

College Student Affairs Capstone Seminar

Spring 2013

Dr. Gregory Blimling, Professor

Office 311 - Graduate School of Education

Gregory.Blimling@GSE.Rutgers.Edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Classroom, Meeting Times, and Dates

1. Class meeting times and location: Tuesday (10:20 – 1:00 Livingston LSH A121) and Thursday (9:00 – 11:40 Livingston LSH A137)
2. The class meets from January 22 – March 14. It will not meet during ACPA (March 4-7) or on February 21 (2013 CSA Interview Days)
3. **Special Note:** This class meets twice a week for approximately the first seven weeks, with one week off for ACPA. The pace of instruction and the due dates for assignments are very quick. You cannot postpone work in this course or you will fall behind and miss deadlines.

Required Books

Hamrick, F. A., & Benjamin, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Maybe I should . . . : Case studies on ethics for student affairs professionals*. Lanham, MD: American College Personnel Association and University Press of America.

Stage, F.K. & Hubbard, S.M. (eds.). (2012). *Linking theory to practice: Case studies for working with college students (third edition)*. New York: Routledge.

Levine, A. & Dean, D. R. (2012). *Generation on a tightrope: A portrait of today's college student*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Course Objectives

This course is structured to help students synthesize and apply their knowledge of student affairs administration to practical problems that they are likely to encounter as professionals in student affairs and to help them make the transition from graduate school to their first job as a student affairs professional. Specific goals for the course include the following:

1. strengthen students' professional knowledge and self-efficacy through increasing intellectual and practical skills in inquiry and analysis of issues encountered by student affairs professionals;

2. synthesize and apply knowledge gained in the CSA program to the resolution of practical problems they are likely to encounter as student affairs professionals;
3. improve critical thinking skills;
4. improve teamwork and small group communication skills;
5. improve problem-solving skills;
6. improve written and oral communication skills;
7. help students develop a coherent philosophy of student affairs based on a full understanding of their beliefs and opinions about student affairs work;
8. help students identify their personal skills and strengths as a new student affairs professional;
9. help prepare students for the NASPA /ACPA conference interviews;
10. have students apply student development theories, learning theories, and leadership theories to cases student are likely to encounter as student affairs professionals;
11. provide students experience in applying basic legal/policy concepts to the practical resolution issues they are likely to encounter as student affairs;
12. help students develop a better understanding of institutional governance structures and how those structures influence institutional decision making.

The course consists of case studies that require students to apply theory and professional judgment to situations they are likely to encounter as student affairs professionals. Students are expected to read and analyze case materials and be prepared to actively participate in class discussions about the cases. Case study teaching is based on the Socratic method of instruction. Students will be asked to respond to questions about the reading assignments or the case studies whether or not they volunteer. The course also will include lectures, an interview workshop, class discussions, assessments, and written assignments.

Students are expected to be informed about current issues in higher education and be prepared to discuss them in class. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* is a good source of information about contemporary issues in higher education.

Class Policies

1. *Do not assume that if the instructor is arguing a particular position in a case study that he necessarily agrees with that position.* The instructor may take different positions on different cases as a way to stimulate discussion and to encourage students to think more broadly about the topics under consideration. The instructor may challenge you on some of your core beliefs and he expects you to be able to explain them and defend them.
2. Part of your grade for the course depends on your participation in class discussions. You cannot participate if you are not in class. Class attendance is required.
3. Complete all written assignments by the deadline date. Students' lives are often complicated and busy. Situations occur which disrupt schedules and cause legitimate reasons for a delay. The instructor may grant deadline exceptions for some written assignments **with prior approval**

under unusual circumstances. If a deadline exception is granted by the instructor, the delay is seldom for more than three days.

4. The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus as needed to meet course objectives.
5. Case studies not covered in a particular class period may or may not be moved to the next class period at the instructor's discretion.
6. Electronic devices, such as cell phones, must be turned-off or silenced during class. Texting, using Facebook, Twitter, or similar social media during class is not permitted.
7. Academic integrity is the first prerequisite for this class and any student who violates *Rutgers University's Academic Integrity Policy* will be subject to the disciplinary process outlined in that policy.

Assignments

1. Case Study Assessments (Total available points = 15): Students should prepare a 2-3 page summary of the critical issues in each case study. The summary should include the following: (1) decision issues presented, (2) the essential facts necessary to understand and deal with the issues, (3) additional information (if any) that needs to be collected by decision makers, (4) theories that might be relevant to the decision issues, (5) what course of action should be taken and why. The instructor will collect at random three case summaries. Each is worth up to 5 points. **(Three assignments collected at random)**
2. Case Study Presentation (Total available points = 20): Students will be assigned to a small group (approximately 3 students) and together they will select and present to the class a case study from the required text by Hamrick and Benjamin (2009). Each group will have 30 – 40 minutes to present the case and facilitate a discussion of the central issues in that case. **(Due dates to be assigned by group. See syllabus)**
3. Personal Reflection Paper (Total available points = 20): Students will prepare a summary of their philosophy of student affairs, a planned career direction for the next 5 years, and a bulleted list of their professional strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of this assignment is to have students develop a self-reflective analysis of what they believe, what they perceive as their professional skills, and assess areas where they still need to grow. This is the type of information students will be asked by a future employer. This paper must be completed prior to the interviewing/networking workshop. **(Due Feb. 19)**

