

# HRE 592 Syllabus

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## Course Description

This course is intended to familiarize students with the nature and characteristics of the community college student. The impact of campus environments and experiences on student development is considered with particular attention to the outcomes of student/institution interaction. Through course activities, assignments, and online chats, students will better understand the needs of the community college student as not only an adult learner but as a diverse learner.

## Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify the major historical periods in American higher education, particularly with respect to access and the characteristics of student populations in the community college setting.
- Identify demographic trends in society and the changing characteristics of students who enroll in community colleges.
- Identify and describe issues related to developmental education in community colleges.
- Analyze ways community colleges should accommodate increasingly diverse student populations.
- Identify and describe the major theories of college student development.
- Apply developmental theory to organizational settings, describing how community colleges can facilitate student development.
- Analyze and evaluate the impact that the college experience has on students.
- Identify the key factors regarding why students leave college, analyze the elements of successful retention programs on college campuses, and propose ideas for a campus wide retention effort.
- Analyze the issues and concerns of special student populations on community college campuses.
- Describe the responses of these special student populations to traditional community college settings, and identify needed modifications to make the college experiences more meaningful for such student groups.

## Grading Criteria

The standard letter grading will be used in the class. Because all assignments are based on self-reflection and analysis, there are no right or wrong answers, only incomplete ones. Consequently, the grading criteria by which assignments will be evaluated is one of quality and thoroughness rather than quantity. Each assignment will specify the criteria that will be employed in evaluating student assignments. Assignments must be submitted on or before the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior instructor approval. It is important that students notify the instructor as soon as any special circumstances arise that could interfere with the timely completion of assignments. Even with prior approval, the instructor reserves the right to lower grades in accordance with the tardiness of the late assignments.

## Course Requirements

The following are the requirements for the course.

Learning Autobiographical Essay (10 pts.)

Assignment: Compose an essay that answers the question: *Who are you, as a learner and how do you know that?*

Reflect on an important lesson learned:

- Identify the context, the relationships, and the motivation behind what you learned.
- What kind of learning took place? How do you make meaning of that now?

This is a personal essay; references are not required.

Format: 2 – 3 page paper, double-space

Grading:

- Who you are as a learner is clearly stated – 3 pts.
- The supporting points are relevant and consistent connections are made between who (as a learner) and how that is known – 2 pts.
- The lesson learned is clearly stated – 1 pt.
- The underlying factors of the lesson are identified – 1 pt.
- Description of how the lesson learned continues to be meaningful – 3 pts.

Developmental Theory Report (40 pts.)

Assignment: This is a small group report.

Select one of the developmental theories from weeks 5 -8.

The report should briefly describe, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Synopsis of the theory's major propositions about how development occurs in students.
- What are the major outcomes associated with the theory? What factors contribute (positively & negatively) to those outcomes?
- What is the primary criticism of the theory?
- Specific implications for practice in the college setting. (How would you structure learning experiences to apply the theory? How useful is the theory for community college instructors? Administrators?)

During the synchronous session, each group will present a 30 minute report which includes visuals for the rest of the class. Each member of the group must contribute to the entire report and bring their individual experiences and skills to the assignment. A group evaluation is required.

Grading:

- Background of the Theory – 10 pts.
- Major Concepts or Propositions – 10 pts.
- Primary Criticism of the Theory – 5 pts.
- Implications for College Practice – 15 pts.

## Departure Theory Assignment (15 pts.)

**Assignment:** Investigate current student retention strategies utilized by a specific community college. Provide thorough explanations of the retention strategies. Many times, this investigation must begin with the college's definition of student retention. Discuss the student departure theories as they relate to the retention strategies of the institution. Describe specific implications for practice in the community college setting.

**Format:** Approximately 5 pages, double-spaced, APA format (references required)

**Grading:**

- Provided a thorough explanation of retention strategies (4 pts.)
- Related student departure theories to the institution (5 pts.)
- Provided specific implications for practice in a community college setting (6 pts.)

## Student Subcommunities (25 pts.)

**Assignment:** Subcommunity is defined as a group/community of students whose norms and values differ from the "mainstream" college student population in such ways that they want to come together as one subgroup. The purpose of this project is to explore the existences of many subcommunities of students on community college campuses. Further, the assignment should lead to an understanding of the dynamics of such groups and their contributions to the total campus community. Of equal importance is the recognition that these subgroups have unmet needs on our campuses, and as such, they present significant challenges to college personnel. Balancing community of the parts and community of the whole institution is one of the greatest challenges facing community college today.

Select a particular subcommunity to research thorough, e.g., older female students, athletes, reverse transfer students, first generation students, etc.

Research the subcommunity and address the following:

- The subcommunity's beliefs, attitudes, and values which differ from the community of the whole
- The barriers which make it difficult for this subcommunity to connect with the community of the whole
- The unique educational and social needs of this subcommunity and general guidelines for colleges to address those needs
- The extent to which the theories studied in class "fit" their experiences.
- Specific and practical recommendations for colleges to follow in helping student subcommunities connect with the institution as a whole.

**Format:** Approximately 10 pages, double-spaced, APA format, References

**Grading:**

- Presented the subcommunity's beliefs, attitudes, and values which differ from the community of the whole (5 pts.)
- Clearly stated the barriers which make it difficult for this subcommunity to connect with the community of the whole (4 pts.)

- The unique educational and social needs of this subcommunity and general guidelines for colleges to address those needs (5 pts.)
- Described the extent to which a theory fit and/or do not fit their experiences (3 pts.)
- Related specific and practical recommendations for colleges to follow in helping student subcommunities connect with the institution as a whole (8 pts.)

Course Participation - Students are expected to complete readings and engage fully in weekly sessions. The expectation is that each student will seek to be a fully contributing class member through regular attendance and active engagement in the weekly sessions (10 pts.)

### **Office Hours**

I am very interested in meeting with you either over the phone, or through email. If you would like to set up a specific time to speak with me on the phone please contact me. If you just have a general question, you can contact me via email.