***Course Description***

Students will develop competencies in the development and direction of community volunteer partnerships and collaborations. Students will explore current volunteer development models, collaboration process theory, and key management areas including: visioning, organizing a partnership or collaboration; creating motivating volunteer positions; recruiting, screening, and interviewing; orientation and training; supervising; evaluation; retention and resolution; risk management; and measuring program effectiveness.

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| ***Course Instructor***  Eric K. Kaufman, Associate Professor  Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education  1319A Ambler Johnston Hall  Office Phone: 540-231-6258  Cell Phone: 540-230-5693  Email: [EKK@VT.Edu](mailto:EKK@VT.Edu) |  |

***Course Materials***[[1]](#footnote-1)

* Seel, K. (Ed.). (2013). *Volunteer administration: Professional practice* (2nd ed.)*.* Markham, ON, Canada: Lexis Nexis. ISBN: 978-0-433-47138-7
* Select readings to be shared via *Scholar*.

***Student Learning Outcomes***

1. Describe current volunteer development models that effectively use collaborative leadership.
2. Develop a plan for a high impact volunteerism program with empowered volunteers and alliances with public and private partners that incorporates how to:

* Organize and maintain community partnerships, alliances and collaborations.
* Assess required administration and risk management of volunteer programs.
* Design effective volunteer positions.
* Implement methods for effective recruitment and screening of volunteers.
* Maintain orientation, training, and supervision of volunteers and stakeholder groups to retain volunteers and program supporters.
* Evaluate effective reward and recognition systems for volunteers.
* Conduct and analyze methods of evaluation to assess volunteerism programs and collaborative program effectiveness.

***Special Needs Requests***

If you are a student with special needs or circumstances, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

***Student Prerequisite Skills***

For your assignment submissions, I expect you to be articulate and clear in your writing commensurate with graduate level work. In regards technical competencies, you should be able to:

* Use standard word processing software to write properly-formatted formal papers.
* Navigate web pages using a web browser such as Firefox, Safari, or Google Chrome.

***Work Load Expectations***

One of the challenges students face in distance education is related to time management. As a three-credit-hour course, university standards suggest that the workload for this course should total at least 135 hours. If we divide those hours equally over the 6 weeks of the course, that is 22.5 hours per week. With that in mind, please set aside the time necessary to devote to your learning and completion of course assignments.

***Course Administration***[[2]](#footnote-2)

This course is administered online via Virginia Tech’s *Scholar* course management system, <https://scholar.vt.edu>. The course is entirely Internet-based with no face-to-face contact with the instructor or other students, though there will be opportunities for real-time communication using telephone, chat, or web conferencing software.  Unlike some distance learning classes, the pace of this course will be set by the instructor with specified due dates for completion of assignments. Online learning such as this requires basic computer and Internet literacy and a high degree of self-motivation and discipline. People who recognize that they are primarily responsible for their academic success and are confident in their abilities tend to do well in distance-delivered courses.  I urge you to complete the self-assessment survey,[*Is eLearning Right for You?*](https://www.waol.org/prospective_students/isonlineforme.aspx), to assess your readiness for online learning.

***Course Communication***

I will be available to answer your questions:

* Through the "Questions" **Forum**  
  If you have questions about the course material or assignments, you should post them there.  If your question has to do with the course as a whole, post to the topic, Whole Course.  If it concerns a particular topic, post to that topic.  The title of your post should give an idea of what your question or comment is concerning and you should check the existing **Forum** threads before posting your own question to see if it has already been answered.  All forum posts should follow appropriate "[netiquette](http://lifehacker.com/5473859/basic-etiquette-for-email-lists-and-forums" \t "_new" \o "Open a new window)."  I plan to check the **Forums** for new posts every day at 9:00 PM and will usually post responses to all these messages by 9:00 PM the following day.
* By **email**  
  You may email me if your questions are of a personal or sensitive nature.  However, most questions or comments should be posted to the **Forums** so everyone can benefit.
* By **telephone**

I am willing to communicate by telephone, but this mode of communication will generally require an appointment.

