiential philanthropy represents the first real meaningful community engagement experience for many of them.
- Students gain a greater awareness of social problems and nonprofit organizations. They report that the philanthropy experience had a positive effect on their beliefs, attitudes and intentions related to charitable giving, volunteering and service.
- A majority of students indicated that the philanthropy component helped them to learn the curriculum, apply the course principles and gain academic skills or knowledge.
- Students who took a class with a philanthropy component had a significantly higher graduation rate when compared to all students at NKU (in some instances, at least 15 percentage points higher, according to a 2020 study).*

Q **Is student philanthropy only for certain disciplines and types of courses?**

A A study of a dozen student philanthropy programs in U.S. colleges and universities found that the most popular disciplines for student philanthropy are public administration, business and communications. At NKU, we incorporate

student philanthropy into a wide range of courses – undergraduate and graduate, general education and specialized, honors and so on. NKU faculty have used student philanthropy in English, sociology, music, social work, history, criminal justice, computer science, biology, math, marketing, organizational leadership, speech, education, theater and many other disciplines. **

Q **What is the "right" size for a student philanthropy class?**

A Student philanthropy is a flexible pedagogy. NKU faculty have used it in some classes with fewer than 10 students and in others with nearly 50 students. Faculty who have a larger class generally organize their class into smaller decision-making groups or "boards."

Q **What percentage of the course is dedicated to the student philanthropy component?**

A Typically, the participation in the philanthropy project is at least 10% of a student's time, often double that and, in some courses, considerably more. But consistent over all courses is a central point: The philanthropy component is integral.

For more on this topic, see Section 3: Tips & Tools.

Q **Is student philanthropy only for the traditional "live" classroom? Has it ever been done online?**

A NKU began experimenting early (Spring 2010) with online models. Now, it is routine to have several classes each year that are taught either in an online or hybrid format. Professors teaching online make wide use of video-conferencing, web searches and online polling.

Q **What is the source of the money that students give to nonprofits?**

A At NKU, the funds come from a variety of sources, including foundations, corporations, government agencies and individuals via students' fundraising efforts. This mix seems similar to the sources of funding at other colleges and universities.

A published study found that the most common source of funding was foundations, followed by the

college or university itself, students raising money, corporations and alumni.*** There also are national programs that fund one or more classes at different universities. Philanthropy Lab and Learning by Giving are two examples of this approach.

Q **Can a class raise additional funds? If so, how would the funds be used?**

A Yes, and many classes do. They have raised money through direct mail campaigns, concerts and other special events, bake sales and silent auctions. Students decide how to invest the extra funds, just as they do with their seed funding.

Q **How do students make decisions about which organizations to fund?**

A It depends on the curriculum and the learning outcomes of the course. One common approach involves the students developing a list of relevant nonprofit organizations, narrowing it to a manageable number (between four and 10) and sending each of those a request for a proposal. Students evaluate the proposals, often make site visits or invite the nonprofits to speak to the class, and ultimately vote on the applications – acting as a community giving board.

Q **What does 501(c)(3) mean?**

A Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal revenue code gives a special designation to certain nonprofit organizations, including those operated exclusively for religious, charitable, educational, scientific, literary, arts, national and international amateur sports and prevention of cruelty to children or animals.

A 501(c)(3) designation has two advantages:

1. It exempts the nonprofit from paying federal taxes on its income.
2. It allows foundations, corporations and individuals to deduct charitable contributions to the nonprofit from their federal income taxes. For this reason, many foundations and corporations grant funds only to 501(c)(3) organizations, and student philanthropy classes typically follow their lead.

Learn more at irs.gov/charities-and-nonprofits.

Q **Can organizations with a religious affiliation participate in the student philanthropy program?**

A That depends on the parameters set for your program. Some universities have a religious affiliation themselves, so giving to faith-based efforts is a fit. Secular universities might have a different rulebook. At NKU, we include faith-based agencies so long as they have 501(c)(3) status. Under IRS code, one type of 501(c)(3) is a religious organization.

Faith-based organizations are increasingly addressing social needs by providing food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, counseling and other services. They are part of the safety net in most communities.

Q **What about public schools? Other government agencies?**

A This is up to your university. NKU permits both. Sometimes, a school or municipality has an affiliated, nonprofit foundation, and the students' grants can be directed there.

Q **What if students contact an organization but its representatives are not interested in participating in the project?**

A Although rare, this does happen. It may be that students have contacted the organization at a time when staff members are busy with organizing an event or writing a major grant proposal. Make sure that students are aware that this situation may happen and, if it does, recommend that the students thank the nonprofit, move to the next one on their list and not be too disappointed.

Q **What is the minimum award to a nonprofit?**

A The student philanthropy process requires a commitment by nonprofit representatives. It stands to reason that the amount of money at stake should be enough to warrant the time and energy asked of the nonprofits applying.

At NKU, we've found that $1,000 is a reasonable amount for a minimum grant. We fund our classes at $2,000 each but allow students to split that between two nonprofits or give the whole amount to one. Other programs set the minimum lower or higher since the fiscal environment differs by community.

Q **How does the university know whether the nonprofit organizations have spent the grant for the programs and services that they described on the application form?**

A At NKU, we request a report and evaluation from all grant recipients about four to six weeks after the semester ends. We ask the nonprofit to provide: a brief description of the program, project or other activity to which the grant was applied and the results; an estimated number of people impacted by this grant; and their perceptions and satisfaction with the program.

Another approach is to work with students in a subsequent class to assess compliance and impact.

Q **Must a university have thousands of dollars in order to do student philanthropy?**

A Not necessarily. Money is a key resource for nonprofit organizations. Funding is critical in providing food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, counseling, music and art,and other services.

Though philanthropy can and often does involve money – "treasure" – it can also involve time and talent:

• **A gift of time:** Twenty-five students in a class might volunteer for 10 hours over the course of the semester. The estimated dollar value of volunteer time is about $28.50 per hour (independentsector. org; April 2021). So the 250 volunteer hours would be worth about $7,125.

• **A gift of talent:** Students in a web-design class could be given the assignment of selecting nonprofit organizations and redesigning their home pages.

Another way to give without having money in hand is by using the indirect model (see page 22 for an example). A class partners with a community funding agency – a corporation's philanthropic board, for example. The students evaluate grant proposals from nonprofit organizations and make funding recommendations; however, the final funding decisions – and the responsibility for writing the checks – rest with the community funding agency itself, not the students.

Q **How many student philanthropy classes does a university need to have? Is one enough?**

A Many universities have just one class. Often, the class is part of a national student philanthropy

program, such as the Learning by Giving Foundation (learningbygivingfoundation.org), that underwrites the cost of one class at many universities. Even outside the umbrella of a national program, an enterprising professor could launch student philanthropy by securing funding for a single class.

Q **In addition to the money given away, how much does it cost to operate a student philanthropy class or program?**

A That's a question of scale. Most colleges and universities with a student philanthropy effort have only one faculty member doing it in one class so operating costs are minimal. NKU has 15 to 20 student philanthropy classes per semester (one of the more extensive programs in the nation), thus involving more administration and coordination. NKU spends about $20,000 a year on direct operating costs to compensate a faculty coordinator and an intern; to cover printing costs for course materials; to support assessment and reporting; and to fund an awards ceremony at the end of each semester.

Q **What role does a university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) play in student philanthropy?**

A: The rule on IRB is simple: If you are conducting any sort of survey of subjects (students, nonprofits, funders or faculty) that might be used for research, ask your university's IRB staff whether a review is required or suggested. They are the experts.

At NKU, approval from IRB is secured before surveys are administered. Students are surveyed as the semester begins and ends. The surveys provide data for research as well as for monitoring program quality and performance.

The surveys are not mandated and not part of students' grades. They are administered by a third party, not by the professor teaching the class.

NKU also surveys nonprofits that receive grants after the semester ends. Those surveys also pass through the IRB process.

HOW STUDENT PHILANTHROPY GOT STARTED AT NKU

Every successful program has a creation story

Philanthropist Neal Mayerson, and his dog, Bentley.

Our creation story begins with a conversation. James Votruba arrived as Northern Kentucky University's new president in 1997 from Michigan State University, where he'd established a reputation as a leader in community engagement. Neal Mayerson oversaw his family's company, which develops commercial property in Greater Cincinnati and also is known for its generosity to the community.

Early in Votruba's tenure, Mayerson paid a courtesy visit. In the course of their discussion, Votruba mentioned a program

in Michigan that involved foundation support to high school students who then made community investments.

"I indicated to Neal that I liked this concept and would like to try it at the college level," Votruba recalled in a 2017 interview. The idea of incorporating philanthropy into the classroom appealed to Mayerson. It aligned with his family's commitment to encouraging stewardship. His father, the late Manuel Mayerson, told his children, "Giving is a habit that some people are privileged to be taught."

With funding from the Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation, NKU developed and launched the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project. Student philanthropy was a new concept then. Its presence on the higher education landscape was spotty, with no handbooks, best practice summaries or sample syllabi. So NKU convened a committee of seven faculty members during the summer of 2000 to design a program and launch it that fall semester.

The committee was led by Joan Ferrante, a sociology professor,

who also was the program's first director. The committee laid out broad parameters that continue to define NKU's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project today:

- Faculty members from all disciplines would be invited to participate, as no discipline or course has a monopoly on preparing students for civic participation.

- Classes would each be provided a few thousand dollars to invest in community organizations with 501(c)(3) designations.

- Faculty would be instructed to use philanthropy as a strategy for teaching the subject matter, not as an add-on. This way, students would come to realize that any academic discipline offers tools and concepts for identifying community needs and thinking about solutions.

- The classes should afford students the valuable learning experience of engaging in meaningful and memorable interactions and discussions with nonprofit leaders and with classmates.

NKU's program has grown and evolved to include new funders and funding sources, teaching platforms and disciplines. Votruba retired as president in 2012. The Mayerson Foundation continued its financial support for the NKU program.

TEACHING THE HABIT OF GIVING

To explore what drives donors to support the idea of incorporating philanthropy into the college classroom, we asked Neal Mayerson to reflect on his family's reasons for giving.

You helped conceive of the student philanthropy concept at NKU. Were you confident then that it would last, and grow?
Things that add value to people's lives tend to survive and thrive. I knew this program would add value to students and the community, and that it would last only if the university also found value in offering it. Without steadfast and enthusiastic support from the university's leadership the program would not be what it is today.

You were an original funder of student philanthropy at NKU. Now there are many other significant donors helping make these classes happen. What's the attraction of student philanthropy to a donor—an "investor" if you will?
A big attraction to a funder is the two-for-one nature of the program. The community benefits through support to valued nonprofit organizations and at the same time student learning improves while experiencing personal and civic growth. By allocating a grant-making function to students, funders get a big bang for their buck in terms of social impact.

What counsel would you give to a graduating student who wondered, "How can I contribute to the common good?"
I'd point out first that contributing to the common good begins with cultivating your best self. Goodness is contagious and as you are your best self you elevate others in the same direction.

And I would suggest that cultivating gratitude creates a sense of abundance that propels generosity of spirit. Finally, I'd offer the perspective that even little contributions result in ripples of positive impact far beyond what you can immediately observe.

What's your vision for student philanthropy for the next 20 years?
Philanthropy in its most literal sense is the cultivation and expression of love for one's fellow human beings. I can envision schools that create cultures of caring in addition to teaching content. Prioritizing the cultivation of character strengths on campus and in the classroom will magnify the philanthropic impulse and cause it to refract throughout our lives with one another.

This Q&A was adapted from a 2018 interview with Neal Mayerson, Ph.D., president, The Mayerson Company and the Manuel D. & Rhoda Mayerson Foundation.

Why teach with philanthropy?

"The most significant thing I have learned is that there are ways that I can become involved in helping and changing the community I live in. Right now, it makes me want to do more to help my community."

*Each section of our handbook begins with the student voice, a quote from one of the hundreds of students who have taken a Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project class at Northern Kentucky University.

Should I add student philanthropy to my class? Ask these three questions first.

OBJECTIVES

Will the objectives and/or learning outcomes for this course be more readily and deeply achieved by adding philanthropy?

APPLICATION

Will knowledge gained in the course be more readily applied outside the classroom if that knowledge is accompanied by a philanthropy experience?

STEWARDSHIP

Am I interested in teaching not only my course material – but also in teaching students to be stewards of place who have a grasp of issues and needs in the community and a commitment to addressing them?

SECTION TWO: CONTENTS

SECTION TWO TITLE PAGE PHOTO: Public history students assisted in setting up an exhibit for Newport's new history museum at the old Southgate Street School. More info on page 21.

LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE ALWAYS THE FIRST PRIORITY

Before being selected for a $1,000 award, Race-Place-Retire had to persuade the students in CMST 340 (Spring 2018) that the greyhound adoption agency would make good use of the money.

