Course name: Foundations’ and Corporations’ Roles and Impact in Social Leadership

Course description

The scope of this seminar is as broad as the idea of the voluntary society itself. The central question to be addressed is the extent to which, and how, a large number of people of varying ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds, living together in a country, state, or city, governed by democratically elected officials, can or should rely on organized or unorganized voluntary action by citizens to fulfill both their own individual needs and the needs of their respective communities. In the wake of the September 11th challenges to American society, as well as in the midst of the most serious downturn in the nation’s economy since the Great Depression of the late 20s and early 30s, the role of the not-for-profit sector in bringing Americans together across the lines that divide us is all the more important.

To explore that question we will examine alternative allocations of responsibility for solving particular problems -- voluntary, not-for-profit, for-profit, joint public/private, publicly encouraged/subsidized, and publicly coerced -- along with examples, reasons, and theories for particular forms of organization. We will probe what it is that motivates donors and volunteers to give money and time, and to assess not only their effectiveness in solving or ameliorating problems but also the comparative praiseworthiness of their respective motives. Private, community and corporate foundations, as well as the tax-exempt organizations to which they and other donors contribute, are part of the inquiry, especially as to their goals, decision rules, governance, and public accountability. We will continuously examine the framework...
of public policy that embodies public judgments about the desirability of allocating some part of the burden of social problem-solving to voluntary organizations alone or in partnership with public organizations, as well as the tax policies that are crafted to facilitate such problem-solving policies. We will also examine the laws defining the boundaries between permissible and impermissible action by not-for-profits. Because of the growing demand for accountability of the not-for-profit sector in general, and of foundations in particular, we will focus throughout the course on the extent to which foundations are achieving social impact commensurate with the tax benefits they and their donors are receiving.

**Course goals:**
An understanding of how non-governmental organizations solve public problem and help shape public policy

**Course Topics**

**Course topics:**
1) the role and impact of foundations in societies;
2) the social responsibilities and roles of corporations in societies; the indispensability of strategy in achieving impact in society

Following are some of the questions the course will consider:

Should not-for-profit organizations, including foundations, be made more accountable to the public, and, if so, why and how? What are the arguments against too great an increase in accountability to government? From what source, if any, do foundations derive their legitimacy in general, as well as in efforts to effect change in public policy in particular? Consider the pros and cons of the charge that foundations, which are substantially unaccountable to the public, improperly shape public policy. To what extent should the public encourage or discourage initiatives in policy-related fields by foundations, given their lack of accountability to the public? What are the arguments for and against? Are foundations viewed as more or less legitimate than other kinds of non-for-profit organizations? How effectively do not-for-profit organizations, including foundations, perform their responsibilities? How can they or we measure their impact? Can metrics of impact be developed, and, if so, how? Are there ways of increasing the effectiveness of foundations without adversely affecting their freedom to benefit society according to their own views of the public interest? How is the Internet changing the ways in which charities raise, maintain and deploy money and volunteers? Does the Internet offer better means of improving the accountability of foundations and other not-for-profits to the public? By what decision rule can Israel or any other country decide which social functions should be performed by which sectors—public, for-profit, not-for-profit...either separately or in some combination of two or three?
Reading:
10. Dan Senor and Saul Singer, *Start-Up Nation: The Story of Israel’s Economic Miracle*
אישור ועדת הוראה של התוכנית לניהול אלכ"ר

י"ר ועדת ההוראה: דר חגי כץ
תאריך: 03/30/01
 Charm: _____________
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Aaron: 309-309-3090
Email: info@horeah.com
Website: www.horeah.com

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