OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

This course is designed to provide students who are new to the study of higher education an overview of the field, its challenges, and opportunities. For those who have worked in college or university settings, it is an opportunity to engage in an examination of structures and fields within higher education yet outside of the university. Our focus is primarily the higher education system in the United States; however, we welcome those in the class who come from outside the U.S. to share the variations from other systems as options for new ways of thinking about the work of higher education. While this course introduces some of the historical background of higher education, its ultimate aim is to be contemporary in coverage and future focused. Because this is a survey of the field, no single topic can be covered with the depth that it deserves, but the course attempts to ensure students have a working knowledge of the structures, functions, major issues, and concerns within higher education, and opportunities to address these issues through readings, discussion, research, and projects.

The course is structured to present the world of higher education by posing overarching questions that allow us to explore enduring issues throughout its history: What is the purpose of higher education? Who is college for? How do people access and thrive in college? How do we structure the academy to allow it to do its best work? What do we teach and how do we teach to achieve our missions? How do we ensure the ongoing quality of higher education?

Using the higher education text, American Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century (Bastedo, Altbach, & Gumport, 2016), we frame the course with a brief historical overview of higher education in the United States, as it is important to understand the antecedents of our current system and to mark the evolution of our institutions overtime. How has higher education changed as it addresses the questions mentioned above? What phenomena in the society spur change and how does the higher education react, resist, or absorb these changes across various aspects of higher education (student populations, curriculum and pedagogy, faculty and staff, and interactions with community and the larger society)? When does higher education lead and when does it follow society?

The course spends some time looking at the impact of diversity, equity, and inclusion on higher education, an important issue for all members of the higher education community and one that requires openness to a critical examination of our system as it responds to the complexity of contemporary society. Through a number of readings, activities, and
class discussions, the course will consider the current status of race, gender, socioeconomic status, and other types of identities at colleges and universities, and how these issues shape campus climate and the student experience.

Additionally, understanding the U.S. higher education system requires understanding the various people who serve the system and how they have come to organize themselves to carry out the functions in higher education. Therefore, we spend some time reading about, discussing, and thinking about the roles of faculty, staff, and administrators within higher education. What are the roles and responsibilities assigned and how do people function in those roles? What is the nature of leadership within higher education? How do the various leadership roles ensure the accomplishment of institutional mission and ultimately the goals of higher education purports to accomplish for our society?

We bring our course to an end by asking an important question: What is the future of higher education? We join in projecting our own assumptions on what may be in store for our field. While, none of us will have an absolute answer to this question, we can leverage our current knowledge to consider issues that are currently being addressed, and we can anticipate issues and concerns that are already emerging within the field. It will be important to think about the future because those of you in the class who will be working in higher education will be operating in the forward movement of our profession, hopefully prepared with a strong sense of the issues and even possible solutions that grow out of your time of study at the University of Michigan.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to help participants accomplish the following objectives:
• To understand the big picture of U.S. higher education and situate that picture within both the historic and contemporary realities of higher education.
• To explore the organizational structures and goals of U.S. higher education, and its role within our society.
• To think critically about current issues in U.S. higher education (primarily) and their connection to other higher education systems.
• To anticipate the future of higher education and the opportunities available to shape or change that future.
• To explore a topic of professional interest through the study of a higher education program or intervention.

TEXTS AND REQUIRED READINGS

Required:

Other Class Readings and Suggested Bibliography:
In addition to the required textbooks, the Instructor will provide other readings through the Canvas course site. Readings will be assigned for each class and can be found on the Course Schedule.

Students should become familiar with prominent higher education journals and publications. There are several higher education news publications that are readily
available online and through the U-M Library, and many national newspapers (New York Times, Washington Post, etc.) cover important higher education stories.

We will spend some time in each class session discussing current higher education-based stories. Students should make it a practice to consult some of these on a regular basis.

These publications have online formats available through the U-M Library website:
- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Diversity in Higher Education

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The course readings and activities have been designed to achieve the following learning outcomes. Students completing the course will be able to:

- Provide a contextual history of major events impacting higher education in the United States.
- Discuss in written and oral formats the basic structural components of higher education and how these components contribute to educational goals of institutions.
- Describe the various types of higher education institutions and their roles within the larger system of higher education.
- Discuss significant issues in higher education and the backgrounds and implications of those issues.
- Access information about higher education institutions and systems.
- Produce a piece of research related to an identified issue or program in higher education.

**General Assumptions:**

Teaching about higher education carries with it certain assumptions that should be articulated to ensure that the underlying premises from which the course has been developed are explicit, even if members of the class may not agree with some of them.