When philanthropy – like any community engagement component – is being considered for inclusion in a college course, the first question is whether adding it aligns with the learning outcomes for the course.

If the answer is "no," then three options are before you:

- Teach without student philanthropy.
- Find a different course where it fits.
- Reconstruct the course so that the philanthropy component seamlessly connects to the learning outcomes.

Fortunately, that third option often works. Student philanthropy aligns with learning outcomes across a wide range of disciplines.

For service-oriented disciplines (e.g., social work), student philanthropy is an obvious fit since it typically involves learning about community needs and thinking about how best to invest in serving

AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO TEACH

In a cross-disciplinary sample of about 3,000 students at NKU over a period of 12 semesters, nearly 80% said the philanthropy component had a positive or very positive effect on their learning the material in their course.

those needs. But professors have found alignment for classes in other disciplines, too.

The list of disciplines that have included student philanthropy numbers at least fifty, and it spans a range of fields. Biology. Counseling. English. Geology. History. Management. Math. Neuroscience. Public relations. Sociology. Theater. Women's studies.

A special education class might explore services to special needs students, learning as they do about effective, in-the-field teaching and support strategies. An acting class examining social justice and the theater might discover a theater group with a commitment to that cause.

In each course, the learning outcomes that would have been there with or without student philanthropy are the same, but the philanthropy component is designed to contribute to students' connection to those learning outcomes.

The assertion – that learning outcomes are amplified by student philanthropy – is not conjecture. End-of-the-semester surveys, focus groups, faculty interviews and student success data have all confirmed as much: Teaching with student philanthropy is, first and foremost, an effective way to teach.

> "The best part about the student philanthropy model is the requirements are simple enough that it can be incorporated into any discipline. This basic format allows ample room for creativity on the instructor's part for implementing the project and tying it into the existing learning outcomes for the course."
>
> – Danielle McDonald, professor of criminal justice, who has taught with student philanthropy and published research on its benefits

A TEACHING METHOD THAT WORKS ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Q. WHICH DISCIPLINES 'FIT' STUDENT PHILANTHROPY?

A. All of them.

This sample of classes taught at NKU demonstrates the adaptability of student philanthropy across a variety of disciplines.

BIS 275: INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS INFORMATICS

In teams of five, students take local nonprofits as their clients in need of business plans for a project or initiative. In the real world, such projects typically are given to teams – so it is important for students to learn to work as teams on their client's behalf.

In the end, each nonprofit gets a business plan. It might, for example, be a plan for expanding the agency's base of volunteers. Or running a museum gift shop. Or for renting space to generate revenue. Whatever the client sought.

The teams also make presentations to the full class, and students vote on which business plan they want to invest in. One client not only gets a business plan but also $2,000 to implement it.

ENG 546: GRANT WRITING

This advanced English class teaches students the skill of grant writing, so its philanthropy component involves first accepting formal grant applications from local nonprofits. Once those are in hand, students dig in – reading and analyzing.

What better way to learn how to distinguish an effective grant application from an ineffective one than to peruse a stack of applications and evaluate them? The review is a learning activity, made even more real since the result is the awarding of real money ($2,000) to an applicant.

In some semesters, the class is funded by a donor with a specific interest, such as literacy or the arts. Students review applications for that added component of compliance – another real-life skill in the grant world.

ENV 493: ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SEMINAR

This seminar's topic varies but, by way of example, it was environmental inequality one semester. To get started, Professor Kristy Hopfensperger

divided the 15 students in her class into four teams, each with a subtopic: access to food, access to clean water, access to outdoors and access to transportation.

The teams researched nonprofits in the region. The students then volunteered a minimum of 20 hours each with one of the selected agencies. Besides the immediate learning it provided, the volunteering also let students build their résumés and networks in their chosen career fields.

Later in the semester, the nonprofits presented to the whole class, with each student team also speaking on behalf of its agency. Students voted to split their $2,000 between a bicycle co-op that refurbishes old bikes for neighborhood use and an urban farm that teaches gardening to city kids.

GER 202: INTERMEDIATE GERMAN II

For this class students learn German by studying issues confronting modern Germany while also studying the influence of German culture in their community.

One semester, for example, they turned to technology – virtual reality glasses – to watch mini-documentaries on the refugee crisis in Europe. They then were grounded in old-fashioned reality when they visited local nonprofits connected to German culture and its preservation, two of which they selected to split the $2,000 the class had available to invest.

The goal of the course is to improve the students' German

Nonprofit leaders visited a business informatics class (Fall 2018) to describe their work and make a pitch for support. The class coupled project planning with philanthropy.

reading, writing and speaking skills. The virtual reality experiences involved German media outlets. Tours and visits in the community involved listening, reading, and speaking in German. "Everything worked very well together," said Andrea Fieler, the professor who designed and taught the course.

HIS 522: INTRO TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Students in this class know beforehand the nonprofit that will receive their mini-grant, but they have to select a program or initiative within the agency to receive the funding.

One semester, for example, their community partner was an old segregation-era grade school that had recently reopened as a museum. The class learned of the museum's interest in holding community classes, and so invested in classroom materials for teaching historic preservation.

They also helped design the materials and clean up the long-abandoned basement to prep it to be a classroom. Knowing the

basement wouldn't be ready for use right away, they designed their teaching materials to travel for off-site classes.

JUS 402: ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

Student philanthropy classes generally don't include a requirement to volunteer a certain number of hours. However, they can – and Criminal Justice Professor Danielle McDonald has found that requirement beneficial.

She explains: "The majority of those who are under criminal justice supervision need help accessing social services and treatment programs within the community. If our students are aware of the nonprofits within the community and feel comfortable helping their clients to make these connections, then everyone benefits through improved community safety. Adding the volunteer component, it turned out, addressed this need."

Her students draw from the list of agencies where they have volunteered when deciding where to invest their mini-grant.

LAW 909: CHILDREN'S LAW CLINIC

Each semester, a small group of law students learns the practice of law by jointly representing clients with their professors. The clinic's ongoing community partner is the Children's Law Center in Covington, a legal services nonprofit set up to protect the rights of children.

The law students also do research and community education on topics related to children and families. For example, in the Spring 2019 semester their focus was on legal and practical problems facing immigrant populations. They identified nonprofits serving those families and children and invested in providing basic necessities as well as legal services.

MUS 100: MUSIC APPRECIATION

This is a class familiar to generations of college students, including (especially!) those who didn't major in music. Students put on headphones and listen to a little Bach or Beethoven. By the semester's end, they have a basic understanding of the classical canon even if they still think it is "old" or "dead" music.
With student philanthropy added, the class is transformed. Students must find nonprofits teaching classical or jazz music to kids. They see the music of the ages alive, vibrant and relevant today.

One semester, the class favored a youth orchestra for funding but worried their investment would be too small to matter. A thousand dollars might buy one violin. One music student

would benefit. The class wanted a broader impact.

Hearing that concern, the orchestra conductor told the NKU students she would use their grant to buy sheet music. It would be used year after year by all the players. The class was convinced. The orchestra got the grant.

PAD 622: VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Large foundations often award large grants. But they typically have a commitment to smaller grants, too. The larger grants get more of a foundation's attention as ideas and budgets are scrutinized. The smaller grants get less attention because there is not enough internal bandwidth to give them more. That creates an opportunity for an experiential philanthropy class.

This graduate course in NKU's Master of Public Administration program worked with Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America. Its foundation gave PAD 622 students a stack of applications, most of them requests for $10,000 or less. The students examined those in detail, then presented findings to the foundation's board – which was not obligated to follow the students' advice but generally did. The class also has worked with Duke Energy and Citi, using the same approach.

This indirect giving model gives students an inside look at how a major foundation processes and determines grants. It's a different take on the real-world education component of experiential philanthropy.

TAR 160: STAGECRAFT AND TAR 340: SCRIPT ANALYSIS

This unique collaboration in the Spring 2018 semester demonstrated how two classes can work jointly.

It occurred during a semester when the NKU Theater Department was staging "Angels in America," the play about the early days of the AIDS epidemic which, when it opened originally, inspired the AIDS Quilt.

The stagecraft students learned quilting skills, then taught those to the script analysis students. Their finished quilts were displayed in the lobby during the play's run, and theatergoers could bid on them. The money raised was then awarded to a local nonprofit that serves AIDS patients.

UNV 101: ORIENTATION TO COLLEGE & BEYOND

This "get acquainted with college" course helps students adjust to higher education and navigate what's ahead. The philanthropy component helps with self-confidence, teamwork, and learning to navigate resources and the community. It also establishes the fact that NKU values community engagement.

In addition, this course employs a philanthropy model that gives not only "treasure" ($2,000) but also time and talent. Students award a fixed number of volunteer hours (100) to the nonprofit they select. A student organization commits the time. This unique curricular/co-curricular partnership extends the reach of the class.

Sure it's good... but is it *service learning?*

Good question.

Adding philanthropy works best when paired with service learning principles and pedagogy. Here's how to do that.

Imagine for a moment that a local food pantry was receiving its meats and vegetables through traditional supply chains, which were cost-efficient and straightforward. Meeting fluctuating demand was simple: A can of green beans could be stored far longer than a bushel of fresh beans.

But the team overseeing our hypothetical food pantry believes people lacking the means to shop at an organic grocery should have the same right to consume healthy foods as those who can afford the luxury of doing so.

So the pantry makes a change. It decides to source its food from local farms.

Put this case before a faculty group looking for service learning opportunities and the ideas will spill forth.

A nutrition professor might offer the services of a class able to document the nutritional value of the change. A nursing class might establish blood pressure checks to see if the pantry's clients are recording lower numbers. A computer programming class might build a database of the pantry's source farms. A web design class might redesign the pantry's web page.

A photography class might make photo essays of the farms' harvest to decorate the pantry's distribution hub. A business class might compare costs – or analyze supply chains.

The list of potential service projects is long. But suppose a class gave the pantry a $2,000 mini-grant to assist with the transition. Would that also be "service" and, more importantly, would it be "service learning?"

Just writing a check might seem to lack depth and commitment. It's an investment but impersonal. Shouldn't service be more hands on?

There's another way to think about it – and to consider philanthropy as service.

Most of us give, even small amounts, because of a passion or concern for a need or cause. Many people who run a 5K do so to fight a disease, perhaps one that claimed a family member. Solicitations in our mailbox or inbox get sorted by "care" and "don't care." Big donors do the same. Dolly Parton in 2020 gave $1 million to COVID-19 research. She explained in a Tweet: "When I donated the money to the COVID fund I just wanted it to do good and evidently, it is! Let's just hope we can find a cure real soon."

Purposeful donors seek to serve a greater good, first by learning about needs, then by investing in them. In that sense, their philanthropy is service. Similarly, a college course with purposeful philanthropy can reasonably be categorized as service learning assuming all other components of the pedagogy are in place. The literature of service learning varies in describing those components, but most definitions include preparation, meaningful action and learning.

PREPARATION

Returning to the food pantry example, a properly taught service learning class would require that a professor prepare students for their interaction with the pantry by first asking them to learn about its mission and work and, most likely, learning something about the value of finding a healthier supply chain.

Students might also be encouraged to explore the larger context of access to healthy food:

• What issues of equity arise when people of means have access to healthy food and poorer people do not?

• Why are poorer neighborhoods so often food deserts?

A guest speaker may come to class to guide students through such questions.

This early stage also is the time to listen to the community partners to learn what they need. Community engagement fails when we show up with something we think the community needs without first asking the community what it needs.

An experiential philanthropy class would, likewise, prepare students with at least as much depth. Students prepare to give before they give.

MEANINGFUL ACTION

For an experiential philanthropy class, the act of giving is the

THE PILLARS OF SERVICE LEARNING

PREPARATION

COMMUNITY VOICE
Listen, hear, respect

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
Plan, prepare

CIVIC TEACHING
Context about the community and its issues

MEANINGFUL ACTION

SERVICE
Of value to the community

RECIPROCITY
Both the community and the students benefit

CIVIC TEACHING 2.0
Let the community teach, too

LEARNING

REFLECTION
Unpack the experience (oral, written, video, etc.)

ASSESSMENT
Were the learning outcomes achieved?

CELEBRATION
Presentation, recognition

primary action, but it is also common to combine philanthropy with traditional, hands-on service.

That photography class, while also taking photos at the local farms, might be combined with a philanthropy component that has the students investing in a food co-op or other nonprofit supplier. Or maybe the students award their funds to a local gallery to stage an exhibit of the photographs they made at the farms. Either way, one action complements another.

