

Rossier School of Education
University of Southern California

EDUC 508 Creating Communities of Interest
Fall 2013—MONDAY section; Section # 27040D Location: VKC 158

Tracy Poon Tambascia, EdD
Email: tpoon@usc.edu
Office WPH 1003C
Phone: (213) 740-9747
Office hours: by appointment

Overview of the course

EDUC 508, Creating Communities of Interest, is a 2 unit course designed to help students develop a learning “conceptual framework” for their educational experience in their Master’s program at the Rossier School of Education. This framework will also serve as the scaffolding for how students will later conceptualize professional problems as leaders in their field.

The process of developing this framework will include an examination of how professional issues are experienced by self and others, society, and other stakeholders. RSOE Master’s graduates are expected to develop the skills necessary to incorporate perspectives other than their own in order to think more critically about issues affecting their profession.

Students will examine a professional problem from many different perspectives, and will examine how others have attempted to address the problem. Students will also review the scientific literature related to their problems of practice, in order to compare and contrast those findings with the other considerations embedded in their conceptual framework to develop empirically based, socially just, customized approaches to problems in their field.

At the end of this course, students will begin to see themselves as distinguished leaders in their respective fields. Students will have the structure needed to further develop a conceptual framework that involves the awareness of leading, learning, teaching, and practicing from the perspective of self and others. Students will develop professional communication skills, with particular attention to writing, that will allow them to impart and receive information necessary to inform their work and influence the field.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate their professional identity at this point in their development.
2. Recognize their roles and responsibilities in the course of their education and training experience at Rossier.
3. Demonstrate the requisite skills necessary to be effective as a student, a professional, and a leader.
4. Articulate a problem of practice within their field, identify societal conditions that converge to create a context in which problems in the field may arise, develop goals related to the problem, examine causes for gaps between problem and goals, and outline an action plan for improvement.
5. Utilize scholarly literature to understand the problem of practice being examined.

Key Questions to Consider

Question 1: What are the most pressing and salient problems or issues that are present in our field?

Question 2: What are the mechanisms by which these problems can be addressed?

Talk through profession-specific systems/structures, ethical considerations, professional standards, expectations and protocol, legal issues, hierarchy, and other factors.

Draw upon each unit to develop an understanding of how your context informs your choices about problem solving.

Question 3: How does one's status affect how one approaches & views problems? How does "who we are" help or get in the way of solving problems?

Question 4: Are there hidden assets associated with particular approaches to problem-solving and change that may not be readily apparent? Are there hidden liabilities associated with particular approaches to problem-solving and change that may not be readily apparent? What opportunities emerge as we look at ways to solve problems that involve individual or systems-related change?

Community Guidelines

The formation and maintenance of a community dynamic is essential to the purpose and success of this course. As participants, students acknowledge that they have joined a community that upholds the following ground rules that guide discussion and interactions in class:

1. Respect differences of opinion and style.
2. Promote an environment of constructive inquiry and information sharing. Share

- your knowledge and be willing to ask questions if clarification is needed.
3. Thoughtfully consider the contributions of your peers.
 4. Prepare for and commit to achieving the goals of each class session by completing assignments in a timely manner.

Items 1-3 are particularly important to consider as half of our class will be conducted online, using a discussion forum where only words exist ...no facial expressions, body language or other non-verbal means of communication will be evident to further enhance understanding. Please be thoughtful about the words you choose and the posts that you share, as mean can be amplified in the absence of further context.

Class meetings

The class will convene for six (6) sessions on campus over the course of this academic term, and attendance is required at every session. In addition, there will be weekly, asynchronous, online activities that are required and are considered part of the course. Failure to participate in the online activities one week would mean “missing” one-half of the class that week. Individual meetings with the instructor may be arranged by appointment.

To optimize the learning process, students are expected to prepare in advance of class meetings and to actively participate in all related discussion and activities. Students are also encouraged to complete *additional* readings related to their own areas of interest, as a basis for making more personally relevant contributions in class.