**Assumptions:**

- Higher education is both a personal benefit and a public good. We frequently hear questions about whether higher education is more a personal benefit or a social or public good. This course assumes that it has been and will continue to be both.
- Higher education has an obligation to use its resources to address societal needs.
- Higher education in the United States should be open to all capable students.
- The study of higher education draws on a wide variety of formal research-based practices and informal observations about institutional and system behaviors. Therefore, we learn about higher education from a variety of sources and subject fields.
- Higher education has multiple goals and intended outcomes, but a primary one is the transfer of knowledge and skills needed for work, economic viability, and civic life in a democratic society.
COURSE FORMAT

Class Session Meetings: Class sessions for this course will occur synchronously via Zoom at the time scheduled on Wolverine Access. Each class session will be recorded and posted to the Canvas course site to be viewed asynchronously. If you do not wish to be recorded, please contact the Instructor during the first week of class to discuss alternative arrangements.

All completed written assignments will be submitted via the Canvas course site. The Instructor will hold virtual office hours by appointment using Zoom.

Classroom Usage: You have the option to use the classroom assigned to this course (listed on Wolverine Access) to conduct in-person work relating to group assignments. In-person classroom usage is limited to the scheduled time of the course and must adhere to all safety measures mandated by the State of Michigan and the University of Michigan.

Class Session Format: The course is designed so that to have the Instructor and students share in the joint process of constructing an environment of participatory learning through reading, research, discussion, and activities that stimulate learning and shared experiences. We will use one common text to help organize and frame our discussions, supplemented by various articles and readings that will be available on the Canvas course site.

Each three-hour class session incorporates a variety of activities in order to cover the content and engage students in the learning process. These activities include student discussions and presentations based on the readings, faculty-led mini lectures, class discussions, group projects, and written assignments. To function well, a seminar course relies heavily on the regular and active participation of all students.

Readings and assignments have been chosen to provide exposure to professional practice and scholarship in this subject area. They provide a foundation both for understanding higher education in the United States and also for engaging productively with guest speakers, course projects, and current issues in higher education. Throughout the term, you will be asked to demonstrate that you have read deeply and understand how to integrate what you have learned through reading in course activities and assignments.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHIES

The approach to the course and the underlying teaching strategy reflect conceptual understandings held by the Instructor:

Students bring different experiences, motivations, and learning styles to the classroom. The implications of this observation not only include the challenge to bring a wide range of ideas forward through readings and discussion, but also the need to recognize that students are taking the class for different reasons. Some may be taking the class as a basis for further research, others to broaden their career opportunities, and some out of a general interest in higher education. All students have something to contribute, but not all students will contribute in the same way.
The subject matter can be approached in a variety of ways. As we will discover, much of what is written about higher education as a general field of study is derived from the work of sociologists, psychologists, economists, and educators. Recently, higher education researchers have pointed to an emerging “science” to complement the “art” that has long dominated professional practice in education.

The teaching-learning processes in higher education are inherently transformational processes hidden in transactional exchanges. This principle is central to the seminar. It brings implications for the ways in which learning goes beyond a redistribution of information or resources between individuals and points to higher education’s ability to reshape identities and transform lives.

Learning should be fun and satisfying, but not entertainment. This subject matter deserves serious consideration. Open discussions and debate are encouraged. We learn through our differences of opinions and approaches, but we can also take pleasure in vigorous exchanges wherein our minds are presented with opportunities to re-think old concepts and perspectives and learn new ones. Laughter is encouraged.

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

- Engage students in learner-centered activities, supported by examination of relevant research using primary and secondary sources.
- Provide a balance of structured class activities and opportunities for students to think creatively about their learning process.
- Acquaint students with resources they can use for extended study in particular areas.
- Call upon students to use multiple intelligences and intellectual skills.
- Expect the Instructor to act as a facilitator of the learning process.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

All students are expected to participate and be engaged in completing the assignments for the class meetings - reading the required texts and other assigned readings; participating in class exercises and discussions, completing written assignments, developing an oral presentation, and participating in a group project.

While the Instructor will make all efforts to provide readings, questions, and assignment information through Canvas in a timely manner, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have all the readings and materials necessary to successfully complete assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Writing Style: All written assignments must be typed, spell-checked, proofread for grammar and usage, and conform to the style and reference notation format outlined by the 7th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Please double-space all assignments and use 12-point font with a one-inch margin on all sides of the paper. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments will be submitted through Canvas course site.
**Attendance Policy**: Class attendance is required, and participation is expected. This is a seminar course. Reading the material for class is important, but equally important is the conversation that takes place in the classroom. The sharing of ideas, active listening, and many questions form the basis of the learning process. This process assumes that students are in class regularly and engaged with the subject matter and each other—critical components to a successful course. Note-taking by a peer cannot take the place of being in class. Students should alert the Instructor in advance if they will miss a class. More than two excused absences will result in a required meeting with the instructor and may affect the participation grade.

