

## Special Topics in College Student Affairs: Critical Perspectives in Higher Education

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Rutgers University — Spring 2014

Tuesdays 4:50 – 7:30 PM

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“On one side there are those who view American education as an agent to conserve and socialize, an instrument of social control to perpetuate the culture and produce the next generation of citizens and workers. The outcome of this approach, however is usually to maintain an existing social and economic order. On the other side are people who view American education as a liberating agent, as an instrument of social change whereby the historically disadvantaged and the newcomer can obtain some measure of quality” (Hume, 1995, p. 325).

“At this moment, we do not come to work for the university, but to demand that the university work for our people” (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969, p. 11).

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### Instructor

Ebelia Hernandez, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Dept. of Educational Psychology

Office: GSE 309

Office hours: Tuesdays 9:00 – 12:00 PM (and by appointment)

Cell phone: (310) 666-8993

Email: [ebelia.hernandez@gse.rutgers.edu](mailto:ebelia.hernandez@gse.rutgers.edu)

### Course description

We will examine current research in a variety of areas to create a complex understanding of the interplay between society and higher education. Our readings and class discussions will include student persistence theory (Tinto's theory of college student departure, Nora's student persistence model), how students have been affected by higher education (graduation attainment rates), college student engagement (Kuh) and involvement (Astin), and how national policy and political sentiment affect higher education policy. To help us develop a critical eye, we will apply critical theories (e.g., critical race theory, feminist theory) to understand how privilege and marginalization affects the college experience, especially for minoritized student populations.

### Learning objectives

In this course students will:

- Learn about theories regarding college student persistence and development and apply it to understand factors contributing to/challenging college student experience.
- Gain a historical and contemporary understanding of higher education
- Investigate how issues--such as educational historical legacy, racism, immigration, and policy--influences the educational experience.

## Course expectations

### *Partnership in our learning environment*

This course is an opportunity for us to co-create a learning environment. This pedagogical approach is based on the Learning Partnerships model (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004), which is grounded on self-authorship theory. Essentially, in order for the partnership to be effective, we all have to take on personal responsibility to make this class to be the best learning opportunity. This includes being fully present during class and ready to engage. We will all play a role in directing the class, constructing lesson plans, and providing consistent feedback in the direction of the class and course assignments.

### *Attendance*

Because this class meets only once a week and much of the learning takes place in class discussion, your attendance is crucial. If you will not be able to come to class, you need to notify me either through email or a text message. You are responsible to obtain any missed information and class notes from your classmates.

Coming to class is a choice that includes you making the decision to come prepared and ready to participate. This also means that you will be committing your attention to the class by refraining from using cell phones.

### *Use of online resources and other media*

In order to provide an array of resources for your success in this course, Sakai will be used extensively. You will be held responsible to check regularly the class page for announcements, to access class materials, and to submit assignments.

### *Class format*

The course is formatted as a graduate seminar. The class is discussion based where students will facilitate and participate in discussions as well as provide supplemental activities/media to enhance our learning. In order to prepare for each week, students will do the following:

1. Complete assigned readings. Carefully read with the goal of understanding the material, being able to summarize each of the readings and consider how each reading adds to your understanding of Latinos in higher education. You will seek out support to understand the readings by forming a study group and/or meeting with the instructor when needed.
2. Submit thoughtful questions in a timely manner to the Weekly Question Board.
3. Contribute to class discussion. You will be ready to engage and be respectful of your classmates by being attentive to their comments.
4. Bring materials to class. This includes readings of the week and other notes that will be helpful to the day's topic.