Specific details pertaining to each session are delineated below, to afford students ample opportunity to prepare. We do not meet often so we need to make each session count!

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. The instructor may notify you of changes to readings and assignments during the course of this semester.

Blackboard and other media

Blackboard is the primary learning management system for this course, and all students are required to utilize it. The course may rely on additional technologies, including Adobe Connect Pro, Google Hangout, Voice Thread, and Jing. Details about these technologies will be covered in the first class meeting.

Course texts and readings

Required Text: American Psychological Association. (2011). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC

Additional required readings will be provided by the instructor on Blackboard.

Optional Text: Gallagher, K., Goodyear, R., Brewer, D., Rueda, R. (2011). *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy*. New York: Routledge.

TIMELINE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Specific guidelines for each assignment will be discussed in class.

ASSIGNMENT	ASSIGNED IN WEEK	DUE IN WEEK	POINT VALUE
Class participation, 2 Posts & 2 Comments (as assigned)	Each week	Each week	18
Reflective Journals (on Blackboard)	1 - 6	Each week	12 (2 points per session)
Group Issue Paper, using popular media sources (5-7 pages)	2	5	15
Group presentation using VT, encompassing content from group and individual papers	3	6	15
Individual Paper, using peer reviewed sources (5-7 pages)	3	6	15
Conceptual Framework project Part I: Narrative version Part II: Creative work	1	Week 2 Week 7 (Oct 14)	10 15

Overview of graded assignments

- 1) Class involvement and community membership - 18 points.

Each week you will be responsible for participating in our class discussions and activities. Be thoughtful and creative, and feel free to experiment, but remember that the goal of each discussion is to understand the material and be able to apply it. We will have a lot to talk about during each class session.

You will also be asked to comment to prompts posted to Discussion in weeks 2 and 5, and to also Comment on someone else's post each of these weeks. Blog-like in nature, the 5-10 minute responses that address the issue(s) or question(s) posed by the prompt. Should be 2+ paragraphs minimum. Comments should be comprised of several sentences/1 paragraph, about 5-10 minutes each comment.

- 2) Reflective Journal - 12 points/2 points per entry. Post to Journal/Assignments (for only the instructor to see). Reflective in nature; discussing one's own responses to the week's topics, readings/viewings and assignments, perhaps comparing them to your own experience, background or situation. It is a thoughtful analysis of experiences based on concepts. Instructor may offer guiding questions for you to address. Should reflect good writing skills. Does not need to be APA style, but is more structured than a Quick-write. Should be 3+ paragraphs minimum.

- 3) Conceptual Framework (Part I: 10 Points; Part II: 15 points).

Part I: Narrative version: A written response to the questions outlined in week 1's pre-assignment. This narrative does not need to address each question one by one; rather, this narrative may simply address the topics and concepts outlined in the questions in week 1.

Part II: Creative work: The conceptual framework should be a *creative* presentation of your concept of who you are and who you want to be as a professional. The creative work builds on the written narrative you wrote in week 1. The framework should reflect your inner most beliefs and values and illustrate your strengths and hopes for the future. Remember there is no right answer.

The creative presentation must be accompanied by a written guide, no more than one page, single spaced, that helps the viewer or listener to understand how the item(s) or artifacts connect to and convey your conceptual

framework.

As these creative presentations will take many forms, you have a couple of options for submitting it. If possible, please upload a digitized version of the presentation directly to the Assignment on Blackboard. Or, you may upload a document with a link to a website that is hosting a presentation, video, mp3 file, or other item. If neither of these will work, please bring your item(s) to my office in WPH 1003C. I will take the item for grading, then make arrangements to return it to you at a later date. I will do my best to care for your item, but please do not include items that are irreplaceable, very expensive, or otherwise very important to you.

