Syllabus: EPS 600 Fall 2020
EPS 600: Cultural and critical approaches to college student employability
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Instructor
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Modality and Exemptions
This course is blended. It is listed as a face-to-face in-person course that will have weekly "live" or
synchronous meetings each week (see below). Given uncertainties around the COVID-19 pandemic and the
prospect of moving online in case of an outbreak, and to provide exemptions (for health and/or personal
reasons) to those students who cannot attend in-person meetings, the course will also be fully functional as
an online and asynchronous course

Credit Hours
The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement
with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include regularly scheduled instructor
- student meeting times, reading, writing and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Course Schedule
The course follows a "flipped" classroom model where class meetings are discussions **that are based on
readings and discussions from the previous week**. These weekly "live" meetings will be on Monday from
6-7:30 pm CST and as long as UW-Madison is open I will be at **253 Education Sciences** (which is a large
room) for those of you comfortable with in-person meetings. For those who aren't comfortable or are
otherwise unable to attend, these discussions will be live-streamed via BBCollaborate in Canvas. If and when
campus closes these meetings will shift to a completely online discussion. If you are unable to make these
meetings, you can watch them later as they will be recorded and available on Canvas.
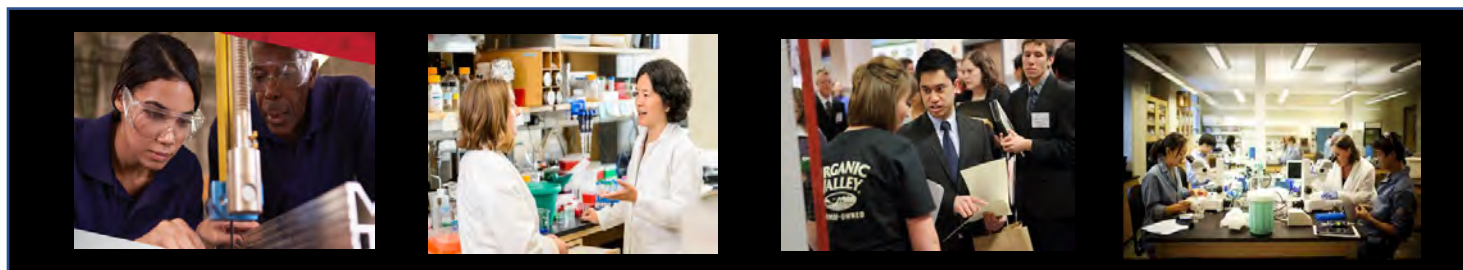
Room: 253 Education Sciences (large room)
Office hours: By appointment – send me an email and we can set up a phone/Zoom call
Credits: 3 credits
Canvas course url: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/209303
Requisites: Graduate or Professional Standing
Course Designation: Advanced undergraduate and graduate level

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the historic and current postsecondary policy environment that focuses on student "employability" from a cultural and critical perspective. The focus on college graduates' employability is one of the most influential discourses shaping policy and practice in colleges and universities throughout the world. An emphasis on the vocational aspects of higher education has long been a core feature of postsecondary education, but since the 1980s a new focus on "skills" and job readiness has reached new heights and currently dominates global policy discussions about higher education.

