

EFOP 2089: Special Topics—Critical Issues in Higher Education Governance
5400 Wesley Posvar Hall
Thursdays 6pm-8:30pm

Instructor:

Hayley Weddle

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Office hours: Please email me to set up a meeting—I look forward to connecting.

Course Description

Welcome to the Critical Issues in Higher Education Governance course! I am excited to learn with all of you this semester. In this course, students will deepen their understanding of how higher education is governed and examine pressing issues these governing bodies address. Such issues include affordability; food and housing insecurity; equity, diversity, and inclusion; sexual violence and harassment; policing on college campuses; and admissions policy. Throughout the course, students will also explore strategies and opportunities for influencing higher education governance processes. The course is designed to be collaborative and engaging, and will include opportunities for group facilitation as well as presentations.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, we will be able to:

1. Describe issues, debates, and stakeholders pertaining to higher education governance
2. Apply a critical lens to evaluate various higher education governance issues
3. Identify strategies for engaging in change processes related to higher education governance

Course Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings will be uploaded to Canvas.

Assignments

Below are the assignments for the course; more details will be provided during class.

Individual virtual meeting (Weeks 1-3): During the first three weeks of class, please sign up for a 20-minute virtual meeting with me so that we can get to know one another. I am excited to learn about what brought you to your graduate program, how I can best support your learning, and your experiences/interests related to higher education. Meetings will be via Zoom. 10%

Source review: Critically examining the reading (Week 3)

For this individual paper, students will select one reading assigned between Week 1 and Week 7 to engage in a critical examination of that source. Papers should begin with a brief summary of the selected reading, followed by your analysis. Questions to address might include:

- What is the main focus and takeaways from the piece? [brief summary]
- What might be the author's motivation for writing the piece?
- What assumptions are the author(s) making, if any?
- How convincing is the evidence or information presented, and why?
- How might the study, argument, or framing have been improved?
- How does this source connect to other readings from this class, or your other classes?
- How does the source align with, expand, or complicate what you know about this topic?
- What unanswered questions do you have after reading this piece?

Papers should be 2-3 pages double spaced. *Bring a Google doc version to class for peer feedback.* 15%

Reflection paper: Connecting governance issues to personal experience (Week 7): For this individual paper, students will reflect on how higher education governance issues shape educational experiences. Students will identify and describe a governance issue from class (e.g. shared governance, basic needs, affordability, admissions, equity, diversity, & inclusion, etc.) and reflect on how this issue has influenced their experiences in education, as well as how their thinking about this issue has evolved over time. Reflections may focus on experiences as a student or as a professional in any higher education setting. Papers should be 2-3 pages double spaced, and include at least two references to class readings. 15%

Co-teaching about a governance issue (Weeks 8-12)

During week 5 of class, you will be assigned to a small group responsible for leading a future class activity focused on a particular reading for our course. When leading class, each group will do a short presentation on their reading (5-10 minutes), and lead an engagement opportunity (20 minutes). **These peer-facilitated sessions will occur in Weeks 8-12.** Students will have opportunities to work on group presentations during class (weeks 5-7). 15%

Case study paper: Examining governance issues in practice (Week 12)

For this paper, students will have the option to choose between two assignment approaches outlined below. For either approach, you are welcome to work on the assignment individually or in a small group (no more than 4 students per group)

Option 1—Reflecting on a Previous Case: Select and reflect on a case study example of a recent governing board decision. Examples include: UC Regents decision to remove standardized tests from the admissions process, CSU Trustees decision to be fully remote for the Fall 2020 semester, UNC Trustees decision to delay tenure for Nikole Hannah-Jones. Students can also

select a different recent example if desired. Brief readings related to each of these potential topics have been added to Canvas as a module. Please note that additional research into your issue of choice will likely be needed to inform the paper. Questions to guide the paper for Option 1 include:

- What is the issue being addressed by the governing board?
- What decision was made? What will be the impact of the decision?
- Whose perspectives were considered in the decision-making process?
- How does this case study align with, contradict, or address gaps across what we've learned about shared governance in this course?
- How does this case study align with, contradict, or address gaps across what we've learned about culturally sustaining governance in this course?
- If you were on the governing board, what would you have advocated for? Why?

