

LEAD 8710-IA
Critical Issues in Higher Education
3 SEMESTER HOURS (Summer IV, July 2011)

Dewar College of Education
Valdosta State University
Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology
Educational Leadership

Conceptual Framework: Guiding Principles

Dispositions Principle: Productive dispositions positively affect learners, professional growth, and the learning environment.

Equity Principle: All learners deserve high expectations and support.

Process Principle: Learning is a lifelong process of development and growth.

Ownership Principle: Professionals are committed to, and assume responsibility for, the future of their disciplines.

Support Principle: Successful engagement in the process of learning requires collaboration among multiple partners.

Impact Principle: Effective practice yields evidence of learning.

Technology Principle: Technology facilitates teaching, learning, community-building, and resource acquisition.

Standards Principle: Evidence-based standards systematically guide professional preparation and development.

Positively Impacting Learning through Evidence-Based Practices

Required Textbooks

Altbach, P. G., Gumport, P. J., and Berdahl, R. O. (2011). *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges* (3rd ed.). Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Supplemental Learning Resources

The instructor may provide a number of additional learning resources from various publications, audiovisual media, news stories, etc. Students will have access to these additional resources through the BlazeVIEW site for this course. The instructor also expects students to find additional materials that contribute to their own learning and online discussions.

Course Description (VSU Banner)

An intensive study in the student's field of specialization to meet individual needs and interests. No more than two directed study courses may be used in a program of study (3 credit hours).

Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to explore and understand a number of current issues shaping American higher education and how these factors continue to influence the development and operation of colleges and universities in contemporary society.

Course Format

This course utilizes an online delivery format. Students will meet the objectives of this course through a combination of assigned readings, online discussions, and written assignments.

An important aspect of this course is the active learning that takes place in the online classroom environment. The instructor expects students to participate in all course modules, log into the BlazeVIEW course site on at least a weekly basis, and constructively comment on the posts of others in the class. Students can access the BlazeVIEW online course environment from the VSU homepage (www.valdosta.edu) or at the following address: <http://blazeview.valdosta.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>

Instructor

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College of Education Conceptual Framework Standards (CFS)

The educational leader will:

1. Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. Ensure management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborate with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5. Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
7. Synthesize and apply knowledge and skills learned in standards 1-6 in real settings under the guidance of university supervisors and school personnel.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for Higher Education Track Graduates

- Establish operational plans to accomplish strategic goals utilizing practical applications of theory.
- Describe processes of educational leadership and relate them to programs in higher education
- Interact effectively with internal and external audiences.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for Student Affairs Track Graduates

- Discuss and justify the role of student affairs and higher education in society.
- Synthesize and critique educational research and explore its practical applications.
- Adapt and relate information and communication technology to professional contexts.

Universal Student Learning Outcomes for VSU Higher Education Program Graduates

- **Part 5a.1: Foundational Studies:** 1) Discuss the philosophical foundations of the profession, referencing historical and contemporary documents, to indicate how values guide practice.
- **Subpart 5b.2: Student Characteristics and Effects of College on Students:** 4) Translate theoretical knowledge about student characteristics and collegiate environments into meaningful learning experiences for students with diverse backgrounds.
- **Subpart 5b.3: Individual and Group Interventions:** 6) Identify and explain contemporary issues facing higher education and create viable solutions.
- **Subpart 5b.4: Organization and Administration of Student Affairs:** 7) Apply knowledge of leadership, organizational functions, and management practices. 8) Demonstrate professional competencies in budgeting, finance, and strategic planning. 9) Explain statutory case law and higher education policies and relate understanding to decision-making.
- **Part 6: Practical/Professional Competencies:** 12) Develop and/or improve skills in the following areas: a) Collaborative Work; b) Critical Thinking; d) Effective Verbal and Written Communication; e) Informed Decision-Making; f) Leadership for Change; h) Work with Diverse Populations

Course Objectives

The student will:

1. Recognize and describe a number of fundamental challenges faced by institutions of higher education in the 21st century.
2. Understand the historical contexts of American postsecondary education and how they provide a foundation for current issues facing the academy.
3. Critically examine issues and constituencies affecting the operations of American colleges and universities.
4. Discuss the various internal and external forces that have shaped and continue to shape the mission of postsecondary education in the United States.
5. Reflect on how contemporary internal and external forces influence the work of practitioners in higher education and student affairs settings.
6. Become familiar with scholarly research on the current and future trajectories of the American higher education system.