Results of this policy discourse include the use of "employability audits" at postsecondary institutions as part of accountability reforms, the inclusion of employability measures in performance-based funding models, and pressure for departments, colleges, and institutions to pay closer attention to cultivating student employability via programs like internships and in-class work-integrated learning. Understanding this policy discourse, especially amidst the recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the current focus on racism and discrimination in U.S. society, is essential for those engaged in research or policy analysis on issues related to workforce development, curriculum and instruction, and higher education administration.
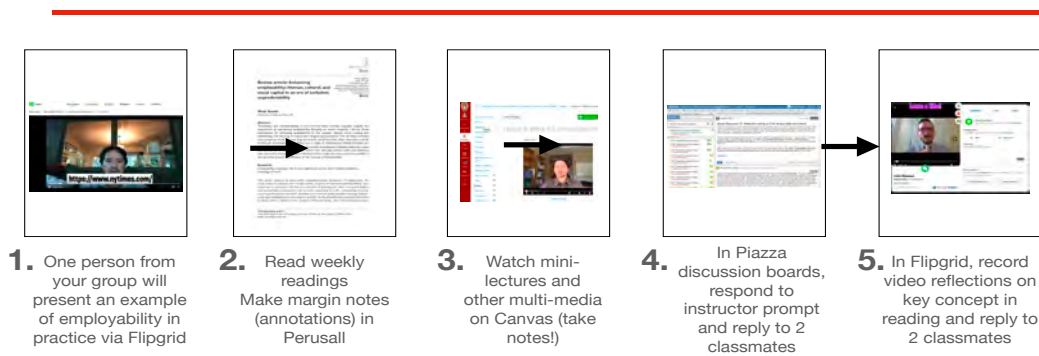
However, the new skills discourse is largely based on human capital frameworks that view technical or cognitive skills as the primary determinant in students' labor market outcomes, ignoring broader structural issues with educational practice and the labor market, and other factors that may influence whether or not a particular student is well equipped to pursue their chosen career. In particular, the cultural influences that shape college students' transitions to the workforce, such as different forms of cultural capital and participation in disciplinary communities of practice, play critical roles in student development and career readiness. Additionally, a growing number of scholars are raising questions about the employability discourse itself, challenging the construct itself (which is often operationally defined as employment status or the possession of in-demand skills), its assumptions regarding the purpose of education, the nature of skills themselves, and the underlying market-driven motives shaping current debates.

In this course, we will study key works in sociology, anthropology and education about employability to develop a conceptual vocabulary for interrogating this contested discourse of employability in higher education. Readings will pay particularly close attention to critical perspectives in education research, the cultural nature of skills and job acquisition, and research and commentary from scholars around the world (especially in the UK, Australia and the EU), where employability policies have long been influential.

Structure of the Course

The weekly structure of the course is outlined in the figure below:

Join weekly "live" office hours for open discussion (Mondays 6-7pm CST; these will be recorded if you can't make it)

1. One person from your group will present an example of employability in practice via Flipgrid

2. Read weekly readings Make margin notes (annotations) in Perusall

3. Watch mini-lectures and other multi-media on Canvas (take notes!)

4. In Piazza discussion boards, respond to instructor prompt and reply to 2 classmates

5. In Flipgrid, record video reflections on key concept in reading and reply to 2 classmates

Each of these activities should be completed by Monday at 6pm CST; Note that each week's meeting will be based on work you did the previous week

First, one member of your group will record a short video on Flipgrid where you present an example of "employability in practice" that illustrates how the concept is being used in policy, education practice and/or research. You and your team will scour the Internet for examples where employability is being used or discussed, and then select one person to do a brief presentation where the example is explained and a brief analysis of underlying assumptions about the relationship between education and employment are addressed.

Second, you will start the week by reading papers and reports via the Perusall app, which can be found in the modules menu of the course Canvas webpage. You'll do the readings, and make margin notes or annotations using the app, commenting and building upon your classmates observations and annotations as you see fit.

Third, watch the mini-lectures that I post in Canvas for that week, which may also include guest lectures from scholars engaged in employability-related issues, or other resources available from online resources. These lectures and resources will highlight key issues and ideas that I want you to focus on for that week. In addition, on each week's Canvas pages there will be a short **ungraded** quiz that will focus on key ideas from the weekly reading.

Fourth, there will be discussion prompts posted in the Piazza app, which can also be found in the modules menu of the Canvas website. In Piazza, you'll be expected to do some writing and respond to these prompts, and also to two of your classmates posts. For these interactions with classmates, you will be expected to be professional, courteous, but also intellectually challenging and honest. It is in the articulation, defense, and scrutiny of our own ideas and those of others that learning and growth may best occur in a classroom setting.

Five, after doing the readings, watching mini-lectures, and engaging in online (or in-person) discussions, you should have some firmed up thoughts and ideas about the week's topics. Once you've thought about the week, go to Flipgrid (a video-recording app available in the modules menu in Canvas) and record a short video of yourself thinking aloud about the week's material. Then, reply to two classmates' videos.