- 4) Group Issue Paper, using popular media sources (15 points). This paper, done by the group, must address the *Key Questions to Consider* from the syllabus. Groups will frame a problem practice to explore and research, understanding the biases that you and others bring to the situation. Analyze the perspectives represented in all your popular media sources and reframe your problem.

Write a 5-7 page paper that addresses the problem, societal conditions, goals, and gaps in the group issue paper by using only popular media sources to introduce, examine and uncover perspectives and opinions on this topic. APA style is required.

- 5) Individual Paper, using peer reviewed sources (15 points). This assignment will require you to be critical readers of scholarly articles. Searching research databases, identify 2 articles that relate to the problems of practice identified in the group issue paper. Write a 5-7 page paper that addresses the problem, societal conditions, goals, and gaps in the group issue paper by using only peer reviewed publications to evaluate the research, evidence, and other credible sources of information to identify a plan of action. This paper will not draw upon any of the popular media that was used for the group paper. This will be your opportunity to demonstrate your critical analysis skills. APA style is required.

- 6) Group presentation (15 points). Students will have 10 minutes to discuss findings from their group and individual papers. The group will develop a presentation using a web based media tool. Students will be required to address at least three sources of information regarding the identified “problem” and the context in which the problem has been reframed. Students must also present the thought process used to look at the “problem” from a

broader social and ecological conditions and present a process to address the identified problem of practice.

Description of online work:

Group work: Find a time to meet -- face to face, online in Google Hangout or other forum, or conference call -- to work on the assignment. Consider using a web-based work tool like Google docs, Prezi or VoiceThread to develop your project together.

Prezi: <http://prezi.com/learn/>

Voicethread: <https://voicethread.com/?#q.b409.i848804>

Read/view/listen: Access the item online or on Blackboard (as noted in the syllabus)

Post: Post the assigned item or url link to Blackboard (in the location indicated on the syllabus – probably Assignments or Discussion).

FINAL GRADING SCALE

Your final grade is based on a 100-point scale. The break down by assignment is included in the Course Requirements section of the syllabus.

A = 95-100	B = 84-86	C = 74-76
A- = 90-94	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73
B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D = 69-60

Grading for *most* written assignments will reflect 3 components:

Content

Writing

APA style (sometimes included in Writing)

A high score in Content reflects a clear organizational approach that:

- Addresses all questions and sections outlined in the assignment or prompt
- Reflects a strong understanding and synthesis of relevant published research
- Uses evidence (data, research findings, other literature) to support assertions
- If reviewing a study, clearly states the author, title/purpose of study, methods and summary of findings

A high score in Writing reflects:

- Appropriate use of APA style
- Few typographical errors, misspellings or grammatical errors
- Little or no redundancy
- Clear transitions from one section to another
- Clear focus on the study and not extraneous topics
- A scholarly tone, with no use of slang
- Primary citations from reputable or peer reviewed publications and sources
- Summaries of concepts in lieu of direct quotes (use of direct quotes should be limited)

GROUP WORK

In this course and in the higher education masters programs, you will be asked to engage in group work. It is important to state up front several expectations:

- 1) Participation in these group projects should reflect the same level of professionalism, engagement, commitment and high standards as a group project in a professional work environment.
- 2) Each member is expected to participate fully in meetings, respond to group conversations via email, chat or other media, contribute meaningful and complete content or work, meet deadlines and assist in completing the final phases of the project.
- 3) Segmenting responsibilities to the point of individual ownership of pieces is discouraged. While this may be a good tactic to start a project, a high quality project cannot be completed in this way. Highly segmented work seldom reflects the quality of a project that involves everyone.
- 4) Communicate abilities and assets, and be honest about limitations. Bring everything you can to a project and let people know when you need help.
- 5) Accept feedback about the betterment of a project without concern for defending a position.
- 6) Try to be democratic or open to decision making.

Last thought – student affairs is a really small field. Please bear in mind that though you are working with friends, academic reputations become professional reputations in due time. Please engage in group work seriously and respect the contributions that everyone needs to bring forth.

