

**California State University, Fullerton
College of Business and Economics
Gianneschi Center for Nonprofit Research**

**Center Program Review: Self-Study
2023-2024**

Mar 15, 2023

Established in 1996. Assigned to the College of Business & Economics (CBE) as a Center of Excellence by Provost in January 2014.

Last Reviewed in 2018

<https://business.fullerton.edu/engagement/gianneschi-center>

Prepared by:

Dr. Chethan D Srikant, Phd, MBA, BE (Engg),
Associate Professor - Management Department
Academic Director - Gianneschi Center
College of Business & Economics
California State University, Fullerton
Office Phone: (657)278-3403
Office Location: SGMH-5358
csrikant@fullerton.edu

PREAMBLE AND CONTEXT

There were multiple changes to the Director position at the Gianneschi Center for Nonprofit Research (Center) since the last review in 2018. Mr. Zoot Velasco was fulltime Director from Jan 2018- June 2021. From June 2021 to August 2023 the Center did not have a dedicated director. Instead, it was managed by the office of Dean of CBE, Dr. Sridhar Sundaram.

Dr. Chethan D Srikant, was appointed the Director of center in August of 2023, with certain goals (see below) for rejuvenating and increasing the center's scope and impact. This necessitated a minor modification to the center's name and mission. Currently, the center is undertaking this name change process with the help of ORSP and Dr Binod Tiwari, AVP Research and Sponsored Projects. The new proposed name for the center is “Gianneschi Center for Social Impact.” This was done because the term “Non-profit research” connotes a very specific activity and does not capture the essence of the center as effectively as the term “Social Impact” does.

MISSION, PURPOSE, AND GOALS

Current Mission and Vision*

The mission of the Gianneschi Center for Nonprofit Research (Center) is to support and encourage the work of Orange County’s charitable organizations. Our vision is to be the leading resource connecting nonprofit organizations, philanthropic foundations, businesses, the university and the larger community by facilitating meaningful discussion—through education and research—of issues affecting the nonprofit sector.

*Note: This mission and vision are from the 2018 full review of the center, which ORSP shared. We could not ascertain if the mission or vision were the same as what was provided in the founding documents for the center, as those documents are no longer available.

Proposed Mission and Purpose

The mission of the Gianneschi Center for Social Impact (Center) is to support and encourage positive societal impact through organizations and communities associated with the College of Business & Economics (CBE) at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).

The center's purpose is to provide a multi-stakeholder collaborative platform for enhancing positive social impact by engaging nonprofit organizations, businesses, CBE students, CBE faculty, academic institutions (both within and outside CSUF), and the larger community.

Goals

As part of his appointment, Dr Chethan D Srikant was tasked with achieving the following goals:

- Through the center’s activities, support fulfillment of CBE’s community mission – “We positively impact the organizations and communities we serve through intentional engagement”.
- Enhance mission alignment between the center and the above CBE mission through:
 - o Thought leadership
 - Internally (across CBE centers and departments), increase awareness and salience of social impact, broadly defined as enhancing the positive impacts and mitigating potential negative impacts of businesses, social enterprises, and non-profits on society.

- Create knowledge artifacts on issues related to the social impact of businesses, social enterprises, and/or non-profits through personal research efforts, and engagement of other CBE/CSUF faculty and international experts
- Community engagement
 - Organize events (seminars, conferences, workshops and other similar activities) that bring together different stakeholders (faculty, students, businesses, non-profits, and others) to exchange ideas on enhancing the social impact of businesses, social enterprises, and/or non-profits, thus bringing recognition to the center and college
 - Design and implement engagement models that help local business enhance their social impact; help local NPOs adopt functional (e.g., marketing, finance, and operation) best practices; and help local social enterprises develop sustainable models that balance social impact and financial viability.
- Academic connections
 - Lead collaborative academic efforts by working with faculty and centers within and outside CSUF in different areas related to social impact
 - Provide opportunities for students to participate in center-related activities

ACTIVITIES

The following Activities were carried out during Mr. Zoot Velasco's director role (Jan 2018 to June 2021):

- Redesigned the "Summer School for Nonprofits" (which was redundant of other training and had become stale) into the G3X Conference and G3X Conversations series
- Podcast on nonprofit issues called "501c3bs".
- Changed the Gianneschi Fellowship program to a leadership training program with scholarships subsidized by OC Community Foundation and Sempre Energy.
- Conducted research on NPOs that grew during the great recession against the trend. This was funded by the OC Community Foundation.
- Coordinated with Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in CBE to provide info related to COVID PPP funding to the nonprofit community

The following Activities were carried out during Dr. Chethan D Srikant's director role (since August 2023, 10 months):

