

Higher Education in the United States

(HIED 545)

Fall 2012 Fridays, 8 - 11 am.

403 Rackley Building

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Drop in Office Hours: Fridays, 11-Noon and Tuesdays 1- 2:30

Goals and Desired Outcomes for HI ED 545:

1. To understand the chief characteristics of U.S. higher education, and to consider a range of perspectives on it by reading and discussing scholarship in this field of study. .
2. To be able to engage in substantive debate about this field through the close reading of recent empirical and historical research. A special focus in 2012 will be on debates about the core purposes of higher education in contemporary American society and, as one part of that discussion, on the place of inter-collegiate athletics
3. To relate scholarship to key policy issues identified by reading *The Chronicle of Higher Education* or *InsiderHigherEd* (<http://www.insidehighered.com/>).
4. To improve analytical and communication skills through weekly discussions and two essays.
5. To introduce Penn State University's Human Subjects and Academic Integrity requirements.

Requirements on which the grade in the course will be based:

- 20% - Class participation, including one turn writing questions for a) the current topics discussion and for b) the readings discussion, as well serving as moderator (details explained in class)
- 20% - Take-home mid-term exam. At least one essay question will be on Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*. Available noon, Oct. 24 and due noon Oct. 26
- 20% - 3,000 word essay on either Kirp, *Shakespeare, Einstein...* or Delbanco, *College...*
- 20% - 3,000 word essay on either Shulman & Bowen, *Game of life* or Clotfelter, *Big-time...*
- 20% - In-class exam, December 14.
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Academic Integrity Policy

All university policies (<http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/>) regarding ethics and honorable behavior apply.

Required course textbooks to be purchased on-line or at Websters (Beaver Street):

All of the readings for this class are available on the ANGEL website except for the following three books, which you should purchase as soon as possible:

Delbanco, Andrew 2012. *College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Clotfelter, Charles T. 2011. *Big-Time Sports in American Universities* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press).

Shulman, James and William Bowen. 2001. *The Game of Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

August 31. Introduction & Contexts of American Higher Education

ANGEL (<https://cms.psu.edu/>) and email attachment sent in August to students:

Please read in advance of first class and come prepared to discuss:

- 1) Introduction: The contexts of American Higher Education. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl, & P. J. Gumport (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011
- 2) “Higher Educational Diversification in the United States,” by D. Bruce Johnstone
- 3) The Spencer lecture by Charles Clotfelter

September 7. Students and Undergraduate Education

Discussion #1 on current topic selected by a class participant. A class member will have identified an article from *Inside Higher Education* or the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. This person will upload the article (to a drop-box on the Angel website) and attach discussion questions by the previous week (in this case, by September 3). The article should relate in some way to the topic of this week’s discussion (for example, in this case, to the history of higher education). Discussion leaders should bring several *printed* copies of these discussion questions to class in order to facilitate a 30 minute discussion.

Also: listen to the entire (67 minute) streaming episode of *This American Life*, available by clicking: <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/396/1-Party-School>

Pascarella, E. T. & Terenzini, P.T. (2005). How college affects students: A summary. In E. Pascarella and P. Terenzini, *How college affects students, Vol 2.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

September 14. Curriculum

Materials on Angel website by Rudolph, Latucca, and Stark.

September 21. Reforming the Curriculum: In-depth Reading 1.

ON ANGEL

Introduction and Chapters 1 – 4 of Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense for Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

September 28 – October 5: In-depth Reading 2.

We will read and discuss Andrew Delbanco’s new book over these two weeks (please purchase and read in advance). Also read supplemental material on Angel.

Oct. 12 Federal Government and State Government

- 1) Report of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education, U.S. Department of Education (2006). *A test of leadership: Charting the future of U.S. higher education*. Available through Angel or the Web site:
<http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/final-report.pdf>
- 2) Also, read one of the following state reports: Pennsylvania, California, Texas, Michigan, New York, Georgia. Available through Angel or the Web site <http://measuringup.highereducation.org/>.
- 3) Also read: "Higher Education in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania"

October 21. Financing Higher Education

Ronald Erhenberg, "Financing Higher Education"

John Cheslock and Rodney Hughes, "Differences Across States in Higher Education Finance Policy" National Center for Education Statistics (2001, December). *Executive Summary: Study of college costs and prices, 1988-89 to 1997-98*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. (FYI: The full report is available at <https://nces.ed.gov/das/epubs/2002157/>)

Liang Zhang, "Does State Funding Affect Graduation Rates at Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities?" *Educational Policy* 23 (2009): 714-731.

