

PUBLIC POLICY IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION¹
Course Number EDUC 764/PUBPOL 732/POLSCI 734
Winter Semester, 2024

Instructors

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Land Acknowledgement:²

University of Michigan resides on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe or People of the Three Fires, namely the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadmi Nations. In 1817, these nations forcibly ceded this land through the Treaty at the Foot of the Rapids some of which was designated for “a college at Detroit” at which Indigenous peoples were eligible to enroll. As we occupy this land, we recognize and affirm that Indigenous peoples who live here now and those who were forcibly removed from this space. We also acknowledge the historic and ongoing struggles for Indigenous sovereignty, the effects of colonial violence, and the erasure of Indigenous peoples.

COURSE STRUCTURE & OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to introduce students to the arena of public policy in higher education, including relevant extant research, theoretical frameworks, and areas of debate. EDUC 764 is divided into four primary areas. First, we situate the public policy process in the higher education context and explore the conceptual and theoretical frameworks used to understand it, including a specific focus on critical policy analysis. Throughout the course, we interrogate the ways in which policymaking in higher education

¹ Segments of this syllabus are modified from DesJardin’s Winter 2013 EDUC 764 syllabus; Dynarski & Weiland’s Fall 2018 Syllabus; & Rodriguez’s Winter 2022 Syllabus

² Text for Land Acknowledgement borrowed from Winter 2022 syllabus by Dr. Rosie Perez.

exacerbates or reduces educational inequality. Second, we examine influences on access to higher education, particularly for minoritized and historically underserved populations, and the various stakeholders who finance it – both from an historical and contemporary perspective. We then review the contemporary mechanisms and practices used to evaluate the effectiveness of higher education policies. This unit is followed by an examination of the policy levers that hold institutions accountable, provide transparency, and evaluate policy objectives.

This course will provide students with foundational tools to study or work in higher education public policy through the combination of the assigned readings, lectures, classroom discussion, and writing assignments. Students will increase their understanding of the various tensions and tradeoffs made in order to craft policy; use the models that describe those processes; and examine the various structures and actors. Moreover, students will gain an understanding of the historical underpinnings of some of the most important higher education policies. In addition, they will be able to clearly articulate current policy challenges and proposed solutions from a variety of perspectives. Students will also become aware of the variety of sources used to discuss, debate, evaluate, and influence higher education policy. Finally, students will be able to succinctly discuss a variety of pressing higher education issues and gain experience presenting and defending their ideas.

Required Texts: The readings for EDUC 764 are in a variety of formats (e.g., scholarly journal articles, book chapters, policy reports) designed to cover an array of interests. As the field of public policy lends itself to debate, the readings and in-class discussions are intended to represent a variety of viewpoints and interests. All readings will be made available via Canvas or are freely accessible online and via U-M libraries. The resources provided alongside the weekly readings (demarcated “[Resource]”) in Canvas allow students to further probe particular interests.

I will never assign more than three texts/artifacts for you to review each week. However, I recognize you may also choose to prioritize which materials to review thoroughly versus which to skim. To help, I will indicate with a star () the reading that is the most important to engage with deeply each week. Additionally, you will be provided with a weekly “reading guide” to help you navigate the readings.*

In addition to the assigned readings, I encourage all of you to regularly engage with current trends and developments in higher education via these and other popular news outlets, which are available through the U-M Library website:

- The Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Diversity in Higher Education

COURSE POLICIES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The University of Michigan recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students who are experiencing a disability-related barrier should contact Services for Students with Disabilities <https://ssd.umich.edu/>; 734-763-3000 or ssdoffice@umich.edu. For students who are connected with SSD, accommodation requests can be made in Accommodate. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your SSD Coordinator or visit SSD’s Current Student webpage. SSD considers aspects of the course design, course learning objects and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. If you are disabled and anticipate needing accommodations

in this course, please contact Dr. Wright-Kim to set up a meeting within the first two weeks of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your need. Before meeting with Dr. Wright-Kim, please apply for and obtain recommendations for accommodations from Services for Students with Disabilities, located in G-664 Haven Hall.

Incomplete “I” Grade: There are unforeseen events that prevent students from completing planned coursework in a given semester. The [School of Education \(SOE\) Incomplete Grade Policy](#) is intended to offer a course of action for instructors and provide transparency to students around expectations when these unexpected events occur. This policy permits students who have warranted need (e.g. illness, personal/family care or emergency, etc.) to request an “I” grade to allow for extended time to complete coursework within a reasonable time frame after the end of the semester.