Community engagement

- Discussions with multiple internal and external stakeholders to understand needs and opportunities related to social impact in the community
- OneOC – It is an NPO that helps other NPOs become better and also helps companies in their engagement with NPOs.
 - Scheduled monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of every month to coordinate collaborative efforts
 - Some of the opportunities that are being explored and planned:
 - Extension of OneOCs CVCOC model to small and family businesses
 - Internship opportunities for students at NPOs
 - Promoting skills based volunteering of CSUF students
 - Tapping into CSUF alumni for leadership positions in NPO sector
 - One-off training workshops with NPOs using CBE faculty
- Other NPOs where we are exploring partnership opportunities – OCCF and UnitedWay

Academic Connections – other centers at CBE

- Center for Family Business
 - Assisted with evaluating and selecting nominees for their Hall of Fame award in Excellence in Social Impact.
 - Planning for joint collaboration on
 - Extending CVCOC model to family businesses
 - Joint research program on the social impact of family businesses
 - Student internship programs evaluating a family business's social impact and providing recommendations
- Small Business Development Corporation: The planned collaboration to evaluate small business social impact through MGMT 440 group project could not be implemented because eight client companies were not available. Currently, we are exploring alternate models for engagement, including student internships.
- Center for Entrepreneurship: Participated in a podcast hosted by the center where we discussed Gianneschi center and social impact in general.

Academic Connections - Students

- A Business Honors student team was mentored for a Social Venture competition at San Diego State University. Provided help and support for the second CSUF tema comprised mainly of engineering students.
- Taught two courses with direct relationship to social impact: MGMT 440 (Business & Society); MGMT 510 (CSR and Managerial Ethics)
- Design and creation of a new group project within MGMT 440 (Business & Society) for evaluation of social impact of local businesses.
 - This project could not be implemented since the center was relying on SBDC to provide eight clients for the project team and we came short of eight teams. So the center will work with SBDC to take a more methodical approach, starting with needs assessment and discussions with business owners.
- Working with the Business Advising group to design and planning Student internship opportunities in social impact.

Academic Connections – external

- Potential collaboration opportunities with Northampton University, UK are currently being planned.
- Potential collaboration opportunities with the College of Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) are currently being explored.

Thought leadership

- Applied for Scott-Jewett Social Justice grant along with Dr Jenny Zhang (Associate Dean of CBE), Dr Jianxin (James) Gong (Full Professor, Accounting) and Phoenix Van Wagner (Assistant Professor, Management). Our proposal has three tracks to achieve CSUF's social justice goals:
 - Diversity in Experiential Learning
 - Equity through Mental Health
 - Inclusive Undergraduate research
- Ongoing Research projects related to social impact
 - With Dr Asad Shafiq: Relationship between ESG performance and shareholder proposals
 - With Dr Gerard Beenen: Entrepreneurial struggles in Social Ventures.
 - Antagonistic relationships in corporate political activities

- Student output: Working with a student from MGMT 510 to convert a student project to a white paper to be published on the Center's website as a resource

Operational activities

- Center's name change process that included coordination with ORSP and creation of new bylaws for the center
- Meetings and discussions with potential candidates for the advisory board
- CSUF Catalog updated
- Center's Website undergoing a complete refresh
- Planning Center's Social media strategy using Instagram and linkedin

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Center is led by a part-time Director who is a full-time tenured Associate Professor of Management with full research, teaching, and other service responsibilities. The Center operates under the auspices of the College of Business and Economics and with specific oversight by the Dean of CBE. The Center has not had an Advisory Board since the last full review. The current director is in the process of establishing a new advisory board.

RESOURCES

People and Facilities

The Center Director works as a part-time director out of his regular faculty office. The Center currently hires a student assistant for support.

Philanthropic Foundation Accounts

Endowment: Gianneschi Center Endowment (90710) = \$258,645.83

Distribution Account 90700 = \$7,091.37

Distribution Account 90760 = \$49,796.71

Endowment: Harry Gianneschi Professorship (10513) = \$180,548.00

Distribution Account 10563 = \$70,184.93

Auxiliary Services Account 09423 (established January 2014) is used to process salaries and stipends.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

The new Center Director took over in August 2023 with a goal to restart the center's activities on three fronts – thought leadership, community engagement, and academic connections (see goals above). He was also tasked with transforming the center into a multi-stakeholder collaborative platform for enhancing positive social impact. This required active engagement with nonprofit organizations, businesses, CBE students, CBE faculty, academic institutions (both within and outside CSUF), and the larger community.

Rejuvenating the center requires innovation, experimentation, feedback seeking, and continuous reevaluation. This process is expected to continue into the next academic year. While there have been some achievements, as detailed above, a lot more can be done by a deliberate approach that actively listens to and engages various stakeholders. As we start implementing the various initiatives, there will also be an emphasis on creating support infrastructure, efficient processes, and long-term relationships with multiple entities. We hope to achieve that in the next 3 to 5 years so that the center can scale its operations and achieve self-sustenance.