**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 concept of academic integrity. Aspire to the spirit and highest representation of academic integrity. Please review the Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy for further information.

You are encouraged to read the U-M Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, especially the sections that detail your rights as a student and the section that discusses the University’s expectations of you as a student.

**Religious Observation**: This class observes University-defined holidays (e.g., Labor Day, Thanksgiving Recess). Because other days may be of more significance than a University-designated holiday, please inform the Instructor as soon as possible if a class day or due date for a class assignment conflicts with your observance of a holiday important to you. The Instructor will work with you to accommodate your needs.

**Late Assignments**: You are expected to submit assignments on the announced dates via the Canvas course site. Assignments submitted after the announced due date will receive point reductions - the later the submission, the more the point reduction.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**: If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make the Instructor aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

**Classroom Civility**: This course, to a great extent, is based on the give and take of discussion. Students are expected at all times to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the teaching and learning process. The expectations below will be discussed at
the beginning of our course and monitored throughout the class:

Community Expectations
• Know when to step up and step back in discussions.
• Express disagreement with respect.
• Assume that others have positive motives and are doing the best they can to learn from and engage with the material.
• Challenge the idea and not the person. If you wish to challenge something that has been said, you will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
• Support your statements. Use evidence and provide a rationale for your points.
• We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.
• Use technology in class respectfully, using laptops and mobile devices is permitted for coursework only.

Course Changes Policy: The Instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus as needed to accurately reflect the course coverage and to enhance the learning outcomes of the course. When, or if changes are necessary, they will be announced in advance and students will have appropriate time to adjust.

COVID-19 Statement: For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the State of Michigan and the University of Michigan, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the Wolverine Culture of Care and the University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19. Your ability to participate in this course in-person as well as your grade may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity. If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis (if available) or to disenroll from the class. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Students Rights and Responsibilities, which includes a COVID-related Statement Addendum.

COURSE GRADES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

While grades are a necessary tool given the educational models we have adopted, they are not the end goals of a course. They are at best a representation of attempts to codify for our systems of accountability that some level of learning has taken place. The Instructor starts with the assumption that all students in the class are capable of learning and plan to earn the highest grade for the course to mirror the level of their work and involvement with the subject matter. Therefore, the expectation is that students will/should earn an “A” grade.

In the event that students do not fully meet this expectation, other grades will be assigned in accordance with the scale given below. The course will use the following assignments for awarding points for the various course activities:
Class Participation (30 points total)

This course is established with class-based discussion, not lectures. While the Instructor will provide some lecture sections, the expectation is that students will read the assigned material and come prepared for the reciprocal learning that takes place from the shared discussions and other activities that will occur in class.

- **Discussion Leading (20 points):** Class participation also means that students will be present for class and will join in the various class-related activities that help introduce them to the field of higher education. One expectation is that all students will be assigned to facilitate a discussion based on the readings from the text and/or other sources. Use of PowerPoint or other visuals is encouraged; however, students may use other presentation formats to engage the class and stimulate discussion. Leading the class discussion around the readings means being prepared to summarize the content of the material, raise questions about the material and suggest how it helps us understand the content focus for that class session. It is important to look at what authors have said, but perhaps have not said in their material and to suggest other perspectives or points of view, where appropriate.

- **Engagement (10 points):** All members of the course are expected to participate and be engaged in completing the assignments for the class meetings - reading the required texts and other assigned readings; participating in class exercises and discussions; completing written assignments; and developing an oral presentation.

Institutional Type Analysis (15 points)

- **Due October 4 at 11:59 pm on Canvas**

Select an institutional type (e.g., community college, research institution, for-profit, tribal colleges). Based on an analysis of historical and current material related to the institutional type, develop and write a paper focused on a particular issue or concern related to this type of institution. The paper should be 5-7 content pages in length; must include at least 6 sources; and present a thesis or research question that can be addressed in the paper. The paper will use current American Psychological Association (APA) formatting.

Students should include the following information:

- Discussion of why you selected this type of institution;
- Historical information about the institution type;
- A discussion that situates the institutional type within the framework of higher education (mission, structure, governance, funding);
- Define one or two specific issues or concerns for you related to this type of institution.
Issue in Higher Education Analysis (25 points total)

- Due November 1 at 11:59 pm on Canvas

The field of higher education is complex and dynamic, and while we often discuss the slow movement of higher education (decisions and outcomes), we understand that our field is constantly changing, and that change often brings controversy. Higher education practitioners should be aware of these complexities and changes and able to understand and discuss the implications of them for the various constituencies. In this course, a written assignment will take on a number of these important and sometimes controversial issues to examine them from various perspectives.

