

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

15:245:642:01

Rutgers University — Spring 2016

Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:40 PM

Tillet 125 – Livingston Campus

Instructor: Ebelia Hernandez, Ph.D. Associate Professor Educational Psychology	Email: ebelia.hernandez@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone Number : (848) 932-0818	Office Location: GSE 309
Office Hours: By appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: Open to all graduate students
Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: contact instructor

“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” (Hune, 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).

Course description

We will examine scholarship in higher education 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 an overview of various populations (e.g., low income, immigrants, minoritized students) and the experiences they have in college. To help us develop a critical eye, we will apply theories that challenge deficit thinking (e.g., critical race theory, resiliency, cultural wealth) and take a wholly different approach to thinking about what “the college experience” really can be all about.

Learning objectives

This course seeks to address the following ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies, with examples of a few Tasks that may be addressed in assignments and class discussion:

- ❖ Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Integrate cultural knowledge with specific and relevant diverse issues on campus
 - Recognize social systems and their influence on people of diverse backgrounds
- ❖ History, Philosophy, and Values
 - Articulate the history of the inclusion and exclusion of people with a variety of identities in higher education
 - Explain the public role and societal benefits of student affairs and higher education generally
- ❖ Personal Foundations
 - Articulate awareness and understanding of one's attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and identity as it affects one's work with others; and take responsibility to develop personal cultural skills by participating in activities that challenge one's beliefs
 - Articulate meaningful goals for one's work

Course expectations

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 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. Contribute to class discussion. You will be ready to engage and be respectful of your classmates by being attentive to their comments.
3. 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 at the end 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. 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 6th 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

Weekly check-ins (6 x 2 points each).....	12 points
Online class activities (6 x 5 points each).....	35 points
Assignment 1: Class facilitation	15 points
Assignment 2: Podcast book review and response	15 points
Assignment 3: Final paper proposal	3 points
Assignment 4: Final paper	20 points
Total	100 points

Rutgers Graduate School of Education grading scale

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

Spring 2015 Schedule

(Readings in **BOLD** are available on Sakai, all others via Rutgers libraries or as noted)

Part I: Developing a Theoretical Background

Week 1: January 19

Introductions

Introduction to class objectives, syllabus, etc.

Week 2: January 26

What is the purpose of higher education?

In reviewing the quotes at the beginning of this syllabus, you can note that there are different perspectives about the role and responsibility of higher education in the United States. In addition to asking ourselves what is the purpose of higher education (what are you trying to do here?), we must also ask ourselves who is responsible in ensuring that we meet our objectives (what is my role?). These readings will also give us some historical background on higher education.

Readings (preferably in this order):

- “The Atlanta Compromise” – historical text available at http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_speech.html (right side of webpage)
- **DuBois, W. E. B. (1903/2005). *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Barnes and Noble Books. [Chapter 3: Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others]**

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #1 (**reminder: due Mondays at noon**)

Week 3: February 2

The power of language

To begin our journey as critical thinkers for this class, first things first. Let’s examine the power of our words.

Readings: (best to do them in this order)

- **Quaye, S. J. (2011). Girl or woman? Dorm or residence hall? What's the big deal about language? In P. Magolda & M. B. Baxter Magolda (Eds.), *Contested issues in student affairs* (pp. 280-209). Sterling, VA: Stylus.**
- **Hernandez, E. (2011). Words: The windows to our assumptions and truth. In P. Magolda and M. B. Baxter Magolda (Eds.), *Contested issues in student affairs*, (pp. 291-296). Sterling, VA: Stylus.**
- Macias, L. V. (2013). Choosing success: A paradigm for empowering first-generation college students. *About Campus*, 18(5), 17-21.

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #2

Week 4: February 9

Critical race theory

Critical race theory provides a framework and the language to critically investigate how inequities are perpetuated at the institutional and individual levels, and how these inequities affect the college experiences. It also requires us to discuss those things that make us uncomfortable (e.g., racism).

Readings (in order):

- Patton, L. D., McEwen, M., Rendón, L., & Howard-Hamilton, M. F. (2007). Critical race perspectives on Theory in Student Affairs. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 39-53.
- Harper, S. R. (2012). Race without racism: How higher education researchers minimize racist institutional norms. *The Review of Higher Education*, 36(1, Supplement), 9-29.