This is the stage, too, where reciprocity should be assured. Yes, the students should benefit; but so should the community partner. A gallery show of student farm photography is good for the students. Their creative work is celebrated. It should also be good for the gallery and for the farmers, whose work also is celebrated.
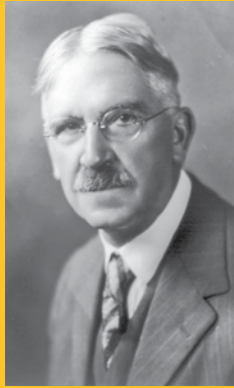
LEARNING

It seems almost overly obvious to say it, but learning is what distinguishes service learning from service itself. *Service* might simply mean volunteering. *Service learning* builds a learning strategy into the engagement.

The photography class in our example could learn light and composition by making photographs of potted plants on campus. But the class might learn the principles of photography more thoroughly and with more passion by visiting local organic farms, where the scene is more colorful and interesting.

Learning in a service learning class also includes reflection. We

THE VALUE OF REFLECTION

JOHN DEWEY, 1859-1952

John Dewey, perhaps the most influential thinker on how to teach, is considered the founder of experiential education – an approach to teaching that provides the basis for service learning, in which the "experience" is the service.

But experience, if it is to teach, must be processed. Reflection is the tool for doing so. Dewey described reflection as "turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive considerations."*

In teaching with philanthropy, the challenge is to devise reflection exercises for students that tie the philanthropy experience to course-based learning objectives.

*John Dewey, *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process* (Boston, D.C. Heath & Co Publishers, 1933), page 3.

PREPARATION. MEANINGFUL ACTION. LEARNING.

An experiential philanthropy class that includes those service learning fundamentals will be a stronger educational experience for the students involved.

learn by an experience but learn more deeply by reflecting on it. Reflection should be continuous – beginning as the class first explores interaction with the community partner, continuing during the engagement and then afterward.

Finally, learning in a service learning class involves assessment.

How the philanthropy component is assessed will depend on the

learning outcomes set for the class. The service may not be assessed at all except inasmuch as it contributes to success with the class assignments.

Going back to the photography class and the farm photos: The inspiration of being at the farm likely will result in a stronger portfolio, which in turn will result in a better grade. But it is the work (the photos) that gets graded. Not the service directly.

THE VALUE PROPOSITION

In addition to the Spring 2013 class described in her essay, Dr. Larson has added experiential philanthropy to other classes that she's taught, including this one in Fall 2016 that learned about art from Spanish-speaking cultures.

Teaching with student philanthropy aligns with the overall objective of the college experience: to nurture young adults and prepare them to thrive personally and professionally.

By Kajsa C. Larson

As a faculty member, I am always looking for new teaching approaches, especially ones that provide both memorable and meaningful opportunities to apply skills to a real-life setting, and ones that I would have liked to have had as part of my own college experience.

Student philanthropy covers all of these bases by allowing students to take what they learn in the classroom and bring it to the community to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Students gain a sense of empowerment and a greater understanding of how their efforts can and do impact others in a meaningful way.

The incorporation of student philanthropy in a class may seem initially to some students to be an intimidating, or perhaps pointless, task because it requires an extra time commitment and out-of-class group work. The introduction of these new challenges is precisely what helps students to grow by putting them on the edge of their comfort zone: a moment when they are most mentally open to expanding or altering their understanding of both themselves and the world around them.

Student philanthropy allows students to trace this process from start to finish and, along the way, reflect upon it. In the end,

students embrace the challenge to give back to the community, in a way that they may have never sought on their own. They learn from it.

ONE EXAMPLE

In the Spring 2013 semester, I incorporated philanthropy into a Hispanic film class to enrich students' understanding of 20th and 21st century films from Spanish-speaking countries.

Students watched and studied twelve films about four social themes: marginalized groups, immigration, women and the fine arts. The films ranged from drama to comedies and were from different countries to vary

the point of view. The films related to each theme were shown in a sequence so students could reflect more deeply on them and make connections and comparisons. Students read an academic article and prepared a written response prior to viewing each film. A follow-up discussion was held in class to share comments and also discuss and analyze scenes from the films.

For the philanthropy component, students formed four "community boards" (student groups). Each researched one of the themes and the fictional plot summaries of its corresponding films. The community boards identified social needs related to their assigned themes and located nonprofits in the community serving those needs.

Students each wrote a two-page reaction paper summarizing their findings. Then each community board chose one nonprofit to investigate more deeply, made a site visit to the group's chosen nonprofit, and each student wrote a two- to three-page reflection paper about the visit.

Finally, after watching all of the films in class, the community boards prepared a persuasive presentation that synthesized information from the films related to their social theme and the nonprofit that they had selected to research. The goal of the presentation was to convince the class that the community board's chosen nonprofit was deserving of the philanthropy grant.

RESULTS
The class had $2,000 to give.

A LEARNING MAGNIFIER

Regardless of their discipline, NKU professors who teach with student philanthropy found it enhanced their course.

SANDRA BAZZANI, Spanish
"Great experience for the students. They were excited and inspired to help others. In my opinion, it changed the experience of teaching and learning for both students and faculty."

ADELE DEAN, Nursing
"Students researched several world health issues and presented them to the class. Students had to contend with language and communication issues while corresponding with agencies in foreign countries.

"So it was also a lesson in cultural sensitivity as well as a lesson in social justice and the distribution of resources. Voting was hotly debated so the democratic process was examined and tested thoroughly by the class.

"My class was extremely engaged in this process and enjoyed it immensely. It was a huge success."

MEGAN DOWNING, Organizational Leadership
"I saw firsthand the student excitement during the project and then experienced it again reading my students' reflections that communicated the impact on learning outcomes and their awakened desire to give back."

KELLY MCBRIDE, English
"Students were able to put into practice what they learned in their textbook. As they researched their nonprofits and met with representatives of the organizations, they became invested in the project.

"They wanted to obtain funding for their nonprofits because they understood the good their investment could accomplish. They learned that business writing is an important way to communicate the needs, goals and attributes of their nonprofits."

KATIE TERHUNE, Social Work
"I felt that my students had a very positive experience. Each indicated that they enjoyed visiting various agencies and learning about the mission of the agencies, as well as the services provided.

"I truly believe that my students now have a stronger ability to see themselves linked with community life beyond graduate school."

These comments are from faculty during the 2016-2017 academic year at NKU.

Students split it evenly between a nonprofit devoted to AIDS awareness and another that provides English language classes for immigrants. Although all four community boards put forth convincing arguments, two nonprofits did not receive funding. Students brainstormed on how they might raise money for those. The class decided not to pursue those options, but some students expressed an interest in continuing a relationship with one or both agencies.

To understand better both the value and compatibility of incorporating philanthropy into a film course, I gave students a short post-survey to assess their attitudes. They answered three short questions:

- How did the philanthropy component enhance your understanding of the fiction films that we watched?

- How did the films enhance your understanding of the philanthropy component and the theme that you researched?

- If your perspective of social issues has changed as a result of this course, please explain how.

Almost all of the student comments confirmed the benefit of this experience. In response to the first question, one student wrote that the philanthropy component "enhanced my understanding of the films because it proved that the issues are real and they are not just made up for movies." Another student made a similar remark: "Having to identify local needs and then watching films that dealt with those themes gave a face and a story to those who are affected. Watching the films allowed me to see these are problems that other cultures experience, too."

Students gain a sense of empowerment and a greater understanding of how their efforts can and do impact others in a meaningful way.

For more, see Dr. Larson's article "Uniting Hispanic Film Studies with Civic Engagement: A Chance for Personal Transformation." Hispania, 2015, Volume 98, Number 3, pages 533-48.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Spanish, Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 2010; MA, University of Minnesota, 2005; BA, Gustavus Adolphus College, 2001.

Student philanthropy classes are rooted in a vision to elevate public engagement in higher education.

James Votruba,
Northern Kentucky University's
fourth and longest serving
president (1997-2012).

ENGAGING STUDENTS
IN COMMUNITY NEEDS

Student philanthropy aligns with the public engagement movement in higher education that took hold in the 1990s and was subsequently validated by practice and research.

The early public engagement movement culminated with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' report *Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place: A Guide for Leading Public Engagement at State Colleges and Universities.*

The report was the work of a task force co-chaired by AACS&U President Constantine Curris and James Votruba, then president of Northern Kentucky University. It was Dr. Votruba who led the establishment of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project at NKU – one of several initiatives at NKU designed to emphasize the university's role as a steward of place.

Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place observed contemporary challenges and plainly saw a role for higher education:

> Much has been written in recent years concerning the need for America's colleges and universities to more aggressively and creatively engage society's most pressing challenges. Our economy is in the midst of a technology-driven transformation; our population is aging and diversifying; our shores are threatened as never before by the specter of global terrorism. And the list goes on. Increasingly, the public looks to its colleges and universities to respond. The term 'public engagement' has become shorthand for describing a new era of two-way partnerships between America's colleges and universities and the publics they serve.

Student philanthropy is part of the public engagement equation. It summons students to participate in understanding community needs and their contexts, and it then offers them the opportunity to contribute to solutions.

A LITTLE PHILANTHROPY CAN GO A LONG WAY

Newport, one of northern Kentucky's oldest cities, is a learning lab for NKU students involved in public engagement. Krista Rudolph took this portrait of the city's business district as part of a photography class taught by Professor Matthew Albritton. Many of NKU's student philanthropy classes invest in nonprofits based in Newport, a city with a high percentage of low-income residents.

Grants awarded by college classes are not large by philanthropic standards. But nonprofits find ways to accomplish important work with the funds. Here is a sample, drawn from NKU's experience.

CHICKS & CHUCKS used its $1,000 to provide direct support to breast cancer survivors, including wigs and makeup.

CINCIDEUTSCH split its $1,000 between a German-language scholarship and support for Christkindlmarkt, a German Christmas market held in downtown Cincinnati with local artisans, traditional German fare and Glühwein (hot-spiced wine).

CINCINNATI ZOO put its $1,000 toward a college prep program designed to allow students to earn a vocational degree by working with animal care experts at the zoo.

CLOVERNOOK, a support center for the blind, used its $1,000 for arts programming. The money covered the fee for a guest instructor, art supplies (clay, paint, brushes and glaze), and beverages for a gallery opening.

DELHI HISTORICAL SOCIETY used its $2,250 to build an interactive, traveling trunk museum with historical items and lesson plans for use in third- and fourth-grade classrooms.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS, which provides women of limited financial means with clothing for job interviews, used its $2,000 to buy clothing and shoes for 200 people.

FREESTORE FOODBANK used its $1,000 to buy molecular gastronomy culinary arts kits, which apply science to create unique food displays. Foods take on imaginative shapes and flavors that add flare to the table. The Foodbank used the kits in a program to train low-income clients for restaurant jobs.

GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) used its $1,500 to support services and programs, including the Gay Prom – a safe and welcoming alternative high-school prom for lesbian, gay and bisexual people along with their straight allies.

GRATEFUL LIFE CENTER provides long-term, residential treatment for men addicted to drugs and alcohol. Lacking funds to buy simple things, like furniture, it used a $1,000 grant to buy chairs.

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND used its $2,000 to buy a new speaker system that allows teachers to give instruction across long distances and play a metronome loud enough for students to hear while performing.

MILL CREEK WATERSHED COUNCIL OF COMMUNITIES used its $2,000 to launch an Adopt-a-Stream Program.

PEOPLE WORKING COOPERATIVELY used its $1,500 to purchase supplies for repairs and upgrades to the homes of low-income and elderly residents.

REDWOOD is a school and support services agency for children with disabilities. It used $1,000 from one class for speech assessment kits that allow therapists to evaluate children's articulation. It used a second $1,000 from another class to restock its supply of therapeutic toys.

WELCOME HOUSE OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY, an emergency shelter for women and children, used its $1,000 to start an e-newsletter to increase awareness, recruit volunteers and attract donors.

Tips and Tools

"This is a much better experience than simply reading from a book or listening to a lecture.... I now feel as though I have a good understanding of the core concepts of this course because I got a chance to see them in action."*

*Each section of our handbook begins with the student voice, a quote from one of the hundreds of students who have taken a Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project class at Northern Kentucky University.

Student philanthropy is about making connections. Once you have decided to teach with it, take time to make connections with funders, with the pedagogy and with nonprofits.

FUNDERS

Secure your funding. This isn't only about getting money but also about understanding what is important to your donor. How can your class further your donor's giving goals?

PEDAGOGY

Get familiar with service learning. Experiential philanthropy is best taught using this powerful pedagogy.

NONPROFITS

Research your community's nonprofit organizations. United Way, Guidestar, Charity Navigator and other resources can help you get a sense of the nonprofits in your town or region.

SECTION THREE: CONTENTS

SECTION THREE TITLE PAGE PHOTO: NKU environmental science students (Fall 2015) took a stream tour to learn more about the work of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities, an agency they later funded.

CONSTRUCTING A COURSE

Student philanthropy is built on the foundation of the existing learning outcomes for each course

Students make their case to their classmates. Central to student philanthropy are student-driven decisions about where to invest.