An incomplete “I” grade may be awarded at the discretion of the instructor. When an instructor approves a student’s request for an incomplete the student and instructor should discuss a schedule for completing the remaining coursework and submit the [Incomplete Grade Form](#) as a written agreement of the amount of work needed to complete the course and the date by which the work will be done prior to the conferral of the incomplete. The form submission will be initiated by the instructor who will list the required coursework and a deadline for completion.

Policy on Diversity: Aligning with the SOE’s commitment to [“dije,”](#) this course strives to include materials and activities that reflect the “character and contours” of our diverse society. As such, we invite any suggestions or feedback on including new material or experiences to improve the course for students and present the range of nuanced perspectives related to the education policymaking topics presented in this course. Collectively, we will endeavor to construct a learning environment in which we may all value our personal experiences, recognize our biases, and engage in intentional and respectful dialogue about perspectives that may differ from our own. Please contact us if, at any point, there is something we can do to better promote those values in our space.

Religious Observation: This class observes University defined holidays (such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Winter Break, and Study Days). Because other days may of significance to you than a University-designated holiday, please inform me as soon as possible if a class day or due date for a class assignment conflicts with your observance of a holiday important to you. We will work with you to accommodate your needs.

Academic Integrity: Operating under the highest standards of academic integrity is implied and assumed. Academic integrity includes issues of content and process. Treating the course and class participants with respect, honoring class expectations and assignments, and seeking to derive maximum learning from the experience reflect some of the process aspects of academic integrity. Claiming ownership only of your own unique work and ideas, providing appropriate attribution of others’ material and quotes, clearly indicating all paraphrasing, and providing the trail to the original source of any idea are key components to the content of academic integrity. Aspire to the spirit and highest representation of academic integrity. We would also encourage you to read the University’s General Catalogue, especially the sections that detail your rights as a student and the section that discusses the University’s expectations of you as a student. (See <https://rackham.umich.edu/academic-policies/>.)

Usage of AI/ChatGPT: Any and all use of machines that emulate human capabilities (ChatGPT, Stable Diffusion, DALLE, etc.) to perform assignments or other works in the course should be disclosed (this includes all graded deliverables as well as other course works and activities). In addition, an explanatory

appendix is required for each and every unique usage to describe in clear steps how such a machine was used, including which machine, iteration, editing, etc. **WARNING:** the current state-of-the-art of machine capabilities have two salient features: 1) the quality is such that more work may be required in a machine-assisted mode; 2) it is feasible to discern the presence of “machine fingerprints.” Our goal as a community of learners is to explore and understand how these tools may be used to augment human performance. However, violation of the explicit disclosure requirement may subject students to standard SOE processes (for reporting, determining misconduct (if any), and assigning sanctions (as appropriate) as would be employed for any other type of potential Academic Misconduct.

Late Submissions: Based on voting during the first week of class, we will observe the following policy.

- Students can submit assignments late without penalty, but if they do so, they may receive minimal to no feedback with which to improve their final product.

Course Conduct: The format of this course is designed to leverage the opinions, experiences, and knowledge of classroom participants in order to produce and safe and robust learning environment. In other words, we will all learn from each other. Therefore, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines³ for classroom participation:

- (1) **Confidentiality.** We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange. (No live tweeting or recording.)
- (2) **Support your statements.** Use evidence and provide a rationale for your points.
- (3) **Challenge the idea and not the person.** If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
- (4) **Be courteous.** Don't interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking.
- (5) **Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own.**
- (6) **Be engaged.** Recognize how much space you're taking up in class and invite others in when necessary. Also, determine what active engagement looks like for you (e.g., verbal contribution, small group activities) and strive toward that level of engagement in class (**added w/ group consensus**)

ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES

Student Well-Being:⁴ Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, personal health (mental, emotional, physical), alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc. If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact us so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, U-M offers many resources, some of which are listed at [Resources for](#)

³ Source: UM Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT)

⁴ Source: UM Office of the Vice President for Student Life

[Student Well-being on the Well-being for U-M Students website](#). You can also search for additional resources on that website. There is also an [embedded counselor](#) in the School of Education who you may contact for assistance with personal matters.

