EDU 576: Contemporary Policy Issues in Higher Education

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Course Description:
This course is intended for students who are pursuing an advanced degree in higher education or a related area. Students in this course will explore contemporary policy issues in higher education. The purpose of this course is threefold: (1) Develop an understanding of key policy issues at the international, national, state and institutional levels. (2) To conduct policy analysis of national issues in American higher education. (3) To develop an integrated view of policy and practice for practitioners working in higher education. Students will use course readings, assignments, in class activities, a personal policy study and a group policy examination project to develop their skills and competencies related to policy in higher education.

Desired Learning Outcomes:
- Develop an understanding of current international, national, state and institutional specific policy concerns in higher education.
- Be able to apply basic policy analysis tools to contemporary policy issues.
- Be able to articulate how policy issues are inter-related to administrative practice in higher education.
- Develop a policy stance on complex and contentious contemporary issues in higher education.
- Express a multi-dimensional understanding of current issues in higher education.

Instructional Pedagogy and Expectations:
This course is designed to be a learning centered course with each student being responsible for maximizing his or her own learning. The instructional responsibility is to create a welcoming environment for all students where sharing differing views and intellectual intrigue are valued and respected. My commitment is to bring my very best in terms of resources, course organization and facilitation to create a high-quality learning experience. I have high expectations of students as to their; (1) preparation for class; (2) engagement with course content; and (3) performance on application assignments. I recognize that individuals learn and perform in a variety of ways and as such instructional approaches will be varied as will my appreciation for different learning and performance styles. In addition to this statement of instructional pedagogy and expectation I have found it useful to articulate the following expectations related to the class.
Attendance:
You are expected to be present at all sessions, should you not be able to be present please contact me in advance of class (e-mail is fine).

Assigned readings:
All class sessions will involve discussion of assigned readings; it is my expectation that you will have prepared these readings in advance of class. I will article two to four readings that you must read for each class period, other reading will be recommended but not required.

Blackboard
Class members are expected to check Blackboard (on-line course management software) several times each week for e-mail, discussion, and announcements and to access PDF course readings.

Group Activities:
Part of working in higher education is working with diverse individuals; as such this course will provide a practical forum for developing group functioning skills. Each class member is expected to participate in group discussions, activities and projects that will be a part of each class.

Assignments:
All assignments should be submitted on or before the due date. E-mail or paper submissions are acceptable; you will also be able to submit papers via blackboard. An e-mail submission is not complete until you have confirmation e-mail from me confirming receipt.

Required Books:


Other course reading will be provided in PDF format via Blackboard.
Assignments

1. **Class Participation** – Each student is expected to attend each class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. As participation in the class each week is valued, preparation is key as is participation in multiple different ways in each class meeting. The class participation grade will be awarded for attendance, preparation, participation and completion of class assessment activities based upon a self-completed assessment at the end of the semester. (10 points)

2. **Blogs Entries (6)** – Each individual must complete 6 different Blog entries that react to class readings throughout the semester. Each blog entry should be between 250 and 350 words in length and written in an academic form with references provided using APA citation. Each entry must be posted before class and react in a critical fashion to the reading assigned for the week (30 points/ 5 points per entry). It is the choice of each student as to what weeks you complete the blog entries.

3. **Book Review and Comparison** - Write a book review and comparison that should not exceed two double spaced pages excluding references. The review should very briefly summarize the Barnet and the Arum & Roksa books and then offer areas of comparison and contrast, along with a critique of the findings of each book. The book review and comparison is due November 3 (10 points).

4. **Individual Course Paper** – Each class member will choose a current issue and develop a course paper surrounding that issue. The paper will select a contested policy issue in higher education. The paper must examine at least 6 peer reviewed empirical articles related to the issue and present those issues in a form of a literature review. Additionally, the paper must outline at least two contrasted positions associated with the policy issue, and then argue for one of the positions. You will submit the paper as a first draft on October 20th. Your first submission should be as complete a version of the paper as possible and will be worth 15 points (at least 8 pages in length). You will receive feedback on your first submission by November 10th. The final submission will be due on December 15th and will be worth 15 points (at least 10 pages in length for masters, 15 for doctoral students).

5. **Group Literature Review Project** – Each student in the class will be assigned a group of four people (or as close as possible four) with whom to identify, review and report on eight high quality peer reviewed articles about a contested policy issue in higher education. Each member of the team will be provided with a scoring rubric to complete and the group will be responsible for providing a written summary of the group review, summaries of each article and a presentation to the class to outline their findings. Due December 15th (20 points).
Grading

1. Class Attendance and Participation  -  10 points
2. Six Blog Entries (5 points each)   -  30 points
3. Book Review and Comparison      -  15 points (Due November 3rd)
4. Individual Paper First Submission -  15 points (Due October 20th)
5. Individual Paper Second Submission -  15 points (Due December 15th)
6. Group Literature Review Project -  15 points (Due December 15th)

Total 100 points

A = 90 to 100 points
B = 80 to 89 points
C = 70 to 79 points
D = 60 to 69 points
F = 59 points or less
Course Schedule

Session 1.1: Course Overview
September 1

This session will provide an introduction to contemporary policy issues in higher education. The class will examine higher education issues in relationship to society; higher education and national policies; higher education and state policy; and policy issues facing institutions.

