

HE 722: Organization and Administration in Higher Education
Wednesday 7:20-10:00pm
Thompson Hall 1017

Instructor: Dr. Jaime Lester
Office: Enterprise Hall, Office 310
Phone: (703) 993-7065
Email: jlester2@gmu.edu or lester.jaime@gmail.com
Twitter: @ProfJaimeLester
Office Hours: By appointment

I. Introduction and Overview

Course Description

This course is designed to provide opportunities to explore and generate greater understanding of the culture of organization and administration in higher education. In order to be effective leaders and members of an organization, it is important to understand colleges and universities as larger, complex systems. When viewing postsecondary education through an organizational analysis, a broader view is taken looking at the entire system internally and externally, not simply as divisions, departments, or functions. Organizational analysis emphasizes conceptual models and the way these can be overlaid on real institutional contexts and problems. This class will focus on leadership, change, and governance as key aspects of administration. This is a master and doctoral level seminar with an emphasis on reading, presentation, and discussion utilizing a case-study approach in a collegial and reciprocal learning environment. Students will be expected to attend class, be current with the issues facing higher education, and actively engage in course discussions.

HEP Mission: The Higher Education Program (HEP) at George Mason University prepares individuals for positions of leadership in teaching, research, and administration at community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities around the globe. The interdisciplinary, graduate-level curriculum focuses on leadership, the scholarship of teaching and learning, administration, and assessment. The program also prepares students for positions in academic and student affairs as well as in associations, government agencies, and industries whose activities relate to or impact higher education.

HEP Learning Outcomes: Students will understand and apply concepts of *leadership, teaching, administration, and assessment* within the context of the complex higher education enterprise. *Leadership, teaching, administration, and assessment* are studied through an interdisciplinary lens using emergent technologies with a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Students will become socialized members of a community of higher education professionals where they will contribute to and lead scholarly conversations by consuming, critiquing, and creating scholarship. Students will

understand and employ effective pedagogical approaches. They will value assessment, understand its role, and be skilled in enacting processes of analysis. Students will reflect on themselves as cultural beings, analyze the ways in which that influences their work in higher education, value diversity, and meet multicultural competencies. Students will use theory as a base from which they ground their practice of effective and ethical leadership, teaching, and administration.

Course Objectives

1. to understand the importance of organizational theory/analysis for the key aspects of administration -- leadership, change, and decision-making;
2. to introduce students to the breadth of literature related to organizational theory both inside the field of higher education and outside (e.g. business, political science);
3. to be able to apply organizational theory to institutional problems and situations;
4. to develop an enhanced ability to analyze published reports, articles and research related to higher education in order to summarize and present them in a professionally acceptable manner;
5. to enhance understanding of other course work by providing an organizational context for curriculum, finance, students, etc.;
6. to learn about different players involved in running colleges;
7. to develop the capacity to work with different education constituencies by understanding the multiple cultures that develop within organizations;
8. to learn about the various external influences that impact educational organizations and the many differences among organizations within postsecondary education;
9. and to create a specialized knowledge on organizations for advanced work such as thesis, comprehensive exams, and dissertations.

Course Policies

Attendance: All students are required to attend and actively participate in all scheduled course meetings. Part of your grade includes in-class participation. If for any reason that you cannot make it to a course meeting, you must contact the instructor immediately.

Late Assignments: All assignments must be turned in on the due date noted. Please contact the instructor before the due date if you cannot turn an assignment in at the scheduled time.

Incompletes: No incompletes will be granted for this class unless there is an extreme circumstance. All incompletes will be granted according to university policies found at: <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/>.

II. Readings

Required Books

Bolman, L & Deal, T. (2013). *Reframing organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. [you may buy any version as text is generally the same]

Bess, J. L. & Dee, J. R. (2007). *Understanding college and university organization: Theories for effective policy and practice* (Two Volume Set). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing. [order the paperback]

Bastedo, M. N. (Ed.) (2012). *The organization of higher education: Managing colleges for a new era*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press.

* All books are available at the bookstore and via the web (Amazon.com has good deals) and several texts are cheaper in ebook format.

Additional readings distributed on blackboard

Chapters from:

Kezar, A. (2013). *How colleges change: Understanding, leading, and enacting change*. Routledge Press.

Martin, J. (1992). *Cultures in organizations*. Oxford University Press.

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline*. New York: Doubleday.