You will also communicate with your peers during the Introduce Yourself **Forums** assignment and can use the **Messages** and **Chat Room** to communicate with your fellow students on an ad hoc basis.

***Academic and Student Support***

You can learn about the wealth of academic and student support services available to our students by visiting the pages on the [Virginia Tech Online](http://www.vto.vt.edu/index.php) site.

***Tech Support***

Student technical support is available through [Computing @ Virginia Tech](http://www.computing.vt.edu/) and [4Help](http://4help.vt.edu/).  If you are experiencing technical difficulty accessing materials that you need for this course or a general technical support question please request assistance by filling out the [help form](http://4help.vt.edu/scholar) or calling 540-231-HELP. When making a request please be sure that you provide as much detail (name, problematic URL, operating system, description of problem) as possible to help solve your problem more efficiently.  Virginia Tech’s [Customer Support Center](http://4help.vt.edu/) is available 24/7 to reset passwords, monitor system outages, and answer questions on a wide variety of computer related issues. Moreover, you can find answers to many of your questions by reading [Virginia Tech's Knowledge Base](http://answers.vt.edu/kb).

***General Structure of Learning Modules/Lessons***

This course is divided into 5 modules/lessons, each corresponding to a topical unit of study.  The general structure of each module/lesson is as follows:

* **Introduction:** The purpose of the introduction is to provide pre-study information you can use to recall your prior knowledge as well as to identify critical ideas that will appear in the lesson.
* **Objectives:** The purpose of presenting objectives is to inform you of what you should be able to do once you have completed the module.
* **Pre-reading questions:** You will have the opportunity to "test" your knowledge of the material in each module before you study the module. You will be presented up to 5 multiple choice questions on ideas, concepts, principles, facts, and theories that are part of the lesson. Once you have completed the test, you will receive a score which you can use as an indicator of how well you already understand the main points and details in the module.  This will help you identify areas you need to pay particular attention to as you progress through the material.
* **Guiding questions:** The purpose of these pre-study questions is to help you recall what you already know and believe about the topics of the module as well as to pose questions that you should consider as you study.
* **Assigned reading:** The purpose of the reading is to present the basic information, the "facts" if you will, for the module. This material, together with the guidance provided by the interactive activities and the feedback from the formative evaluation, should enable you to successfully master the objectives.
* **Post-reading questions:** You will have available up to 5 multiple choice questions to test your own understanding of the material you have studied. These questions are linked to elaborated explanations of the answers. As a result, you will be able to enrich your understanding of these ideas by, first, seeing if you understand well enough to choose the correct alternative, and second, by studying the explanation of the answer to ensure your explanation matches the text-based explanation.
* **Interactive activity:** The purpose is to provide an opportunity to interact with one or more of the concepts included in the module. The interactive activity may focus on a single important concept or help you develop an understanding of relationships between concepts.
* **Activities for Assessment:** This section will refer you to the next steps – assignments that will be scored as an assessment of your learning and involvement in the course.

***Activities for Assessment***

1. Discussion Forum Posts (15% of your final grade)

As part of each learning module, you must contribute at least two posts to the module’s discussion forum: one original example (OE) and one value-added comment (VAC). Each OE and VAC must contain at least five clearly and carefully composted sentences. An OE must be truly original; it must not duplicate a classmate’s OE or any in the assigned readings. Each VAC must live up to its name by truly adding value to the OE or another VAC. Additional details and expectations will be shared on the course page in *Scholar*.

1. Applied Learning Reflections (30% of your final grade)

For each unit of study, you complete an applied learning reflection in the form of an article review or blog entry. Articles for review must be different from assigned readings. Article reviews will include components that connect the article to the unit being studied at the time it is due. Blog entries should also be connected to the unit of study but will focus more on personal experiences and observations. Blog entries should follow a "what?", "so what?", "now what?" format. Additional details and expectations will be shared in class and on the course page in *Scholar*.