4. Interviewing workshop (Total available points = 10): A workshop on interviewing and networking at the ACPA and NASPA conferences will be presented at a time to be scheduled. Students who complete the workshop will receive 10 points.
5. Reaction Paper: (Total available points = 15): Students will write a 3-5 page reaction paper to the book by Levine, A. & Dean, D. R. (2012), *Generation on a tightrope: A portrait of today's college student*. **(Due: Feb. 28)**
6. Class Participation: (Total available points = 20): Students who actively and regularly participate in class with what the instructor believes to be relevant information and thoughtful analysis will earn up to twenty points for class participation.
7. Assessment (Bonus points = 5): Complete a 2-3 page written assessment of the 2013 CSA Interview Days. **(Due Feb.28)**

Grading

Zero points will be earned on assignments not submitted by the deadlines. The instructor reserves the right to extend deadlines for students **with prior permission** in extraordinary circumstances when there is a compelling reason to do so.

Final course grades will be calculated by adding together the points earned on each of the assignments.

Grades for the course will be computed using the following scale: A=90-100, B+=86-89, B=80-85, C+=76-79, C=70-75, F=0-69. Note: The university grading system does not include minus grades.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Deadlines

1. Tue Jan 22 Syllabus Overview and Lecture
 - a. Review and discussion of course objectives and syllabus
 - b. Lecture/Discussion: Case Analysis
 - c. In class exercise
2. Thu Jan 24 Overview of Student Affairs Administration, Leadership, and Management
 - a. Read: Blimling, G.S. (2001). Uniting scholarship and communities of practice in student affairs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 42(4), 381-396.
 - b. Read: Blimling, G. S. (2002). Uncommon truths: A diary of practical wisdom. In J. Dalton (ED.), *The art and practical wisdom of student affairs leadership*, 71 - 81. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- c. Read: Blimling, G.S. (2008). You can't rock the boat if you're rowing it: And other observations about life as a student affairs administrator. *Journal of College and Character*, 9 (3), 1-7.
 - d. Review of student affairs foundational information
 - e. Read: Pages 1 – 35 (Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
 - f. Read and analyze case study: *Less Drinking or Professional Sinking?* by Katie Branch (pp. 49 – 57, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
3. Tue Jan 28 Case Studies
- a. Read and analyze case study: *Student Dissent at Warren Community College*, by Florence Hamrick & Catrina Gallo (pp. 71 – 75, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
 - b. Read and analyze case study: *Culture Clash: International Student Incident*, by Julie Nelson, Florence Hamrick, & Marissa Amos (pp. 158- 162, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
 - c. Read and analyze case study: *The Growing Presence of Muslim Students at St. Francis Xavier University* by Mark Hummell (pp. 174 – 178, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
4. Thu Jan 31 Case Studies
- a. Read and analyze case study: *Cyberbullying on Campus* by Sara Klein (pp. 179 – 183, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
 - b. Read and analyze case study: *They Won't Fire the Whole Staff* by K Yousey-Elser (pp. 193 – 196, in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
5. Tue Feb 05 Class Presentation of Ethics Case Study from Hamrick & Benjamin (2009)
6. Thu Feb 07 Class Presentation of Ethics Case Study from Hamrick & Benjamin (2009)
7. Tue Feb 12 Class Presentation of Ethics Case Study from Hamrick & Benjamin (2009)
8. Thu Feb 14 Discussion of current topics in higher education
9. Tue Feb 19 Career Issues in Student Affairs
- a. Read: Renn, K. A. & Hodges, J.P. (2007). The first year on the job: Experiences of new professionals in student affairs. *NASPA Journal*, 44, 367-391. (Available at: <https://www.msu.edu/~renn/RennHodgesNASPAJournal.pdf>)
 - b. Complete the Principles of Good Practice Inventory
 - c. Complete the Student Affairs Skill Inventory
 - d. Personal Reflection Papers are due
 - e. Briefing on interview days – guest lectures
10. Thu Feb 21 No Class: 2013 CSA Interview Days
- a. (complete a 2-3 page reaction paper on the interview day program as an assessment of the experience for next year's planning team – Due: Tuesday Feb.28)
11. Tue Feb 26 Interview/Networking Workshop
12. Thu Feb 28 Read: Levine and Dean (2012), *Generation on a tightrope: ...*
- a. Reaction paper to the above referenced book due
 - b. Discussion of book by Levine and Dean

- c. Debriefing on Interviewing/Networking Workshop and CSA Interview Days
 - d. Discussion of current topics in higher education
13. Tue Mar 05 No Class: ACPA Convention Las Vegas
14. Thu Mar 07 No Class: ACPA Convention Las Vegas
15. Tue Mar 12 Post-Convention Debriefing and Case Studies
- a. Read and analyze case study: *Fighting Words at Carpe Diem* by John Downey (pp. 207 – 212 in Stage & Hubbard, 2012)
 - b. Discussion of selected higher education critical issues (TBA)
16. Thu Mar 14 In class exercise