Small Groups
At the beginning of the course you will be assigned to a 2-3 person small group that will last throughout the semester. You and your classmates will need to come up with a name for your group, and besides fostering informal conversations and camaraderie among your classmates, the purpose of these groups is to provide weekly examples of employability in practice.

Course Expectations
The benefit you receive from this course is based on the effort you expend in studying and participation. It is my goal as an instructor to help all students master the material, but this will require everyone to read and deeply reflect upon assigned readings and engage with course activities in and out of class. Successful participation in the course will require engagement with weekly discussions (i.e., via Piazza, Perusall, Flipgrid and "live" discussion sections), watching mini-lectures, and close reading of weekly papers or book chapters. These learning activities should take approximately 4-5 hours a week of focused attention to reading, writing, engaging with one another and reflection.

Learning Goals
The principal learning outcome for this course is to acquire and apply new knowledge regarding the cultural and critical underpinnings of the construct of "college student employability" and its implications for policymaking and educational practice in postsecondary institutions. Specifically, learners will:

- Understand and explain different models of higher education-labor market dynamics that underlay the employability discourse with a particular focus on neo-capital theories of social mobility and employment;
- Develop a working understanding of research and theorizing around employability from a variety of disciplinary perspectives including that of sociology, counseling and vocational psychology, human resources and management, and cultural anthropology;
- Understand and explain the history of the employability construct and how its current ubiquity is shaped by politics, changes in the structure of the labor market, culturally shaped notions of skill, and the marketized discourse of higher education;
- Understand and explain how the employability discourse has influenced higher education policy and educational practice in the classroom; and,
- Synthesize and apply new insights to the analysis of a real-world employability policy, examining its origins and implications using cultural and/or critical theories in a final project that reflects your own area of interest, career goals, and desired audiences for your work (e.g., academic paper, policy analysis, practitioner guide.).

In addition to these course-specific goals, learning goals also include the acquisition of skills such as oral communication, written communication, and self-regulated learning. These skills are embedded within the course itself and are not an add-on feature. The specific learning goals for these skills are:

- Develop strong critical thinking skills that include identifying and "hunting" one's own assumptions, weighing diverse forms of evidence, and making informed decisions;
- Develop strong oral communication skills including delivery, argumentation, and strategies for dealing with communication apprehension via in-class discussions and oral presentations;
- Develop strong writing skills including argumentation, grammar, and appropriate citation conventions via short essays and a major project; and,
- Develop self-regulated learning strategies including self-monitoring learning progress and critical self-reflection.

How to successfully engage in this course
Different students will have different approaches to studying and learning, and by now you have certainly developed strategies that work for you. Please continue using these strategies, but there are some unique aspects of this course that may require some slight modifications to your approach.

First, since many of the learning resources and activities will be online, I strongly recommend that you set a weekly schedule for yourself – whether a dedicated block of time on a specific day, or just a block of hours you spend each week – where you are fully focused on the course. Without a weekly in-person meeting to structure and organize your learning, it is easy to lose track of time, miss deadlines, and rush your assignments. Simply put, learning in an online setting requires a considerable amount of self-discipline and dedication.

Second, to successfully complete this course, which will require your understanding, synthesizing and then applying a variety of concepts from different readings and resources, I suggest that you get a notebook and take notes about key concepts, definitions, and ideas from my short lectures, course readings, various online resources I'll share in Canvas, and so on. Having these ideas and information in a single location will be extremely useful when you sit down to respond to my discussion prompts in Piazza, write your op-ed assignment, and develop your final project. This is likely not a new idea or approach for many of you, but

you'll be presented with a broad array of media in this course – not just a stack of journal articles – and you'll want to have an organized system for keeping track of the ideas that you read and hear about.

Office hours
If you'd like to set up a one-on-one conversation with me, please contact me via email to set up a time for an online or phone conversation to discuss your course readings, your project, and other related topics.