LATE WORK & INCOMPLETES:

All work is expected to be completed and turned in on time. Late work will reflect a deduction of 2 points for not meeting the initial deadline, then an additional loss of 2

points for each week thereafter. Assignments not turned in by the last class meeting will be factored in as a zero.

A grade of Incomplete can only be considered if there are outstanding assignments not completed due to documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Arrangements for the IN and its removal should be initiated by the student and agreed to by the instructor prior to the final day of classes in the semester.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

EMERGENCIES OR NATURAL DISASTERS

In the event of a emergency or natural disaster that requires temporary cancellation of face to face class meetings on campus, please check this course on Blackboard for further instructions.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One: Introduction to the Course and Determining Your Own Experience August 26, 2013

Introduction

The initial class meeting will serve as an overview for the course and a start to discussions regarding the expectations associated with being a graduate student at the Rossier School of Education.

You will examine your goals and motivations for joining your specific degree program and professional field, and examine what you think the program will provide for you, and what you think you can contribute to the program, and to the field. As a result of these discussions, a set of goals and a commitment to a certain level of participation and effort should emerge that is directly related to your goals and expectations for yourself. This commitment should come from a strong motivation to get what you want from your training.

Determine what it is you want to know, and what it will take to acquire that knowledge and skill during your time here. While making these decisions you should consider not only what knowledge and skills you hope to leave with, but also what kind of an impact do you want to make on your field, and what do you envision the magnitude of that impact to be.

Consider, too, what your relevant previous experience has been, and what strengths and weaknesses you possess, as these too will affect where you will need to focus your efforts and where you will likely contribute or shine.

Finally, inventory the resources you have at your disposal outside of the program, what interests or passions or drives you have, and how those might factor in to how you want to spend your training time and where you will want to zero in.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Reflect upon the qualities, knowledge, experiences, and perspectives they bring, and how these assets will enable them to contribute meaningfully to their program and field of practice
 - Solidify goals and motivations for pursuing this degree program and

- the related professional field
- Identify interests, passions, needs, and expectations as related to the professional preparation program
- Clarify and conceptualize the roles envisioned as an agent of positive change within this field
- Engage in an honest assessment of your capacity to make the requisite level of commitment; brainstorm strategies for bridging the potential gap between your actual and desired level of commitment
 - Determine the level of commitment (time, energy, intellectual investment, etc.) you will need to make in order to ensure a productive and meaningful graduate experience for yourself.
 - Identify resources and support mechanisms that will facilitate your academic progress and maximize their professional preparation

BEFORE CLASS

Read: Baxter Magolda, M. B & Crosby, P.C. (2011). Preparing students and graduates to navigate life's challenges: A dialogue on self authorship and the quest for balance of agency and communion. *Journal of College and Character*, 12(3), 1-11.

Pre-assignment: Complete Conceptual Framework, part I – Written Narrative, responding to the questions below. Post to Blackboard (Assignments) and bring a hard copy to class.

Questions

In all of your other classes you will be influenced to think one way or another about who we, as a profession, are and what our purpose is. This is your chance to build your own initial conceptual framework of who we are and what we should do. Over the course of your training and career, this framework will be altered and even reconstructed in some places. But the foundation of it will remain and that will be the essence of who it is you want to be as a professional. This activity will get you started in developing the scaffolding for your framework, and requires you to avoid self-censorship.

- Question 1: Briefly, how and why did you come to be where you are now, in your program?
- Question 2: What are the three most important things you expect to gain from your training?
- Question 3: What do you believe you will contribute to the program (class discussions, assignments, colleagues, fieldwork, professional organization

work, philanthropic work, leadership)? What experiences, characteristics, or interests/passions are a part of why you believe you have this to contribute?

