EDHE 6550  
Policy Studies in Higher Education  
Mondays, 5.30-8.20 pm  
Language #205  
Spring #205  

About the instructor  
Barrett Taylor, PhD  
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Office hours:  
Mondays, 11.00 pm – 2.00 pm  
Tuesdays, 11.00 pm – 2.00 pm  

Although I am in my office almost every weekday, I often have meetings scheduled during these times. I therefore strongly suggest that you email me to make an appointment before coming to my office. Simply write to me at one of the two addresses posted above, noting the days and times at which you are available to meet. I generally reply to email within 24 hours, and often even sooner.

Course objectives  
This course is designed as part of a sequence of classes intended to prepare you for work in higher education as a scholar-practitioner. To that end, this course has two complementary objectives.

First, this class will familiarize you with basic principles and current issues of higher education policy. Every scholar-practitioner needs an understanding of educational policy because state and federal policy environments shape virtually every office on a campus. I seek to present core concepts in a way that they may be applied readily to educational practice. I will give special attention to the ways in which these topics touch upon other core issues in higher education – such as organization and administration, finance, and student choices – in an effort to integrate this course’s content with the other classes you will take while at UNT.

Second, this course will help you to develop the range of skills that characterize advanced scholar-practitioners in higher education. Necessary skills include the ability to write clear scholarly prose, and to present academic content orally. Course assignments will be graded accordingly. If you do not possess a copy of a “style guide” to writing, I highly recommend purchasing and familiarizing yourself with one. I remain partial to Strunk and White’s *Elements of Style*, but any of a number of guides can help you to improve your writing. Please note that this is a guide to writing style, mechanics and usage. Strunk and White is not a substitute for the “APA manual,” which is the official referencing guide of this department.
In addition, scholar-practitioners must be able to read and comprehend a variety of sources, including books, policy reports, and peer-reviewed journal articles. This will involve some familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methods. If you do not possess this familiarity, simply do your best with course readings and raise relevant questions in class. You are responsible for learning all materials presented in the course, so please ask questions that you have so that you can hone your skills as a reader of academic content.

Assignments
There are four assignments in this course:

1. State case studies: Students will present single-state case studies orally. The oral presentation should last 10-12 minutes, and will be followed by questions/comments from the class. The case study should explore higher education within a state that is not covered by course readings (i.e., not Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, etc.). The case study should draw on data from multiple sources – e.g., SHEEO, the state governing agency, the Chronicle Almanac, peer-reviewed journal articles – in order to highlight key aspects of the state system. Each report should address:
   a. The state’s demographics, higher education history, and the composition of the system (publics/privates; two/four years, etc.).
   b. The state’s governance mechanism (centralized, coordinating, etc.).
   c. The state’s mechanism for funding higher education (appropriations, student aid, performance- vs. formula-based, etc.).
   d. The extent to which the state meets goals of access, affordability, and performance outcomes.
   e. Significant challenges facing the state in the future.
   10% of final grade.

2. Final examination: This take home exam addresses major themes and content from the course. Students will have one week to respond to exam questions using course materials. 40% of final grade.

3. Final paper: Each student will identify a topic of interest in higher education policy. The final presentation and paper covering this topic should:
   a. Be more specific than the general theme. For example, “access” or “economic development” is too general, but “tuition deregulation and enrollment patterns of low-income students” might work. Students must present their topics to the instructor for verbal approval/revision in week five, and present progress updates in week ten.
   b. Utilize relevant descriptive data from policy and nonprofit sources to highlight the nature and scope of the problem. The student should specify clearly whether the issue is analyzed on the state or federal level.
   c. Draw on scholarly sources (i.e., course readings, peer-reviewed journal articles, and books/chapters from reputable presses) in order to analyze the problem. Papers should draw on at least one of the major policy analysis and formation frameworks discussed in Unit I.
   d. Based on this scholarly analysis, propose at least three policy remedies that the state/federal body may undertake.
Term papers should demonstrate students’ fluency with higher education policy by allowing for detailed exploration of a particular topic, concept, or issue. All papers will analyze the topic in light of course readings and other relevant materials, and also will draw upon external readings. Evaluation is based upon demonstrated knowledge of material, quality of analysis, stylistic clarity, and writing mechanics.