### *Assignments*

All assignments are due the day and time as stated on the syllabus. Any changes to these dates will be posted on Sakai in the “Announcements” section and assignment information. Carefully review the deadlines and mode of submission on the Assignments Guidelines section of this syllabus. Please keep in mind the following:

- Written papers
  - You may ask for feedback on a draft. You must submit your paper to me no later than a week before the assignment is due via email. Generally, I prefer to give feedback on a one-on-one meeting, so submit your availability for a meeting with me along with your draft. My feedback will be on the paper’s content, organization, flow, and appropriateness of writing style, not editing for grammar, spelling, etc.
  - All papers need to be written in APA format. Refer to the APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition manual and the very good online resource, *APA Formatting and Style Guide* from the OWL at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Adherence to APA is critical in ensuring appropriate citation of references you are using in all of your work.
- Late assignments
  - Late assignments will not be accepted without a written explanation that provides reasons to justify the tardiness of the paper, and proposed penalty (if applicable). I reserve the right to accept the paper or not and the grade penalty.
- Extensions
  - Extensions can be negotiated for legitimate reasons, not for poor time management. You should request in email no later than a week prior to the deadline, specifying the date you wish to submit the assignment and your reasons for your request. Requests submitted less than a week will not be considered unless there is a major, unexpected situation (e.g., debilitating accident).
- Incomplete grade
  - An incomplete grade must be negotiated prior to the end of the semester. An INC may only be considered if you have attended the minimum number of classes and have completed a substantial portion of the course during the semester.
- Accommodations
  - If you are registered with Disability Support Services and require accommodations, please make an appointment with me to go over your needs no later than the end of the first week of class. You will need to have your Letter of Accommodation. For more information, go to <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>.
- Academic integrity
  - Appropriate citation is needed to avoid any issues of plagiarism and to ensure that you give credit where credit is due. As noted above, you should cite all sources using APA format. This citing is required in your papers, handouts, Powerpoints... basically anything you write for this class.
  - My personal code of ethics and university policy require me to report all violations of the Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> for the policy.

## Grading

Assignment 1: Book report ..... 20 points

Assignment 2: Discussion Facilitation.....	25 points
Assignment 3: Article critique .....	15 points
Assignment 4: Research paper proposal .....	10 points
<u>Assignment 5: Research paper .....</u>	<u>30 points</u>
Total	100 points

*Rutgers Graduate School of Education grading scale*

A = 90 - 100 points	C+ = 75 – 79
B+ = 85 – 89	C = 70 – 74
B = 80 – 84	F = below 70

List of Possible Readings

Anzaldúa, G. (1999). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.

Braxton, J. M. (Ed.) (2000). *Reworking the Student Departure Puzzle*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

hooks, b. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. London: Pluto Press.

Hernandez, E. (2013). Mexican American women’s activism at Indiana University in the 1990s. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 84(3), 397-416.

DuBois, W. E. B. (2005). *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Barnes and Noble Books.

Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans. 30th anniversary ed.). New York: Continuum.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1999). Just what is critical race theory, and what's it doing in a nice field like education? In L. Parker, D. Deyhle & S. Villenas (Eds.), *Race is . . . Race isn't: Critical race theory and qualitative studies in education* (pp. 7-30). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Morales, A., Herrera, S., & Murry, K. (2011). Navigating the waves of social and political capriciousness: Inspiring perspectives from DREAM-eligible immigrant students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 10(3), 266-283.

Nora, A. (2003). Access to higher education for Hispanic students: Real or illusionary? From J. Castellanos & L. Jones (Eds.), *The majority in the minority: Expanding the representation of Latina/o faculty, administrators and students in higher education* (pp. 47-68). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Rankin, S. R., & Reason, R. D. (2005). Differing perceptions: How students of color and White students perceive campus climate for underrepresented groups. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(1), 43-61.

- Rendón, L. I., Jalomo, R. E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 127-156). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Reynolds, A. L., Sneva, J. N., & Beehler, G. P. (2010). The influence of racism-related stress on the academic motivation of Black and Latino/a students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 51(2), 135-149.
- Saenz, V. B., & Ponjuan, L. (2008). The vanishing Latino male in higher education. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 8(1), 54-89.
- Solórzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 121-136.
- Wolf-Wendel, L., Ward, K., & Kinzie, J. (2009). A tangled web of terms: The overlap and unique contribution of involvement, engagement, and integration to understanding college student success. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4), 407-428.