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Special Topics in College Student Affairs:
The Research University in Modern America

Spring 2016

3 Credits

Bishop House 211 Thursday 1:10 – 3:50 p.m.

Professor Richard L. McCormick

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Office hours: Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and by appointment

Course Description

This course will examine many of the most important issues and opportunities facing American research universities today. Topics include the universities' origins, purposes, and distinguishing characteristics; their modes of governance and finance; and the education they provide for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Particular emphasis will be placed upon research, the signature mission of these institutions, as well as upon several notable challenges they face today: securing adequate resources, promoting student access and learning, managing political and governmental relationships, and taming the behemoth of intercollegiate athletics. Most of the reading in the course will be drawn from two contemporary masterpieces: Derek Bok, *Higher Education in America*, and Jonathan R. Cole, *The Great American University*, as well as from my own book, *Raised at Rutgers*. Each student will also explore a subject of his or her choosing through current issues of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The New York Times*. Where appropriate, our classes will draw upon people and experiences here at Rutgers. The course will provide a wide-ranging introduction to the modern American research university.

The course will be conducted as a seminar, which means that discussion among students and the instructor will be the focus of each class meeting. An occasional bit of lecturing will provide some essential background. Expert visitors will enliven portions of several class meetings.

Requirements and Expectations

Each student in the course will be expected:

1. To do the assigned readings according to the schedule below, to attend each class, and to participate actively in class discussion.
2. To choose, in consultation with the instructor, one important contemporary topic or problem related to American research universities; to peruse throughout the duration of the course every issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The New York Times* and read every article published therein on the chosen topic; to keep a journal on that topic based on the articles read; to write, at the end of the course, a ten page essay reflecting on the chosen topic; to share these reflections orally in class; and to submit both the journal and the essay to the instructor at the last class meeting.

Each of these two expectations will count equally toward the student's final grade.

Required Texts

Jonathan R. Cole, *The Great American University: Its Rise to Prominence, Its Indispensable National Role, Why It Must Be Protected* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009)

Derek Bok, *Higher Education in America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013)

Richard L. McCormick, *Raised at Rutgers: A President's Story* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014)

[The books by Cole and Bok may be purchased at the Rutgers University Bookstore or online at Amazon.com. I will give each student a copy of *Raised at Rutgers*.]

The Chronicle of Higher Education (The instructor will ensure that each student has access to the online edition of this publication for the duration of the course.)

The New York Times

Schedule of Class Meetings, Reading Assignments, and Special Events

January 21 **Introduction to the course**

January 28 **American higher education today**

Read: Bok, pages 1-43; Cole, pages 1-44

February 4 **The rise of research universities**

Read: Cole, pages 75-174

February 11 **Governing universities**

Read: Bok, pages 44-74

Additional reading to be assigned

February 18 **Financing universities**

Reading to be assigned

Initial presentations of student topics

February 25 **Undergraduate admissions, affirmative action, and financial aid**

Read: Bok, pages 77-144

Richard L. McCormick, "Converging Perils to College Access for Racial Minorities: Examples of Responses that Work from Washington State and New Jersey" (copies will be given to students)

March 3 **Undergraduate teaching and learning**

Read: Bok, pages 145-224; McCormick, pages 6-10, 104-124

Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum (online)

March 10 **Scientific research** (Class will meet in the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine (Busch Campus))

Read: Cole, pages 175-298; McCormick, pages 124-131

March 24 **Social scientific and humanities research**

Read: Bok, pages 321-380; Cole, pages 299-342

March 31 **Graduate and professional education**

Read: Bok, pages 225-318

April 7 **Political and governmental relationships**

Read: McCormick, pages 1-6, 15-19, 166-198

Additional reading to be assigned

April 14 **Intercollegiate athletics**

Read: McCormick, pages 132-165

Additional reading to be assigned

April 21 **Challenges facing universities**

Read: Bok, pages 383-412; Cole, pages 345-418

Student presentations on their chosen topics

April 28 **Challenges facing universities**

Read: Cole, pages 419-510

Student presentations on their chosen topics

Journals and essays due in class

Course Policies

Class conduct Students will be expected to arrive in class on time, to treat their fellow students respectfully, and to give their undivided attention to the work of our learning community for the duration of the class period.

Academic integrity Students will be expected to adhere to the highest professional standards in their class participation and in their writing. Please review and abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy. See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

Disability accommodations Rutgers University recognizes its responsibility for creating an institutional climate in which students with disabilities can thrive. If you have any type of disability for which you require special accommodations to promote your learning in this course, please register with the Office of Disability Services immediately and notify the instructor. For more information, go to <http://ods.rutgers.edu/>.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Through their work in this course, students should attain a solid basic understanding of the research university in modern America. They should be familiar with its origins, its characteristics and achievements, the forces and factors that are bringing change to higher education, and some of the most important challenges for the future. Through study of their chosen topics, students should gain experience in obtaining knowledge about higher education, in forming opinions and drawing conclusions based upon that knowledge, and in expressing their findings and conclusions both orally and in writing. Students who anticipate careers in Student Affairs within research universities should better understand the institution-wide context of the student-related activities in which they will be engaged.