Course Activities, Assignments, and Requirements

Discussion Question Responses 5 @ 10 points each (50%)

Description. Respond to discussion questions associated with various course units. To obtain full credit, you need to post a response of approximately 250 words, as well as comment on the responses of at least **two** other classmates. Your responses to other's posts should provide constructive feedback and/or ideas and not simply state that you like their post or agree with them. You will be graded on three criteria: posting on time, a developed post, and two developed responses to other's posts. **Remember:** Class discussion points are not calculated simply on the total amount of posts you submit or stating whether or not you like someone else's answer, but instead for moving the discussion to a more complex level of understanding of the issues presented in our course and your contributions to everyone's learning. **Submit weekly to appropriate BlazeVIEW discussion board threads when completing individual units. See course calendar on due dates for course units.**

Practitioner Interview (20%)

Description. In order to better understand how the issues presented in this course impact the daily operations of higher education and student affairs units, choose an academic or student affairs administrator (entry-, mid-, or senior-level staff member, department head, dean, etc.) to interview. This interview should focus on how various issues (e.g. external pressures, financial concerns, diversity issues, interactions with multiple stakeholders, etc.) impact the work that occurs in his or her department. You may interview an administrator in an area in which you have current or previous experience or you may choose to interview someone in a different area in order to gain more exposure to the work in that unit. You should plan on interviewing your selected administrator for approximately one hour (longer is fine) and please prepare several questions in advance of your interview (based on information found in the course text and other activities). Once your interview is complete, write up a 500-word summary of your discussion including what you learned from the experience. You must also read a comment on the interview of a fellow class member in order to receive full credit.

Submit this assignment through the appropriate discussion board thread on BlazeVIEW by 11:59 pm EST on Monday, July 25, 2011.

Issue Paper (30%)

Description: Select one topic presented in the course text and write an issue paper of approximately 5-7 pages exploring your chosen topic in greater depth. In addition to using the course text as a reference, you should also include a **minimum** of five additional peer-reviewed, scholarly sources (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, books) to support your examination of the selected topic. The purpose of this paper is to provide you with the opportunity to examine current literature related to an important contemporary issue in higher education. You may explore any related course topic you choose, however, your paper should be based on current research in the field and **not** on your own personal beliefs and opinions. In addition to examining the issue, you should also include a discussion of how the issue impacts your own work in higher education and student affairs. You may request an individual consultation with the instructor on your intended topic if you desire. **Submit this paper through the Assignment Dropbox on BlazeVIEW by 11:59 pm EST on Wednesday, July 27, 2011.**

Course Evaluation

<u>Learning Activities</u>	<u>Points</u>
Discussion Question Responses	50
Practitioner Interview	20
Issues Paper	30

Grading Policy and Scale

Quality is expected in all products and performances. Grades will be assigned accordingly:
>93 points = A 85-92 points = B 77-84 points = C 69-76 points = D <69 = F

The instructor typically awards an “A” for work that is excellent—very strong in every sense. It represents thoughtful, detailed, creative, and critical work, shows complex thinking and insight, and is well written and free of errors (typographical, grammatical, APA, etc.). A “B” represents good work. It has some weaknesses in one of more of these areas but displays good work overall. A “B” is a perfectly reasonable grade in graduate school. Lower grades are given to assignments with more significant weaknesses in the areas noted above. While many students in this class can expect to earn “A”s, please do not expect to earn an “A” for work that meets expectations without being in some way outstanding.

All written work is to be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point standard font (i.e., Times New Roman), follow APA 6th ed. guidelines, and use correct spelling, grammar, and syntax. All written work should be spell-checked, grammar-checked, **and** proofread (spell-check will not catch when you used “site” when you should have used “cite”). If it is clear you have not spell-checked and proofread an assignment, one full letter grade may be deducted from your assignment.