Select a current issue impacting higher education (e.g., rising tuition costs, use of SAT/ACT scores in admissions, faculty tenure process). Based on an analysis of historical and current material related to the issue, develop and write a paper focused on the challenges and opportunities that impact possible solutions to the issue. The paper should be 8-10 content pages in length; it must include at least 10 sources; and present a thesis or research question that can be addressed in the paper. The paper will use the current American Psychological Association (APA) formatting.

Students should include the following information:

- Discussion of why you selected this issue;
- Historical or background information about the issue;
- A discussion of multiple sides to the issue and the factors that could enter into decision-making processes to address the issue (challenges, possible solutions, short and long-term impact of solutions).

Future of Higher Education Group Project (30 points total)

- Group Presentation (10 points): November 19
- Model Higher Education Institution or System Paper (20 points): due December 6 at 11:59 pm on Canvas

This course is designed as an introduction to higher education. As such it seeks to have students think about the purposes, structures, and organization of institutions, but it also seeks to have students anticipate and plan for the future. Project Groups for this assignment will be organized during the second week of class. Groups will be asked to work together over the course of the semester to design an ideal new institution (private or public) or higher education system for a state. The goal is to use what you know about higher education to develop new models or to improve on our current models.

Students should collaboratively write a paper that identifies existing challenges or opportunities to improve higher education and how they may be addressed in the future. In this paper students should:

- Identify existing challenge(s) that is/are substantiated with previous research/data;
- Identify of structures or characteristics that would be introduced or changed to address these, with accompanying rationale based in the literature;
• Address how you expect these changes to address future higher education needs.

The paper should be 10-12 content pages in length; must include at least 15 sources; and use APA formatting as noted in the syllabus. The presentation of this project will involve both a visual presentation (e.g., PowerPoint presentation) accompanied by an oral presentation as scheduled in the Course Schedule.

**Total Points Possible: 100 Points**

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<td>Below 73</td>
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COURSE SCHEDULE

Session 1 (September 3)

Introduction to the Course
• Introductions: Your higher education journey
• So why study higher education? What do we need to know about higher education and how do we need to learn it?
• Course Plan and Requirements (review of the Course Syllabus)

Session 2 (September 10)

Roles and Goals of Higher Education
• What are the roles and goals of higher education?
• Please review the mission and history of your undergraduate institution(s).
• Groups formed for the Future of Higher Education Group Project

Canvas:

Session 3 (September 17)

The History of Higher Education
• How did we get where we are?
• Creating a chronology of higher education: major events, players, and changes.

Text:

Canvas:
Session 4 (September 24)

The Structure of Higher Education
• How are we organized to do the work of higher education?

Canvas:

Session 5 (October 1)

Who are the internal players: The professoriate and other roles
• What is the role of the professoriate?
• Who is included in administrative leadership?
• What are other higher education staff roles?

*Guest Speaker from the Rackham Graduate School.

Text:

Canvas:

Session 6 (October 8)

Access to Higher Education
• Who’s in and who’s out: accessing higher education.

Text:
Canvas:

**Session 7 (October 15)**

**Higher Education Finance and Student Financial Aid**

- Who pays for what?

*Guest Speaker from the National Center for Institutional Diversity.*

**Text:**

**Session 8 (October 22)**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and its impact on the Campus Climate**

- How do we come together as a campus community?: The campus experience - implications for equity and inclusion.

*Guest Speaker from the Center for Educational Outreach.*

**Text:**

Canvas:
Session 9 (October 29)

Curriculum and Pedagogy
- What do we teach?
- What do students learn (or not)?
- How do students experience college?
- Curricular reform from an organizational perspective.

Text:

Canvas:
   2a. Associated video to watch before class: https://vimeo.com/21656324

Session 10 (November 5)

Higher Education Outcomes
- How do we define student success?
- What do states and communities need?
- What do employers want?
- How do we assess outcomes?

*Guest Speaker from the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching.

Canvas:
Session 11 (November 12)

Serving the Public Good

- What is community engagement?
- How do we assess outreach?
- What “public good” does higher education serve?

Text:

Canvas:

Session 12 (November 19)

Future of Higher Education Group Presentations

- Each group will have 20 minutes to present their project

Session 13 (December 3)

What’s ahead; the future of higher education

- Who gets to determine the future of higher education?
- What are the challenges and opportunities? 
- What have we learned and what are new considerations?
- Course debrief

Canvas: