Course Description and Goals
The purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive examination of the intended (goals) and actual educational results (outcomes) of enrollment in postsecondary education from the perspective of both individual students and the society in which we live. Further, we will explore strategies (plans or designs) for achieving those outcomes, barriers to student learning and development, and the roles and responsibilities student affairs staff share in reducing these barriers and improving the attainment of the intended outcomes.

Course Learning Outcomes
Students who complete all assigned readings and assignments, and who fully participate in all aspects of the course will increase their ability to:

1. Identify typical missions of colleges and universities in the United States, their role as social institutions, and the societal contexts that influence their missions and desired outcomes.

2. Articulate a range of desired learning outcomes of college and identify which stakeholders are invested in which kinds of outcomes.

3. Become familiar with the research and assessment methodologies used to evaluate the impact of college and the issues surrounding their use.

4. Identify major kinds of developmental changes students experience between the beginning and end of their academic careers.

5. Critique and compare the effects of different types of educational institutions and environments on student development.

6. Identify and explain what factors affect the interaction between the college environment and individual experience.

7. Recognize and differentiate how various student identities (including differences in race, nationality, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, and religious belief ) and experiences affect the college experience.

8. Use course content and the research literature to design an institution with a mission and programs that promote chosen learning outcomes.
9. Design a plan to assess the achievement of chosen learning outcomes.

**Texts**


**Activities and Assignments**

All papers (with the possible exception of the I-Plan) are to be submitted to me through Blackboard using the Assignment link as MS Word (either 2003 or 2007 is fine) file attachments due before the beginning of the assigned class session. I will download and read your paper, make comments using the MS Word “Track Changes” function, and return the graded paper to you electronically. Papers and citations should be submitted in APA style (6th edition).

*Note: The I-Plan may be submitted in alternative formats other than a traditional paper. In such instances, APA formatting will only be expected for citations.*

You are strongly encouraged to work with a classmate to critique and proofread one another's assignments. Each of you is likely to submit better papers and projects as a result of that process. Excessive typographical and grammatical errors detract from your work and will be reflected in your grade. As advanced master’s students, you should no longer be making the same errors in your written assignments that marred your work last year. If you know that writing has been a particular challenge for you, you are best served by working far enough in advance so that you can request that your draft be reviewed by the Writing Center and make revisions based on their feedback.

If you wish to propose an alternate assignment in place of any below, please develop a short proposal for discussion and consideration.

**Class Participation and Reading Notes**

In this course, it is important that you participate by sharing your thoughts and reactions to readings, speakers, and class discussions. The input of each student is valued and valuable. Your attendance for the full class period is expected and you are responsible for everything that is covered, distributed, or announced during class. If you will be absent, please arrange with a classmate to receive handouts and announcements.

Effective participation in and contribution to class requires that you do all assigned readings *prior* to our meetings. Readings offer us a common language with which to explore and inform our thinking. The reading materials themselves do not determine or create our thinking; that is your job as a learner. Good thinking comes from a critical eye willing to look beyond what is claimed by an author to pursue a number of very important questions:

1. In my own words, what is the author attempting to explain?
2. In what ways do the author’s ideas reflect or contradict my educational experience?
3. In what ways do the author’s ideas inform how I think about education?
4. What are the implications of these ideas for higher education generally and for my own practice in student affairs? In other words, what different actions do they encourage?
5. What questions remain for me?
You should take notes as you read in response to each of these questions. Bringing your reading notes with you to class each week will help facilitate more engaging class discussions. **Students will be randomly called upon to submit their reading notes twice throughout the semester, so bring 2 copies in anticipation.**

### Intended Outcomes Paper

The purpose of this assignment is for you to articulate your own definition of a college-educated person and to answer the question, *“What are the purposes and goals of higher education?”* What should a college graduate know, be able to do, and value? In other words, what *should* happen in college? What difference should college make?

- This paper is **not** the place to discuss how these outcomes are achieved (that comes later in the term), or even what outcomes actually result from college, but rather what the outcomes of college *should* be.
- Describe these outcomes in the context of a particular institution because, as you have discussed in Foundations and Environments previously, outcomes differ by institutional type and mission.

You are to support your construction through liberal use of course readings. However, your perspectives are most important; you should present yourself as an educator who knows and can articulate a set of intended outcomes within a particular environment. Assume your audience is comprised of laypersons, and clearly articulate the meaning and purpose of higher education in the United States.

At a minimum, address the questions listed below in an integrated essay of **not more than 2500 words** (excluding cover page and reference list):

1. How would you succinctly define the **purpose** of higher education in the United States? What do you believe to be true about this society and the role of postsecondary education within it that supports your stated purpose? Your thesis statement will be further elaborated on by your responses to the following four questions.

2. What is important for a college-educated person to **know** through a collegiate experience? What common core of knowledge should all students master by graduation? Why? Be sure to clearly define each outcome.

3. What should a college educated person **believe** as a result of going to college? Is there a common core of values that all students should master by graduation?

4. What should a college-educated person to be able to **do** as a result of completing college? Is there a common core of skills and values that all students should master by graduation?

5. What role do you believe **vocational preparation** should play in the undergraduate experience? How should the development of career-specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes be integrated with or differ from the development of general knowledge, skills, and values? What should be the respective contributions of the major and the general education programs?

6. In what ways do the **institutional type and mission** you have chosen to frame your discussion shape these intended outcomes?

**Note:** Keep in mind that whole books could be (and have been) written about each of these questions. However, you have been asked to limit your pronouncements to 2500 words, so be selective in what you choose to share and how you choose to share it.
Intended Outcomes Evaluation Criteria

1. Identification of purpose of higher education: The purpose of higher education in the United States is clearly described, justified, and consistent. A thesis is clearly stated and the premises supporting this thesis are carefully identified and logically consistent with one another and with the overall thesis.

2. Identification of specific intended outcomes: Outcomes are: (a) clearly described, (b) justified using both relevant literature and personal experiences and values, (c) reasonable, and (d) consistent with each other.

3. The relationships between the overall purpose of higher education, specific outcomes, and career-preparation are clearly described, grounded in appropriate citations, and logical.

4. Understanding of the influence of institutional type and mission is clearly demonstrated.

5. Familiarity with the outcomes literature is demonstrated. Integration of concepts from a variety of sources is evident. Major conclusions are supported with references to program readings and other published materials.

6. The paper reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections) and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style).

Be prepared to share the results of your thinking about these ideas with other class members on the day the paper is due. Our class session that day will be almost entirely devoted to your work on this paper.

Impact of College Paper
We have considered what should happen in college; now we turn our attention to what does happen in college. We focus on a central question of this course: “Does college make a difference?” This assignment will allow you to explore that question based on the empirical data amassed in the literature from one of two vantage points:

a. in relation to a particular learning outcome you have identified as important in your intended outcomes paper
   OR
b. in relation to a student subgroup (a group on which you focused in CSP 6020 or 6030) or a particular functional area of student affairs (one you intend to pursue in your job search).

To do this, you will write a paper of about 7 – 12 pages (of text, not counting title or reference pages) in which you summarize the research literature relevant to your topic.

In your paper, briefly identify the specific area of focus (the specific learning outcome, student subgroup, or functional area) and summarize what the research literature you have found indicates for your respective focus (either A or B below):

A. Learning outcome – the extent to which college contributes to this outcome and the greatest sources of variance in the achievement of this outcome (e.g., between-college, within-college, and conditional effects). You should choose an outcome that will be a focus in your I-Plan.

B. Student subgroup or functional area – the conditional effects of college for your chosen student sub-group or contribution of your functional area to any college outcome(s) (typically with-in college effects). You should choose a student sub-group or functional area that will be a focus in your I-Plan.
Close your paper with an overall assessment of key influences on the learning outcome, student sub-group, or impact of the functional area, and what your findings imply for student affairs practice.

