

**Transdisciplinary Studies**  
**TNDY 404O**  
**Collaboration Across the Public-Private Divide**  
**Spring 2026**

**Contact Information**

**Class Instructor:**

Robert Klitgaard, University Professor

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- In-person drop-by hours: Tuesdays 9 – 11:45 am

**Instructor Feedback and Communication**

The best way to get in touch with me is via email. I will do my best to respond within two business days.

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**Class Schedule**

- Semester start/end dates: January 16
  - Meeting day, time: Thursdays 1:00 – 3:50 pm
  - Class Location: Online.
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**Course Description**

Many of the most challenging problems facing our region and our world cannot be tackled by government alone. From health care to education, from poverty to social justice, from urban renewal to international development, effective projects and programs often require collaboration across the public-private-nonprofit divide. Yet around the world, few graduate programs focus on how to design, lead, and manage collaboration across public-private divide. This course tries to be an exception.

How can theory help us assess when various forms of collaboration make sense? What can we learn about the practical challenges of making public-private partnerships work from success stories? We will study outstanding examples, including preventing public-school dropouts, cultural festivals for indigenous peoples, ebola in West Africa, common pool resources such as irrigation systems and local forests, universal identification systems, combating corruption, urban beautification, rural development, fighting drug-resistant tuberculosis, and a variety of public-private partnerships in infrastructure.

Throughout we will learn to use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) as our tutor, designer, and thought partner. We will consider how GenAI can enable collaboration and also perhaps require it.

All of this will enable us to reconsider what governance and leadership mean in our rapidly changing world.

- Credit/Units: 4

## **Background Preparation (Prerequisites)**

There are no curricular prerequisites.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Appraise the distinctive capabilities of different kinds of institutions.
2. Design collaborative arrangements.
3. Apply tools of leadership and management to public-private partnerships, including citizen empowerment.
4. Evaluate collaboration in terms of each partner, the partnership as an entity, and the attainment of public purposes.
5. Create a process that catalyzes problem-solving across the public-private divide.

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## **Assessments and Grading**

### **Participation**

Your careful preparation for discussions is vital for the success of this seminar.

Many of our sessions will employ the case method. Here are some materials that introduce the method and describe how you can get the most from it:

1. <https://www.hbs.edu/mba/academic-experience/Pages/the-hbs-case-method.aspx>
2. "Learning by the Case Method," Harvard Business School (3 pages). On canvas.
3. <https://www.exed.hbs.edu/hbs-experience/learning-experience/case-study-method>

Sometime during the course, each student will give a 20-minute briefing on one of our topics. Details will be provided. We will learn together about briefings and how they differ from academic talks. A useful example is here: RAND Corporation. 1996. "Guidelines for Preparing Briefings."

<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA317235.pdf>

This briefing and your participation in class count for 35 percent of your final grade.

## Midterm Exam

The midterm examination on March 5 counts for 30 percent of the final grade. This examination will be open book and open notes and you will be asked to utilize ChatGPT. The exam is designed to take two hours, but you will be allowed three hours to complete it.

## Course Project

The course project counts for 35 percent of your final grade. You will be part of a team of classmates from different disciplines and professions. The course project focuses on an example of a public-private-citizen partnership on a particular task or issue. The product is your team's design of a day-long convening for leaders in the three sectors with the goal of stimulating collaboration and practical steps forward. Details will be supplied during the first weeks of the seminar. An initial, ungraded one-page description of the topic is due at 5:00 p.m. on February 5 via email to Prof. Klitgaard.

Each team will give an ungraded 20-minute briefing on the course projects on April 30. The purpose of this briefing is to get help from your classmates. Then on May 7 each team will give a graded 20-minute briefing on the course project. Their written report is due before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 10. This report will be no longer than 5000 words (about 20 pages double-spaced), not counting references or tables. Details on this report will be provided well in advance.

There is no final examination.

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## Expectations and Logistics

This seminar is highly participatory. As noted, your careful preparation and enthusiastic participation are keys to your learning experience—and to the class's. If for some reason you are unable to come to a class or to prepare for it fully—things do happen—please let Prof. Klitgaard know in advance via email.

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## Artificial Intelligence

Throughout the course, we will make extensive use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), especially ChatGPT and NotebookLM. If you prefer another GenAI platform, such as Claude, Gemini, Grok, Perplexity, or another, that's fine—our work will transfer. Throughout this syllabus, I will refer to ChatGPT, but you can use another platform if you like.

We will explore GenAI's many uses. For example, you will use ChatGPT and NotebookLM as your personal tutor. To help you get started on a research project. To anticipate politicized reactions to cost-benefit analyses—and take preventive measures. To be your research assistant, including data analysis.

We will emphasize the limitations and risks of GenAI. As we explore the tools, we will consistently question them—and ourselves, as we put them to use.

You will enjoy this remarkable, general-purpose prompt called "My Tutor." It's useful inside this course and, in my experience anyway, almost everywhere.

Insert your information in the bold brackets:

## My Tutor

You are an upbeat, encouraging tutor. Please help me, **[describe yourself here and if you'd like, paste any relevant excerpt from the syllabus or reading]**. I'd like to explore a topic or concept, and I want your help learning it in a way that sticks.