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #3

Optional additional readings:

- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (2009). Toward a critical race theory of education. In A. Darder, M. P. Baltodano & R. D. Torres (Eds.), *The critical pedagogy reader* (2nd ed., pp. 167-182). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Solórzano, D. G., Villalpando, O., & Oseguera, L. (2005). Educational inequities and Latina/o undergraduate students in the United States: A critical race theory analysis of their educational progress. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 4(3), 272-294.

Part II: The College Student Experience

Week 5: February 16

Campus climate

Campus climate refers to how we feel about our institution's social norms, diversity mix, and interactions with others. Do we feel welcomed? By whom? In what spaces? How can inclusivity/exclusivity affect key outcomes, such as sense of belonging, persistence, and academic achievement?

Readings:

- Rankin, S. R. (2005). Campus climates for sexual minorities. *New Directions for Student Services*, 111, 17-23.
- 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.

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #4
- Class facilitation – Team #1 (details on this assignment are under Assignment 1)

Week 6: February 23 College student departure theory – Reviewed and revised

Theories have been developed to explain the factors that may contribute to student persistence and success. However, these models have been reconsidered for particular student populations as these groups may not have been fully included when these models were conceptualized.

Readings:

- 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.
- **Tinto, V. (1993) *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (Appendix B: Toward a theory of doctoral persistence)**

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #5
- Class facilitation – Team #2

Optional additional readings:

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

Week 7: March 1 Gender

While there is increasing access to higher education, there seems to be widening gap in regards to enrollment and persistence by gender. Why is that? And what concrete ways does gender play a role in the college student experience?

Readings:

- Saenz, V. B., & Ponjuan, L. (2008). The vanishing Latino male in higher education. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 8(1), 54-89.
- Sax, L. J. (2009). Gender matters: The variable effect of gender on the student experience. *About Campus*, 14(2), 2-10.

To Do:

- Weekly check-in #6
- Class facilitation – Team #3

Week 8: March 8 - ONLINE College choice

There is expansive research on college choice where scholars theorize the factors that affect the decision to go to college, as well as how students go about deciding what school to enroll in. There are many issues that complicate college choice and merits our time in class to discuss: What messages are universities sending out that may lead certain student populations (e.g., LGBT) to feel welcomed or unwelcomed? Are these messages intentional?

Readings:

- Burleson, D. A. (2010). Sexual orientation and college choice: Considering campus climate. *About Campus*, 9-14.
- Hernandez, E. (2015). Balancing dreams and realities: The college choice process for high achieving Latinas. *Journal of Latinos in Higher Education*.

Online class activity (due 3/14):

1. Watch “First Generation,” a 1-hour documentary on the college choice process for four low-income students available at <http://www.gocollegenow.org>.
2. In your blog post, discuss a particular scene that struck you in regards to illuminating the complexity of college choice for first generation college students. Address one or more of the following:
 - a. Describe how you see Hossler and Gallagher’s model of college choice hold up.
 - b. Describe how you see students manage balancing factors as described by Hernandez.
 - c. What role did you see campus climate play in the college choice process? (reference back to Burleson)
 - d. In reflecting upon your readings and the documentary, how could you support students’ college choice process? Be specific!
3. Comment on two posts.

Week 9: March 22 - ONLINE

Immigrants

Rutgers is a forerunner in education for immigrant students. Not only does it guarantee access for undocumented students (Rutgers Future Scholars Program), it is a scholarly community with a large, diverse student immigrant population. The readings this week will include a recent study on Rutgers student immigrants.

Readings:

- 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.
- *Immigrant students’ journeys to higher education: What makes acculturation successful?* Read report available at http://www.ihhpar.rutgers.edu/org_units/default.asp?v=2&o=32

Online class activity (due 3/28)

1. Interview a Rutgers college student (undergrad or grad) who is a first or second generation immigrant. In your blog post, share this person’s immigrant history, and how you see their educational experience has been shaped by straddling their family’s native culture and American culture, language, and other factors you read as critical in immigrant students’ college experience as reviewed in your readings for the week.
2. Comment on two posts.