October 26 Research Integrity and Plagiarism NOTE: Meet in Rackely 103

Before Class: register and at least begin CITI course <https://www.citiprogram.org/Default.asp?>

Read:

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/13/opinion/13tue4.html?_r=1&src=me&ref=general
<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2010/7/12/when-did-cheating-become-an-epidemic>

On Angel:

Charles Lipson, "Plagiarism and academic honesty." Pp. 32-48 in *Doing honest work in college: How to prepare citations, avoid plagiarism, and achieve real academic success* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Nicholas Steneck, *Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Washington: Department of Health and Human Services.

November 2. Markets in Higher Education: In-depth Reading 2.

David Kirp, *Shakespeare, Einstein, and the bottom line: The marketing of higher education*
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

On ANGEL: listen to interview with David Kirp

Ehrenberg, R. (2002). Reaching for the brass ring: The U.S. News & World Report rankings and competition. *Review of Higher Education*, 26(2), 145-162.

Lederman, D. (2009). 'Manipulating,' Er, Influencing 'U.S. News'. *InsideHigherEd.com*. June 3.
(<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/06/03/rankings>)

Lederman, D. (2009). Rankings Rancor at Clemson. *InsideHigherEd.com*. June 4.
(<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/06/04/clemson>)

Malcom Gladwell, "The Order of Things"

Colin Diver, Two short articles on rankings, SAT, and education as non-instrumental good

Upton Sinclair, *The Goosestep* (selections)

November 9 and 16:

In-depth reading 4: *The Game of Life*

November 30 and December 7.

In-depth reading 5, *Big-Time Sports in American Universities*
(*video conference with author, Charles Clotfelter*)

December 14. Wrapping up, closure, Essay Exam

HIED 545 Mid-term

Select any 10 out of the following 12 questions. Write responses of *no more than 150 words* for each.

1. D. Bruce Johnstone lists several important unique characteristics of US higher education, compared with other countries. The last of these, concerning the “open door,” creates some unique pressures on counselors inside higher education who must help students (or potential students, if the counselors are at the high school level). What are these pressures and what can a professional do to confront them?
2. Suppose you are a banker reading a loan application from a student whose parents are willing to use their home as collateral. Your computer program estimates that, given the student’s high school grades, test scores, and several encounters with the legal system, there is only a 10% chance that the student will be able to repay a (non-Federally Guaranteed) loan. What is your decision? Offer the loan or not? Now suppose you are not a banker but a financial aid officer at Penn State and your computer tells you the same thing about this student. The student must receive a loan to continue. Do you or do you not advise the student to obtain a loan from a bank? What do you tell the student?
3. According to Terenzini and Pascarella, what are the benefits of attending a highly ranked college? What evidence do they use to arrive at this conclusion?
4. According to Kevin Dougherty, what are the differences in likelihood of BA attainment between a student who begins in a 2-year college versus the same student beginning in a 4-year college? What possible explanations are for the finding?
5. Frederick Rudolph concludes the chapter we read by suggesting that curriculum is merely an “accidental compromise.” However, Lisa Lattuca and Joan Stark envision a more deliberate, planned and rational construction. Based on evidence from what you have seen (both in this class and elsewhere), which side is closer to the truth?
6. What advantages and disadvantages does Martha Nussbaum find with diversity requirements at the Universities of Reno and of Buffalo?
7. What is normative skepticism, and why does Martha Nussbaum believe that to refuse to moral standards to a foreign person or culture is not really a form of respect for it?
8. What is the “cardinal principle” (p. 138) that colleges have abandoned, according to Andrew Delbanco, and why does he consider this a problem? Do you consider it a problem? Why or why not?
9. Delbanco states that early admissions programs “advantage the already advantaged,” do you agree with this? What are the pros/cons of early admissions programs?
10. What support does Delbanco provide for the argument that the American college was always intended to develop the “whole student?”
11. In 1945, Harvard University published a report “General Education in a Free Society” (otherwise known as the red book), to advocate the importance of general education. But in chapter 3, according to Delbanco, merely “a vestige of that curriculum survives today.” What are the fundamental problems behind the eclipse of general education? What forces impede general education in American university?
12. Based on data presented by the Educational Testing Service, on average how old would a college graduate have been in 2005 by the time she or he had cumulatively netted (i.e. after paying for college) more earnings than a high school graduate? What might the same graph look like today? Are there any other measurable benefits besides money that might explain why people are still willing to pursue higher education? Any benefits for society?