Weick, K. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Meyerson, D. E. (2003). *Tempered radicals: How everyday leaders inspire change at work*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Ely, R. J., Foldy, E. G. , & Scully, M. A. (2003). (Eds.). *Readers in gender, work, and organization*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Birnbaum, R. (1991). *How colleges work*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Suggested Supplemental Readings

The Chronicle of Higher Education – weekly newspaper for higher education. Access via GMU library for free

Insiderhighered.org – sign-up for this free daily newsletter highlighting current issues in higher education. Found at: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news>

GMU Library Higher Education Portal – research references established by GMU librarian. Found at: <http://gmutant.gmu.edu/highered/>

III. Assignments and Grading

The assignments for this class all relate to one major project, culminating in a large 15 page paper, where you will identify a college or university and a current theme or event on that campus and conduct an ethnographic project. The goal is to use the theories discussed in class as a lens to understand the college or universities culture, structure, and processes in context of the current issue. For example, you may choose to examine the budget issues at GMU. Each assignment below will help to build the final paper and give you an opportunity to receive feedback throughout the semester.

1. *Case selection paper* – the first step is to identify a higher education institution, choose a current theme or event on that campus, and begin to understand the campus mission and values. For this paper, you must locate the campus mission, strategic plan, value statements, and read over the website. You will want to note the current theme or event and it's significance on the campus. The paper should be 2-3 pages where you briefly describe the current theme or event, campus mission, values, priorities, and recent attention to the issue.
2. *Weekly papers* - Over the course of the semester, you will write weekly papers (2-3 pages) that summarize the major theory/frame discussed and apply that theory to the college or university and theme or event chosen. Include a brief description of the lens (2-3 paragraphs), spending the majority of the time on the application of the lens to the college or university and issue chosen. These papers will help you practice applying these theories for your final paper. Note: You are required to write 4 of the 8 papers and may chose which 4 to write. Everyone must write the first weekly paper.

3. *Final paper* – The final paper is a 15 page document where you comprehensively analyze the higher education institution and the current theme or event using 2-3 of the organizational lens’ discussed throughout the semester. You are required to either interview 2-3 people on the campus or attend 2-3 campus events. Events may include meetings, discussions with people on the campus, and observations of classrooms/the campus to fully understand the theme or event and the campus culture. Please do not just cut and paste the other papers; rather, you need to create a cohesive argument and use the text from the other papers to describe and support your argument. A more detailed outline will be provided during the semester.

4. *Peer review* – Near the end of the semester, you will submit a draft of your final paper to a partner who will provide you feedback within one week. The following are the criteria that should be used in the peer review process.
 1. Does the paper have a clear introduction?
 2. Is enough context described?
 3. Is the theme or event described?
 4. Does the author explain the significance of the issue?
 5. Is the argument clear and focused?
 6. Has integration been achieved...are there a few main themes and lens. Are the themes/lens related to each other?
 7. Is justification provided for themes/lens?
 8. Does review of themes reference concepts and theories from the readings? Are adequate number of citations and concepts brought to bear?
 9. Is the analysis focused on the problem statement?
 10. Are conclusions well grounded in the analysis and solutions?
 11. Is the paper clearly organized?
 12. Is the paper well written?
 13. Does the paper have a logical flow? Does it provide justification for interpretations?
 14. Does the paper emphasize interpretation and not merely describe situations and issues?
 15. Is the paper explicit about assumptions and beliefs?
 16. Does the paper accurately reflect theories?
 17. Are there misunderstandings, naive comments, or mischaracterizations?

Your comments should be both constructive and critical. You will submit your draft to your partner on November 14 and you must provide your partner (and me) and copy of your feedback on November 21. That allows you two weeks to incorporate feedback into the final paper and for your presentation. The feedback should be between 2-3 single spaced pages.

5. *Final Project “Poster” Presentation* - For the final paper presentation, you will develop a poster presentation based on the paper, explaining the context, theories used in analysis, findings, and implications. Poster presentations should be in a professional manner using PowerPoint templates or you may use a laptop or tablet device. You need to condense material into 10 minutes of informal presentation with time for discussion. We will be combining the two sections of this course for the poster session.

Grading

Assignment	Percent of total grade
Weekly papers	25
Case selection paper	10
Final paper	30
Peer review	10
Final paper poster presentation	10
Participation*	15

*Participation includes active engagement in class discussions, weekly attendance, and participation on the course blackboard site.

University Policies/Services

University Honor Code:

*To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.***

Diversity Statement:

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum,

programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Office of Disability Services:

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 222; 993-2474; www.gmu.edu/student/drc) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

IV: Weekly Schedule

*Introduce
yourself on
course
discussion
board*

August 29

Introduction to course

Readings: syllabus; Bess and Dee chapter 2 (VI)

Supplemental readings: S&O Chronology

Major questions:

Why organizational theory? How will organizational theory help me understand higher education? How can I apply organizational theory in my job?