- Question 4: What do you believe you will contribute to the field? How might you become a leader in the field through that contribution; how will you develop something new or more impactful than what currently exists? What experiences, characteristics, or interests/passions are a part of why you believe you have this to contribute? What will the magnitude of your contribution be (again, try not to constrain yourself)?
- Question 5: Given what you want to gain and what you have to give, and the impact you want to make, consider how much energy, time, and effort are you willing to give to maximize your potential, while still maintaining a manageable life over the course of your training. As you are making this determination, keep in mind what your academic, clinical, and professional strengths and weaknesses are, as well as what your external resources are (family, friends, support, access to research, access to support services, money).
- Question 6: Given all you want to gain and all you have to give, and considering the level of commitment you'd like to make, where do you think you should focus your greatest energies (learning skills, knowledge, theories; working with certain populations; diversity training)? What resources at USC, in Rossier, and in your program will you need to access? How often? What risks will you have to take to accomplish this vision of yourself? How can you find ways to take those risks and be supported so that you diminish the downside and maximize the upside of the risk.

IN CLASS

- 1) Be prepared to discuss your Conceptual Framework written narrative and to hear others' approaches to this process.
- 2) Discussion: What is a problem of practice? How do you frame them? How do you develop research questions?

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, September 1

- 1) Read/watch/listen to:

Sir Ken Robinson (2 videos)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>

http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html

- 2) Submit a Journal entry

What do you believe you will contribute to the program (class discussions, assignments, colleagues, fieldwork, professional organization work, philanthropic

Mondays, 2:00 – 3:40 pm

work, leadership)? What experiences, characteristics, or interests/passions are a part of why you believe you have this to contribute?

Week Two: How the World and I Get in My Own Way
September 9, 2013

Introduction

The goal of the second class meeting is focused on avoiding, overcoming, and eradicating obstacles that prevent you from determining your own graduate experience. The first step will be in recognizing self-sabotage and how to avoid it or overcome it. The next step will be in finding ways to mitigate or overcome external obstacles such as oppression, marginalization, bias, and invalid assumptions so that you are not thwarted in maintaining the integrity of the framework you created for yourself. The third step will be to raise awareness of how our own biases and assumptions about others will block you from reaching your full potential.

In this session, you will refer back to the professional framework you began to construct for yourself in the first class session, and consider the ways in which this framework may be altered or compromised by both internal and external influences (assumptions, beliefs, biases, social cues, disappointments, etc.). This will help you to identify the factors that affirm and detract from your professional self-concept, and develop strategies for addressing the latter.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Recognize the potential effects of your values and belief systems on the professional self-concept you have constructed and your eventual work in urban settings, in the US, and abroad.
 - Identify potential obstacles (internal and external) that keep you from fully actualizing your goals.
 - Identify strategies for balancing and strengthening your professional framework and mitigating potentially unfavorable influences.

BEFORE CLASS

Read: Pittelman, K. & Resource Generation. (2010). Deep thoughts about class and privilege. In Adams, M., et al. (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

O'Neill, N. (2011). Educating for personal and social responsibility: Levers for building collective institutional commitment. *Journal of College and Character* 12(2). 1-6.

Pitner, R.O. & Sakamoto, I. (2005). The role of critical consciousness in

multicultural practice: Examining how its strength becomes its limitations.
American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 75(4).

Assignments:

1) Start work on a visual, audio or creative representation of your Conceptual Framework (part II). Examine your class notes, readings, and other resources. From the information you collected begin to create a visual or audio representation of what you wrote so that you are left with a scaffold or framework that symbolically represents you in the context of your training, the field, and your future.

For example, you may create a mash up YouTube video, or a mix of songs, or spoken word poetry, a mental map, or some other symbolic summary of your conceptual framework that will encapsulate all elements of your framework succinctly and powerfully. Remember to include representations of yourself, your relevant experiences, your strengths, your weaknesses, your resources, your professors, your colleagues, your future, the field, your contribution, the effects or size of the impact you will make on those you serve. Use creative elements to represent each component of your framework. It should be an accurate audio/visual/spatial representation of the written framework you created last week.