One question is paramount when deciding whether to teach with experiential philanthropy: How does adding it help you teach the course?

Once you have evaluated the benefits and decided to proceed, the next step is writing a syllabus.

The first consideration is the course description. Since course descriptions often are preset through a curriculum approval process unique to each university, changing the description might be difficult. However, there really is no need to revise the course description anyway – not for an existing course.

The philanthropy component, after all, is not what the course is about; rather, it is a strategy for teaching the course. Think of it as similar to deciding whether to test with multiple choice or essay questions. Essay questions might work best in determining the depth of what students have learned and are, arguably, a better tool. But the course description need not mention the use of essay exams.

If you are creating a course

from scratch, the philanthropy component might be mentioned if philanthropy itself is what will be taught. But if the course is about something else and philanthropy is simply a teaching tool within the course, then there is no need to mention philanthropy in the course description.

An example is the course description for a freshman writing class taught by Northern Kentucky University English Professor Jonathan S. Cullick, who weaves experiential philanthropy throughout his class. He begins with an adaptation of the course catalog description for ENG 101:

> Welcome to your first-year writing course! This course will help you become more successful in the writing you will do as a college student and beyond the university. We will analyze the choices writers make to suit their purposes and audiences.
>
> You will be encouraged to think about the choices you make in your own writing. To improve as a writer, you must practice. Come to class prepared to write every day. You will draft, revise, and give and receive feedback in workshops and conferences. By the end of the semester and years from now, I want you to feel more confident as a writer.

What Dr. Cullick does next is common in constructing a class with a philanthropy component. He adds a section to the syllabus describing this addition, which reads in part:

> This course will help you improve your writing by giving you something very important to write about…. This is not a make-believe project. This is real money. I am inviting you to improve your writing skills by helping other people improve their lives.

NKU's student philanthropy program offers participating faculty a boilerplate passage to use on their syllabus to describe this component of the course. Some professors choose to use it as is; others customize it. Either way, the passage lets students know what is ahead and that they are part of a family of classes. Here is the boilerplate passage:

> The Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project was created in 1999 through a partnership between NKU and the Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation. This "learning by giving" approach provides funds to a number of classes each semester and allows students to experience philanthropy firsthand by being grant makers in the classroom. Students in each class research community problems and nonprofit organizations, evaluate and discuss them, and ultimately select nonprofits in which to invest the funds.
>
> The goals include engaging students more fully in the curriculum, teaching them about community problems and nonprofits, and encouraging them to be involved with nonprofit organizations in the future, as philanthropists, volunteers and staff. About 500 students take a Mayerson class each academic year.
>
> Together, they invest thousands of dollars in nonprofits, most of them in Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati. The Mayerson project is managed by NKU's Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement. For more information, please visit the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement website.

In summary, the course description itself need not be revised. If you are teaching a biology course with a philanthropy component, you are still teaching a biology course. If you are teaching a math course with a philanthropy component, you are still teaching a math course. The exception to this approach would be for a newly designed course specifically intended to teach philanthropy. Then the course description would zero in on what will be taught about philanthropy and perhaps mention the experiential component of giving real money to real nonprofits. For most courses, the existing course description should stand as it is since experiential philanthropy is not *what* is being taught, but *how* it is being taught.

The same overlay applies to the next crucial

WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR CLASS? LET YOUR STUDENTS KNOW

NKU collaborates with national experiential philanthropy programs for some classes. Those classes typically add information about the partnership to their syllabus. Here is an example from a freshman course, ENG 101: College Writing, taught by Jonathan S. Cullick in the Fall 2020 semester.

By being in this course, you are joining a nationwide movement of student philanthropists!

The Learning by Giving Foundation has generously given our class $5,000 to contribute to one to two northern Kentucky nonprofit organizations of your choice. The Learning by Giving network consists of 35 colleges and universities across the country educating more than 700 students each year.

You will work as a whole class and possibly in two groups – each responsible for $2,500. You may donate the whole $5,000 to one organization or $2,500 each to two organizations. You will decide how to donate this money. I am only here to guide you.

component in a typical syllabus: the learning outcomes. Experiential philanthropy is not intended to determine course learning outcomes. Rather, it is intended to achieve, and perhaps amplify, the existing outcomes for the course.

Here are Dr. Cullick's learning outcomes for ENG 101:

- Write appropriately and effectively for particular audiences and purposes.
- Generate, develop and organize complex ideas.
- Analyze the rhetorical and stylistic decisions writers make.
- Locate, evaluate, employ and cite sources.
- Know what plagiarism is and avoid it.
- Edit, proofread and format your documents.

Let's look at a second example. The discipline differs. The commitment to learning outcomes

does not. Communication Professor Jeffrey Fox teaches CMST 304: Strategies of Persuasion with student philanthropy. Among his learning outcomes are these calling on each student in the class to become:

- A more effective persuasive communicator.
- A critical consumer of persuasive communication.
- An individual who is aware of the types, principles, and potential of persuasive communication in your personal, occupational and social life.

In both the English class and the communication class, the professors retained the learning outcomes they had before adding philanthropy – but in both instances they are using philanthropy to arrive at those learning outcomes.

It is possible to supplement the learning outcomes

NKU Communication Professor Jeffrey Fox includes student philanthropy when he teaches CMST 340: Strategies of Persuasion.

- Identify social problems and nonprofit organizations in the community.
- Reframe attitudes, interests, intentions and behaviors related to social responsibility and civic engagement.
- Recognize and discover philanthropic processes, particularly grant seeking and grant making.
- Connect what is learned in the classroom and what is learned in the community.
- Use critical thinking, communication, leadership and other work-life skills.

with outcomes specific to the philanthropy component. In fact, if you want the philanthropy component to deliver something added, then it makes perfect sense to consider learning outcomes that specify what you have in mind. Those are sometimes listed in a separate section after the course learning outcomes.

At the program level, NKU offers (but does not mandate), these outcomes for the philanthropy component:

These outcomes align with the ones NKU tracks with course surveys. Thousands of surveys have demonstrated that that our expected outcomes are achieved. Students gain awareness of community needs and how to address them while also improving their work-life skills (see chart below).

Once you have the course description and the learning outcomes set, you can tailor the rest of the syllabus to fit the addition of the philanthropy component. In those sections (assignments, readings, key dates, assessment) students can read more about this added course component.

STUDENT BENEFITS

Experiential philanthropy delivers measurable benefits both in teaching students to be stewards in their community and in acquiring work-life skills, such as teamwork and critical thinking. These are end-of-semester survey results from classes at NKU from 2014-2018 (2,986 students).

POSITIVE/VERY POSITIVE IMPACT ON…

Awareness of nonprofits in the region	86.7%
Intention to donate money to a nonprofit	83.2%
Belief that I have a responsibility to help others in need	82.6%
Development of functional life skills	82.0%
Application of information and ideas from this course	81.2%
Sense of personal responsibility to my community	81.0%
Interest in community service	80.7%
Belief that I can make a difference	80.6%
Intention to volunteer	80.3%

Note: A complete chart is in the appendix on Page 59.

AMPLIFYING A SYLLABUS

Experiential philanthropy fits neatly into assignments and assessment. It adds depth.

With a course description and learning outcomes in place, the next step is to examine the other elements of your syllabus to determine whether to revise them given the addition of philanthropy to the course.

Again, there are choices. For some courses, the existing assignments, grading structures, texts and readings, and timelines may work untouched. In other courses, the addition of philanthropy may change some or all of those elements. Some universities (Northern Kentucky University is one) require time estimates for all components of the course, so the philanthropy component may have to be accounted for in that way (see charts, page 42).

Assignments can be an especially useful way to align philanthropy with learning outcomes. At NKU, examples of this abound:

- For a course in leadership around the world, students were assigned to look for and learn about Third World nonprofits making an impact by leading change. Students learned how leading change can contribute to improvements in public health, food security, human rights and other needs.

- A public administration class in planning and community development met with residents of an urban neighborhood to discuss ideas for the neighborhood. Residents wanted more public art along their streets. Students decided to co-invest with the neighborhood association in a mural painted by a local artist. The mural provided a backdrop for a small skateboard park.

- An education class met off campus at a special ed program's classroom, immersing the NKU students in the daily teaching and support services. As they experienced the classroom, they also learned of unmet needs for classroom supplies and invested their philanthropy funds in fulfilling one of those.

- A public history course designed, funded and installed the first exhibit at a new museum in Newport, a city near NKU's campus. They learned history by "doing" history.

Public history students (Fall 2017) hang a 1960s baccarat table for the gambling and vice section of an exhibit for Newport's newly established history museum. Newport once was known as "Sin City" for its illegal casinos.

EXAMPLE ONE:
TEACHING TEAMWORK

Student philanthropy classes typically divide students into teams of four or five students, who work together to select one or more nonprofits to recommend for funding to the full class.

LDR 385: Teamwork in Organizations begins with students contacting nonprofits early in the semester to talk about teamwork in their agencies. Students, as they listen, are learning about teamwork in the real world – its value, its challenges, its variations.

A textbook on teamwork and other readings, as well as classroom lectures by the professor, prepare the students to evaluate each agency's teamwork model. Toward the end of the semester, when students decide collectively where to invest, they are more likely to fund an agency that demonstrated strong internal teamwork that produces discernable community benefits. Students will not want to invest in a food pantry if the pantry's team is dysfunctional and, consequently, the food distribution wasteful.

Because the students themselves work in teams throughout this process, they also are applying classroom lessons to their deliberations and decision-making about where to invest. They are learning teamwork by practicing it.

What's that look like on a syllabus? The professor, Megan Downing, who redesigned her LDR 385 syllabus, made no revisions to the course description or learning outcomes after adding the philanthropy component. Here, for example, is

the course description:

This course focuses on the dynamics of teamwork. Roles and qualities of team leaders and team players will be discussed, along with attributes and behavior of teams. Special focus will be placed on problem solving in a team environment, diverse teams, and virtual teamwork.

And here are the learning outcomes:

- Identify and critique characteristics of and strategies for building, maintaining, and evaluating teams.
- Evaluate group development processes and identify techniques for effective team dynamics.

- Identify strategies for effective virtual teamwork and virtual collaboration.
- Identify and analyze personal perspectives and develop an action plan for personal development and team effectiveness.
- Analyze the leader's role in the team-oriented environment.
- Identify and interpret value of teams as a productivity improvement tool.

The existing course description and learning outcomes need no change to accommodate the philanthropy component. The textbook for the course, *Group Dynamics for Teams* by Daniel Levi (sixth edition, SAGE Publications, 2021) is also the same.

What is different is an added assignment:

Team Research Project
Teams will research an assigned topic and develop a written paper and a PowerPoint presentation to post for evaluation by the other teams.

Also different is the grading structure. Twenty percent of the course grade is associated with the team research project that is tied directly to the team-based philanthropy component of the class. The actual percentage is greater because some of the other, individual-based assignments (a reflective essay, for example) are related to the philanthropy component, too.

WHAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR READING LIST?

Unless the course is about philanthropy specifically (some are, most are not), then the reading list is unlikely to be philanthropy focused. The textbook is not likely to change. A marketing class still uses a marketing textbook, a criminal justice class still uses a criminal justice textbook.

However, faculty sometimes add some philanthropy-specific readings. Here is a sampler of ideas:

"The Gospel of Wealth, and Other Timely Essays," by Andrew Carnegie, 1900

"Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

"What Are People For?" by Wendell Berry, North Point Press, 1990

"What Should a Billionaire Give – and What Should You?" by Peter Singer, *The New York Times Magazine,* Dec. 17, 2006

Harvard Commencement remarks, Bill Gates, June 7, 2007

"The Essence of Strategic Giving," by Peter Frunkin, The University of Chicago Press, 2010

"Gifts with Meaning," Nicholas Kristof, *New York Times*, Nov. 14, 2015

"Philanthropy Serves the Status Quo," Annika Neklason, *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2019

"The Business Case for Corporate Philanthropy in 2020," by Leslie Pine, *The Philanthropic Initiative,* Aug. 21, 2020

Put another way, the assignments and grading weave the philanthropy component tightly into the class, even as the philanthropy component directly serves the more generally stated course description and learning outcomes.

The intention is to teach organizational teamwork by using both traditional methods (lectures, textbook, etc.) while also providing assignments where teamwork is both modeled (by the nonprofits) and experienced (by the student teams).

Does it work? It does, and here is testimony from a student:

"Working on the student philanthropy project as a team, rather than individually, enhanced my understanding of the course concepts.

"The content we read and discussed in class was much more practical and relevant as I participated in a team. The philanthropic team experience provided context to understand, apply, and learn from the course concepts firsthand, rather than just theoretically."

EXAMPLE TWO:
TEACHING NEUROSCIENCE

Think STEM disciplines are not a good fit for student philanthropy? Think again.