September 5

Higher education as an organization: Overview of organizational frames and theory

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part I; Bess and Dee chapter 3 (Vol 1); Bastedo chapters 1 and 2

Major questions:

What makes higher education a distinct organization? What are the different organizational frames and how can we apply them to organizations? What does it mean that an organization is a system?

Case selection paper due

September 12

Organizations as structures and bureaucracies

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part II; Bess and Dee chapters 6, 7 (Vol 1); skim <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>

Weekly paper on organizations as structural due Sept. 16

Supplemental readings: Taylor; Mintzberg; Birnbaum chapter 5

Post information on your case selection on blackboard

Major questions: How do structures impact organizational processes? What are some structures within higher education? Do structures vary by institutional type (i.e., four-year universities and community colleges)? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

Weekly paper on organizations as human due Sept. 23

September 19

Organizations as human and collegial

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part III; Bess and Dee chapter 10 (Vol 1)

Supplemental readings: Birnbaum chapter 4

Major questions:

What are the assumptions of the human resource frame? How is higher education a human resource organization? What are the assumptions of the human resource frame? What is a collegium? How is higher education a collegium? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and

for higher education?

Weekly paper on organizations as systems and environments due Sept. 30

September 26

Organizations as systems and environments

Readings: Bess and Dee chapters 4, 5 (Vol 1); Bastedo chapter 5

Supplemental readings: Huber; Dill

Major questions: What is considered the external environment for higher education? To what degree does the external environment impact higher education? Why do we need organizational fit? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

Weekly paper on organizations as political due Oct. 7

October 3

Organizations as political

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part IV; Bess and Dee chapter 3 (Vol 2); Bastedo chapter 4, 10

Supplemental readings: Birnbaum chapter 6; Dahl; French

Major questions: What are the major characteristics of a political organization? What are the assumptions of the political frame? How is a higher education institution political? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

Weekly paper on organizations learning and sense-making due Oct. 14

October 10

Organizations learning and sense-making

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part 1, chapter 2; Bess and Dee chapter 6 (Vol 2); Bastedo chapter 11

Supplemental readings: Argyris ; Senge; Weick

Major questions: What are mental models? What is sense-making and how does it assist in understanding organizations? What is a learning organization? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

*Weekly paper
on
organizational
culture due
Oct. 21*

October 17

Organization as culture

Readings: Bolman and Deal Part V; Bess and Dee chapter 11 (Vol 1); Bastedo chapter 6

Supplemental readings: Schein; Tierney

Major questions: What is culture? What are the main characteristics of organizational culture generally and in higher education? What are the characteristics of the cultural frame? What are the assumptions of the cultural frame? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

*Weekly paper
on
organizational
governance
and decision-
making due
Oct. 28*

October 24

Organizational governance and decision-making

Readings: Bess and Dee chapter 4, 5, 7 (Vol 2)

Supplemental readings: Cohen and March; Helms and Price

Major questions: How does decision-making differ by each frame? When do you use the different processes from each frame? What strategies are most effective in today's higher education climate?

*Weekly paper
on
organizations
and identity
due Nov. 4*

October 31

No class –Work on final paper

November 7

Organizations as diverse – identities and gender

Readings: Ashfort; Cox; Kanter; Acker; Holvino; Lester; Bastedo chapter 8

Supplemental readings: Calas; Mumby; Roberson; Harrison

Major questions: What is institutional sexism and racism? How are organizations gendered? What is the strength and weakness of this lens generally and for higher education?

<i>Turn in paper to partner via email</i>	November 14	Organizational change [Course conducted online]
		Readings: Bolman and Deal chapter 18; Bess and Dee chapter 9 (Vol 2); Kezar; Bastedo chapters 7 and 9
		Supplemental readings: March
		Major questions: How do each of the frames help you to understand organizational change? Would you change how you approached organizational change based on the different frames?
<i>Turn in peer review to partner and instructor</i>	November 21	<i>No class - Thanksgiving</i>
	November 28	Leadership: positional and non-positional
		Readings: Bolman and Deal Part VI; Bess and Dee chapter 10 (Vol 2); Kezar and Lester; Bastedo chapter 12
		Supplemental readings: Meyerson
		Major questions: What is leadership? What is the difference between leadership as a role and leadership traits? How does leadership change when viewed through the different frames?
<i>Final Paper Due</i>	December 5	Presentations of final papers: joint poster session
		Readings: none