2) Frame a problem of practice with your group and post the problem to Blackboard

IN CLASS

Bring a draft or early prototype of the expression of your conceptual framework. The final iteration is due in week 7.

Be prepared to discuss your group's problem of practice.

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, September 15

1) Read/watch/listen to:

Daniel Benjamin: Happiness and decision making

<http://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2011/11/23/happiness-and-decision-making>

Freakonomics radio podcast: Freakonomics Goes to college. What is a college degree worth these days? (33 minute podcast – NOT the 29 minute podcast)

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/freakonomics-goes-to-college/id354668519?i=118723523>

2) Submit a Journal entry

What do you tend to do that interrupts, delays, or prevents you from reaching your

goals? Also, what kinds of thoughts or beliefs do you have about yourself that belittle, devalue, or cause you to doubt yourself? Have you internalized biases, imposed by others or society, that interrupt, delay, or prevent you from reaching your goals? What kinds of statements, subtle cues, covert messages, or lack of support or role models have you experienced that belittle, devalue, or impose doubt on you?

Do you have untested, unfair, or prejudiced thoughts, beliefs, or assumptions might you have about others that could affect your work? What thoughts, beliefs, assumptions do you have that are part of your value system, that may not be shared by others, that could affect your work? How could these thoughts, beliefs, assumptions go beyond affecting the individuals you work with and permeate through the larger system of which you are a significant part, and how might that affect the larger community?

How do biases and prejudices impact your framework. How do you feel when you see the effect they have? Is there an initial reaction you have? Something you immediately want to add to the framework to strengthen it? If so, do that.

Is there something you can add to your framework to prevent the viral spreading of the effects of biases and prejudices to the larger framework? Add that to your framework.

3. Submit a Post and Comment on the Discussion board. The prompt is posted on Discussion.

After posting your original reply to this prompt, please review replies posted by your classmates and post 1 comment. You may wish to reflect on similarities and differences in your responses. What would you change about your own responses based on what you are seeing in the messages of others?

Week Three: Framing Problems and Opportunities

September 16, 2013

Introduction

In this class session, we will begin to examine the critical issues that confront professionals in our field, and their potential impact on the field. Also, we will explore how one's position affects one's approach to problem solving. How does "who we are" help or get in the way of solving problems?

A portion of this class session will also be devoted to an introduction and overview of the APA Manual, which will allow students to learn to communicate effectively in their field.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Recognize the bearing of broader contextual factors and position on professional training and practice.
 - Identify and discuss the critical issues that confront the work of professionals in our field, and their potential impact on the present and future of the field.
 - Differentiate between mere assertions and evidence-based conclusions in practice.
 - Identify a problem of practice that transcends your individual perspective.

BEFORE CLASS

Read Olsen, L, Bhattacharya, J. & Scharf, A. (n.d.). Cultural competency: What it is and why it matters. *Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health*.

Williams, C. C. (2006). The epistemology of cultural competence. *Families and Societies* 87(2). 209-220.

Pre-assignment Draft responses to these questions:

Problems and opportunities within our profession

- What are the most pressing and salient problems or issues that are present in our field?
 - What are the mechanisms by which these problems can be addressed?
 - Systems/structures, ethical parameters, professional standards, expectations and protocol, legal issues, hierarchy, and other factors

- Draw upon previous units to think about how your background/context might inform your choices about problem solving.
 - Any hidden assets or opportunities within your environment that could lead to solutions?
-
- What opportunities emerge as we look at ways to solve problems that involve individual or systems-related change? Are there hidden assets associated with problem-solving and change that may not be readily apparent?