NEU 101: Neuroscience for the Brain is a general education course for non-majors. The professor, Christine Curran, wove a philanthropy component through the full semester, but did so largely by revising the assignments and the grading structure. The course description and learning outcomes went untouched.

Here is a key excerpt from the course description:

NEU 101 is designed to introduce students to the general principles of neuroscience and their

application to current topics in society. Students will receive a fundamental understanding of how the brain processes information and responds to external stimuli and how that affects both interpersonal relationships and the way societies function.

Here are the learning outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify the major functional regions of the human brain related to language, the major senses, memory, emotion, and decision-making.
- Students will understand the application of neuroscience and neurobiology in multiple aspects of their daily lives.
- Students will be able to distinguish between the concepts of sex and gender and how they apply to the brain and behavior.
- Students will understand how brain structure and function changes during development and aging.
- Students will be able to describe how an individual's behavior impacts the larger community and how society can influence an individual's behavior.

As with other courses at NKU, the syllabus also includes a boilerplate description of NKU's student philanthropy program and its expected outcomes. But the most substantive changes to the syllabus come when Dr. Curran lists the assignments, schedules them across the semester, and outlines how she will assess and grade students.

WHERE TO FOCUS

While the course description and learning outcomes generally are not revised when adding philanthropy to a course, other components provide good opportunities making philanthropy integral to the course. Faculty frequently rewrite timelines, grading guidelines and reading lists.

The class schedule spans 16 weeks and meets twice a week. The syllabus, at various points, mentions student philanthropy components:

Week two: The student philanthropy component is introduced as is the concept of altruism. The donor supporting the class visits as a guest speaker. Does altruism inspire the donor to give?

Week three: Student teams are formed, and the teams begin exploring nonprofits in the community that are working on an issue, cause, or field. One semester, for example, students looked for arts-related nonprofits as they studied the connections between art and the brain.

Weeks four through ten: The philanthropy teams continue their work, learning about the nonprofits they have decided to explore and consider for funding.

Week eleven: The teams make a decision about where to invest.

Final weeks: The philanthropy component continues to show up in the closing weeks of the semester with reflection and writing assignments.

What the NEU 101 syllabus

shows is a course that has woven philanthropy in from start to finish. It also includes the philanthropy component in explaining how students are assessed. Grading is directly addressed in a section on team assignments:

> Neuroscience is transdisciplinary in nature. Teams will be formed to encourage broad-based discussion and analysis. Points earned on team assignments will be shared by all team members, except in cases where it is clearly documented that individual team members did not participate in any meaningful way.

Because teams depend on participation, the syllabus also points out that attendance will be part of how students are graded.

TAKING TIME TO INVEST IN TEACHING WITH PHILANTHROPY

The time allotted to the experiential philanthropy component varies by class, though professors generally report that about 10% to 20% of their class time is spent on it as well as some time out of class with site visits and other related homework. Here is a breakdown from two courses at Northern Kentucky University that have included philanthropy for a number of years.

LDR 160
Leadership Around the World

This general education course was taught at high schools for dual credit.

- One class period (50 minutes) to introduce student philanthropy with videos and discussion.

- 30 minutes in class to explain consent forms for students younger than 18.

- 15 minutes to complete start-of-semester survey.

- 25 minutes to define nonprofit organization, explore list of potential recipients, and begin rudimentary teambuilding.

- Two to three hours out of class for teams to explore and identify nonprofit organizations and make selections they'll recommend to the full class.

- Four hours out of class for research of organization to determine areas of focus and development of presentation, writing of summary.

- Two class periods devoted to presentations by each team.

- 15 minutes to complete the end-of-semester survey.

TOTAL TIME: approximately 11 hours

CMST 340
Strategies of Persuasion

This course used the fund-raising model in which students raise money that is matched dollar-for-dollar by an outside donor.

- One class period (75 minutes) on start-of-semester survey, introducing philanthropy component, and working to identify appropriate nonprofits.

- 20 minutes of a class period preparing the fundraising letters for mailing.

- Two to three hours outside class contacting and visiting nonprofits.

- Ten to 15 minutes in class once a week for 3 weeks discussing nonprofit site visits and narrowing down decisions.

- 30 to 45 minutes of a class period to discuss all submitted proposals and determine the top eight organizations.

- Four class periods devoted to the top eight nonprofits presenting and persuading the class.

- One class period for students to work on their own persuasive presentations.

- Two class periods for students' persuasive presentations and voting of winners.

- Ten minutes in class to complete the post-test survey.

TOTAL TIME: approximately 14 hours

More TIPS and TOOLS

WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE IN PLACE IN ORDER TO INCLUDE PHILANTHROPY IN THE CLASSROOM?

Aligning with the learning outcomes and then weaving experiential philanthropy into a syllabus are the foundations of redesigning a course to use giving as a learning tool. But the work does not stop there.

Here are some other considerations.

SECURING FUNDING

Philanthropy is generally about giving money. So you will need some. A typical funding level is $2,000 though some universities allocate less, others more. Funds primarily come from outside donors who agree to support one or more classes. Corporate and community foundations are typical sources; some classes use crowdsourcing to raise some or all of their funds.

There is an option that does not involve money. Philanthropy is most often thought of in terms of "treasure" – but it can also involve time and talent. A student organization might, for example, donate 250 hours of volunteer time; the experiential philanthropy class can then award those hours. Such an approach opens the door to teaching with experiential philanthropy even if you have no budget for making monetary grants.

EXPLORING NEEDS

An early task in any course with a philanthropy component is to explore needs in the community and then to learn about nonprofits addressing those needs.

Students arrive with some knowledge of the local nonprofit landscape derived from their own experiences. Maybe they volunteered at a homeless shelter. Maybe they were once a recipient of services from a social service agency that they came to admire.

That built-in knowledge is a potential starting point for considering needs and agencies. It can be supplemented (or supplanted) by an online search or by a guide to local nonprofits provided by United Way or another umbrella agency. If no list exists for your community, making one could be a service learning project for a class.

Here are some suggestions to consider as students explore community needs. As many of these strategies show, the nature of a course and other factors might narrow the field of nonprofits that students consider.

Cause or issue focus: An especially powerful way to teach with philanthropy is to start by asking students to pick a niche they want to affect. They may settle on literacy or hunger or homelessness or clean air and water. Once the class settles on its niche, students can then find nonprofits working in that quarter. The usual ways to search for those (local guides, online searches) are the next step.

This more general approach only works if the course itself provides the latitude for students to explore a broad spectrum of needs and causes. A freshman course that acquaints students generally with community engagement (at NKU, that course is University 101) is a good fit for this approach. Other

courses require a narrower focus.

Course focus: The discipline, along with learning outcomes specific to a course, may provide a way to sift through a list of nonprofits and narrow the number of possibilities.

A biology class might focus on nonprofits concerned with the environment. A social work course on elderly care might look at nursing homes and their programming. A business class may look at incubators for low-income entrepreneurs.

At NKU, a psychology class in addiction policy taught students about evidence-based treatment. Students did not simply look for agencies providing addiction treatment (of which there are many) but for agencies employing authentic evidence-based practices.

Donor focus: Sometimes donors have an area of interest. If this interest aligns with course outcomes, such partnerships can be particularly meaningful. Students learn that giving is purpose-driven. Donors want to affect something.

At NKU, one of our donors is ArtsWave, a community fund that supports major arts (opera, theater, symphonic music and ballet) – but ArtsWave also supports grassroots arts programming. Our students become ArtWave's scouts. A class might find theater programs embedded within schools or social service agencies or perhaps an art therapy program at a home for seniors.

Another NKU donor, whose life story involves being a barrier-breaking woman in medicine, hopes to see her family's foundation encourage more young women to enter the sciences. NKU's classes are her change agents.

As a bonus with this model, donors motivated by purpose make excellent guest speakers to invite to class.

Project focus: Sometimes a class couples its philanthropy with a project. At NKU, an introductory class in GIS (geographic information systems) divided into teams. Each team made a GIS map for a local nonprofit. As the semester drew to a close, students awarded one of those nonprofits $2,000 after discussing where the money might be best spent.

There is a timing issue with this model. The nonprofits that will be considered for funding are lined up early in the semester, possibly even pre-selected by the professor, so that the mapping proposals can be evaluated as workable projects. But the decision about where to invest is student-driven.

Program focus: In yet another model, the nonprofit that will receive the money from the class is known beforehand, pre-selected by the professor to align with the course and its learning outcomes. What is not pre-selected is the program or initiative within that agency that will be funded.

This approach demands a deep dive by students to learn about the agency and its work. An honors class at NKU worked with a food pantry, learning about its work in detail – including how it had pivoted to provide food during COVID-19 restrictions. The students had to figure where to invest effectively from what they learned about the agency's work. They settled on supporting a virtual "Hunger Walk," giving money to the fundraiser but also developing promotional materials – and then volunteering to walk.

Solicit applications: A general call for applications is another approach. At NKU, a class in grant-writing uses this method, sending applications out before the semester starts. This works well for this class because students can hit the ground running with a stack of applications to consider.

Reading grant applications is a good way to learn grant writing. When students see a well-executed application, they learn what to do. When they see a poorly executed application, they learn what not to do.

Other approaches: There is no "right" way to find nonprofits except to do so in a way that fits with the course involved.

One NKU class, Leadership Around the World, donates internationally and begins with an op-ed piece in the New York Times by its then-columnist, Nicholas Kristof. He annually listed smaller international NGOs that may not be well-known but that he has judged to be impactful. Students do their own evaluation, make class presentations on their findings, and then select from

the Kristof list, having used it as a starting point.

EVALUATING

Classes typically begin their evaluation of nonprofits with site visits, guest speakers from agencies they want to consider, or both. Some classes also incorporate interviews with nonprofit representatives in person, by phone, or via web conferences or email exchanges.

With site visits, a common approach is to divide the class into teams. Each team visits a nonprofit and then reports to the whole class, which in turn narrows the field of choices. Internet searches, including media reports, may also inform students at this stage. The operative principle is to gather and evaluate information that allows the class to make informed decisions about where to invest.

How students report their findings to the class is guided by the discipline. A speech class may want oral presentations. A writing class may want to use essays. An electronic media class may want short videos. As with every other aspect of adding a learn-by-giving component to a course, the learning outcomes of the course guide the integration of experiential philanthropy.

SELECTING

As the semester ends, the moment arrives to decide: Where will the money go? This is the students' moment, not the professor's. While the professor can guide, the professor cannot decide. The students must.

One way to think about this process is to think of the class as a foundation board, deciding where to invest. What would be such a board's criteria? This may be a good time to invite any donors who supported the class to be guest speakers and talk about how, in their family or foundation, they evaluate and decide where to invest.

Consider some reflection questions for students at this stage, related to their criteria:

- Is your voting based on your heart ("this nonprofit was passionate about its work"), your head ("this nonprofit had data to show results of its work"), or a little of both?
- Does this nonprofit's work align with the topics covered in class?
- Is this nonprofit's work aligned with the giving goals of the donor supporting the class?

Classes typically vote, perhaps

SELECTING A NONPROFIT FOR FUNDING

RANKED

PLURALITY: Each student communicates one preference. The agency with the most votes wins. The downside is a deadlock if students all vote for the agency they or their team recommended. Five same-sized teams would produce a five-way tie.

APPROVAL VOTING: Students make a list of the nonprofits that have their "approval." The contender with the most approval votes wins.

INSTANT RUN-OFF: Students rank all the contenders. Each round eliminates the contender with the least number of votes. Rounds repeat until one contender remains.

WEIGHTED

BORDA COUNT: Students rank all the contenders, each of which receives a point for every contender below it on the tally. For example, with three contenders, a first choice receives 2 points, second receives 1 point and third receives 0 points. The contender with the most total points wins, whether or not that contender has the most first-place rankings.

COPELAND COUNT: This is a round-robin tournament of head-to-head plurality votes. Each contender is paired with one other option, so the class will need to identify how many one-on-one votes will take place (example, if you have A, B, C, D, you will need to have six one-on-one competitions: A vs. B; A vs. C; A vs. D; B vs. C; B vs. D; C vs. D.)

The preferred candidate of each head-to-head vote is given one point. If there is a tie, each candidate is awarded half a point. After all pairwise comparisons are made, the candidate with the most points is the winner.

using a weighted approach to avoid deadlocks and ties.

REFLECTING

We learn from an experience but also from reflecting on an experience.

That principle is fundamental to service learning, and service learning is the best way to teach with experiential philanthropy.

Students need a chance to unpack their philanthropy experience, whether in a reflective essay or a reflective dialogue with each other – or both. "Reflective listening" exercises work well. Talking circles, too. Classes might use index cards to record reflections, then exchange cards. Each is read aloud (anonymously) by a student other than the author. The reading of each is accompanied by class discussion.

All of these approaches have something in common: They are interactive and engage the whole class.