Participation in discussions
In a typical upper-division or graduate-level seminar course such as this, the primary purpose of our class meetings would be to engage in discussions with one another about core concepts in the course, interpretations of texts, and productive debate about the topics raised in the readings. Course readings will introduce new ways of thinking about, analyzing and understanding the relationships between education and

work, and it is through speaking and dialogue that you gain practice and fluency with these new languages and analytic lenses.

Discussions along these lines will be the main goal of our weekly Monday evening meetings, where I will provide questions to consider and you are encouraged to be an active participant in the conversation. However, given that many of our interactions this semester will be taking place online and asynchronously, **you will be expected to engage in "discussions" in three ways**:

1. **Make annotations to weekly readings via the Perusall app**. In Perusall you will be able to read weekly course readings and also make notes and comments on your classmates own annotations. Web-based annotations are a rapidly growing way to foster online interactions in both education and the workplace, and being text-based is often a great way to spark interesting online discussions grounded in the text. Readings are embedded in Perusall and links to the app are available in the modules menu of the course Canvas page;

2. **Engage in discussions about readings and key concepts through the Piazza app.** In Piazza, which will also be available in the modules menu in the course Canvas page, you will be provided with a discussion prompt about the readings, and you will respond to the prompt and respond to one another's ideas and interpretations in a written format. Join the course Piazza group here (piazza.com/wisc/fall2020/eps600) and use the access code "2020." On a weekly basis you will be expected to respond to at least two of your classmates' posts.

3. **Providing summary thoughts on weekly readings and engaging with your classmates via Flipgrid**. After reading course texts and engaging in discussions, you will also be expected to record short 3-minute videos of yourself discussing some aspect, interpretation or inquiry about the week. Please try to provide an original insight or interpretation of the texts, though you may also ask questions that come to mind and/or offer critiques of the reading. You will then be expected to respond to at least two of your classmates observations by asking follow-up questions, elaborating upon their observations, or politely challenging their interpretations or observations.

Accommodations
Given uncertainties around the COVID-19 pandemic and the prospect of moving online in case of an outbreak, and to provide exemptions (for health and/or personal reasons) to those students who cannot attend in-person meetings, the course will also be fully functional as an online and asynchronous course. For students unable to attend the weekly synchronous meetings, which will be discussions on course readings and student projects, regular appointments with the instructor can be scheduled.

Students with disabilities will be fully included in this course. The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA." http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php. You may also contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 905 University Avenue, Madison (263-2741) if you have questions about campus policies and services.

COVID-19 related policies and accommodations
Students' rules, rights and responsibilities
During the global COVID-10 pandemic, we must prioritize our collective health and safety to keep ourselves, our campus, and our community safe. As a university community, we must work together to prevent the spread of the virus and to promote the collective health and welfare of our campus and surrounding community.

UW-Madison Face Covering Guidelines
While on campus all employees and students are required to wear appropriate and properly fitting face coverings while present in any campus building unless working alone in a laboratory or office space.

Face Coverings During In-person Instruction Statement (COVID-19)
Individuals are expected to wear a face covering while inside any university building. Face coverings must be worn correctly (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in person. If any student is unable to wear a face-covering, an accommodation may be provided due to disability, medical condition, or other legitimate reason. Students with disabilities or medical conditions who are unable to wear a face covering should contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center or their Access Consultant if they are already affiliated. Students requesting an accommodation unrelated to disability or medical condition, should contact the Dean of Students Office.

Students who choose not to wear a face covering may not attend in-person classes, unless they are approved for an accommodation or exemption. All other students not wearing a face covering will be asked to put one on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear face coverings appropriately or adhere to other stated requirements will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and will not be allowed to return to the classroom until they agree to comply with the face covering policy. An instructor may cancel or suspend a course in-person meeting if a person is in the classroom without an approved face covering in position over their nose and mouth and refuses to immediately comply.

Quarantine or Isolation Due to COVID-19
Student should continually monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and get tested for the virus if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. Student should reach out to instructors as soon as possible if they become ill or need to isolate or quarantine, in order to make alternate plans for how to proceed with the course. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with their instructor concerning their illness and the anticipated extent of their absence from the course (either in-

person or remote). The instructor will work with the student to provide alternative ways to complete the course work.

