**DEPARTMENT:** School of Political Studies  
**TERM** FALL 2021  
**PROFESSOR:** Emily Regan Wills  
**RESEARCH TITLE:** *Alternative Approaches to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning in Transformative Grant-making*  
**NUMBER OF STUDENT:** 1-6  
**LANGUAGE:** English  
**ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE SUBMITTED IN FRENCH** YES

### RESEARCH DESCRIPTION:

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) are an essential part of contemporary practices in the nonprofit and international development field, particularly within the context of a push for results-based management techniques in the public and third sector. However, conventional MEAL approaches are often top-down and donor-imposed, rather than reflecting the priorities of nonprofits themselves or the communities they serve. Student researchers will join an applied research project in collaboration with Dalia Association (dalia.ps), a Palestinian community foundation, that aims to examine how alternative and transformative grantmakers have dealt with the problems of accountability to donors and communities, learning from successes and failures, and ensuring that projects are being carried out appropriately. Profiling progressive grantmakers from Latin America, Africa, and Asia will allow the team to draw conclusions to support the development of best practices in the field.

### KEY LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Students will become familiar with critical approaches to community development, nonprofit management, and grantmaking in the developing world through readings and discussions, carry out essential research tasks including writing background dossiers on cases, constructing interview questions, participating in interviews, analyzing interview data, and drawing conclusions. Group meetings will be conducted in English, readings may be in English and/or French according to student preferences, and written outputs may be in English or French. Students who can speak or read Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, or Assamese will be able to use their language skills productively on this team.