IN CLASS

Guest lecture on use of APA style and scholarly writing (James Hayashi)

In-class review of common APA uses and errors (worksheet)

Discussion of problems and opportunities in the profession

Work on group papers (time pending)

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, September 22

1) Read/watch/listen to:

<http://www.gapminder.org/videos/200-years-that-changed-the-world-bbc/>
Instead of studying history for one year at the university, you can watch this video for less than five minutes. Income per person (GDP per capita) is adjusted for inflation and for differences in costs of living (purchasing power) across countries. You can play with the data yourself in Gapminder World. This is a short clip from the longer film *The Joy of Stats* ©Wingspan Productions for BBC, 2010.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2012/08/16/discussing-college-advantage>
Discussing college advantage: Merisotis and Carnevale

2) Submit a Journal entry.

Response to the Gapminder Video:

1. *How does this video impact your assumptions about poverty? Confirmed? Challenged? Provide examples from the video to support your explanation.*
2. *Revisit your reflection right before attending class. Have your assumptions changed or stayed the same? Keep your response the same or revise according to changes in your assumptions.*

Week Four: Examining Effective Academic Writing & Evaluating Positionality
September 23, 2013

Introduction

In this class session, we will begin to consider the mechanisms by which these problems can be addressed. Draw upon previous units to understand how context informs your choices about problem solving.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Gain familiarity with the writing standards and guidelines for producing scholarly work in their graduate program.
 - Utilize the resources provided by the USC Libraries to search for and retrieve scholarly literature on the problem of practice reviewed.
- Recognize the importance of written communication and dissemination of information for effective leadership in the field.
 - Summarize and critique credibility of sources of a research article
 - Develop goals related to the problem, examine causes for gaps between problem and goals.
- Evaluate how one's position affects how we approach and view problems.
 - How does "who we are" help or get in the way of solving problems?
- Draw connections to broader conditions that give rise to the problem (e.g., oppression, social conditions, etc.).

BEFORE CLASS

Read Kezar, A. (2002). Expanding notions of leadership to capture pluralistic voices: Positionality theory in practice. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(4). 558-78

Torres, V., Jones, S. R., & Renn, K. A. (2009, November-December). Identity development theories in student affairs: Origins, current status, and new approaches. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(6), 577-596.

American Psychological Association. (2011). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC
Read Chapters 3 & 4

Pre-assignment

TBA

DUE

Nothing.

IN CLASS

Melanee Vicedo, guest speaker, on library resources

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, September 29

1) Read/watch/listen to:

Salman Khan

http://www.ted.com/talks/salman_khan_let_s_use_video_to_reinvent_education.html

Cultural problem solving, Dominik Guess

<http://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2011/12/08/cultural-thinking-and-problem-solving>

2) Submit a Journal entry.

Imagine that you are writing a letter to your closest friend telling him or her about how your first three weeks in this course have impacted you. Be sure to address the concepts of problem definition, privilege, and worldview (including your thoughts on the values, beliefs, and assumptions that define it). Use this as an opportunity to process your thoughts and feelings about the coursework to date (this journal entry may be a bit longer – the equivalent of 2-3 pages, single spaced).

**Week Five: Using Literature to Inform your Perspective &
Synthesizing Research Findings
September 30, 2013**

Introduction

This unit will address the important role of scholarly literature in the formulation of viewpoints and presentation of arguments within the academic and professional contexts.

Now that we have begun to frame ourselves within our profession, moving from an examination of our own individual perspective to a broader one, it is time learn how to integrate academic research into our point of view. In this class session we will learn the elements of a scholarly article, how to synthesize the findings of two or more articles, and how to critically analyze the methods used or conclusions made in scholarly writing, and how to incorporate this point of view into our knowledge and perspective on a particular problem of practice.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Distill the key points/findings from multiple pieces of research to develop a consolidated and succinct summary.
- Incorporate this new knowledge and perspective into your own point of view.
 - Use scholarly research to develop a plan of action to address the gaps between goals and the problems.
- Research local, national, or global examples in which similar problems appear to be addressed more effectively.