Option 2–Future Focused Case: Propose a higher education initiative that would require support/backing from governance stakeholders. For example, one of our lovely colleagues plans to write about a potential plan to have Pitt recognize Indigenous People's Day (and would welcome partners!). Questions to guide the paper for Option 2 include:

- What is the proposed initiative? What is the potential impact if the initiative is implemented?
- What governance stakeholders would you need to collaborate with?
- What challenges might you encounter (e.g. lack of buy-in, limited resources)? How might you address these challenges?
- How does your proposed initiative align with, contradict, or address gaps across what we've learned about shared governance in this course?
- How does your proposed initiative align with, contradict, address gaps across what we've learned about culturally sustaining governance in this course?

For either option, papers should be about 3 pages double spaced (per person), and include at least two references to class readings (per person). 15%

Final presentation: Engaging in higher education governance (Week 14)

Advocacy and engagement are key aspects of higher education governance. In this creative assignment, you can work individually or in a small group (no more than 4 students per group).

Each student or group will be responsible for **presenting an idea for an advocacy approach** related to a critical higher education governance issue of their choice. You are welcome to focus on the same issue from a previous class assignment, or a different issue from class (e.g. basic needs insecurity, affordability, admissions, selecting a university president, sexual harassment, etc.). Potential advocacy approaches include public comment at a governing board meeting, a brief agenda for a meeting with a decision-maker, an email to a stakeholder(s), a social media

post to raise awareness, etc. Each student or group will share their issue and advocacy approach with the class during a 3-minute (per person) presentation including:

- A brief overview of the governance issue and why you selected it
- Description of your proposed advocacy approach, audience, and intended impact. 10%

Ongoing engagement: Consistent engagement in class activities is the foundation of our collective learning. Please complete readings prior to our class sessions. Recognizing that students may feel more comfortable participating in different ways, I am open to many forms of engagement (e.g. sharing during breakout groups, participating in full-class discussions, adding insights to online platforms such as Jamboard, etc.). I also understand that this is a hard year, and everyone is navigating complicated circumstances. Please reach out if you cannot attend a class session or have other circumstances you would like to address, and we can work together to find an appropriate (and manageable) solution. 20%

APA Writing Style

For this course, the acceptable citation format is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). Please consider utilizing the Pitt Writing Center (<https://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu/graduate-services>) for assistance with grammar, sentence structure, and organization.

Course Schedule and Readings: Please read the materials listed for each week in advance of that class session, as they will be discussed during class. All readings are available on Canvas.

Week 1—January 13th

Class will be held via Zoom

Introduction to the course: what is higher education governance?

- Rall, R.M., Morgan, D.L., & Commodore, F. (2020). Toward culturally sustaining governance: Best practices of theory, research, and practice. *The Journal of Education Human Resources*, 38(1), 139-164.

Week 2— January 20th

Class will be held via Zoom

Shared governance in higher education

- Kezar, A. (2006). Rethinking public higher education governing boards performance: Results of a national study of governing boards in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(6), 968-1008. Read pages 968-973 and 997-1002 more deeply, skim the rest of this piece
- American Association of University Professors. (1966). Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.
- Association of Governing Boards. (2017). Statement on Shared Governance.

Week 3—January 27th

Addressing critical issues: food and housing insecurity

- Graves, D., Weddle, H., & Muwwakkil, J. (2021). *Passing the gavel: Empowering students to lead in higher education governance spaces*. Inside Higher Ed.
- Hope Center. (2021). Basic needs insecurity during the ongoing pandemic. [\[skim only\]](#)
- University of California (2020). The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs ([executive summary only](#))

Article review is due on Thursday, January 27th by midnight via Canvas. Bring a Google doc version to class for peer feedback

Week 4—February 3rd

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: affordability

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2019). *State higher education funding cuts have pushed costs to students, worsened inequality*.
- Tran (2021). UC Regents approve new system-wide multi tier tuition plan. Daily Bruin.
- Association of Governing Boards (2021). Designing for affordability.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Devon Graves, Assistant Professor of Education, CSU Stanislaus

Week 5—February 10th

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: equity, diversity, and inclusion

- Rall, R.M. (2021). *Getting the boards involved: Challenges and opportunities for equity at the highest level of university governance*. University of Southern California, Pullias Center for Higher Education.
- Morgan, D. L., LePeau, L. A., & Commodore, F. (2021). Observable evidence and partnership possibilities for governing board involvement in diversity, equity, and inclusion: A content analysis. *Research in Higher Education*, 1-33.