Reflection might logically occur at the end of a semester as students draw connections between their giving and their learning. But reflection also can be woven through the semester if the course warrants it.

REFLECTION REINFORCES LEARNING

There is no rule about how many reflection exercises should be incorporated into an experiential philanthropy class beyond "at least one." But reflection reinforces learning, so weaving it throughout a course strengthens the learning and strengthens students' connections to the service and philanthropy components of the class.

Here are some reflection prompts suggested by Professor Julie Olberding, who teaches with experiential philanthropy in NKU's Master of Public Administration program. Dr. Olberding is one of the nation's most published researchers on experiential philanthropy.

Describe and comment on your role(s) in the student philanthropy component of this class. In answering the question, be sure to:

- Identify the nonprofit organization(s) you submitted to the board and/or to the class.
- Explain how you learned about the organization(s) and why you found it (them) especially compelling.
- Describe and comment on any interactions you have had with people involved with the nonprofit organization(s).

Reflect on the value of including a philanthropic investment component in this class:

- Did your participation enhance your understanding of the course topics? If so, please explain.
- What suggestions, if any, do you have for improving the philanthropic component of this course?
- If given a choice, would you prefer to enroll in a class that does or does not offer a philanthropic component? Please explain.

Take a moment to think about the philanthropic experience this semester:

- What have you learned about the nonprofit sector?
- What have you learned about other people and society?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- How might the experience reflect your future philanthropic activities, including volunteering and donating to nonprofits?

Are you currently involved with organizations on or off campus that promote community service, civic involvement and/or _____ (key topic in the class such as social equity or environmental protection)? If yes, please provide the following:

- Name and describe the organization(s) and the nature of your involvement.
- The amount of time you devote to these activities.
- How you became involved with the organization and the specific roles or tasks you have taken on.
- If no, explain why you choose not to participate in such organizations.

Excluding your current activities, give a history of your involvement with organizations in your community, beginning with your earliest memories. Be sure to include:

- A brief description of the activities.
- Amount of time devoted to the activities.
- A specific role or tasks performed.

Think about your family and closest friends.

- Describe their community service activities and histories.
- Has their activity or lack of activity influenced the way you think about community service and civic engagement? Please explain.

NKU hosts an end-of-the-semester celebration of all student philanthropy classes where students welcome the nonprofits they supported to the stage.

CELEBRATING

Celebration is a component of service learning – and hence a component of experiential philanthropy.

At NKU, this is built into the program. The participating classes gather at the end of the semester in the student union ballroom with nonprofits receiving grants and the funders who donated money. Each class takes the stage, introduced by the professor teaching the class. Students representing the class (one or two, perhaps) talk about the experience, then invite the nonprofit to say a word, too.

A value of this joint ceremony is that students are able to see their efforts as part of something larger. This is a favorite part of the experience for many students. They are awakened to the broader range of needs in the community.

For a campus with a single student philanthropy class rather than a program that has several, the celebration may be more intimate and simply involve inviting the selected nonprofit to class – or the class visiting the nonprofit. No matter how it's done, celebrate the collaboration of campus and community.

ASSESSMENT

While not necessary to the success of a class, a survey at the beginning of the semester that is repeated (with some additional questions) at the end can assess both the stewardship and the academic benefits of experiential philanthropy.

In addition, focus groups with students and/or nonprofits can provide additional assessment of the experience. Institutional data on student success (e.g., GPA, add/drop rates, retention and graduation rates) can provide additional assessment information.

Each of these tools provides class and program assessment, and with appropriate Institutional Review Board approval, the rich data collected can be used for conference presentations and published research. A wide body of research on experiential philanthropy has been published in peer-reviewed journals; most of it makes considerable use of these kind of surveys.

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

NKU uses a comprehensive survey at the beginning and end of the semester for classes teaching with experiential philanthropy. This sample is from the "post" survey, which includes one set of questions about stewardship benefits and another about academic benefits. The surveys receive Institutional Review Board approval before being administered.

STEWARDSHIP BENEFITS	ACADEMIC BENEFITS
Did the philanthropy component of the class have an effect on your…	
Awareness of nonprofits in the region?	Interest in this course?
Sense of personal responsibility to others in need?	Development of life skills (communications, assertiveness and decision-making)?
Sense of personal responsibility to your community?	Application of information and ideas from this course?
Intentions to raise money for a nonprofit?	Interest in service learning?
Intention to work on behalf of social justice?	Desire to complete your degree?

STUDENT-**DRIVEN**

Experiential philanthropy is student-driven. Students:

- Identify community needs.
- Select nonprofits addressing the identified needs.
- Send grant applications to the nonprofits.
- Interact with nonprofits (website reviews, interviews, site visits, guest speakers).
- Evaluate the applications.
- Engage in a deliberative group decision-making process to select successful applicants.
- Communicate with agencies about the decision.
- Celebrate and present the award(s).

A WORD ABOUT GRADING

Bear this thought in mind: You are not grading the philanthropy. You are grading assignments just as you would any other class.

Experiential philanthropy is taught using service learning principles. While the service is important, students don't get an A (or an F) for their service. As with any class, they are graded on their mastery of the course material.

Assignments might include reports or reflective essays. Grade these as you would grade any other written work. Also, professors are accustomed to evaluating participation and teamwork, two nearly unavoidable components of a class with experiential philanthropy. Again, assess and grade them as you normally would.

The percentage of the grade for a course that is attributable to the experiential philanthropy component varies by course. But if the philanthropy component is substantial, then the percent of the grade should be substantial, as it is in the example below.

+ **Attendance: 10%**

+ **Weekly discussion board posts: 25%**

+ **Student philanthropy project: 30%**
  (reaction paper one, 5%; reaction paper two; 10%; group presentation, 15%)

+ **Final research paper process: 10%**
  (partial draft, 5%; full draft and peer edit process, 5%)

+ **Final research paper: 25%**

USE LEARN BY GIVING TO ELEVATE HOW YOU TEACH

While philanthropy can be added to a course in a minimalist fashion, as a sort of 'one off' assignment, this handbook is urging something deeper... and more impactful.

- Aligning philanthropy with learning outcomes.

- Using service learning principles and pedagogy.

- Weaving a learn-by-giving component into the syllabus, start to finish.

We've discussed each of these as ways to invigorate a course and elevate how it is being taught. A course is transformed. It becomes a course that actively engages students in two, complementary learning environments: the classroom and the community.

As this handbook closes, allow us to reiterate that it is intended to guide professors and others who design college courses. It is an invitation to look at existing courses and find those where a philanthropy component might enhance learning.

It is possible to create a new course (call it "Philanthropy 101" or "Investing in Your Community"). But the real power of the learn-by-giving approach

Laura Menge of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation talked to students in CMST 340 about philanthropy's power to change communities for the better. The foundation is one of the funders for NKU's student philanthropy program (Fall 2018).

is to integrate it into existing courses across disciplines and to do so with the rigor and intentionality inherent in what scholar, professor and educational consultant L. Dee Fink, Ph.D., calls "High Impact Teaching Practice," or HITPs. His approach is derivative of the more widely cited High Impact Practices, but he has conceived it as connected more to classroom practice than to institutional practice. His "practices" complement the overall "practice."

The chart on the next page is a sample of courses at Northern Kentucky University and how they

align with Dr. Fink's approach, outlined in his 2016 essay, "Five High-Impact Teaching Practices."

Four classes are charted with their learning activities specific to each of four of Dr. Fink's suggested practices. As the essay's title suggests, Dr. Fink's model includes five practices. The fifth is being a leader with your students. It is common to all of the courses. As subject matter experts, faculty fulfill this HITP as they design, facilitate and model the philanthropic experiences and include high levels of instructor-student interaction and guidance throughout the project.

STUDENT PHILANTHROPY OUTCOMES

Stewardship benefits: Students will gain a greater sense of commitment to their community. They will leave campus with an enhanced sense of stewardship and become more likely to give time, talent and treasure.

Academic benefits: Students will learn their course material more thoroughly—and they are more likely to remain enrolled and graduate.

PHILANTHROPY AND HIGH-IMPACT TEACHING PRACTICES*

COURSE	LEADERSHIP AROUND THE WORLD (100 level course)
ACTIVITIES	**HITP1: Helping Students Become Meta-Learners** • Instructed in studying, note-taking, critical thinking and effective teamwork strategies, implicit bias, and empathy **HITP2: Learning-Centered Course Design** • Explored cultural dimensions and identified cultural considerations for nonprofit work in a global context **HITP3: Small Groups in a Powerful Way** • Researched and selected nonprofits in groups; prepared and delivered persuasive presentations and executive summary of findings **HITP4: Service Learning/Community Engagement with Reflection** • Team, class-wide, and personal reflection and class-wide online discussion in context with course content, nonprofit interaction, philanthropy and learning outcomes
COURSE	COSTUME CONSTRUCTION I (200 level course)
ACTIVITIES	**HITP1: Helping Students Become Meta-Learners** • Conceptualized, drafted, and refined costume design, and perfected garment production **HITP2: Learning-Centered Course Design** • Designed and sewed five doll outfits (per student) • Produced and delivered 10-minute video invitation to theater production **HITP3: Small Groups in a Powerful Way** • Researched nonprofits in groups; prepared and conducted 10-minute presentations about nonprofit clients and community need **HITP4: Service Learning/Community Engagement with Reflection** • Donated 50 dolls, outfits, and monetary funds to selected nonprofits • Invited nonprofit patrons to campus theater production and provided behind-the-scenes tour • Personal reflection (connected to course content and philanthropy)
COURSE	SPANISH & GERMAN REPRESSION, RESISTANCE & REFLECTION (400 level courses)
ACTIVITIES	**HITP1: Helping Students Become Meta-Learners** • Read primary and theoretical texts about the Holocaust and its legacy today **HITP2: Learning-Centered Course Design** • Merged German and Spanish classes to discuss readings and carry out community engagement project **HITP3: Small Groups in a Powerful Way** • Researched nonprofits that represented course themes and prepared persuasive presentations for nonprofit selection **HITP4: Service Learning/Community Engagement with Reflection** • Site visits to nonprofit finalists • Personal reflection connected to course content and community engagement
COURSE	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE (400 level course)
ACTIVITIES	**HITP1: Helping Students Become Meta-Learners** • Applied assessment skills for on-site evaluation of nonprofit needs **HITP2: Learning-Centered Course Design** • Individually researched local nonprofits aligned with urban sustainability • Volunteered for three days on-site with selected nonprofits **HITP3: Small Groups in a Powerful Way** • Worked in teams on semester-long projects with the organization • Prepared and delivered persuasive class presentations **HITP4: Service Learning/Community Engagement with Reflection** • Personal reflection of nonprofit volunteer and service experience in context with course content and philanthropy experiences

This chart was originally published in "High Impact Practices Through Experiential Student Philanthropy," a 2020 article in the Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice. Read more about the article and its findings on page 56.

Appendix

"It was a unique experience, and I loved getting to know the nonprofits personally. Understanding how the nonprofits work in the community helped me to learn about topics that were covered in the class."*

*Each section of our handbook begins with the student voice, a quote from one of the hundreds of students who have taken a Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project class at Northern Kentucky University.

Professors who teach with philanthropy have, collectively, produced research and resources to guide colleagues new to it.

PROVEN

Peer-reviewed journal articles include analyses of student philanthropy overall as well as case studies from specific disciplines. Research includes evaluations of both the short-term and the long-term benefits.

ADAPTABLE

Universities have successfully incorporated student philanthropy across a wide spectrum of disciplines and continue to expand into new ones.

DYNAMIC

How philanthropy is woven into the college classroom is not the same in every classroom. Creativity rules. With that in mind, this handbook is complemented by a dynamic online hub where new resources can be added as they become available at **nku.edu/philanthropyresources**.

APPENDIX: CONTENTS

APPENDIX TITLE PAGE PHOTO: Students in ENV 493, an environmental science class, awarded $1,000 to MoBo Bicycle Co-op in Cincinnati (Spring 2018).

BENEFITS ARE RESEARCH-TESTED

The scholarship about student philanthropy is extensive and confirms both the stewardship benefits and the academic benefits. These seminal articles are a representative sample of the published research on this powerful, impactful way to teach.

Experiential philanthropy classes teach students to be stewards of place. They become more likely to give time, talent and treasure to nonprofits.

OVERVIEW ONE

Title: "Can Philanthropy Be Taught?"

Journal: *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly,* 2017, Volume 46, Issue 2, pages 330-351.

Authors: Danielle McDonald, Ph.D., of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky., Huafang Li, Ph.D., of Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Whitney McIntyre Miller, Ph.D., of Chapman University, Orange, Calif.; and Lindsey McDougle, Ph.D., and Chengxin Xu, Ph.D., both Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark, N.J.