Questions

- To what extent has your perspective on the topic changed after scholarly research about it? Conversely, how do the opinions/views expressed by those in the “real world” (readings from the previous class session) influence your view of the scholarly research?
- How does this bi-directional analysis affect your ultimate perspective on the topic? What recommendations would you make for prevention, intervention, or further research?

BEFORE CLASS

Read Rhoads, R.A. & Black, M.A. (1995). Student affairs practitioners as transformative educators: Advancing a critical cultural perspective. *Journal of College Student Development*, 36(5). 413-21.

<http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/journalarticles.html>

Students' self-selected research publications and literature related to the problem(s) identified by the group.

Identify two publications from peer reviewed journals directly related to the problem(s) identified by your group. Mark up and analyze the publication, writing questions in the margins and reviewing/critiquing it according to the suggestions offered by the website at Frostburg.

DUE

Group paper. Post to Blackboard (Assignments).

IN CLASS

In small groups, be prepared to discuss what you found in the scholarly literature and how it was similar or different from the popular media sources you reviewed and discussed previously.

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, October 6

1) Read/watch/listen to:

Educause interview with Craig Gibson (focus on discussion regarding evaluated user generated content)

http://www.educause.edu/sites/default/files/2007/08/gbayne_ELI-CraigGibson.mp3

2) Submit a Journal entry.

What are the mechanisms by which some of the most salient and pressing problems can be addressed? Talk through systems/structures, ethical considerations, professional standards, expectations and protocol, legal issues, hierarchy, and other factors within higher education and student affairs that may aid or deter the creation of responses or solutions.

3) Submit a Post and Comment on the Discussion board. The prompt is posted on Discussion.

After posting your original reply to this prompt, please review replies posted by your classmates and post 1 comment. You may wish to reflect on similarities and differences in

Mondays, 2:00 – 3:40 pm

your responses. What would you change about your own responses based on what you are seeing in the messages of others?

Week Six: Presentations, Synthesis, and a New Lens
October 7, 2013

Introduction

In this final class meeting, students will present on the group case study they completed, focusing on a common professional problem/challenges of their choice, the environmental conditions that may have contributed to the problem, their proposed approaches to addressing these conditions as a means for bringing about change, and how the issue is addressed in other areas of the country or world. This will afford students an opportunity to showcase the synthesis of their collective perspectives, as well as their skill in creating a succinct, engaging, thought-provoking presentation on a critical issue that warrants attention.

Time will also be devoted to reflecting upon the “framing” experience and contemplating the ways in which students may have evolved in their views and understanding of themselves, their chosen field, or how they envision their roles within it.

This course was designed to help frame your entry into this new academic and professional realm. We have spoken specifically about students’ career paths, the context for our professional work, and the major issues, problems and opportunities in our field. By undergoing this foundational experience, students will be better oriented toward their training program and their field, with a keener understanding of what will be expected of them through the remainder of their degree program.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

- Engage in collective analysis of critical issues within their field.
 - From the examples studied, develop strategies for addressing the larger conditions (not merely the individual problem) as a means for producing a more sustainable solution .
- Reflect on their own framework for learning through the initial phase of their degree program.
 - Reassess and refine their personal goals and expectations moving forward in the program.
 - Articulate tentative goals for leadership within their fields.

BEFORE CLASS

TBA

DUE

Critical Analysis Paper. Post to Blackboard (Assignments).
Group presentation

IN CLASS

Be prepared to do your 10 minute group presentation
Course Evaluation

ONLINE Please complete by Sunday, October 13

1) Read/watch/listen to:

Freeman Hrabowski interview on NPR:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/06/06/154432628/wisdom-from-one-of-worlds-most-influential-people>

2) Submit a Journal entry.

As this semester has progressed, how has your view of this profession changed? What was affirmed? What has surprised you?

As we discuss the context for our work, has your understanding of your own place within this profession changed? How?

Week Seven: Conceptual Framework Creative Work Due on Monday, October 14

Post to Blackboard (Assignments), post a link on Bb, or bring to WPH 1003C.