Basic Needs: If you are facing challenges securing food, housing, and adequate financial support and believe this may affect your performance in the course, please consider contacting the Dean of Students Office via phone at (734) 764-7420 or via email at deanofstudents@umich.edu. Information about the Dean of Students Office is available at <https://deanofstudents.umich.edu/>. The Maize & Blue Cupboard located in the basement of Betsy Barbour Residence Hall may also be of assistance to you. Information on this campus resource can be found [here](#). The Rackham Graduate School also has emergency financial assistance should you experience an emergency or one-time unusual, or unforeseen expenses as you matriculate. Information about the Rackham Graduate Student Emergency fund is [here](#).

Harassment & Discrimination: The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. If you have experienced harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance from me, other faculty or staff members you trust, a Rackham Graduate School Resolution Officer at (734) 764-4400 or RackResolutionOfficer@umich.edu, a representative from the Office of Student Conflict Resolution at (734) 936-6308 or oscr@umich.edu if the harassment or bias-incident involves another student, or the Office of Institutional Equity at (734) 647-1388.

EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on three different components – classroom participation, a policy report, and a presentation, described below. Final grades will be on an A-F scale.

Classroom/Policy Engagement (25%): A quarter of your grade will be based upon your engagement w/ the classwork and policy space in general. Per voting during week 1 of class, you must complete the following:

- Engagement with news of policy issues (e.g., the Chronicle) and reflection on potential paths forward

At some point during the semester, you are required to identify at least 1 article discussing current policy activity of interest (related in some way to higher education). Then, you must write a 1-page reflection on the issues at hand. In your write-up please indicate:

- What are the policy issues at hand?
- What values are being presented?
- If a specific policy is being proposed, what are the potential tradeoffs in its adoption?

The reflection is formal – don't worry about citing anything other than the article. Also, you may be asked to discuss your reflection with the class, but no formal presentation is necessary.

Policy Brief (75%): Policy briefs are an important communication tool for examining policy problems and solutions. Throughout the course, students will work to address a range of policy topics/problems across multiple public policy domains, including college access, affordability, student outcomes, institutional finance, and accountability. The goal of this assignment is to produce a policy brief of publishable quality that addresses one of the topic areas discussed in class, or a policy issue that applies theoretical and methodological tools covered throughout the course.

- **Brief Topics:** Potential topics, including initial questions, data sources, etc. will be provided in class (see Policy Report Resource Guide on Canvas). This information is meant to be a starting point for the assignment. You are encouraged to make tweaks to the RQs, focus, data, etc. This should be done in consultation with the instructor.
- **Submission of Assignments:** All submissions should be made on Canvas before the start of class. Uploading incorrect documents to Canvas will be considered a late submission (see Late Submission section below).
- **Schedule of policy brief assignments:**

Step 1: Understand the context. [5 pts]

The purpose of this assignment is to understand the policy to be examined. This will be achieved by accessing the *original* legislation (when applicable), reports, scholarly work, and media coverage surrounding the policy/policy issue.

Due February 6th / 3 pages of text / at least 12 sources / Word

Step 2: Understand the data. [15 pts]

The purpose of this assignment is for you to demonstrate an understanding of the available data and the operationalization of measures. Much of this will become your Methodology section or appendix. While the suggested pagination is short, this assignment can take a lot of time. Students are *urged* to start as soon as possible (i.e., do not wait until after you turn in Step 1).

Due February 27th / 4-5 pages of text / table[s] describing data / dataset / Word

Step 3: Analyze data + present findings. [20 pts]

Once your data is clean/collected, you are ready to answer your research questions. In this section you will include a description of your analytical approach to answering your research questions and a presentation of your findings. You are expected to include at least one infographic and are expected to utilize data visualization software. Some options include: Excel, [Dedoose](#) (trial); [Tableau](#) (free full student version); [Raw](#); [infogr.am](#).

Due March 26th / 4-5 pages of text / tables + figures / Word

Step 4: Policy Report Presentations. [10 pts]

Students will have an opportunity to present their preliminary final projects (in PowerPoint or similar software) to their peers and receive feedback. The presentation should include a brief introduction to the project (including its significance), research questions, analytic approach, findings, and implications.
Due April 16th or April 23rd (in class) – TBD based on enrollment

Step 5: Final Report. [20 pts]

This draft will combine all of the steps above, with incorporated feedback, and add an implications/discussion section. This implications/discussion section should include situate your findings in extant public policies and debates and provide recommendations for policymakers. These recommendations should be founded in extant literature or best practices (and cited appropriately).

