Business school educators emphasize the following points to students who arrive at Baylor’s doorstep with a desire to save the world:

1. **Understanding** your target market and branding are vital to making marketing work.

2. **Success** derives from the same professional operations used by the for-profit business next door.

**BY BARBARA ELMORE**

Although a passion to make a difference is important to nonprofits’ success, no one need add passion to the list. The desire to do far others after walks in the door. Recognizing it is easy for professors who are in the classroom for some of the same reasons as their students.

Professor Charles Fifield employs a Confucian passage to describe how he teaches students in his Concert Promotions and Event Planning class:

“Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand.”

This formula has resulted in successful campus performances by such groups as the Nashville-based duo Hymns for Hunger and Christian rock group Switchfoot.

Promoting events and concerts is mostly accomplished through legwork and youthful energy, a heart for helping, heavy use of social media—and no budget to speak of. And yet sellouts or near-sellouts of concerts are the result.

The secrets to successful nonprofit promotion are not all that secret. The event or brand students are promoting must be someone or something people will pay to see or do, and the promoters have to fulfill well-defined duties, which they accomplish using a team approach.

Fifield’s class is the concert promotion arm of Uproar Records, a record, entertainment and promotion company run by students in the Hankamer School of Business. Most of the students who run Uproar are business majors. Fifield, an adviser of the group and a senior lecturer at Baylor since 2001, teaches by giving the students experience.

Students who want to pursue social entrepreneurship—using their entrepreneurship skills to accomplish social change—must take courses in the basics of business, said Kendall Artz, director of the Baylor Entrepreneurship Program and chairman of the Department of Entrepreneurship.

Hankamer’s Entrepreneurship Program has grown explosively in the last decade, Artz said, and students who want to use their business background in unconventional ways are often the drivers.

The first step of the Confucius saying, the “telling” part, occurs in class. The next step, “showing,” includes taking them into meetings with sponsors and customers. “I say, ‘Just watch. I will tell you what I am going to do, and then you are going to do it.’ Then the next meeting, they do it. Tell me, show me, involve me.”

This formula puts the students in the role of carrying out a marketing plan, giving them a sound background no matter where they land after graduation.

“Students who want to pursue social entrepreneurship—using their entrepreneurship skills to accomplish social change—must take courses in the basics of business, said Kendall Artz, director of the Baylor Entrepreneurship Program and chairman of the Department of Entrepreneurship. They must know how to understand finance and cash flow. “A course is specifically designed for students to write a business plan for a venture they could undertake in another country,” Artz said.

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Nonprofits are not selling products, so resources are always a big issue. But if you are an entrepreneur, you learn to make do with limited resources. Nonprofits have a vision of where they want to go and not a lot of resources, so if I work in a nonprofit, I learn how to take what I have and do what needs to be done.”

The promotion formula that Fifield’s students employ begins after Baylor’s Student Activities signs artists to perform on campus. Some of the most recent performers include Christian rock band Switchfoot, artists Cindy Morgan and Andrew Greer of Hymns for Hunger, and American folk band Judah and the Lion.

Students operate within five teams, each one with specific tasks. A street team, with five to 15 students, is the largest. These students call on area colleges and universities and visit sororities and fraternities, as well as faith-based organizations like the Vertical club. “If we have an artist who is a faith-based performer, the club lets us make a brief presentation and then we hand out flyers,” Fifield said. “The street team sells discounted group tickets to churches and faith-based organizations that we think the artists will draw.”

Although the social media team is the smallest in terms of number of members, using social media is a necessity. It’s a critical medium and the price is right—many nonprofits have something to sell. We market a service just like we do a plane ticket. Doing so is a requirement for reaching a campus audience. “For our target audience, 90 percent of the attendees are under the age of 40, so social media is a necessity. It’s a critical medium and the price is right—which is great for us because we have nothing in terms of budget,” Fifield said.

The immediate payoff is getting fans to campus events. Eventually, students can take what they learn to the job market. Fifield said, “Some students go into event management or artist-related work. Some go to Nashville.”

Fifield said there are challenges getting our students entertainment-related jobs. There is not much supply in terms of jobs, so we work more on brand promotion and are not limited to the entertainment world.”

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Although salaries that nonprofits pay might be on the lower end of the scale, nonprofits offer the added benefit of “sustaining your family and also giving back to the community,” he added. “It’s very advanced, and some not as much. It is always a resource question. Their presence (on social media) can be spotty.”

Roberts, who will take the helm at the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Service in fall 2015, said many students at Baylor arrive with a “service ethos,” so showing them how to channel their passion follows naturally. In the nonprofit center, they learn how to prepare themselves for life after college by doing something that has a meaningful impact. Current Center leader Stan McDade has developed relationships and made informal connections in the community that often lead to internships, Roberts said. “Our job is to be the middle man between nonprofits and students who need their talents and energy.”

His team also promotes performers at regular Chapel gatherings for students. Morgan and Greer, the Hymns for Hunger duo, played at Chapel.

The remaining four teams include promotions, which is in charge of posters and flyers; an event team, which is in charge of helping with artist move-in and move-out, providing refreshments for the performers, getting posters signed, and coordinating merchandise, such as CDs and t-shirts; a publicity team, which submits press releases and free and paid advertisements to local media; and a social media team, which is in charge of all postings.

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