

Building Nonprofit & Government Capacity to Respond to Wicked Problems

PUBA 744-001 Spring 2023

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### **Course Information**

**Credit Hours:** 1.5

**Asynchronous work:** August 28 – September 25

**On-campus Immersion:** September 28 – 30

**Final paper:** October 13<sup>th</sup>

### **Instructor Information**

**Professor:** Dr. Teshanee Williams

**Email Address:** [twilliams@sog.unc.edu](mailto:twilliams@sog.unc.edu)

**Office Location:** 3101 Knapp-Sanders Building

**Office Hours:** Use this link to schedule office hours <https://calendly.com/teshwill/officehours>

### **Course Content**

#### **Course Description**

**This course will focus on the complex and multifaceted societal challenges often referred to as "wicked problems." These problems are characterized by their intricate nature, involving various stakeholders, uncertain outcomes, and interconnected issues that defy straightforward solutions. Philanthropic organizations, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies are crucial in tackling wicked problems. We will work on understanding each sector's unique capacities and roles in addressing these challenges. We will examine real-world examples of successful and unsuccessful attempts to address wicked problems, drawing insights from different sectors and contexts.**

#### **Course Texts & Materials**

**Weekly articles and chapters will be available on Canvas and listed in the class session description.**

#### **Course Goals & Student Learning Outcomes**

This course delves into the intricate landscape of "wicked problems," the complex and multifaceted societal challenges that resist easy solutions. Students will explore the defining characteristics of these challenges, which encompass intricate stakeholder dynamics, uncertain outcomes, and interconnected issues. The role of philanthropic organizations, nonprofit entities, and government agencies in addressing wicked problems will be central to our study.

The learning outcomes of this course include:

- **Understanding Wicked Problems:** Gain a comprehensive grasp of the unique attributes of wicked problems, including their complexity, uncertainty, and systemic nature.
- **Sectoral Roles and Capacities:** Analyze the distinctive capacities of philanthropic organizations, nonprofit entities, and government agencies in tackling wicked problems.
- **Intersectoral Collaboration:** Explore the potential for collaboration and synergy among different sectors to address complex challenges more effectively.
- **Real-world Case Studies:** Examine real-world instances of both successful and unsuccessful attempts to tackle wicked problems, drawing insights from various sectors and contexts.
- **Critical Analysis:** Develop the skills to critically evaluate the strategies employed by different sectors to address wicked problems, considering factors such as adaptability, innovation, and sustainability.

## **Course Assignments & Assessments**

### **Asynchronous (pre-work) course**

The asynchronous (pre-work) course assignments and grading are designed to: a) Emphasize the importance of reading assignments, per short “knowledge check” quizzes on reading and other material. b) Prepare students to make the most of the face-to-face time through reporting on their collaboration experience and c) Provide appropriate weight to a pre-class, in-class and post-class learning activities.

### **In-class preparation, attendance, and participation**

**Attendance.** On-time arrival for the class sessions (Thursday evening 9/28/23; Friday 9/29/23.; Saturday 9/30/23) and respectful attention is important. If you have a medical, family, or other urgent matter/emergency inform me as soon as possible and accommodations will be determined.

**Preparation.** Preparation for this segment include Literature-grounded questions for Individual presenters (individual and small group work) and the primary Case study (which crosses pre-class and in-class work)

### **Post-Class**

**Reflective Paper.** To make the most of the asynchronous and in-person instruction parts of the course, you are assigned a reflective paper to synthesize your thinking around a theme or central question that is meaningful to you. Further guidance is provided on the platform. The paper is due Friday, October 13.

### **Grading Scale & Schema**

#### **Late Work**

Assignments turned in late will be subject to a grade reduction of 5% per day.

#### **Grading Scale**

To successfully complete the course, students must demonstrate at least a minimal level of achievement in meeting the learning objectives. All assignments should exhibit critical thinking, intellectual rigor, and attention to detail. A grade of "P" (Pass) signifies that these expectations have been met, which is the standard grading criterion for graduate-level work. An "H" (High Pass) represents exceptional performance deserving special recognition. An "L" (Low Pass) indicates that while the basic course requirements were fulfilled, the work falls below the expected standards for Carolina MPA students. An "F" (Fail) suggests that either all course requirements were not met or the overall quality of the work is unacceptable.