Due April 30th / Approx. 10-15 pages of text (single spaced) / tables + figures / methodology appendix / Word + PDF

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| Grading | A = 100 – 94 | B = 86 – 84 | C = 76 – 74 |
| Scale: | A- = 93 – 90 | B- = 83 – 80 | C- = 73 – 70 |
| | B+ = 89 – 87 | C+ = 79 – 77 | D = 69 – 60 |

(anything below is an “F”)

Course Changes Policy: The instructor reserves the right to alter information in this syllabus as needed to accurately reflect the course coverage and to enhance the learning outcomes of the course. When or if changes are necessary, they will be announced in advance and students will have appropriate time to make adjustments. *While we will make all efforts to provide readings, questions and assignment information through Canvas in a timely manner, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have all the readings and materials necessary to successfully complete assignments.*

| Course Schedule & Weekly Readings | |
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| Introduction – What is Public Policy & Why Does It Matter? | |
| Week 1 January 16th | An introduction to the course: This class will serve as an introduction to the course and the study of public policy in general. We'll review the syllabus, spend time setting group expectations (e.g., course conduct, late submission policy), and get to know one another. We'll also speak with a current policymaker on the importance of policy & higher education. <i>Guest visit by Michigan House Representative Jason Morgan!</i> |
| Assigned Readings | Smith & Larimer (2018). Chapter 1 |
| I. Public Policy Process & Theory | |
| Week 2 January 23rd | (Critical) Policy Design & Adoption. Public policy theory describes how issues come to be problematized and paid attention to, as well as how policies are designed and adopted to address those issues. For this week, we'll review some common theories of policy process (e.g., multiple streams, advocacy coalition framework) in Rodriguez et al. (2021) while interrogating the racialized and values-laden ways policies are designed (Smith & Larimer). Then, we'll use state funding (Gándara) as an example. |
| Assigned Readings | Smith & Larimer (2018). Chapter 4 *Rodriguez, A., Deane, K. C., & Davis III, C. H. F. (2021). Towards a framework of racialized policymaking in higher education. In Perna, L. (Ed.), <i>Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research</i> . https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66959-1_2-1 Gándara, D., (2020). How the sausage is made: An examination of a state funding model design process. <i>The Journal of Higher Education</i> , 91(2), 192-221. |
| Week 3 January 30th | Implementation & Evaluation Analysis. Building on last week's work, we turn our focus to the implementation of policy (Felix & Nienhusser) and some of the prevailing perspectives through which we evaluate policy successes and failures (Berman). We'll then use "free college programs" as a real world example of how policy goals, implementation, and evaluation may (mis)align. |
| Assigned Readings | Felix, E. R., & Nienhusser, H. K. (2023). <i>Humanizing policy implementation in higher education through an equity-centered approach</i> . Ed Working Paper No. 23-806. Retrieved from Annenberg Institute at Brown University. *Popp Berman, E. (2022). <i>Thinking like an economist: How efficiency replaced equality in U.S. public policy</i> . Princeton University Press. (Chapter 1: Thinking Like an Economist) [Pages 1-13] Education Trust (2018). A Promise Fulfilled: A Framework for Equitable Free College Programs. Retrieved from https://s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/edtrustmain/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/05155636/A-Promise-Fulfilled-A-Framework-for-Equitable-Free-College-Programs-9.6.18.pdf |
| II. Access and Affordability | |
| Week 4 February 6th | The postsecondary pipeline: The demand side of access. In this class, we discuss policies aimed at improving college readiness and choice. The Eaton piece provides a |