Week 10: March 29 – ONLINE

Book Review

This week, you will submit your book review via podcast (see Assignment 2). In addition, you will evaluate and comment on 2 of your classmates’ podcasts.

Online class activity: (see Assignment 2 details)

1. Book Review podcast
2. 2 Book Review evaluations

Week 11: April 5 - ONLINE

Grit and Resilience

Is success based on innate characteristics? Can you teach resiliency or grit? And, could expecting for students to rely on their grit to succeed in college be detrimental and unfair?

Readings:

- Schriener, L. A. (2010). The "thriving quotient": A new vision for student success. *About Campus*, 15(2), 2-10.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2014). What role does grit play in the academic success of Black male collegians at predominantly White institutions? *Journal of African American Studies*, 18(1), 1-10.

Online class activity (due 4/11):

1. Read "Is grit racist?" available at http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2015/01/is_grit_racist.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-TW
2. Listen to NPR podcast about teaching grit in the classroom: <http://www.npr.org/2012/09/04/160258240/children-succeed-with-character-not-test-scores>
3. Watch my class video available on Sakai to receive your assignment.

Due:

- Final paper proposal (see Assignment #3)

Week 12: April 12 – ONLINE

Social Class

Judging from the emergence of articles that I see posted on facebook and my twitter feed, there seems to be a growing dialogue on the experiences of the poor in higher education. Social class has always been a factor to consider, but now we are seeing social media giving voice to this population.

Online class activity (due 4/15 and 4/18)

This week, you and your classmates will provide each other with the readings for the week.

1. Blog Post 1 (due 4/15): Find an online article (from an academic journal or news source with some reputation) that relates to the issues of social class in the academy as it affects faculty, staff, and/or students. Go to our Blog page on Sakai, and post a link to your article. Post a review of the article where you focus on your reaction, critique, and main take-aways from the article (400 words minimum).
2. Blog Post 2 (due 4/18): Read a classmate's article, and add in your own comments to their post (100 words minimum).

It seems that student activism is on the rise. At Rutgers, the history of student activism is prevalent, and students today continue to engage in protest, resistance, and advocacy. What is our role as educators when it comes to activists?

Readings:

- Hernández, E. (2013). Mexican American women's activism at Indiana University during the 1990s. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 84(3), 397-416.
- Pasque, P. A., & Vargas, J. G. (2014). Performances of student activism: Sound, silence, gender, and dis/ability. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 167, 59-71.

Online class activity (due 4/25):

In your blog post, share with your classmates a brief description of a current campaign in student activism (for example, a review of #BlackLivesMatter twitter posts). Then, in your analysis of your chosen campaign, consider addressing the following questions:

- How have campus administrators responded?
- Do you define this campaign as “true” activism? Why or why not? (This requires you to give your own definition of activism, of which there is no consensus to a singular definition. Consider defining with a set of criteria)
- Is the university a reflection of society, or is it a place from which social change can occur? How does your example of student activism illustrate your conclusion?

This week, we will examine the ways that stereotypes affect how students make meaning of their own identities and the identities of others. The readings will provide a foundation to consider issues, such as stereotype threat, that need to be considered to recognize the impact that racist actions play on their peers.

Readings:

- Fries-Britt, S., & Griffin, K. A. (2007). The Black box: How high-achieving Blacks resist stereotypes about Black Americans. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(5), 509-524.
- Museus, S. D. (2008). The model minority and the inferior minority myths: Understanding stereotypes and their implications for student learning. *About Campus*, 13(3), 2-8.

Online class activity (due 5/2):

- Watch *Dear White People*
- Blog Post 1: Post your reactions and critique to the movie - leave a question or provocative statement that encourages a classmate to respond. (minimum 200 words). Use the readings of the week to unpack certain concepts and issues (e.g., stereotypes, stereotype threat, racism, identity) that you found in the movie.
- Blog Post 2: Post a reaction, question, or response to two other posts.

After a semester of readings about inequities, racial tensions on the college campus, and challenging the normative ideas about persistence and student success, let's end our readings with a selection that allows us to reflect on the process of being/becoming a social justice oriented educator.