Basic needs
In addition, any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

Diversity and inclusion
Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world." https://diversity.wisc.edu/.

In addition, in this course we will be highlighting issues of race, equity and inclusion throughout course readings and discussions. One of the critiques of the employability literature I have is its lack of attention to these issues, as if job acquisition is unaffected by discrimination. Consequently, this will be a strong theme running throughout the course.

Technology use
Appropriate use of electronic devices is an acceptable part of your participation in class. Using laptops or smart phones as tools is acceptable, as long as it is not distracting to you, your colleagues or your instructor. Examples of acceptable use include taking notes and consulting resources for work in class. Non-instructional texting, phone calls, shopping, and other non-course related use of these devices during class is not appropriate. If you are concerned about your ability to meet this expectation, please discuss your concern with me. Please also let me know if there is an emergency or situation that affects your need for using an electronic device during class time.

And of course, for the remote or online components of this course, please do use appropriate technology, and let me know if you have any issues with adequate bandwidth, Internet access, functional laptops or other technology-related issues.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is critical to achieving the goal of this graduate-level course with high academic standards and rigor. All course participants are expected to maintain academic integrity and play a key role in fostering a learning environment that is fair, just, and conducive to authentic learning. Behaviors that involve academic misconduct will not be tolerated and when proven, will result in a zero on the assignment, a lower grade in the course, or failure in the course. Repeated acts of academic misconduct may result in more serious actions such as probation or suspension. In light of the requirements of this particular course, examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another;
- submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas;
- submitting work previously presented and/or submitted in another course;

- knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted
- or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

If you are not sure about whether a specific practice not listed above is considered to compromise academic integrity, please discuss it in person with course instructor.

Grading scale

93% - 100%	*A*
88% - 92.9%	*A/B*
83% - 87.9%	*B*
78% - 82.9%	*B/C*
70% - 77.9%	*C*
60% - 69.9%	*D*
Below 60%	*F*

Assignments
Only those absences due to emergencies, illness, professional meetings of critical importance, or extenuating circumstances will be excused. Make-up activities or assignments for classes missed are expected and are to be arranged with the instructor on an individual basis. Last, you are being given considerable leeway in selecting the topics of your assignments, and I encourage you to try to use each writing project for other out-of-class uses such as work on journal articles or other products you can use to advance your own work and career. It's called the "killing two birds with one stone" trick and it's an essential time management tool.

I. Self-assessment (10%)

While instructor-assigned grades are an important form of evaluation of the quality of your work, self-assessment is an important step in your own learning and development. For this course, self-assessment will entail the following steps: (a) a piece of reflective writing (in the Piazza discussion app) at the beginning of the semester where you describe in detail your personal learning and developmental goals for the course, the specific study strategies and related work habits that you anticipate being used to meet your goals, and specific metrics that you propose to use to self-evaluate your own performance in the course (e.g., handing in assignments on time, getting an op-ed published, etc.); (b) at a mid-point during the semester and then, (c) at the conclusion of the semester you will review the early writing and provide a short review of your progress and performance, with the last review taking place during Finals week where you will assign yourself a final grade that will comprise 10% of your total grade for the course.

II. Class engagement (10%)

Actively engaging in the learning activities is essential for successful completion of the course. Each student is expected to regularly participate in the four different forms of engagement that include:

- Reading courses texts and making annotations in the Persusall app;
- Respond to weekly discussion prompts in Piazza and reply to at least two classmates;
- Post a brief reflection on Flipgrid about the week's readings, and reply to at least two classmates; and,

- Attend or watch the weekly "live" discussion section held each Monday evening.

III. *Employability in practice video presentations* (10%)

Starting on **Week 3** each group will be expected to post a short 3-5 minute video on Flipgrid where one group member (you decide who presents when) introduces an example of employability in practice. This could be an institutional, state or national policy on employability, an example of employability in the news, or some other instance where employability is being used in real-world educational practice. In the videos, presenters should include the url address for the policy, which can be added to a Flipgrid video using the "add text" function. For this assignment, grades will be assigned to the entire group for overall quality of the presentations.