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| | historical lens to the ways in which access policies and their goals have developed. In particular, the concept of college readiness has taken hold in state houses, and Glancy et al. discuss attempts to define and promote it. From the student perspective, access is about choice. And policymakers are keen on “improving” student choices. The Page and Scott-Clayton text identifies the impact of various policies, some of which affect college choice, and lays the ground work for other policy to be explored in subsequent class sessions. |
| Assigned Readings | Eaton, J. S. (2010). “The Evolution of Access Policy: 1965-1990” in Lovell, C.D., Larson, T.E., Dean, D.R. and Longanecker, D.L. (Eds.) Public Policy and Higher Education: Second Edition, Boston, MA: Pearson Learning Solutions. |
| | *Page, L. C., & Scott-Clayton, J. (2016). Improving college access in the United States: Barriers and policy responses. <i>Economics of Education Review</i> , 51, 4-22. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2016.02.009 |
| | Glancy et al. (2014). Blue Print for College Readiness. Denver: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from http://www.ecs.org/ec-content/uploads/ECSBlueprint1.pdf |
| Week 5 February 13th | Building the system: The supply side of access. In this class, we examine the ways in which the postsecondary landscape is comprised of a set of institutions that have particularly roles in providing capacity with the Educational Capacity reading. We then consider how this system has been shaped through policy levers such as accreditation (New America) and authorization (Tandberg et al reading). <i>Bo-Kyung teaching!</i> |
| Assigned Readings | *Chapter 6 (Educational Capacity in American Higher Education) in Zumeta, W., Breneman, D.W., Callan, P.M., & Finney, J.E. (2012). Financing American Higher Education in the Era of Globalization, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. |
| | New America. (n.d.). Higher education accreditation: A background primer. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from: http://pnpi.newamerica.net/spotlight_issue_higher_education_accreditation |
| | [Pages 4-24] Tandberg, D., Bruecker, E., & Weeden, D. (2019). Improving state authorization: the state role in ensuring quality and consumer protection in higher education. State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO). Pg. 4-24. Retrieved from https://sheeo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SHEEO_StateAuth.pdf |
| Week 6 February 20th | College Affordability: Tuition. As far as higher education policy issues go, tuition is one of foremost concerns in the popular media. We will explore tuition trends in class. For context, the Weeden piece provides a brief overview of tuition-setting policies and some of the policy debates around it. Both the Bennett piece and the Wall Street Journal Video offer insights into popular policy debates on the reasons tuition continues to increase. |

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| Assigned Readings | Weeden, D. (2015). Hot topics in higher education: Tuition Policy. Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved from http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/tuition-policy.aspx |
| | Bennett, W. J. (1987). Our Greedy Colleges. New York: The New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/18/opinion/our-greedy-colleges.html |
| | *How Public Universities Became So Expensive- Wall Street Journal. Access video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtxRa9Xd4vw |
| Week 7 March 5th | College Affordability: Financial Aid. In the provision of financial aid, policymakers must make a series of choices. Taking a long view, this week we look at the history of some aspects of financial aid policy (e.g., federal student loan video). We also examine the policy tensions in state and federal financial aid (Doyle). The Heubeck pieces offers a brief snapshot into ongoing changes to the FAFSA, which serves as a key mechanism to the disbursement of financial aid. |
| Assigned Readings | *[Pages 158-185] Doyle, W. (2009). Access, Choice and Excellence: The Competing Goals of State Student Financial Aid Programs. In Baum, S., McPherson, M., and Steele, P. The Effectiveness of Student Aid Policies: What the Research Tells Us. New York: The College Board. |
| | How did we get here: Growth in Federal student loans- IHEP & Lumina. Access video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Cha6bWhuD0 |
| | Heubeck, E. (2023). The FAFSA process is changing. Here's what you need to know. EducationWeek. Retrieved https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/the-fafsa-process-is-changing-heres-what-you-need-to-know/2023/10 |
| Week 8 March 12th | College Affordability: Higher Education Finance. We finish the affordability triad by considering the role of finance. Postsecondary finance, as a policy tool, can be used to take on a number of goals. Here, we examine how policy finance varies by state (Stauffer & Oliff) and consider the alignment between policy objectives and higher education finance (Jones). We then explore various trends in approaches to state appropriations (Lingo et al.) |
| Assigned Readings | Stauffer, A. & Oliff, P. (2015). Federal and State Funding of Higher Education: A Changing Landscape. Retrieved from https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2015/06/federal_state_funding_higher_education_final.pdf |
| | *[Pages 1-39] Jones, D. (2003). Aligning fiscal policies with state objectives. In Policies in sync: Appropriations, tuition, and financial aid for higher education. A compilation of selected papers. Boulder: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. |
| | Lingo et al. (2021). <i>The landscape of state funding formulas for public colleges and universities</i> . InformEd States Working Paper. |
| Week 9 March 19th | Working Week (tentative). As the semester progresses, we'll discuss our plans for this week. For now, we'll hold it as time for you to work on your assignments in class and get support in real time. <i>Subject to change.</i> |