Policy on Late Assignments and Incompletes

Due to the nature of this course, late assignments will not be accepted for credit without prior instructor approval. In addition, no incompletes will be given in this class except for major emergencies (e.g., hospitalization) and only after consultation and mutual agreement upon a contract specifying when the work will be completed. The course instructor reserves the right to determine what circumstances allow for late submission of course assignments. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments. No extra credit assignments will be offered in this course.

Extra Credit

Extra Credit Assignment 1 @ 5 points

Description. Using topics presented in the course as a guide, discuss what you believe are 2-3 critical issues specifically influencing the work you do in your current position within higher education. You may discuss how these issues impact the broader functional area in which you work (e.g. if you work in residence life you can present how the issues you selected affects residence life in college and universities as a whole) or you may choose to focus on your discussion on the specific work you do within your department or institution. Regardless of your choice, keep in mind the purpose of this assignment is to explore how larger issues (both internal and external) affect our work in higher education. You should not simply discuss day-to-day operational issues you deal with in your job. You need to post a response of approximately 250 words, as well as comment on the response of at least one other classmate. Your response to other's posts should provide constructive feedback and/or ideas and not simply state that you like their post or agree with them. You will be graded on three criteria: posting on time, a developed post, and a developed responses to other's posts. **Submit this assignment through the appropriate discussion board thread on BlazeVIEW by 11:59 pm EST on Monday, July 25, 2011.**

Course Considerations

It is the instructor's expectation that students will enter the online class environment on a consistent basis (at least once each week) and thoughtfully and actively participate in all online discussions. In order to maximize your graduate school experience, you must read and study all assigned learning resources, noting questions or issues you would like to raise.

Students are expected to prepare fully for each course unit, which means you will have read and reflected upon the assigned material and subsequently developed meaningful comments and questions. The instructor also expects that you will be respectful in online discussions, which means actively debating with classmates when you do not agree with their view, but not being adversarial or demeaning to them. You should also allow others the opportunity and space to express their own views and opinions. Points for discussion board posts are not calculated simply on the total amount of posts you submit, but instead for moving the discussion to a more complex level of understanding of the issues presented in our course and your contributions to everyone's learning.

When communicating with the instructor or peers through e-mail, you should use your official VSU e-mail address or the e-mail function in our BlazeVIEW course. In addition, be sure to identify yourself (provide first and last name, include the course number – LEAD 8710 in the subject line), be polite and tactful, and maintain an appropriate degree of professionalism. The instructor will respond to your e-mails as soon as possible. However, please allow up to 48 hours to receive a response – especially over the weekend. Also, recognize that e-mail failures sometimes occur. Please be patient or resend your e-mail if several days pass with no response.

Computer Usage and Technical Support

Students will require the use of electronic resources to complete course requirements and to access the BlazeVIEW course site. If a student is unsure of how to access these resources, please notify the instructor immediately so we can ensure that you are able to complete all aspects of the current course.

Students who require technical support regarding the use of any hardware or software required to complete any requirements of the course should contact the VSU Helpdesk at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/> or by phone at 229.245.HELP (229.245.4357).

Special Needs Statement

Any student requiring necessary accommodations to meet class requirements should consult with the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor would appreciate hearing from any student who would like to request an accommodation due to a disability or other concern. Students requesting course accommodations or modifications due to a documented disability must also contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (V/VP) and 219-1348 (TTY).

Policy Statement on Plagiarism (Dewar College of Education)

Below is information directly quoted from the Academic Honesty Policies and Procedures:

Academic integrity is the responsibility of all VSU faculty and students. Faculty members should promote academic integrity by including clear instruction on the components of academic integrity and clearly defining the penalties for cheating and plagiarism in their course syllabi. Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the Academic Integrity Policy as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct and the faculty members' syllabi. All students are expected to do their own work and to uphold a high standard of academic ethics.

The full text of Academic Honesty Policies and Procedures is available in the on the Academic Affairs website

(<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyatVSU.shtml>).