Do not simply summarize each source one at a time. Use the format of *How College Affects Students* as a model. Note how Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) use the findings of individual studies to create an argument about the effect of college, rather than simply presenting a string of summaries.

Although *How College Affects Students* was published in 2005, it includes research published until 2001-2002. Thus, in your search for articles, utilize research published after 2001. It is acceptable to use the Pascarella and Terenzini text as one of your sources. However, you must also read and cite at least 6 other empirical sources representing a variety of journals.

*A few notes on what constitutes research literature:* You are to use materials from empirical, database sources that are preferably peer-reviewed. Scholarly journal articles are the preferred source; however, scholarly books are acceptable if they are based on empirical research, rather than being a summary of others’ research. The one exception to this is reports of meta-findings; these are acceptable. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* and similar publications are not research literature and therefore are not acceptable sources.

**Impact of College Evaluation Criteria**
1. Outcome is clearly defined OR student sub-group or functional area is clearly identified.
2. Effective summary of research; both extent and variance are well documented.
3. Summary of research incorporates major findings.
4. Implications for student affairs practice are addressed effectively and are clearly tied to your findings in the literature.
5. Resources (at least six other than Pascarella & Terenzini) are appropriate to outcome, recent, and sufficient to draw a conclusion.
6. The paper reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections) and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style).

**Outcomes Implementation Plan (a.k.a., “The I-Plan”)**
This assignment is designed as a follow-up to your intended outcomes paper in which you identified the characteristics of an educated person. In this assignment, your task is to design a plan that will assist undergraduate students to achieve those outcomes or characteristics. Your Intended Outcomes paper defined the “what”; your I-Plan identifies the “how.”

The term "plan" refers to a set of experiences (practices, programs, policies) you design to assist students in obtaining the outcomes you identified in your Intended Outcomes paper.

You should consider the following elements as you design your implementation plan:

A. *Identify and describe the characteristics of your campus.* What type of institution is it [2- or 4-year? Control? Size? Student demographics (gender, race, age, FT/PT, selectivity, etc.)]? What campus environment do you propose (physical, cultural, etc.)? Give your institution a name and explain its importance. This should be your first decision as you begin to frame the rest of the plan;
however it is meant to serve as a solid foundation for more substantive decisions and explanation as you continue.

B. Summarize the intended outcomes of your institution in a table. You already justified these in your Intended Outcomes paper and just need a brief review here. You may modify, add to, or delete outcomes you discussed in your Intended Outcomes paper.

In order to achieve these outcomes, identify the “macro” design elements of your plan (e.g., general education core, co-curricular activities, living options, volunteer opportunities). If you did your Impact of College paper focusing on a learning outcome, draw on that here. How do the various pieces fit together and support and enhance one another? Are all activities required or are some optional? Who (i.e., what individuals, offices, and/or departments) is responsible for implementing the various parts of the plan? Justify your choices. Indicate why you have chosen your selected elements and designed them as you have. Ground those elements in the literature from this class and other courses you have completed. A reference list is expected. An organizational chart may be helpful. A draft of this section will be required to assist you with staying on track with the I-Plan.

*** If your elements are based on an existing program, be certain to provide appropriate citation. Do not copy or download design elements from the Web (or other sources) and include them in their entirety in your plan. Elements borrowed from existing programs should be modified to conform to your institutional dynamics and to the concepts drawn from this and other courses.

C. Choose at least two of your “macro elements” (or components thereof) for detailed elaboration. These constitute your “micro” elements. If your Impact of College paper focused on a student sub-group or functional area, then draw on that for your work on this section. It is recommended that at least one of your micros will focus on a group you studied in a voice or immersion project. What are the details of the specific experiences, classes, co-curricular activities, etc. in your plan? Who (i.e., what individuals, offices, and/or departments) is responsible for implementing the various parts of the plan? Create/adapt exemplary programs that you believe will realize your identified outcomes. Once again, it is possible to utilize existing design elements (but, do not include in its entirety a program designed by someone else). You must indicate why you have chosen your selected elements: What about them will help your students reach your identified learning outcomes? Further, you must ground your rationale in the professional literature. A draft of this section will also be required to assist you with staying on track with the I-Plan.

