Course Description

*Academic Affairs and Student Development in Postsecondary Education* focuses on colleges and universities as teaching-learning environments. Class sessions highlight critical issues and scholarship related to the academic aspects of college and university campuses. Key concepts and theories that frame higher education research in this area are examined.

The course is divided into two sections, as follows:

1) *Teaching-Learning Environments (TLEs)*

This section is designed to familiarize students with TLEs, the forces that shape them, and how scholars frame answers to TLE-related questions. Consideration is given to three general sets of factors acting on TLEs: individual, organizational, societal factors.

2) *Critical Issues in TLEs*

The section explores several issues colleges and universities encounter as teaching-learning environments; these include defining and assessing the quality of higher education, enhancing diversity, and protecting academic freedom.

Course Learning Goals

By the conclusion of the course, students should:

- Be knowledgeable about and conversant with the research and scholarship that informs a thoughtful understanding of higher education institutions as complex and multi-layered teaching-learning environments;

- Be able to articulate your own understanding of and position on what teaching-learning environments are and the forces that shape them, as well as on several persistent professional and scholarly issues that are related to student learning and college teaching within the context of contemporary higher education practice; and

- Be knowledgeable about and conversant with major approaches to research and scholarship that comprises the CSHPE Academic Affairs and Student Development concentration.
Course Requirements

1) Class Participation (30% of final grade)
The primary course format will be discussion of the issues raised in the readings. My assumption is that each we are here to learn together and that each participant has important insights to share. Thus, each member's contribution to the overall group process is key to our collective success.

Making your best possible contribution will require completing all reading assignments in a thorough and critical manner. This means using strategies such as taking notes while reading, writing down questions and points of disagreement or affirmation, issues to be explored further, and coming to class prepared to be an active participant in the group learning process. It also requires the willingness to share your ideas and relevant experiences and to actively listen to others. Last, it requires that class members take responsibility for sharing their views as clearly and thoughtfully as possible, and for seeking understanding of points others make you don’t understand.

I will also construct several class exercises designed to give you practice gaining skills analyzing and interpreting the readings.

Written Assignments
Please deposit all course papers under the appropriate assignment in our course Canvas site.

All written assignments should conform to the *APA Publication Manual* (6th Edition), be printed in 12-type font, and be double-spaced. **PLEASE NOTE:** This manual contains MUCH more than the format for referencing citations (e.g., the section on gendered language and using graphic elements in the text). Several websites exist that cover only APA referencing style; this will not be sufficient for developing your own understanding of and proficiency with the kinds of guidelines addressed in this manual. There is a copy in the main CSHPE Office for you to use there; please use it! **I strongly recommend purchasing a hard copy (with the spiral binder).**

2) Reaction Paper(s) (10% of grade for each paper)
These two short papers (up to 3 pages, double spaced) are designed to help you prepare for class by providing an opportunity to practice reflecting critically on a selected reading listed in the course syllabus. Briefly summarize the focus of the reading, comment on its contribution(s), and offer your critique of the argument the author(s) puts forward. Conclude with your observations about how the reading might be used as a guide for understanding the teaching/learning process and the role of TLEs in collegiate contexts. Be prepared to summarize and discuss your responses in class.

Reaction Paper #1: Select a reading from the Faculty unit (Week 5); this paper is due October 9, 1PM.
Reaction Paper #2: Select a reading from the Organizational Influences unit (Week 7); this paper is due by Oct. 23, 1PM.

3) Analysis of “Designing the Future(s) of the University” (25% of final grade)  
In a paper of up to ten pages (not counting the cover sheet or reference list), first summarize the major arguments offered President John DeGioia of Georgetown University in his address launching the “Designing the Future(s) of the University” initiative. The URL for the video of his address is available on Canvas (Week 9). Select four of his key points; for each, explain and interpret his comments through the lens of our readings. For example, consider how course readings and discussions to date support and/or raise questions about his assertions. Come prepared to discuss your responses in class. Due: Monday, November 6, 1PM.

4) Final Paper (25% of final grade)  
In this exam, you be asked to respond to one or two broad, integrative questions that have been raised through this course. In constructing your response, you will be asked to demonstrate your learning by applying your own thinking and reasoning skills and drawing on relevant course readings to frame and substantiate your answers. Your responses will be relatively short (about 8 pages); the questions will be distributed near the last day of class. Due: Friday, Dec. 15, 11AM

Policies on Late Papers and Missed Classes
If an emergency arises and you need additional time to complete an assignment, please notify me prior to the due date. In most cases, late papers will receive a penalty of half a grade.