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| Assigned Readings | None |
| III. Outcomes & Accountability | |
| Week 10 March 26 th | Short-Term Student Outcomes & the Role of Policy. We start this unit examining oft-discussed short-term student outcomes in postsecondary education: remediation (Complete College America), retention and progress (to be covered in class) as well as the transfer function (Felix). Each of these topics could easily have its own course. We also examine the diversity score card (Bensimon), which when unveiled, pushed the conversations about racial equity and equality of outcomes in the higher education policymaking space. Finally, we think about one state’s approach toward legislating better outcomes for students via Student Equity Plans (Felix). |
| Assigned Readings | <p>[Pages 2-12] Complete College America. (2012). <i>Remediation: Higher education’s bridge to nowhere</i>. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/CCA%20Remediation%20ES%20FINAL.pdf</p> <p>Bensimon, E. M. (2004). The diversity scorecard: A learning approach to institutional change. <i>Change: The magazine of higher learning</i>, 36(1), 44-52.</p> <p>*Felix, E. R. & Castro, M. F. (2018). Planning as Strategy for Improving Black and Latinx Student Equity: Lessons from Nine California Community Colleges. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i>, 26(56).</p> |
| Week 11 April 2 nd | Long-Term Student Outcomes: Completion and the Labor Market. In this section, we examine the ways in which long-term outcomes in postsecondary education are examined, measured, problematized. The Hauptman piece is intended to situate students in traditional degree attainment and workforce development arguments that are made by policymakers. The Knott piece provides updates regarding policy to hold institutions accountable for “good” outcomes through the concept of “gainful employment.” We will discuss policies in class intended to increase these longer-term outcomes (i.e., completion and wages), while also exploring how a broader framework of postsecondary value (the Postsecondary Value Commission) could both 1) identify high achieving and struggling institutions and 2) offer insights to inform future policy. |
| Assigned Readings | <p>Hauptman, A. (2012). “Increasing higher education attainment in the United States” in Kelly, A.P and Schneider, M. (Eds.), <i>Getting to graduation: The completion agenda in higher education</i> (pp. 17-47). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.</p> <p>*[Pages 8-25] Postsecondary Value Commission (2021). <i>Equitable value: Promoting economic mobility and social justice through postsecondary education</i>. Retrieved https://postsecondaryvalue.org/reports/</p> <p>Knott, K. (2023). <i>Game on, again, for gainful employment</i>. Inside Higher Ed.</p> |

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| Week 12 April 9th | Accountability & Consumer Information. There are generally two ways of arriving at better outcomes: incentivizing institutions to improve or providing more information to students and their families to make different choices. Building upon authorization and accreditation policies previously discussed in class, we will turn to recent updates to other policies intended to hold institutions accountable (Delisle et al.); we'll also explore informational interventions for students in class. Some argue, however, that one of the reasons why change is so hard at institutions, however, is due to the concept of the Iron Triangle (Immerwahr et al). Finally, we revisit funding policy (Dougherty et al.) to explore the genesis and pros and cons of tying state funding to metrics to hold institutions accountable. |
| Assigned Readings | *Delisle et al. (2023). <i>Higher Education Accountability Policy</i> . Urban Institute. |
| | [Introduction & Part IV] Quality and Accountability in Immerwahr, J., Johnson, J., Gasbarra, P. (2008). <i>The Iron Triangle: College Presidents talk about costs, access, and quality</i> . San Jose, CA: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Retrieved from http://www.highereducation.org/reports/iron_triangle/IronTriangle.pdf |
| | Dougherty, K., Natow, R.S., Bork, R.H., Jones, S.M., Vega, B.E. (2013). <i>Accounting for Higher Education Accountability: Political origins of State Performance Funding for Higher Education</i> . <i>Teacher's College Record</i> , 115(January), pp 1-50 |
| Week 13 April 16th | Influencing Public Policy & Class Presentations. There are a number of influencers in the higher education policy arena. In this class we examine the roles of some of the players, such as policymakers, public opinion, think tanks, lobbying organizations (McCann & Laitinen), and foundations (Parry et al.). |
| Assigned Readings | *Parry, M., Field, K., & Supiano, B. (2013, July 13). <i>The Gates Effect</i> . Retrieved from The Chronicle of Higher Education website: http://chronicle.com/article/The-Gates-Effect/140323/ |
| | McCann, C. & Laitinen, A. (2014). <i>College blackout: How the higher education lobby fought to keep students in the dark</i> . Washington, D.C.: New America Foundation http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/CollegeBlackoutFINAL.pdf |
| | Popp Berman, E. (2022). <i>Thinking like an economist: How efficiency replaced equality in U.S. public policy</i> . Princeton University Press. (Chapter 5: The Economic Style and Social Policy) |
| Week 14 April 23rd | Hot Topics & Class Presentations |
| Assigned Readings | None |