Lecture: Mission, Market and Learning: Examining Contemporary Issues in Higher Education

Lecture Readings On Blackboard:


Discussion: Your views on the state of higher education.

Session 1.2: The Relationship Between Higher Education and Society
September 8

Lecture: A Rapid and Linear Historic Overview

Lecture Readings

-- Chapter One, Patterns in Higher Education Development; and
-- Chapter Two, Ten Generations of Higher Education

Discussion: Trust and Public Good

Discussion Readings On Blackboard:
Selected entitled Kezar and Chambers in PDF


Start

**Session 1.3: Higher Education, The Media and Accountability**  
**September 15**

**Lecture:** Higher Education and the Media

*Lecture Reading:*
-- Chapter Three, Autonomy and Accountability: Who Controls Academic?  
-- Chapter Five, The Federal Government and Higher Education  
--*Chapter Six, The States and Higher Education  
--*Chapter Eight, The Hidden Hand: External Constituencies and their Impact

**Discussion:** Why accountability now and what does it mean for practice?

*Discussion Readings On Blackboard:*

*Optional

**Continue:**

**Session 1.4: Access to Higher Education**  
**September 22**

**Lecture:** Conceptualizing Access

*Lecture Readings:*
-- Chapter Eighteen: The Diversity Imperative: Moving to the Next Generation

*On Blackboard:*
*Closing the Expectations Gap by the Lumina Foundation

**Discussion:** Access and the Issue of Affirmative Action

**Discussion Readings:**


**Start:**

**Session 1.5: The Cost of Higher Education**

**September 29**

**Lecture:** Understanding Higher Education Tuition and Cost

**Lecture Readings:**

On Blackboard:
--Chapter One, Trends in the Affordability of Public Colleges and Universities: The Contradiction of Increasing Prices and Increasing Enrollment
--Chapter Two, The Paradox of College Prices: Five Stories with No Clear Lession

-- Chapter Twelve, Financing Higher Education: Who Should Pay?

**Discussion:** What should be done about the rising cost of tuition?

**Continue:**

**October 6 – No Class**

**Continue:**
Session 1.6: Academic Capitalism and Changing Knowledge Regimes
October 13

Lecture: Examining the Theory and Application of Academic Capitalism

Lecture Readings:

-- Chapter Sixteen: Markets in Higher Education: Trends in Academic Capitalism

On Blackboard


Discussion: To what extent should universities follow a business model? How far have they already moved toward the market? What is the promise and peril of the move toward the market?

Continue:

Session 2.7: Liberal Education
October 20

Due Today: Individual Policy Paper First Submission

Lecture: Liberal and Vocational Education: Different Forms for Different Students?

Lecture Reading:

-- Chapter Fifteen, Curriculum in Higher Education: The Organizational Dynamics of Academic Reform

On Blackboard:
--Chapter Five, Liberal education: Slip-Sliding Away?

Discussion: What learning matters in the knowledge economy?

Continue:

Session 2.8: Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
October 27

Lecture: From Teaching to Learning

- Chapter Eleven: Presidents Leading: The Dynamics and Complexities of Campus Leadership

On Blackboard


Discussion: Do we really care about learning, really?

Continue:

Session 2.9: Assessment in Higher Education
November 3

Lecture: The Purposes and Forms of Assessment in Higher Education

Lecture Readings: (On Blackboard)


**Discussion:** Are the improvement and accountability purposes of assessment compatible?

*Blackboard Optional Readings:*


*Optional

**Session 3.10: Academic Freedom**

**November 10**

**Due Today:** Your feedback on your individual policy papers back to you.

**Lecture:** Defining the Parameters of Academic Freedom

*Lecture Reading:*


--Chapter Four, Academic freedom: Past, Present and Future beyond September 11.

--Chapter Fourteen, Graduate education and research: Interdependence and Strain.

**Discussion:** Do students have academic freedom, or simply a chilly classroom?

**Session 3.11: Faculty Issues**

**November 17**

**Discussion:** Tenure, promotion and all that stuff… What will faculty be like in the future?

*Discussion Reading:*


--Chapter Nine, Harsh realities: The professoriate faces a new century.

**Session 3.12: Students**
December 1

Lecture: Defining who are students of today, what does the demographics tell us?

Lecture Reading:
-- Chapter Ten: College students in changing contexts.
--Chapter Thirteen: The Digital Technologies of Learning and Research

Discussion: Just what are the student issues of the moment?

Session 3.13: International Issues in Higher Education
December 8

Lecture: Bologna and Beyond, International Implications for Higher Education

Lecture Reading (On Blackboard):


Discussion: To what extent is higher education “globalized”?

Session 3.14: Final Discussions
December 15

Due Today: Final Individual Paper, Group Presentations (20 minutes each)