Office Hours. To schedule an appointment, please sign up for a time during my posted office hours using the link provided at the top of the syllabus. If the posted times don’t work for you, I would happy to schedule an appointment at another time; please contact me by email to do so.

Absences. Discussion of readings is a key element of this course, and this requires your participation and attendance. Consequently, missing class will affect your class participation grade. However, circumstances occasionally arise when your presence may be required elsewhere. Please be very selective in such occasions, and whenever humanly possible, alert me in advance AND arrange to obtain notes, handouts, etc. and review class activities with two classmates. Missing more than two classes will earn you a personal meeting with me to discuss your absences. If you miss three classes (other than for religious holidays and for medical issues), I may suggest withdrawing from the course.

Readings
The course readings are available electronically through Canvas, and are listed by topic each week. Please bring a copy of the readings (either electronic or hard copy) with you each week.
Academic Integrity
Operating under the highest standards of academic integrity is implied and assumed. Academic integrity includes issues of content and process. Treating the course and class participants with respect, honoring class expectations and assignments, and seeking to derive maximum learning from the experience reflect some of the process aspects of academic integrity. Claiming ownership only of your own unique work and ideas, providing appropriate attribution of others’ material and quotes, clearly indicating all paraphrasing, and providing the trail to the original source of any idea are key components to the content of academic integrity. Aspire to the spirit and highest representation of academic integrity. I would also encourage you to read the University’s General Catalogue, especially the sections that detail your rights as a student and the section that discusses the University’s expectations of you as a student. (See http://www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications.)

Special Needs. If you believe that you may need an accommodation for a disability, please contact me within the first two weeks of the class so that I can arrange for appropriate accommodations. We can then work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD; (734)-763-3000; http://www.ssd.umich.edu); staff in this office will help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. They typically recommend accommodation through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. Also, if other life circumstances arise that may affect your participation or performance in this class, please let me know.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing
University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/.

Religious Observation
This class observes University defined holidays (such as Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Fall break). Because other days may be of more significance than University-designated holidays, please inform me as soon as possible if a class day or due date for a class assignment conflicts with your observance of a religious holiday that is important to you. I will work with you to accommodate your needs.
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

1-September 11  Introduction to the Course and Each Other

Discuss the purpose and structure of the course and its central question: *What do we mean when we speak of colleges and universities as TLEs?*

Create teams for next week’s reading assignment (described under Week 2).


**Unit 1: PERSPECTIVES ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

2-September 18  Universities and Colleges as Teaching-Learning Environments

**Idea of the University**


**Goals and Outcomes**


[Focus on the learning outcomes and the contemporary context for today (pp. 1-14); I encourage you to explore the rest when you have time!]

**To Be Completed Prior to Class:** In the higher education literature, universities and colleges are conceptualized in many ways - as complex organizations, political systems, fiscal agencies, management systems, etc. This assumes, of course, that universities and colleges are (or should be) teaching learning environments. *But what does this mean?*

The goals of this assignment are to: a) explore your conceptions of postsecondary institutions as teaching-learning environments (TLEs); and b) construct definitions of TLEs that we will use to frame our class discussions throughout the semester. Drawing
on the readings and your experiences as students and practitioners, please complete the following tasks:

(1) With your partner, discuss your views and reach consensus about the distinguishing features of college and university TLEs. Use the following questions to structure your conversations:

   a) Within your vision of a TLE, what is learning? What is teaching?
   b) When you refer to colleges’ and universities’ teaching-learning environments (TLEs), what do you mean?
   c) What are the key features of these TLEs that come to mind?

(2) Create a conceptualization of postsecondary institutions’ TLEs that captures your views. To do this, please finish the following sentence: When we speak about college teaching-learning environment(s), we mean…

(3) Identify areas of consensus and difference that emerged during your conversation and summarize these for discussion in class. Be prepared to talk about issues arising during your conversation, information you drew upon as you constructed your views, and other relevant factors.

Note Presentation teams for Week 4.

3-September 25   Student Influences – Individual Level

As you read each article, consider the following questions:
1) What does this piece set out to do and how well did it accomplish its purpose?
2) What underlying assumptions about whether and why students succeed do you discern from the way the author(s) explained success and failure?
3) How did the authors define and frame the central constructs?
   a) What was the basis for these definitions (e.g., were they grounded in theoretical propositions, in empirical evidence, in something else)? How did they organize their discussion of the construct and its definition in the literature review?
   b) What questions (if any) were raised for you about their definitions of the constructs (either conceptual or operational)?
   c) Were related constructs adequately distinguished?
4) What questions for further research emerge for you after reading this article?
5) Overall, what do you think are the strengths and limitations of this piece?

Learning and Motivation

Cognitive Development and Learning


Article to Critique as a Class

In addition to the questions above, please also list the insights into graduate student success and failure that you gained after reading Lovitt’s study.

4-October 2 Student Influences – Group Level

Select two of the following sets of readings:

Effects of Student Disengagement/Engagement


Peer Group Effects

Inkelas, K. K., Johnson, D., Lee, Z., Daver, Z., Longerbeam, S. D., Vogt, K. & Brown Leonard, J. (2006). The role of living-learning programs in students’ perceptions of intellectual growth at three large universities. NASPA Journal, 43(1), 115-143.doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.1574
Community Effects


Assignment: Teams will select one of the sets of readings for which they will be primarily responsible. Teams should meet prior to class to discuss the set of readings selected and to prepare a 30-minute class presentation that: a) explains the authors’ theoretical perspectives and arguments and summarizes the key findings; b) highlights concerns about any relevant aspect of the reading (e.g., their arguments, definitions, measures, conclusions); and c) fosters class discussion about the effects of group-level student influences on TLEs. Please include a visualization of the arguments made (e.g., a table, figure, graph, picture).

5-October 9 Faculty Influences

*DUE: Reaction Paper #1*

Reshaping Roles and Authority


Orientations to Teaching

[Note: Parry’s name was omitted from the title page of the journal, but is included on the title page of the article. I’ve never seen this before, so inserted brackets around Parry’s name!]


**Questions to Consider:** The writers consider faculty roles and work from multiple theoretical perspectives. Come to class ready to discuss the grounding (or lack of) in the articles, the methodological strengths and limitations, and the implications for further research and practice.

**6- October 16**  
UM Fall Break – NO CLASS

**7-October 23**  
Organizational Influences

*DUE: Reaction Paper #2 [confirm: submit conceptual frameworks?]*

Mission/Culture/Climate


Structures/Processes


**Questions to Consider:**
As you read the selections for this week, think about what you believe the mission of a college or university should be and what organizational structures (e.g., academic calendars, degree programs) and processes (e.g., admissions, instructional) you would put in place to accomplish these goals? Also consider what you think the impact of these practices, policies, etc., might be on a university’s TLE. Given the contemporary emphasis on “branding” and your readings so far, what do you think are some potential positive and negative impacts this practice might have on a campus’ TLES? Come prepared to discuss the authors’ theoretical lens and arguments as well as methods of inquiry and results.

**8-October 30 External Influences: National Debates and TLEs**

[Note: There are many facets to this article. For our purposes, I suggest reading it with an eye toward external influences on TLEs, using the specific events noted as examples of how such influences have played out over time.]


**Civic Engagement Debate**


Guest Speaker: David Scobey
Questions to Guide Class Discussion

National Commissions addressing select aspects of higher education are convened periodically in the U.S.; some of these spark debates about the purposes of higher education. How should campuses receive and respond to the recommendations from the reports they offer?

Today’s readings include background readings on the mission of higher education and national reports, an original report released by a national task force, a response from two faculty members to this report, and empirical research on students’ responses to campus climates around social responsibility. Specifically, Downs offers a critique that exemplifies the thinking of many who oppose the ideas expressed in A Crucible Moment; Scobey was a member of the Crucible Moment Report Task Force. By contrast, Barnhardt, et. al. (2015) consider how campuses can shape students’ understanding of their social responsibilities and civic skills.

Based on the assigned course readings thus far, please come ready to discuss your answers to the following questions:

advocates for its students to be active and involved citizens. Qualitative

What are the positions taken by the authors of A Crucible Moment and by Downs (2012)? What are their general arguments?

What assumptions about higher education TLEs do the authors of both the Report and articles share?

What assumptions about higher education TLEs are fundamentally different?

In what ways do these readings support the arguments put forth by the authors? Do you find unsubstantiated claims?

What questions do these readings raise about the different positions?

Assume that you are appointed to an ad hoc committee created by the Provost (the chief academic officer) on your campus and charged with responding to A Crucible Moment. The governing board wants to take up the matter of how the campus will react. In light of her belief that board members hold a variety of points of view, the Provost seeks to emphasize the underlying assumptions and has made it clear that she expects that all recommendations be well reasoned and evidence-based whenever possible. What will you recommend and why?

9-November 6 Discussion of President DeGioia’s Address (2014)

“Designing the Future(s) of the University” --Discussion of the main points of this address as interpreted in your papers. (For details and the URL for the video of this address are posted on Canvas, Week 9.)
https://umich.instructure.com/courses/93008/modules/items/186754
DUE: Analysis Paper
November 9-12  
Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), Columbus, Ohio.

**Unit 2: CRITICAL ISSUES IN TLEs**

10-November 13  
Assessment and TLE Quality


**Student Outcomes**


**Learning Analytics**


Baer, L. and Campbell, J. (2012). From metrics to analytics, reporting to action: Analytics’ role in changing the learning environment. In D. G. Oblinger (Ed.), *Game changers: Education and information technologies* (pp. 53-65). EDUCAUSE.

**Questions to Consider:** Think about the student outcomes that you would include in a summative assessment of undergraduate learning at the conclusion of the baccalaureate degree. What would you choose as so important no student should graduate without achieving it? Are the outcomes you identified reflected in the articles you read for today? What potential do you see for learning analytics in assessing student learning outcomes? What other questions does this set of articles raise for you?

In class, we will examine several of the key assessment tools mentioned in these articles.
11-November 20  Diversifying TLEs

Structural Diversity


Institutional Level – Climate and Curricular Diversity


Societal Level

Questions to Consider: “Diversity” is a complex concept used in reference to curriculum, teaching, learning, students, teachers and many other aspects of higher education. What is a diverse TLE? What effects does a diverse TLE have on learners and on faculty? In making a compelling argument to support affirmative action, colleges and universities (as well as businesses) talk of the need to prepare students to live in a diverse democracy and to work in diverse settings. What do you see as the challenges these expectations present to postsecondary TLEs?

12-November 27  Academic Freedom – Rights and Responsibilities-1: Freedom of Speech

Conceptions of Academic Freedom
[Note: This is available online from www.aacu.org and published in Liberal Education, Spring, 2006, Vol. 92(2), a special issue on academic freedom.]


Class Discussion: What key differences do you see between the perspectives reflected in the AACU Statement and Horowitz’ Statement? What is your assessment of the published responses to each Statement?

“Academic Freedom” – Freedom of Speech

Freedom of Speech among Students


Applebaum, B. (February 2009). Is teaching for social justice a “liberal bias”? Teachers College Record, 111(2), 376-408.

Class Discussion: You are the associate vice-president for student affairs at a public research university and have been asked to offer recommendations on how to respond to parental concerns arising from the publicity around this issue. What will you say?

Freedom of Speech among Faculty


Class Discussion: You have been invited to participate in a public debate about faculty rights and responsibilities around freedom of speech. The organizers have decided to use the Ward Churchill case to focus the debate. What main points would you convey?
Questions to Consider: Each set of readings listed above concludes with an anchoring discussion question at the end. Please come prepared to critique the readings and to answer the question posed there. In addition, consider this question: What do you see as the challenges presented by these issues for postsecondary TLEs?

13-December 4 Academic Freedom – Rights and Responsibilities-2: Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty among Students


Class Discussion: As the dean of student affairs, the academic associate dean of your college has asked you to work with him on the development of guidelines and practices to foster academic honesty among undergraduate students. Plagiarism is the first issue he wants to tackle. Based on these readings, what will you recommend? Based on other sources of awareness, what else might you recommend?

Academic Dishonesty – Faculty


Class Discussion: The student and faculty governments on your campus are at odds over a proposal to implement a student honor code. The sticking points are primarily around whether students or the faculty member teaching a particular class should be responsible for monitoring and enforcing such a Code. Which group do you think should be responsible? Why? What implications do you see for TLEs weighing this decision? What advantages or disadvantages do you see for reframing the solution in terms of creating a culture of integrity rather than an honor code?

Questions to Consider: Each set of readings listed above concludes with an anchoring discussion question or suggestions for practice. Please come prepared to critique the readings and to respond to their conclusions or questions posed. What do you see as the challenges presented by these issues for postsecondary TLEs?

For next week: See question posted on Canvas.
14-December 11      Looking Back, Looking Forward

[Last Day of Class]


Reflecting on the broad range of factors that affect TLEs, where do Rendon’s “agreements” fit in your emerging conceptualization of TLEs? What agreements about teaching and learning would you like to recast?

The remaining focus of our last class will be to reconsider the major questions of this course, your stance on them, and the kinds of questions you now seek to explore. (See specific questions posted on Canvas.)

I value your feedback. *Be sure to complete your Course Evaluation* (available through Canvas).

December 15      Final Paper Due
Thursday, 11AM