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Final Score Grade

97–100: High Pass

87–97: Pass

70–86: Low Pass

0–69: Fail

Assignments	Grade Points	Description
<b>Pre-work</b>	50%	(20%) Knowledge checks (Due w <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· About 3-4 questions for each</li> <li>· Short Answer</li> <li>· Short Case study reflections</li> </ul> (15%) Intersectoral Collaboration
August 28 <sup>th</sup> – September 26 <sup>th</sup>		(15%) Literature grounded quest <i>September 26<sup>th</sup> 11:59pm EST</i>
<b>In-Class</b>	25%	(10%) On-time attendance, resp full group discussion.
September 28 <sup>th</sup> 29 <sup>th</sup> , & 30 <sup>th</sup>		(15%) Case study responses
<b>Post-Class</b>	25%	Reflection Paper. Due October 13
Reflective paper		

Total 100%

## Course Schedule

Week of:	Module	Topics	Readings & Assign
August 28th	1	Defining Wicked Problems	September 5th
September 5th	2	Sector Analysis	September 12th
September 12th	3	Case Study Review	September 19 <sup>th</sup>
September 19th	4	Intersectoral Collaboration Project	September 26 <sup>th</sup>
September 26 <sup>th</sup>	5	Reflection Paper	October 13th

## Policy Statements

### Academic Policies

#### University Class Attendance Policy

University Policy: As stated in the University's [Class Attendance Policy](#), no right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities: [University Approved Absence Office \(UAAO\) website](#) provides information and [FAQs for students](#) and [FAQs for faculty](#) related to University Approved Absences
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Instructors may work with students to meet attendance needs that do not fall within University approved absences. For situations when an absence is not University approved (e.g., a job interview, illness/ flu or club activity), instructors are encouraged to work directly with students to determine the best approach to missed classes and make-up assessment and assignments.

### Honor Code Statement

All students are expected to follow the guidelines of the UNC Honor Code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from "lying, cheating, or stealing" in the academic context. If you are unsure about which actions violate the Honor Code, please see me, or consult [studentconduct.unc.edu](http://studentconduct.unc.edu).

### Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

By attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the acceptable use of IT systems and services. The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) sets the expectation that you will use the University's technology resources responsibly, consistent with the University's mission. In the context of a class, it's quite likely you will participate in online activities that could include personal information about you or your peers, and the AUP addresses your obligations to protect the privacy of class participants. In addition, the AUP addresses matters of others' intellectual property, including copyright. These are only a couple of typical examples, so you should consult the full [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#), which covers topics related to using digital resources, such as privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property. Additionally, consult the [Safe Computing at UNC](#) website for information about data security policies, updates, and tips on keeping your identity, information, and devices safe.

## **Data Security & Privacy**

[UNC-Chapel Hill Privacy Statement](#): Canvas Discussion Forum, Assignments, DropBox, Gradebook, and Tests & Quizzes tools are designed to share FERPA-protected information privately between instructors and individual students.

## **Grade Appeal Process**

If you have any concerns with grading and/or feel you have been awarded an incorrect grade, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If we cannot resolve the issue, you may talk to our director of undergraduate studies or department chair.

## **Services & Student Support Policies**

### **Accessibility Resources & Services (ARS)**

Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS – [ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu)) receives requests for accommodations, and through the Student and Applicant Accommodations Policy determines eligibility and identifies reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions to mitigate or remove the barriers experienced in accessing University courses, programs and activities. ARS also offers its Testing Center resources to students and instructors to facilitate the implementation of testing accommodations. Faculty and instructors with any concerns or questions about accommodations and/or their implementation, are invited to [reach out to ARS](#) to discuss.

### **Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)**

UNC-Chapel Hill is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body. The [Heels Care Network](#) website is a place to access the many mental health resources at Carolina. CAPS is the primary mental health provider for students, offering timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services. Go to their website <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health building for an initial evaluation to learn more. Students can also call CAPS 24/7 at 919-966-3658 for immediate assistance.

## **Title IX Resources**

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/> or by contacting the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, [titleixcoordinator@unc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)) or the Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)). Confidential resources include Counseling and Psychological Services and the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu)). Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu).

### **Policy on Non-Discrimination**

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered, and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (email [reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu) or see additional contact info at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu)) or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

### **Diversity Statement**

I value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. I broadly define diversity to include race, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, political background, and physical and learning ability. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve. I appreciate any suggestions.

### **Learning Center**

Want to get the most out of this course or others this semester? Visit UNC's Learning Center at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu> to make an appointment or register for an event. Their free, popular programs will help you optimize your academic performance. Try academic coaching, peer tutoring, STEM support, ADHD/LD services, workshops and study camps, or review tips and tools available on the website.

### **Writing Center**

For free feedback on any course writing projects, check out UNC's Writing Center. Writing Center coaches can assist with any writing project, including multimedia projects and application essays, at any stage of the writing process. You don't even need a draft to come visit. To schedule a 45-minute appointment, review quick tips, or request written feedback online, visit <http://writingcenter.unc.edu>.