The consequences for acts of academic dishonesty in the Dewar College of Education are:

FIRST OFFENSE:

1. The faculty member will administer an academic response (e.g. resubmit / retake assignment, failure of the assignment, failure of the course).
2. The faculty member will complete a Level Two Dewar College of Education Concern form (<http://www.valdosta.edu/coe/studentsinfo.shtml>).
3. The faculty member will complete a Valdosta State University Report of Academic Dishonesty (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyatVSU.shtml>).

SECOND OFFENSE:

1. The faculty member will administer an academic response (e.g. resubmit / retake assignment, failure of the assignment, failure of the course).
2. The faculty member will complete a Level Two Dewar College of Education Concern form (<http://www.valdosta.edu/coe/studentsinfo.shtml>). According to the Dewar College of Education Concern Form Policy, “a second level two concern form will result in the student being dismissed from his/her program of study. This dismissal will result in an automatic review by the COE Undergraduate Policies Committee.”
3. The faculty member will complete a Valdosta State University Report of Academic Dishonesty (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyatVSU.shtml>). According to the Academic Honesty Policies and Procedures document, “after a second (or subsequent) Report of Academic Dishonesty has been submitted to the Student Conduct Office in the Dean of Students Office, official charges will be drawn up and the disciplinary matter will be referred to the Valdosta State University Judicial Committee.”

LEAD 8710 Course Schedule

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Unit Theme</u>	<u>Unit Objectives</u>	<u>Course Objectives</u>	<u>Learning Resources</u>	<u>Assignments and Activities</u>
	Start Here	1.1. Identify the objectives and requirements for this course (Readings).		Various readings presented in Unit 1	Student Intros
Unit 1	The Contexts and Settings of American Higher Education	2.1. Identify how the historical development of American institutions of higher education provides the necessary context for understanding current issues facing the academy (Readings). 2.2. Reflect on your understanding of the critical issues facing higher education in contemporary society based on your current understanding of the topic and your direct experience working in the field (Discussion).	1, 2	Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport (2011): Introduction, Chapters 1-3	Discussion 1
Unit 2	External Forces	3.1. Recognize how a number of forces external to the higher education environment can have important repercussions for the work of college and university administrators (Readings). 3.2. Identify a specific example of how external forces can influence the role of contemporary institutions of higher education (Discussion).	1, 3, 4	Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport (2011): Chapters 5-8	Discussion 2
Unit 3	The State of American Higher Education	4.1. Examine how contemporary media portrays the current state of American higher education (Film). 4.2. Discuss issues related to access, educational quality, and cost presented in the documentaries (Discussion).	1, 3, 4	Watch ONE of the following films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>College, Inc</i> - http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/collegeinc/ • <i>Declining by Degrees</i> – available on course reserve at VSU’s Odum Library (limited loan period) 	Discussion 3

Unit 4	Central Issues for the 21 st Century (Part 1)	<p>5.1. Identify and describe a number of the current challenges faced by colleges and universities in the 21st century (Readings).</p> <p>5.2. Recognize the pressures faced by the current generation of college students in financing their education as well as some of the unique strategies these students have developed in response to this challenge (Web Content, Discussion).</p>	1, 3, 4, 5	<p>Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport (2011): Chapters 12-14</p> <p>Additional Web Content Located in Unit 5</p>	Discussion 4
Unit 5	Central Issues for the 21 st Century (Part 2)	<p>6.1. Identify and describe a number of the current challenges faced by colleges and universities in the 21st century (Readings).</p> <p>6.2. Discuss the potential benefits and problems with altering currently accepted practices in the 4-year general undergraduate curriculum and identify constituent groups that may support or resist such changes and why (Web Content, Discussion).</p>	1, 3, 4, 5	<p>Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport (2011): Chapters 15-17</p> <p>Additional Web Content Located in Unit 6</p>	<p>Discussion 5</p> <p>Practitioner Interview</p> <p>Extra Credit</p>
Unit 6	Course Wrap-Up	<p>7.1. Critically examine a selected issue currently facing institutions of higher education using content from the course and outside research and resources (Issue Paper).</p> <p>7.2. Provide important feedback on your personal experiences with class to improve future offerings of the course (SOI).</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		<p>Issue Paper</p> <p>Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI)</p>