D. Conclude your discussion by summarizing the unique features of your I-Plan and why you think it should be implemented by a college or university that endorses your concept.

The format of your plan is entirely up to you. You may present your ideas in the form of a traditional paper or through an alternative format (e.g., college catalog or Web site). For those of you who have been chaffing under the rigid writing standards of the program since you completed your first issue paper, this is your chance to stretch your creative wings. Use the power of your imagination to create a product that effectively communicates your learning goals and experiences. **You will also prepare a poster presentation display on your I-Plan for the last day of class.** I am looking forward to seeing your creativity at play; however, do not let the effort you put into the format of your presentation exceed the effort you put into creating a plan that achieves your designated learning outcomes. **Content is the primary focus here. Presentation is important, but should not claim the majority of your attention.**
Outcomes I-Plan Evaluation Criteria

1. Institutional Context: The institutional context is clearly, completely, and carefully explained. Institutional type, culture, location, physical environment, and mission are logically connected and support one another (i.e., the mission is appropriate for the type, location, etc.). Creativity, clarity, and logical consistency are rewarded.

2. Outcomes: The table of outcomes is clear; the outcomes are consistent with mission and institutional type and represent a holistic education appropriate for an undergraduate college. Appropriate consideration of an assessment plan for the outcomes is demonstrated.

3. Macro Design: The overall design is explained in a clear, consistent, logical, and integrated manner (i.e., major design elements build on and support one another). The macro design is comprehensive enough to actually produce the intended outcomes. Assumptions are clearly stated and design elements are appropriately based on those assumptions. Major design elements are explicitly tied to educational/learning outcomes. All design elements are justified through connections to the professional literature.

4. Micro Design Elements: The micro elements are presented and explained in detail. The micro design elements are a logical outgrowth of the macro design. Design elements are clearly and comprehensively explained. One design is appropriately focused on students of a selected social/cultural group. Connections to educational/learning outcomes and the professional literature are explicit.

5. Implementation: Responsibilities for implementing all aspects of the plan (i.e., macro and micro design elements and assessment strategies) are identified and justified. Interrelationships are clearly explained and justified.

6. Overall Style: The plan is well organized and clearly presented. Creativity is displayed and the substance of the plan is enhanced, not obscured, by the method of the presentation.
   a. On the last day of class, students will set up poster presentations of their I-Plans and be prepared to answer questions about their projects from each other and the instructor.

7. Proficiency in written communication: The plan reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections) and is free of errors (e.g., APA*, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style).
   a. *APA criteria should be attended to as relevant for the format style you use.
      i. In other words, if you choose to submit your I-Plan in a traditional paper format, you will be expected to adhere to all APA format guidelines.
      ii. If you do not submit a traditional paper, then only your citations should be formatted APA style.

Course Evaluation

25% Intended Outcomes Paper
25% Impact of College Paper
40% I-Plan
10% Reading Notes (2 sets)

Your final grade in the course is the weighted average of grades received on individual assignments.

About grading: An “A” paper or project is excellent—very strong in every sense. It represents a very solid job in addressing all aspects of the assignment, shows complex thinking and insight, reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions
linking various sections), and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style). A “B” paper is good. It has some weaknesses in one of more of these areas but captures the essential elements of the assignment. Lower grades are assigned to papers and projects with more significant weaknesses in the areas noted above and do not reflect the quality expected in graduate-level studies. Students with three or more absences are unlikely to earn a grade higher than B.