Students will present their reports (approximately 20 minutes per student) in weeks 13-15. These presentations are an important opportunity to develop the project, ensuring that the written portion of the assignment will be of high quality. Final papers will be approximately 10-12 pages. 40% of final grade.

4. Class participation: **Attendance at all course sessions is required.** In accordance with Texas state law, absences on religious holy days will be considered excused. Students must complete assignments within a reasonable time frame after the absence at no penalty to their grade. I request that you let me know at your earliest convenience if you will be observing a religious holy day at a time during which we have scheduled a course meeting. If you must miss a course meeting for any other reason, please notify the instructor immediately. In addition to attendance, students are required to complete all readings and to participate in all class sessions. Please note that “participation” does not necessarily require speaking, and certainly does not indicate speaking out of turn or talking over classmates. 10% of final grade.

**Grades and evaluation**
A course grade of “A” (90-100) indicates exemplary work. A “B” (80-89) denotes work that meets expectations of a graduate student. A “C” (70-79) is assigned to work that does not meet expectations of graduate student performance. Grades of “D” (65-69) and “F” (<65) are assigned when work is unacceptable.

**Late assignments**
Assignments are due at the dates and times specified in the syllabus. Late work will be penalized one plus or minus for each day that it is late.

**Course readings**
There are two required texts for this course:


In weekly assignments, I will refer to this text as “McMahon.”


In weekly assignments, I will refer to this text as “St. John.”
In addition to these texts, we will read from a variety of book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, and policy reports. Some of these documents will be made available to you through an electronic course reserve. This reserve is offered as a convenient way to access materials available through the UNT library, and its contents are intended only for educational “fair use” within copyright provisions (i.e., you are not to distribute these documents to others).

Find the course reserve by clicking the “course reserve” link on the UNT library’s main page. You then can search for this class using the course number found at the top of this syllabus. The password for this reserve is “partisan” (case-sensitive). You must not share this password with others outside the class. Further, library staff will not be able to provide the password to you should you lose it. Please ask a classmate or request a duplicate copy of the syllabus.

Peer-reviewed journal articles are available through the UNT library. They are not part of the electronic reserve because you can find them easily using the citation information found in this syllabus.

A few readings, including those from Thomas Piketty’s (2014) *Capital in the twenty-first century*, Danielle Allen’s (2016) *Education and equality*, and Paula Stephan’s (2012) *How economics shapes science*, are available through the UNT library as electronic books. Here again, these chapters cannot be posted as part of the course reserve, but can readily be accessed from the library’s main page.

Finally, policy reports are available publicly through the body that published these documents. A simple google search using information in the citation should take you to the items that you will need to read.

**Succeed at UNT**
- Show Up
- Find Support
- Take Control
- Be Prepared
- Get Involved
- Be Persistent

**Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty**
Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and sabotage. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with University policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. The policy and procedures are available at: [http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm](http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm).

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

Disability Access
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access website at https://disability.unt.edu/. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

EagleConnect
All UNT students should activate and regularly check their EagleConnect (e-mail) account. EagleConnect is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via EagleConnect. For information about EagleConnect, including how to activate an account and how to have EagleConnect forwarded to another e-mail address, visit https://eagleconnect.unt.edu. This is the main electronic contact for all course-related information and/or material.

Emergency Notifications and Procedures
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Observation of Religious Holy Days
If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Retention of Student Records
Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about students’ records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault
UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. Because of Texas Senate Bill 212, as a UNT employee, I am required by law to report sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking, and crimes. I cannot keep those things confidential if you reveal any of those to me. If you need a confidential resource available on campus or in the local community then I can refer you.

UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Esther Oppong is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)
Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13 and 14 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (noreply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

Retention of student records
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papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Coursework completed via the Canvas on-line system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and F.E.R.P.A. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) laws and the university’s policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html
Unit I – Understanding policy

Week 1 – January 13, 2020 – Introduction and overview

Week 2 – January 20, 2020 – NO CLASS – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Week 3 – Understanding the policy environment – January 27, 2020
  • Chapter 7, “Negative Partisanship and the Triumph of Trump,” pp. 142-173
  • Excerpt from Chapter 5, “Attitudes toward Public Institutions and Public Employees,” pp. 110-127
  • Chapter 1, “Identity-Based Democracy,” pp. 1-16
  • Introduction, “Confronting the Submerged State,” pp. 1-7
St. John, chapter 2

Finance and economics refresher (as needed)
  • “Introduction,” pp. 1-35
  • Available as an electronic book through UNT library

Discussion points: revenues; expenditures, costs; equilibrium; value; marginal costs/returns; subsidies; prices; hierarchies; peers; elite vs. access institutions; role of state governments; federal government and HE as a policy instrument; economies of scope and scale; strengths and weaknesses of economic frames of analysis; Piketty & Saez; Keynesianism and neoliberalism; politics vs. policy; competition vs. appropriation; governance vs. steering; the “hollowed out” state; academic capitalism; the old (Fordist) economy; the new (innovation) economy; external control of organizations; relating policymaking to theories

Week 4 – February 3, 2020 – Five frameworks for policy analysis
  • Ch. 1, “Two Concepts of Education,” pp. 1-26
  • Available as an electronic book through UNT library
• Discussion points: “liberal” in the US and the UK; sovereignty of individual; justice as fairness; veil of ignorance; HE as vehicle of opportunity
Human capital theory: McMahon, chapters 1-2
• Discussion points: portable knowledge and skills; wage premium; HE as economic growth
• Discussion points: higher education as a market; portability; competition; rational actor hypothesis
• Discussion points: interest convergence; microaggressions and critical race theory in higher education research; HE as sorting mechanism and reproducer of inequality
• Discussion points: policy incentives and responses; definitions and classifications; HE as means of accumulation; HE as site of contestation; colleges/universities in policy

Unit II – State governance and policy

*Week 5 – February 10, 2020 – The funding of state systems*
St. John, chapter 8

Students present preliminary paper topic ideas in class.

*Week 6 – February 17, 2020 – The structure of state systems*
St. John, chapters 7, 10-11
Policy and Higher Education. Available at http://www.gse.upenn.edu/pdf/irhe/Perpetuating_Dispersity_Georgia.pdf

Three students present state case studies in class

Week 7 – February 24, 2020 – Accountability in state systems
• Chapter 4, “State Accountability Policies,” pp. 71-91

Three students present state case studies in class

Week 8 – March 2, 2020 – Policy formation at the state level

Three students present state case studies in class

March 9, 2020 – No class – Spring break
Unit III – The federal role

Week 9 – March 16, 2020 – Federal student financial aid
  • Chapter 11, “Outside Financial Aid.”
St. John, Epilogue I

Three students present state case studies in class

Week 10 – March 23, 2020 – The federal government and R&D
McMahon, Chapter 6
  • Available as an electronic book through UNT library
  • Available as an electronic book through UNT library

Students present project updates in class

Week 11 – March 30, 2020 – National policy in a globalized world
  • Available as an electronic book through UNT library

St. John, chapter 14

*Instructor will answer students’ questions as an exam review*

*Final exams distributed in class*

*Week 12 – April 6, 2020 – NO CLASS – Final examinations submitted to barrett.taylor@unt.edu no later than 5.00 pm*

*Unit IV – Current issues in higher education policy*

*Week 13 – April 13, 2020 – Student presentations I*

*Week 14 – April 20, 2020 – Student presentations II*

*Week 15 – April 27, 2020 – NO CLASS– Final papers submitted electronically to barrett.taylor@unt.edu no later than 5.00 pm.*