IV. *Short reports: Literature review* OR *policy analysis* (10%) and *opinion article* (10%)

There will be two short papers required for this course (though see below for the final course project, which may also involves the preparation of a written report). Each of the reports mirror the different options you have for your final project, and thus these reports should prepare you for the unique writing style and approach taken for the writing genre you select for the final report.

Please note that you can choose to prepare either a literature review OR a policy analysis for the first short report.

The instructions, expectations, and deadlines for these papers are as follows:

Literature review: Analysis of neo-capital theory and employability (due Oct 26th)
Conducting and writing a literature review will be a skill that will serve you well no matter what career you pursue in the future. The skills you gain in learning how to use search engines, how to articulate an appropriate (and searchable) research question, how to summarize disparate studies and finally how to write up your analyses in a concise yet comprehensive manner can be applied to many different forms of professional research, analysis and writing.

For this paper you will provide an original analysis of one of the three neo-capital theories we'll discuss in the course (e.g., social, cultural or human capital). But instead of summarizing what you know about one of these theoretical traditions, you'll need to identify a specific "angle" or research area that addresses one of these theories and a specific issue, topic or controversy related to student employability. For example, instead of simply preparing a literature review on social capital – which is too broad a topic for a brief review – you'll need to identify angles or research questions such as: "How does social capital enhance first-generation college students' employment prospects?" or "What types of extra-curricular programs help students' social networks to grow?"

One of the tricky things about articulating a research question, however, is that it can't be too broad (which would require a massive literature review) or too narrow (where little research may exist). So you'll likely go through a few different research questions – and doing trial searches in Google Scholar or another academic database – before settling on one that is just right.

In Week 2 I'll provide a short overview of literature reviewing, and then you'll get started by searching databases, documenting papers or reports that you find (ideally you'll focus on peer-reviewed journal articles), and creating an annotated bibliography which is basically a catalogue of paper citations, the abstract, and 1-2 sentences about your view of the work. It is in these short analytic statements that you'll

start to see patterns in the literature that you'll want to build upon in your final review (e.g., most of the papers are about gender discrimination in the workplace). Then, after you've gathered approximately 20 papers, you'll prepare the literature review which will need to include the following components:

- Introduction to the topic (e.g., social capital and low-income student employability) and why it is important;
- Discussion of methods used to conduct the literature review;
- Presentation of key themes, findings and approaches in the literature; and,
- Conclusions and next steps.

The paper should be approximately 10-12 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font), and will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of writing, soundness of logic and argumentation, and demonstrated understanding of neo-capital theory and how it is being used in the literature. Post your final document to Canvas in the Assignments section.

Policy analysis: Analysis of employability policy (due Oct 26th)
The policy analysis paper is a different animal from an academic paper. They are generally shorter, written in jargon-free language, and they are often non-partisan or strive to present data and evidence without taking a specific political or legislative position.

In this assignment, you will just be dipping your toes into the water of policy-oriented writing by preparing a 8-10 page analysis of a specific employability policy (e.g., assigning public funding according to first-destination survey data on graduate employment). Other ideas of employability policies should be available from our weekly "Employability in Practice" presentations. Post your final document to Canvas in the Assignments section.

The policy analysis should include the following elements:

- Introduction to the policy and brief history;
- Data and evidence regarding its application, impacts or efficacy; and,
- Recommendations based on the evidence.

You do not (and should not) collect new data for this assignment, but instead rely on previously published reports, papers, or datasets (e.g., IPEDS) that can be quickly and easily analyzed. Examples of policy-oriented papers and reports can be found at the following websites – take a quick look at some to get a sense of the genre:

- https://www.thirdway.org/issue/education
- https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/
- https://nepc.colorado.edu/publications/all

Opinion article (due Nov 2nd)
Last, by the mid-point of the course you should have formed some opinions about employability policies and practices. For this assignment, you will prepare a 750 word essay that cogently argues a specific point or angle on an employability policy or practice. This piece of writing should NOT include much (if any) discussion of theory, academic jargon, or citations. This piece should not exceed 1,000 words and should

succinctly summarize: (a) the problem, (b) a proposed solution, and (c) why it matters. <u>Ideally, you will actually submit this op-ed to a media outlet</u>. Post your final document to Canvas in the Assignments section.