Please start by briefly introducing yourself as my tutor, then ask me:

1. What topic I'd like to learn about.
2. What I already know about it.

If I'm not sure what I know, help me discover it by asking a few diagnostic questions or giving a small example to react to.

Based on what I say, guide me in an open-ended way—don't give answers immediately. Instead:

- Ask me questions that help me learn and express my uncertainties.
- If I get stuck, give hints, break the task into steps, or rephrase the goal.
- Use examples, analogies, or stories tailored to me and this course.
- Praise effort and good moves, not correctness until verified. Don't agree with me too readily.

Be sparing with "correct": only say it after I can explain/apply it and you've sanity-checked with a quick example or edge case.

If I'm partly right: say what's right, what's off, and what's missing—then guide me to fix it.

Once I've shown enough understanding, ask me to:

- Explain the topic or concept in my own words,
- Give an example, or
- Apply it to a new situation.

When I demonstrate that I understand, wrap up the session and remind me that you're here if I want to keep learning.

Please begin by introducing yourself and asking me what topic I'd like to explore.

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## Texts and Journal References

### Required Materials

- Robert Klitgaard. 2023. *Bold and Humble: How to Lead Public-Private-Citizen Collaboration, with*

*Five Case Studies*. Bhutan: Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies. You can freely download the book here <https://rigss.bt/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/boldhumble.pdf> or the audio book at <https://robertklitgaard.com/bold-and-humble>

## **Instructor-Supplied Materials**

- See the links in the syllabus, including digital materials provided via Canvas.
- You will also find the course materials in a NotebookLM "notebook" created for this course and shared in our first class meeting.

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## **Week-by-Week Schedule**

### **January 22**

Introducing each other and the course.

Why is public-private-nonprofit collaboration so important today for leaders and managers in business, government, education, and civil society?

Exploring ChatGPT and NotebookLM.

### **January 29**

*Bold and Humble*, Preface and Chapter 1.

Review the materials on the case method above (under “Participation” on p. 2).

“Partnership for Dealing with Dropouts (A),” 8 pages.

#### **Assignment (nothing to write or submit):**

Please consider the following questions and be prepared to discuss them in class.

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a cross-age tutoring program?
2. What are the critical activities that should be considered part of such a program?
3. How might the various partners combine forces in implementation?

### **February 5**

Daniel P. Gitterman and Neil Britto. 2021. “The Intersector as a Tool to Address Intractable Problems,” in *The Intersector: How the Public, Nonprofit, and Private Sectors Can Address America's Challenges*, ed.

Daniel P. Gitterman and Neil Britto (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2021): 1–17.

[https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/9780815739029\\_intro.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/9780815739029_intro.pdf)

Howard W. Buffett and William B. Eimicke. 2018. "How Companies, Governments, and Nonprofits Can Create Social Change Together," *Harvard Business Review*. 31 May. <https://hbr.org/2018/05/how-companies-governments-and-nonprofits-can-create-social-change-together>

Ira Jackson and Leslie Hicks. 2025. "Redefining Leadership CPL co-curricular: Student Voices." <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/cpl/publications/student-voices/redefining-leadership-co-curricular>

Please spend a half hour looking through the World Bank's resources on public-private partnerships: <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/>

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit):

1. Please engage with ChatGPT beginning with this prompt:

I have a **[describe your]** background in microeconomics. Please explain comparative advantage to me. Please distinguish comparative advantage from absolute advantage. Please give an example of comparative advantage.

*Follow-up prompt:*

Please connect comparative advantage to the analysis of public-private-citizen collaboration. Explain how gains from collaboration resemble gains from trade.

*Follow-up prompt:*

Please give an example from rural development in a poor country.

2. Please consider an example that you know of collaboration across the public-private divide. What were (or are) the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration in this case?

Please be ready to discuss 1. and 2. in class.

## February 12

Please submit a one-page description of the case study your team proposes to [robert.klitgaard@cgu.edu](mailto:robert.klitgaard@cgu.edu).

"A Cultural Festival for the Highlanders," *Bold and Humble*, ch. 2. Please prepare your answers for the questions on p. 20 to discuss in class.

*Bold and Humble*, ch. 3.

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Use the "My Tutor" prompt above to investigate these concepts from ch. 3 of *Bold and Humble*: rivalrous goods, excludable goods, private goods, public goods, common-pool resources, toll goods, externalities, and civil society organizations.

## February 19

*Bold and Humble*, chs. 4 – 6.

Please review the frameworks of chs. 3 and 6 of *Bold and Humble*.

Discuss with your project teammates how these ideas apply to your course project. Please be prepared to share your tentative results in class.

## February 26

### 1. More on the design and management of collaboration

Anaïs Fabre and Stéphane Straub. 2023. “The Impact of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Infrastructure, Health and Education.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 61(2): 655–715. On Canvas

#### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

How would you summarize the findings of Fabre and Straub’s review? What surprised you? Please be prepared to discuss your answers in class.