1. Volunteerism Philosophy Paper (20% of your final grade)

You will prepare a final paper (of about 1500 words) to discuss the fundamental and powerful concepts of volunteerism derived from the course. This paper will serve as your final exam for the course. The paper should include an introduction to the concept of volunteer administration (10%), your philosophical approach to volunteerism with key components articulated (30%), discussion of class readings and resources that support or contradict your personal philosophy (30%), and discussion of your personal/professional experiences that have influenced your philosophy (30%). A full rubric for this assignment will be shared via the Assignments function in *Scholar*.

1. Volunteerism Case Study Development (20% of your final grade)

You will work with others in the class to develop a case study that highlights principles of volunteer administration. This assignment will include three deliverables: a case study prospectus (due midway through the semester), the case narrative, and teaching notes for the case. These items should be written in a wiki format (such as Google Docs), so that progress and contributions of each class member can be easily recognized and evaluated. More information about this assignment and writing good case studies will be provided in *Scholar*.

1. Peer Evaluation (15% of your final grade)

At the end of the semester, you will anonymously rate the quality of the contributions of the students you work with on the Volunteerism Case Study Development assignment. Your peer evaluation score will be the average of the points you receive from the other members of your team. Rating criteria will be outlined in advance in a formal peer evaluation form available in *Scholar.*

**All assignments are due by 11:55 PM on the respective date identified in Scholar.**

***Grading Scale***

A 90% - 100%

B+ 86% - 89% B 80% - 85%

C+ 76% - 79% C 70% - 75%

D+ 66% - 69% D 60% - 65%

F Below 60%

***Honor Code***

Virginia Tech’s Graduate Honor Code (<http://ghs.graduateschool.vt.edu/>) will be followed and enforced in this class. Violations of the Honor Code include: copying another's work, cheating on exams or assignments, and plagiarism of another's work, whether another student's or something found online.

***Disability Accommodations***

Any student that is in need of special accommodations due to a disability, as recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office.

Students with disabilities are responsible for self-identification.  To be eligible for services, documentation of the disability from a qualified professional must be presented to SSD upon request. Academic adjustments may include, but are not limited to: priority registration, auxiliary aids, program and course adjustment, exam modifications, oral or sign language interpreters, cassette taping of text/materials, note takers/readers, or assistive technology.

For more information on disability accommodations, please contact:   
Lavery Hall, STE 310, Virginia Tech; 430 Old Turner Street; Blacksburg, VA 24061   
Phone: (540) 231-3788 Voice; E-mail: [ssd@vt.edu](mailto:ssd@vt.edu" \t "_new" \o "Open a new window); Website: [http://www.ssd.vt.edu](http://www.ssd.vt.edu" \t "_new" \o "Open a new window)

***Course Outline***

Note: Reading materials and resources for each unit will be outlined in the Modules function in *Scholar*.

*Unit/Module #1 – The State of Volunteerism in America* (July 7 – July 13)

* Objectives
  + Describe the role of volunteer administration in modern society and organizations.
  + Identify current trends of volunteerism in America.

*Unit/Module #2 – Volunteer Development Models* (July 14 – July 20)

* Objectives
  + Recognize prominent scholarly models of volunteer development.
  + Evaluate the appropriateness of common approaches to volunteer administration in community‐based organizations.

*Unit/Module #3 – Volunteer Management* (July 21 – July 27)

* Objectives

Recognize effective strategies for volunteer management.

Outline a plan for training and supporting volunteers in a community-based organization.

*Unit/Module #4 – Responsibility and Risk Management* (July 28 – August 3)

* Objectives
  + Recognize the importance of risk management in volunteerism.
  + Develop a process for identifying, analyzing, and managing risks associated with volunteer programs.

*Unit/Module #5 – Measuring Impacts and Outcomes* (August 4 – August 10)

* Objectives
  + Identify critical elements that document volunteer impact.
  + Organize a systematic approach to formative and summative evaluation of volunteer programs.

1. You can use the University Bookstore website to mail-order your book - [http://www.bookstore.vt.edu](http://www.bookstore.vt.edu/). Also note that the book may be available from other commercial vendors or your local library. Remember, don't wait until the last minute - it may take the book a while to get to you. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The syllabus is a guide for the course, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes in assignments and expectations will be announced on Scholar. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)