From the abstract: "This study explores learning and development outcomes associated with experiential philanthropy and examines the efficacy of experiential philanthropy as a pedagogic strategy within higher education. Essentially, we seek to answer the question: Can philanthropy be taught?"

Methodology: The study used data from surveys administered to students enrolled in classes that were part of Northern Kentucky University's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project classes from 2009 to 2013.

From the findings: "In response to our research question, 'To what extent does experiential philanthropy enhance students' academic learning and personal development' our findings indicate that, overall, students who participated in an experiential philanthropy course reported primarily positive effects on both their academic learning and individual development."

OVERVIEW TWO

Title: "Practicing Philanthropy in American Higher Education: Cultivating Engaged Citizens and Nonprofit Sector Professionals"

Journal: *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 2014, Volume 20, No. 2, pages 217–231.

Author: David A. Campbell, Ph.D., of Binghamton University, Binghampton, N.Y.

From the abstract: "Recent scholarship has documented a growing interest in teaching philanthropy at the undergraduate and graduate level. This study is an overview of the nature and extent of one approach, experiential philanthropy, in which students learn philanthropy by making grants to nonprofit organizations."

Methodology: The study is based on a review of syllabi and support material for 88 experiential philanthropy courses at 53 different institutions from 2007 through 2010.

From the findings: "Instructors who teach experiential philanthropy courses pursue multiple goals. Two purposes are dominant: preparing students for citizenship and preparing students for professional work in the nonprofit sector…. These findings matter because they deepen our understanding of how instructors use experiential philanthropy and, subsequently, because they shape how we assess the efficacy of experiential philanthropy as a pedagogical strategy."

CASE STUDY ONE

Title: "Uniting Hispanic Film Studies with Civic Engagement: A Chance for Personal Transformation"

Journal: *Hispania (Special Focus Issue: The Scholarship of Film and Film Studies),* 2015, Volume 98, Number 3, pages 533-548.

Author: Kajsa C. Larson, Ph.D., of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "This current study presents a unique approach to the examination of Hispanic film through the incorporation of a civic engagement project, the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, into the curriculum. Students examined and assessed important global issues, and how they are portrayed in films from several Spanish-speaking countries, while simultaneously investigating nonprofits that address these same needs in the local community."

Methodology: Student surveys included quantitative (Likert scale) and qualitative questions that were analyzed for this article, which outlines how philanthropy was incorporated into a course on Hispanic film taught as part of NKU's Department of World Languages and Literatures.

From the findings: "Most students came out of the experience with a new, or renewed, appreciation for community organizations that are dedicated to valuable outreach missions, and this gave them greater insight into how they can continue to promote awareness of social needs through their words and actions. Community organizations played the important role as mentors for topics that are fundamental to their existence."

CASE STUDY TWO

Title: "Student Philanthropy: Experiencing Grant Proposals from the Funder's Perspective"

Journal: *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly,* 2018, Volume 81, Issue 2, pages 167-184.

Author: Janel Bloch, Ph.D., of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "This article explains the steps in a student philanthropy project in a grant-writing course, illustrating how business and professional communication courses can be a natural partner for this approach."

Methodology: This case study is written from the perspective of a professor who added student philanthropy to her grant-writing course. The article includes step-by-step descriptions of how this component was added along with an analysis of surveys measuring the benefits of learning by giving.

Classes find creative ways to engage around student philanthropy. This NKU class, GER 480, made a video to boost crowd-sourced fundraising (Spring 2018).

From the findings: "Experiencing proposals from the funder's perspective gives students unique insights that they can, in turn, apply as writers. The nonprofit participants in student philanthropy benefit as well. In addition to the possibility of receiving a grant, the nonprofits have the opportunity to increase awareness of their organizations' work while also making connections with many potential future supporters. Thus, student philanthropy is a multifaceted endeavor that can have a long-lasting impact on all involved, including instructors, students, nonprofits, and the constituencies they serve."

COMPARATIVE STUDY

Title: "Supporting Community Connections: Experiential Student Philanthropy and Engaged Learning in Social Work"

Journal: *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, 2020,* Volume 24, Number 3, pages 47-60.

Authors: Katherina Nikzad-Terhune, Ph.D. and Jessica Averitt Taylor, Ph.D., both of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "This study examined the impact of an experiential student philanthropy project in a graduate-level social work course at Northern Kentucky University through the use of a pre-test and post-test administered to involved students. The results indicate that incorporation of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project with this class ultimately strengthened learning outcomes as related to both course engagement and community engagement."

Methodology: The study compared four sections of a graduate level social work course. Two sections were taught with a philanthropy component and two without.

From the findings: "Experiential student philanthropy yields various benefits for students in higher education and offers a unique approach to helping students better understand civic responsibilities. Responses of students who participated in this project signify that incorporating the (student philanthropy) into their course ultimately strengthened student learning outcomes as they pertain to course and community engagement. The results of the current study support findings from prior studies on experiential

student philanthropy, and also provide potential practical implications to be considered in social work higher education."

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Title: "Does Student Philanthropy Work? A Study of Long-term Effects of the 'Learning by Giving' Approach"

Journal: *Innovative Higher Education,* 2012, Volume 37, Issue 2, pages 71-87.

Author: Julie Cencula Olberding, Ph.D., of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "This is the first study to examine long-term effects of student philanthropy by surveying alumni years after their experience with this teaching strategy. A majority of respondents indicated that student philanthropy had a positive effect on their awareness, learning, beliefs, and intentions. Further, 86% of student philanthropy alumni had recently made charitable contributions, 71% reported volunteering, and 15% served on nonprofit boards – all of which are much higher than the national averages for these behaviors."

Methodology: NKU alumni who had taken a course that included student philanthropy were sent an online survey asking about their community engagement after graduation. The goal was to measure lasting impacts of the student philanthropy experience.

From the findings: "The survey of 127 alumni found that years after their student philanthropy experience a majority of them said it had positive effects on their awareness, learning, beliefs, and intentions. Further, results indicated that relative to the general population a much larger percentage of student philanthropy alumni donated money and volunteered and served on a nonprofit board."

STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES

Title: "High Impact Practices Through Experiential Student Philanthropy: A Case Study of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project and Academic Success at Northern Kentucky University"

Journal: *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice,* August 2020 (online; print publication pending).

Authors: Kajsa C. Larson, Ph.D.; Megan S. Downing, Ed.D.; Joseph Nolan, Ph.D.; and Mark Neikirk, B.A., all of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "This study examines the retention and persistence impact of student philanthropy, an active learning approach that engages students with the community by incorporating a philanthropy component into college courses."

Methodology: Institutional research data was analyzed to evaluate student success measures, including graduation rates, for Northern Kentucky University students who had taken a course with experiential philanthropy from 2014 to 2017. Those were then compared to results for all students at NKU.

From the findings: "This study not only affirms the value of MSPP [Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, the experiential philanthropy program at NKU] as a HIP/HITP [High Impact Practice/High Impact Teaching Practice] that fosters student persistence and academic success through active student engagement inside and outside of the classroom, it is the only study that demonstrates that the impact of MSPP…extends beyond student perception to benchmark academic outcomes (in particular 4-year graduation rates) in a substantial way."

Also from findings: "Data suggest the sophomore year as an ideal time for the experience as the amount of improvement in four-year graduation rates for cohorts in that year is at least 15 percentage points (as indicated by the jump from 22.8% to at least 38%)."

COURSE DESIGN

Title: "Service-Learning and Philanthropy: Implications for Course Design"

Authors: Julie A. Hatcher, Ph.D. and Morgan L. Studer. M.A. (both of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Ind.)

From the abstract: "This article examines the role of service-learning in developing philanthropic values and behaviors in students that can influence their postgraduate years through careers, civic activities, and family life."

Methodology: The authors reviewed existing scholarship about service learning as well as about philanthropy, and make a case for combining the two practices to "prepare civic-minded graduates." The article provides valuable information about how to design a course to maximize the impact of incorporating philanthropy.

From the findings: The authors "offer five recommendations when designing a service-learning course to cultivate philanthropic outcomes." Those include: cultivate a collaborative relationship with community partner(s); take a project approach rather than a service-delivery approach; include course readings and resources that inform students about the nonprofit sector and voluntary action; design class activities that allow students to engage with community partners and organizations; and use reflection activities to cultivate civic outcomes.

ONLINE DELIVERY

Title: "'Extreme' E-Student Philanthropy: Expanding Grantmaking into Fully Online Classes and Assessing Outcomes for Students as Learners, Community Members, and Social Activists"

Authors: Julie Cencula Olberding, Ph.D., and Megan S. Downing, Ed.D., both of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky.

From the abstract: "About 20 years ago, professors began using the 'learning by giving' approach in face-to-face classes. Since that time, some have expanded and innovated. This study is one of the first to examine electronic student philanthropy, or 'e-student philanthropy.' Specifically, it looks at 'extreme' e-student philanthropy in classes in which both the instruction and the philanthropy experience are fully online."

Methodology: This study focused on the outcomes of e-student philanthropy on both undergraduate and graduate students in online leadership courses. The study also compared the outcomes of student philanthropy for undergraduates taking a leadership course in an online format relative to those taking the same course in a traditional face-to-face format.

From the findings: "The findings that e-student philanthropy can have positive student-based outcomes seem especially timely and important during a global pandemic, when educational institutions are going through large-scale transitions to online teaching and learning. This study provides some optimism about the potential of student philanthropy, service learning, and other 'learning-by-doing' approaches in a virtual environment."

COMMUNITY PARTNER BENEFITS

Title: "Does the 'Service' in Service Learning Go Beyond the Academic Session? Assessing Longer Term Impacts of Nonprofit Classes on Community Partners"

Authors: Julie Cencula Olberding, Ph.D., of Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Ky., and Whitney Hacker, Disabled American Veterans, Cold Spring, Ky.

From the abstract: "Service-learning outcomes for students have been assessed in a number of studies, primarily in the short term (end of the academic session), but the outcomes for community organizations have been examined in few studies, also primarily in the short term. But service-learning projects in nonprofit classes have the potential for longer term impacts, particularly related to organizational capacity. In this article, we examine impacts from the community partners' perspective

Celebration is part of service learning! NKU's student philanthropy classes gather for an end-of-semester ceremony with students and nonprofit representatives (Fall 2013).

with a relatively unique combination of data: project assessments in the short term (end of academic session) and survey results in the longer term (1 to 8 years later)."

Methodology: NKU's Master of Public Administration (MPA) program regularly incorporates service learning and experiential philanthropy in nonprofit management classes. For this study, data were extracted and analyzed from end-of-semester assessments of service-learning projects by nonprofit partners to measure their short-term outcomes. In addition, a new survey of nonprofit partners was developed and implemented

to examine the longer-term impacts of these projects, particularly on organizational capacity such as fundraising and volunteer management.

From the findings: "Nonprofit professionals in this study tended to see MPA students as assets to their organizations and the service-learning projects as valuable resources. With that said, a few survey respondents offered suggestions that may be of interest to a broader set of faculty members involved or interested in service learning. One common suggestion was enhancing students' knowledge and understanding of the nonprofit organizations by setting up more site visits or field trips."

WHAT RESEARCHERS HAVE LEARNED

Adding experiential philanthropy to college classes "strengthened student learning outcomes as they pertain to course and community engagement."

HAVING A HIGH IMPACT

STUDENT PHILANTHROPY BOOSTS STEWARDSHIP AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

NKU monitors student philanthropy's benefits to students with a survey at the start of each semester and a follow-up survey at the end of the semester. Our students begin with an inclination toward stewardship. Student philanthropy amplifies that inclination. It also contributes to academic success. Note that the highest "very positive" response (58.2%) is to a question about intention to stay in college and complete a degree.

THE STUDENT PHILANTHROPY CLASS I TOOK HAD AN EFFECT ON MY…

STEWARDSHIP BENEFITS	POSITIVE	VERY POSITIVE	TOTAL
Awareness of nonprofits in the region	49.1%	37.7%	86.7%
Intention to donate money to a nonprofit	43.7%	39.5%	83.2%
Belief that I have a responsibility to help others in need	38.3%	44.4%	82.6%
Sense of personal responsibility to my community	41.8%	39.3%	81.0%
Interest in community service	42.5%	38.1%	80.7%
Belief that I can make a difference	39.7%	40.9%	80.6%
Intention to volunteer	42.4%	38.0%	80.3%
ACADEMIC BENEFITS			
Awareness of the needs and problems addressed in class	52.0%	36.7%	88.6%
Interest in this course	39.8%	42.9%	82.7%
Student philanthropy's fit with the goals of this class	35.6%	46.8%	82.3%
Development of functional life skills	45.0%	37.0%	82.0%
Application of information and ideas from this course	45.2%	36.0%	81.2%
Desire to stay in college and complete a degree	22.1%	58.2%	80.3%
Learning of the material in this course	41.9%	37.0%	78.9%

NOTE: These results are from 12 semesters from Spring 2014 through Fall 2019. The sample size was 2,986 respondents. The response rate was 74%. The surveys underwent Institutional Review Board approval before they were administered. Slight differences in totals are due to rounding.