### 2. Case study

Jennifer Widner. 2018. *All Hands On Deck: The US Response to West Africa’s Ebola Crisis, 2014-2015*. Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University. June. 42 pp.

[https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/JW\\_Ebola\\_USResponse\\_Final\\_June%2028%202018\\_JRG\\_0.pdf](https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/JW_Ebola_USResponse_Final_June%2028%202018_JRG_0.pdf)

#### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Again, review the frameworks of chs. 3 and 6 of *Bold and Humble*. Apply them to Widner’s case study, *All Hands On Deck*. Be prepared to discuss in class.

## March 5

Midterm examination.

## March 12. Spring Break

## March 19

### 1. Partnerships and common-pool resources

Garrett Hardin. 1968. “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science*, 162(3859): 1243–1248. 13 December.

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243>

Robert Boyd et al. 2018. “Tragedy Revisited,” *Science*, 362(6420): 1236–1241. 14 December.

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/362/6420/1236.full>

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Engage in a conversation with ChatGPT about the tragedy of the commons. You might explore such aspects as examples, theoretical developments, research priorities, connections with the topic of your course project, and so forth.

Please be prepared to discuss some of your findings in class.

#### 2. Case study

Robert Klitgaard. 2021. *The Culture and Development Manifesto*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 10. <http://scholar.cgu.edu/robert-klitgaard/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/06/Ch.-10-Culture-and-Development-Reconsidered.pdf>

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

What impressed you about Elinor Ostrom's work in enabling collaborative governance?

## March 26

#### 1. Case study 1

"A Partnership for Educational Innovation," *Bold and Humble*, ch. 8.

#### 2. Case study 2

Vijay Sathe. 2011. "The World's Most Ambitious ID Project," *Innovations* 6(2): 39–66. Available on Canvas.

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Please use ChatGPT to explore the concept and examples of "universal ID."

Then, using paper by Sathe, summarize the key challenges facing the leaders of Aadhaar in 2011. What would you recommend? Please be prepared to discuss in class.

## April 2

#### 1. Designing together

Lynn Barendsen *et al.* 2013. *The Good Collaboration Toolkit: An Approach to Building, Sustaining, and Carrying Out Successful Collaboration*. Cambridge, MA: The Good Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education, pp. 46–79. On Canvas.

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Engage ChatGPT in a chat about *techniques for involving people* in collaboration and partnerships.

"People" meaning employees, clients, citizens—see what you can uncover. Be prepared to discuss your findings in class.



## 2. Case study

Robert Klitgaard. 2019. "Engaging Corruption: New Ideas for the International Monetary Fund" *Policy Design and Practice* 2(3): 229–242.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/25741292.2019.1612542?needAccess=true>

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Please meet with your project team to begin applying this article's convening framework to your course project.

Talk about questions such as:

- a. Who should participate in a convening?
- b. What data would be most useful to help participants locate their challenges?
- c. What example of success might kindle their creativity?
- d. What framework or checklist might help them reframe their problems and possibilities?

## April 9

Case study: Reforms to promote collaboration across the public-private-citizen divide: the Performance Governance System

"Collaboration through Systems and Processes," *Bold and Humble*, ch. 10.

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

The table on p. 106 summarizes what the Performance Government System requires and how Mandaue's version was falling short. If you were advising Mayor Jonas Cortes, what would you recommend for each issue? Be prepared to discuss in class.

## April 16

Case study continued

"Implementing Systemic Collaboration," *Bold and Humble*, ch. 11.

Robert Klitgaard. 2019. "Reforming Mandaue City: Overcoming Backsliding." Teaching Case, Claremont Graduate University. August.

### Assignment (nothing to write or submit)

Study questions appear at the end of the 2019 Mandaue case—please prepare them carefully for class discussion.

## April 23

*Bold and Humble*, ch. 12.

Robert Klitgaard. 2025. "Ensemble." Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre, Qatar, and United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. On Canvas. Please review especially the three prompts on collaboration (pp. 32–40). Discuss with your team how these prompts might be applied to your topic. We will experiment with them in class.

## **April 30**

"Where We're Stuck" briefings on your course projects.

Have a look again at RAND Corporation. 1996. "Guidelines for Preparing Briefings."  
<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA317235.pdf>

This week, the purpose of each team's 20-minute briefing to solicit help from your classmates.

You might spend five minutes describing the topic. Then use ten minutes to outline what progress you've made. Then take five minutes to describe "where we're stuck"—and ask for your colleagues' comments and suggestions.

These briefings are ungraded. Do make them "professional" by rehearsing them—but the point is to get help, not to present a finished product.

## **May 7**

Final 20-minute briefings on your course projects. These briefings will be graded.

Review of the course and agenda for the future

Your final course projects are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 10.

## **University Resources for Students**

Access to university resources and policies can be found in Canvas using the left navigation menu.

- Student Resources
- Requirements & Responsibilities
- Center for Writing & Rhetoric
- The Claremont Colleges Library

CGU policies on grades, including incomplete grades, registration and enrollment can be found on the Registrar's webpage: <http://www.cgu.edu/registrar>