Readings:

- Viray, S., & Nash, R. J. (2014). Taming the madvocate within: Social justice meets social compassion. *About Campus*, 19(5), 20-27.
- Waters, R. (2010). Understanding allyhood as a developmental process. *About Campus*, 15(5), 2-8.

To Do:

- Prepare 5-minute discussion of your chosen topic for your final paper.

Finals: May 7

Final paper due

Final paper due (Assignment 4). Submit via Sakai by the end of the day.

Assignments Guidelines

Weekly check-ins..... 12 points

For each week designated, you will complete a check-in via Sakai. Generally, these check-ins ask for your thoughts about the readings, and also assesses what concepts are understood and which ones may require further discussion for class.

Due: Monday at noon via Sakai

Online class activities..... 35 points

For those dates we are not in class, you will be tasked with activities to engage in the readings with your classmates, as well as apply some of the concepts you have read about.

Assignment 1: Class facilitation..... 15 points

You will learn your topic and your classmate collaborators on the first day of class. Plan on a 45 minute facilitation. Include the following components:

- Background information about the author(s), including professional experiences and other scholarship.
- Find the difficult concepts in the readings and provide a mini lesson that would help the class understand them.
- Share related articles in *The Chronicle*, *Daily Targum*, and/or videos from YouTube, movies, or shows, etc.
- Prepare discussion by developing a list of discussion questions as well as key points you wish to make during your facilitation.

- Prepare a handout that illustrates key information. Helpful information may include a copy of a theoretical model (if applicable), listing of relevant resources, and/or a list of key terms with definitions (citations included).

Assignment 2: Podcast book review and response..... 15 points

First, choose a good book to review. This book should be one that you have not read for another class and be about any topic in higher education. A good strategy is for you to choose a book that relates to the topic for your final paper.

Keep in mind that a good Book Review is not merely a summary of the book, but has thoughtful critique. What are the main take-aways that has influenced your own work as an educator? Where did the author get it wrong? Who would you recommend this book to? Why? Please do not use the majority of the podcast just to summarize the book – make this an opportunity for you to give your take in an interesting, engaging way.

- Podcast: Instead of writing up a paper, produce a 5-minute podcast. You may wish to create a script or notes to help you with your recording. Five minutes will challenge you to make it interesting, to the point, and focused. Due Tuesday, March 29th. You will post your podcast on Sakai.
- Two Podcast evaluations: You will listen to two of your classmates' podcasts and provide some feedback and comments. You will evaluate them using the rubric (posted on Sakai). Due Friday, April 1st.

Assignment 3: Final paper proposal3 points

This proposal will get you started with your final paper, and provide me an opportunity to give you feedback on your plans for it. In no more than 2 pages (single spaced, bulleted), please include the following:

1. Thesis/research question: What are you interested in knowing more about?
2. Purpose: Why is your research question important? What issues in higher education does it address? Who would need to know this information?
3. Definition of key terms, if needed: e.g., first-generation college student, engagement
4. Preliminary list of 3 references: Using primary, scholarly sources, create a starter list to begin your literature review. Write up a paragraph (about 100 words for each source) summarizing the content of the article/book chapter.

Due: April 11th.

Assignment 4: Final paper 20 points

Hopefully, the discussions and readings from this class have cultivated a curiosity in you to further investigate a particular area of study further. This final research paper provides the opportunity to do additional reading and meaning making on a topic of your choice.

In no more than 15 pages (APA formatted), you will write a paper on a topic of your choosing. As any good literature review, it goes further than a mere summary of several sources. Rather, it should provide a more global perspective on the topic that utilizes references as a foundation for this perspective. Consider the following in developing your paper:

- Compare your resources. Do they all have the same conclusions, or do they offer conflicting conclusions?
- How do these works perpetuate or challenge the deficiency framework to explain the achievement gap? How does the research support/challenge the ideas of meritocracy, equal opportunity?
- What assumptions do the author(s) have about students? How are these assumptions illustrated in word choice and descriptions?
- Structure your paper with an Introduction (thesis statement, purpose, and an overview of your paper's organization), body (your literature review), and conclusion (a summary of your paper that highlights your most significant critiques and insights, and future direction for further study).

Please review the Final Paper rubric for more details.

Due: May 7th at noon. Submit as Word doc via Sakai.