Incompletes will not be given except for major emergencies (e.g., hospitalization) late in the term and only after consultation and mutual agreement upon a contract specifying when the work will be completed. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments or one wishes to complete the course during a subsequent semester.

**Academic Integrity**

From the 2011-2012 Graduate Catalog: “Academic honesty is the central value of an academic community. It is expected that graduate students will neither engage in nor facilitate cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids), fabrication (falsification or invention of any information or citation), or plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of others as one’s own) in their academic work” (p. 27). Please note that you may not submit an assignment that has been or will be submitted for another course. See the Student Handbook ([http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/)) now exclusively online for the full policy on academic honesty.

**Policies and Reminders**

**Accommodations**

**Documented disabilities**

Please notify me in advance of the first assignment if you will need any accommodations for a documented disability.

_Disability Services for Students, 413 South Hall._ The goal of the Disability Services for Students Office is to help provide equal access and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities attending BGSU and to act as a resource to faculty and staff. Students wishing to discuss their eligibility for such accommodations are encouraged to contact the office. **Phone:** 419-372-8495, **Fax:** 419-372-8496, **TDD:** 419-372-0582.

**Religious observances**

If you will miss class because of the observance of a religious holiday, please see me as soon as possible to determine an alternate way to cover the material.

**Attendance**

I assume that all students will attend all scheduled classes, for the duration of the class time. I recognize that situations (other than religious/civic observances) sometimes occur which are beyond your anticipation or control. However, routine meetings, regularly scheduled events/programs, or other non-emergency situations arising with your internship or practicum office are not sufficient reasons to miss class. If you will miss class, please try to notify me in advance if possible. Contact one of your fellow students to review the material we covered in class and any announcements. Coming to class late disrupts the learning of the class and is disrespectful to all and should therefore be avoided if at all possible. Significant numbers of absences (i.e., more than two) or tardiness will affect your final grade.

**Non-sexist/offensive language**

This class must be a comfortable place for everyone. To that end, you are asked to pay attention to both the effect and the intentions of your words, and to avoid deliberately using language that is demeaning to
others. When listening to other students, assess both the intent and the effect of those words before assuming offensive intent. Any papers using sexist, racist, heterosexist, ableist, ageist, or otherwise inappropriate language will be returned without a grade.

Announcements
Announcements will be distributed via your BGSU e-mail account; please check it regularly.

Cell Phones & Other Electronic Devices
If you bring a cell phone or other electronic device to class, please assure that is it either off or on silent mode.

Course Schedule (subject to change) [BB] Readings available on Blackboard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SCHEDULE &amp; READINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class #1</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Course Overview: Defining the Good Collegiate Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #2</td>
<td>What Should Students Learn in College?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harper &amp; Row. [Chapters 4-7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #3</td>
<td>The Educated Person: Student and Institutional Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College student affairs administration (pp. 136-144). Needham Heights, MA: Simon &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schuster. [BB]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #4</td>
<td>What Should Students Know, Believe, and Be Able to Do?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bring Mission Statement(s)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #5</th>
<th>Sept. 21</th>
<th><strong>What is a Liberal Education?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Intended Outcomes Paper Due**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #6</th>
<th>Sept. 28</th>
<th><strong>What is the Role of Student Affairs in Liberal Education?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #7</th>
<th>Oct. 5</th>
<th><strong>Assessing Student Outcomes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class #</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #9</td>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Using Pascarella and Terenzini to Solve Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #10</td>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>Understanding the Impact of College: Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #11</td>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td>Anticipating the I-Plan: Macros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #12</td>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>Topic to Be Determined/Catch-up Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>NO CLASS—GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR BLESSINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #14</td>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Student Success in College: Effective Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #15</td>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Student Success in College: Promoting Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class #15</td>
<td><strong>Course Wrap-Up and Evaluation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Michael D. Coomes. Revised from Dafina Lazarus Stewart & Maureen E. Wilson. Syllabus and course schedule are subject to change with notice. Revised Thursday, August 25, 2011.