Week 6—February 17th

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: admissions

- Baker, D. J., & Bastedo, M. N. (2021). What if we leave it up to chance? Admissions lotteries and equitable access at selective colleges. *Educational Researcher*.
- PACE. (2020). *UC Regents should consider all evidence and options* ([only the blog post is required](#))
- NPR. (2019). *US charges dozens of parents, coaches in massive college admissions scandal*.

Week 7—February 24th

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: policing on college campuses

- Dizon, J. P. M. (2021). Protecting the university, policing race: A case study of campus policing. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*.
- UC Board of Regents. (2020). *Discussion item on university policing*.
- UC Davis. (2021). *A decade of listening and acting*.

Guest speaker: Jamaal Muwwakkil, former UC Student Regent and current PhD Candidate at the University of California, Santa Barbara

Reflection paper is due on Thursday February 24th by midnight via Canvas

Week 8—March 3rd

Role of students in higher education governance

- Rall, R. M., & Maxey, D. B. (2020). “A steeper hill to climb”: The role and experience of student trustees in public higher education governing boards. *Journal of Power*, 8(2), 12-27.
- Lozano, J., & Hughes, R. (2017). Representation and conflict of interest among students on higher education governing boards. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 39(6), 607-624.

Spring Break! No class—March 10th**Week 9—March 17th**

The role of university presidents in shared governance

- Deloitte’s Center for Higher Education Excellence & Georgia Tech’s Center for 21st Century Universities (2017). Pathways to the university presidency: The future of higher education leadership
- Bustillos, L. T., & Siqueiros, M. (2018). Left out: How exclusion in California's colleges and universities hurts our values, our students, and our economy. *Campaign for College Opportunity*. [[read pages 1-9 more closely, skim the rest](#)]
- Jaschik, S. (2022). *University of Michigan fires president*. Inside Higher Ed.

Week 10—March 24th

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: sexual violence and harassment

- Grummert, S., & Rall, R. (2020). Looking Beyond the Toxic Triangle: Connecting Sexual Abuse to Failed Governance. *Journal of Higher Education Athletics & Innovation*, (8).
- Napolitano (2018). *Don’t let the Trump administration undermine Title IX*. Washington Post.
- UCLA Health (2020). Special Committee Report. [[executive summary only](#)]

Week 11—March 31st

Addressing critical issues in higher education governance: Navigating the pandemic

- AAUP (2021). COVID-19 and Academic Governance. [executive summary only]
- Rall, R. M. (2021). Modeling Equity-Minded Leadership amid Crisis: The Call for Higher Education Governing Boards to Lead the Way. *Journal of Higher Education Management* 36(1), 25.

Week 12—April 7th

Role of faculty in higher education governance

- Rosenberg, B. (2014). Essay on shared or divided governance in higher education. Inside Higher Ed.
- Bornstein, R. (2012). Transforming Institutions through Shared Governance. *Trusteeship*, 20(5), 24.

Case study paper is due on Thursday April 7th by midnight via Canvas

Week 13—April 14th

Board member selection and presentation prep

- Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (2020). Merit Selection of Public College and University Board Members.

Week 14—April 21st

Final presentations

Please upload your final presentation slides to Canvas by class time on April 21st

Week 15—April 28th

Graduation at 6pm! No class.

University Policies and Resources

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the [Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial](#).

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services \(DRS\)](#), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Health and Safety

During this pandemic, it is extremely important that you abide by the [public health regulations](#), the University of Pittsburgh's [health standards and guidelines](#), and [Pitt's Health Rules](#). These rules have been developed to protect the health and safety of all of us. Universal [face covering](#) is required in all classrooms and in every building on campus, without exceptions, regardless of vaccination status. This means you must wear a face covering that properly covers your nose and mouth when you are in the classroom. If you do not comply, you will be asked to leave class. It is your responsibility to have the required face covering when entering a university building or classroom. For the most up-to-date information and guidance, please visit coronavirus.pitt.edu and check your Pitt email for updates before each class.

My priority is your well-being, and I am committed to being flexible. Please reach out with any concerns, scheduling conflicts, or other circumstances you would like to address so that we can strategize together.