BUILDING A PROGRAM: THE

Student philanthropy can start small at a university and often does, sometimes with just one class and modest funding. Northern Kentucky University chose to take a programmatic approach, beginning with a few classes and building toward 30 or more per academic year. Highlights provide a guide for how to start small and scale up over time.

1997

▶▶ James Votruba arrives as NKU's fourth president. He had seen firsthand an experiential philanthropy project for high school students in Michigan. The seed of an idea had been planted.

1999

▶▶ President Votruba discusses the concept with Neal Mayerson, whose family's real estate development business in Cincinnati was widely known for its generosity to the community and for fostering philanthropy. "I indicated to Neal that I liked this concept and would like to try it at the college level," Votruba would later recall. Mayerson welcomed the idea.

2000

▶▶ A faculty committee begins designing an experiential philanthropy program, with recommended course structures and assessment.

▶▶ With $100,000 in start-up funding from the Manuel D. & Rhoda Mayerson Foundation, NKU launches the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project in the fall semester with four classes in four disciplines: sociology, human services, public administration, and honors. The program is believed to be the nation's first for higher education.

2001

▶▶ Communication Professor Cady Short-Thompson introduces a student fundraising component to her class, SPE: 340: Strategies of Persuasion. The class would become a template for future classes that use "the matching model" in which students raise money that a donor then matches.

2003

▶▶ The Cincinnati-based Scripps Howard Foundation contributes $750,000 to launch an office at NKU that would guide students and faculty toward community involvement. The Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement becomes the new home of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.

2005

▶▶ The Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project's first five years of growth are summarized in the annual report: "1,142 students enrolled in 61 sections of 36 different classes have invested $319,256 in 218 projects involving 158 organizations. Students have raised $33,026 of this total."

2006

▶▶ NKU earned the prestigious community engagement classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Student philanthropy is one of the programs highlighted in the application. NKU's classes begin to get attention in higher education circles when sociology professor

▶▶ Joan Ferrante's essay, "Student Philanthropy as a Vehicle for Teaching the Subject Matter," is included in "Quick Hits for Educating Citizens," published by Indiana University as a guide for faculty teaching strategies that connect students to community needs. Dr. Ferrante helped design NKU's student philanthropy program and managed it in its early years.

2007

▶▶ NKU public administration professors, Shamima Ahmed and Julie Olberding, publish "Can Student Philanthropy Help to Address the Current Nonprofit Identity Crisis?" in the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, and set the stage for ongoing peer-reviewed scholarship by NKU professors on student philanthropy.

▶▶ Citi becomes the first funder of NKU's classes other than the Mayerson Foundation, with a gift of $24,000.

▶▶ Citi also partners with NKU in creating a new "indirect" model of student philanthropy. Students review and evaluate funding applications to Citi. They make

FIRST DECADE AT NKU

nonbinding recommendations about which ones to fund. The model puts students in the board room, learning how larger scale philanthropy unfolds.

2009

▶▶ NKU's Scripps Howard Center implements a new strategy of including at least one new discipline each year into the Mayerson portfolio. It is intended to demonstrate that student philanthropy works across a variety of fields of study.

▶▶ The Kentucky, Ohio and Michigan Campus Compacts collaborate on a student philanthropy program patterned after NKU's and call it Pay It Forward. The federally funded initiative expands student philanthropy's footprint in higher ed significantly.

2010

▶▶ The Scripps Howard Center publishes *Student Philanthropy: Plant It, Nurture It, Harvest It*, a handbook for college and university faculty (first edition) interested in incorporating this unique pedagogy into their classrooms. This handbook is its successor.

▶▶ NKU's first online student philanthropy class is offered, portending what is now the routine inclusion of one or more online classes each year.

▶▶ A new "pre-test" is implemented so that results could be compared to "post-test" survey answers (collected since the program's inception). It showed that student awareness of nonprofits nearly doubled by taking a student philanthropy class.

▶▶ The academic year ends with 19 classes incorporating student philanthropy – the highest number since the program's inception.

CONTINUING TO BUILD

In the years since 2010, NKU has introduced additional classroom models, including the "strings attached" model that allows funders to identify where they would like their funds invested. NKU also added philanthropy to dual credit classes, taught at local high schools for college credit.

The program's funding portfolio has expanded as new donors sponsor one or more classes, typically at $2,000 per class. The Mayerson Foundation continues to fund program overhead and some classes.

ADVANCES SINCE 2010

- Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North American, and later, Duke Energy participate in the indirect model.
- First classes involving international travel and international giving are introduced.
- Students begin using crowd-sourcing platforms to bring in additional money to give.
- Student philanthropy classes become part of a larger effort to concentrate community-engaged learning in a single inner-city neighborhood, the Westside of Newport (2013).
- First summer class (2017) is held; more follow.
- First accelerated online class (seven weeks) is in 2020.
- By the Fall 2020 – the start of our 20th year of classes – NKU has 20 classes per semester and has distributed nearly $1 million to over 400 nonprofits.
- COVID-19 pandemic arrives. Classes pivot to online in March 2020, using online strategies previously pioneered.
- The Fall 2021 semester begins NKU's third decade of student philanthropy classes.

A YEAR OF STUDENT PHILANTHROPY

The 2019-2020 academic year was the 20th year of classes for the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project at Northern Kentucky University.

The year reflected NKU's approach to experiential philanthropy: We look to include a variety of disciplines and class levels, and we try to include at least one new discipline each academic year:

- The year included 36 classes and one co-curricular cohort.
- Together, they invested a total of $66,508 in 46 different nonprofits.
- Twenty academic disciplines participated.
- A mathematics course joined the lineup for the first time.

Here are the 2019-20 classes and the nonprofits they selected. *

FALL 2019

CMST 340: Strategies of Persuasion
TAUGHT BY: Jeff Fox // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,212
Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky, Covington;
Gabriel's Place, Cincinnati

EDS 365: Characteristics of Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
TAUGHT BY: Missy Jones // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Phoenix Program: Northern Kentucky Cooperative for
Educational Services, Cold Spring

ENG 101: College Writing
TAUGHT BY: Jonathan S. Cullick // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Center for Great Neighborhoods, Covington; Kentucky
Symphony Orchestra, Newport

ENV 220: Protecting Water Resources
TAUGHT BY: Kristy Hopfensperger // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Foundation for Ohio River Education, Cincinnati; Campbell
County Conservation District

HIS 594: Special Topics in Public History
TAUGHT BY: Brian Hackett // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $1,500
Heritage Village Museum, Sharonville, Ohio

HIS 689: Research and Writing in Public History
TAUGHT BY: Paul Tenkotte // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Kenton County Public Library

HNR 101: Investing in the Community
TAUGHT BY: Ali Godel // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington

JUS 402: Alternatives to Incarceration
TAUGHT BY: Danielle McDonald // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Children's Home of Northern Kentucky, Covington; Life
Learning Center, Covington

LDR 160: Leadership Around the World (2 sections)
TAUGHT BY: Rick Brockmeier // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Fistula Foundation, California; Light for the World, Austria

LDR 385: Teamwork in Organizations (2 sections)
TAUGHT BY: Megan Downing // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $4,000
Brighton Center (Center for Employment Training),
Newport; Matthew 25 Ministries, Blue Ash, Ohio; Newport
Primary School Family Resource Center; Read Ready
Covington

MAT 115: Mathematics for Liberal Arts
TAUGHT BY: Axel Brandt // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Keep Cincinnati Beautiful; Welcome House of Northern Kentucky, Covington

NEU 101: Neuroscience for Life: Sex to Society
TAUGHT BY: Christine Curran // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Brighton Center (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters), Newport; Brighton Center (Bright Days Child Care Early Education Program), Newport

PAD 500: Foundations of Public Administration
TAUGHT BY: Julie Olberding // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Children's Inc., Covington; Isaiah House, Erlanger

PSY 505/HNR 320: Drug Policy
TAUGHT BY: Perilou Goddard // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Caracole Inc., Cincinnati; GLAST, Covington

SPI 480: Art in the Spanish-Speaking World
TAUGHT BY: Kajsa Larson // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Price Hill Will, Cincinnati; Visionaries and Voices, Cincinnati

SWK 106: Introduction to Social Justice
TAUGHT BY: Suk-hee Kim // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Women's Crisis Center, Covington; Saturday Hoops Program (Cincinnati Youth Collaborative)

TAR 262: Costume Construction
TAUGHT BY: Ronnie Chamberlain // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
YES Home, Aurora, Ind.; Lighthouse Community School, Cincinnati

Young Women Lead Program
INSTRUCTORS: Felicia Share, Melanie Hartzel, Gina Geiser // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $500
Girls on the Run, Cincinnati; Girls Who Code, N.Y.; Girls Opportunity Alliance

SPRING 2020

ANT 307: Museum Methods
TAUGHT BY: Judy Voelker // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
STEM Bicycle Club (Brighton Center), Newport

CMST 340: Strategies of Persuasion
TAUGHT BY: Jeff Fox // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $3,008
The Barracks Project, Covington; A Kid Again, Cincinnati

CSC 301: Web Programming
TAUGHT BY: Nicholas Caporusso // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Creative Aging, Cincinnati

EDU 316: Racism and Sexism in Educational Institutions
TAUGHT BY: Kimberly Clayton-Code // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Children's Inc., Covington

ENG 102: College Writing
TAUGHT BY: Jonathan S. Cullick // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Crayons to Computers, Cincinnati; DCCH Center for Children and Families, Ft. Mitchell

ENG 546: Grant Writing
TAUGHT BY: Janel Bloch // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Holmes High School Marching Band, Covington

ENV 493: Environmental Science Seminar
TAUGHT BY: Kristy Hopfensperger // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Foundation for Ohio River Education, Cincinnati.

GER 202: German Immigration
TAUGHT BY: Andrea Fieler // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
American Association of Teachers of German, Kentucky chapter

LAW 909: Children's Law Clinic
TAUGHT BY: Amy Halbrook // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $3,000
Women's Crisis Center, Covington; DCCH Center for Children and Families, Ft. Mitchell

LDR 160: Leadership Around the World
TAUGHT BY: Megan Downing // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
A Father's Heart Foundation, Dry Ridge; A Child's Hope International, Sharonville, Ohio

LDR 160: Leadership Around the World (2 sections)
TAUGHT BY: Rick Brockmeier // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Give Directly, New York, N.Y.; Heifer International, Little Rock, Ark.

NEU 101: Neuroscience for Life: From Sex to Society
TAUGHT BY: Lauren Williamson // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Holly Hill Child and Family Solutions, Highland Heights

PAD 621: Resource Acquistion & Management
TAUGHT BY: Julie Olberding // Indirect model
Partnered with the Duke Energy Foundation, Cincinnati

PSY 685: Applied Research Study Capstone
TAUGHT BY: Phil Moberg // No awards
Provided program assessment

TAR 464: Wigs and Hairstyling
TAUGHT BY: Ronnie Chamberlain // **TOTAL AWARDED:** $2,000
Fernside Center for Grieving Children, Cincinnati; Chicks and Chucks, Highland Heights

Unless otherwise designated, the cities listed (other than Cincinnati, Ohio) are in Kentucky.

A DYNAMIC TOOLKIT
ONLINE RESOURCES

Northern Kentucky University maintains a website with additional resources for teaching with experiential philanthropy.

The resource hub includes material for program operation and for class design.

Among the resources you will find:

- **Sample syllabi.**

- **Course abstracts and timelines.**

- **Sample letters to nonprofits.**

- **NKU's "pre-test" and "post-test" student surveys.**

- **NKU's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project reports.**

The online resource hub is dynamic because experiential philanthropy is not stagnant. New approaches continue to be developed. New research is being published. New disciplines are being added that demonstrate how philanthropy can be included in additional fields of study.

Visit our resource page.
nku.edu/philanthropyresources

Suggest a resource.
mspp@nku.edu

• HOPE Grant County • Hope House Mission • Hospice of Northern Kentucky • Housing Authority of Covington • Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky • Housing Opportunities Made Equal • Humbledove • IKRON Corporation • Imago Earth Center • Indian Summer Camp • Inner City Tennis Project • InkTank • Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center • Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati • International AIDS Society • International Family Resource Center • International Visitors Council of Greater Cincinnati • Isaiah House • iSpace • James A. 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Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production • Wyoming Fine Arts Center • Yellow Ribbon Support Center • YES Home • YMCA • Youth Opportunities United • YWCA Greater Cincinnati

The 410 agencies listed on this page and on the inside front cover represent the nonprofits awarded grants by classes participating in Northern Kentucky University's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project during its first twenty years, from 2000 to 2020.

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