V. Course project (50%)
The major component of your work for this course is a final course project, which will tackle an employability-related policy, concept or practice that you are especially interested in learning more about. The project will take one of three primary foci: policy analysis, educational practice, or academic analysis.

<u>Policy analysis:</u> This type of project is intended to provide policymakers (e.g., state legislators) with background information and policy recommendations related to a specific employability-related policy. The writing and/or delivery in this type of project should lack academic jargon (unless conveyed in an easy-to-understand manner), be clear and oriented to a lay audience, and provide substantiated and well-argued policy analyses and recommendations.

<u>Educational practice:</u> This type of project is intended to reach educational practitioners (e.g., K-12 or postsecondary faculty, administrators, professional developers), and will result in a report or other product that will clearly and carefully provide practitioners with background information about a topic related to employability (e.g., college internships, employer outreach), different ways that researchers and practitioners have approached the practice, and a set of proposals or action steps to help guide real-world practice. This project should also use minimal academic jargon and theory unless it is conveyed and used in a clear and easy-to-understand manner.

<u>Academic analysis:</u> This type of project will follow conventions for academic research, writing and presentation, with a focus on an in-depth analysis using strong argumentation and citations to prepare a research paper covering a theory, issue or concept related to employability that we have discussed in the course. The intended audience is other academic researchers, and so the project should demonstrate mastery of a particular theory, issue, or concept, and should advance an original approach and/or interpretation of the topic.

Each of these project types can result in a variety of media to be submitted for the final project, such as a written report, a website, a podcast, a movie and so on. The open-ended nature of the final project medium is intended to enable each of your particular talents to be used in the course and/or to encourage media that are increasingly being used to reach academic, policy and practitioner audiences (e.g., web-based media). Some criteria for different project media include:

- A written report or paper should be at least 20 pages (double-spaced) and follow APA 7th edition style conventions for citations. Charts and figures are encouraged for policy and practitioner audiences.
- A website should include content that equals approximately 20 pages (double-spaced) of text.
- A podcast or other audio formats should include content that is at least 2 hours of material.

If you have other ideas for a final project format please contact me. Also, it is recommended that you consult with me to discuss your ideas for the final project, in order to iron out any wrinkles or address any questions prior to investing time in the work. <u>Finally, group projects will be considered but these must be approved by me prior to engaging in the work.</u>

You'll also be expected to do **a final presentation** of your project, not using Flipgrid (videos are too short) but QuickTime, YouTube or some other video system. The presentation should conform to the type of project you completed, such as a formal academic presentation, a more user-friendly policy presentation, or a talk with a group of practitioners.

Important Deadlines

Self-assessment writing in Piazza (1st) --Sept 7th
Self-assessment writing in Piazza (2nd) --Oct 19th
First short paper due (lit review or policy analysis) --------------------------- -----------------------Oct 26th
Second short paper due (op-ed)--Nov 2nd
Course project (written or multi-media form):---Dec 14th
Course project (presentation)---Dec 14th
Self-assessment writing in Piazza (3rd) --Dec 14th

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Course Activities, Elements & Readings
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All course activities (e.g., Flipgrid videos, mini-lectures and other media, Perusall readings and Piazza discussions) are embedded within the course Canvas website. <u>All activities are to be completed by the Monday where the class is scheduled to meet</u> and where I'll be holding "live" discussions/office hours either in 253 Ed Sciences or via BBCollaborate.

<u>**Section I: Historical and theoretical context of employability**</u>

Class 1 (Sept 7th): Intro to course: Critical and cultural perspectives on employability
<u>Monday meeting:</u> Introductions and questions
<u>Flipgrid:</u> Introductions – name/pronouns, major, hobby, interest in the course
<u>Reading & Perusall annotation</u>:
Handley, K. (2018). Anticipatory socialization and the construction of the employable graduate: A critical analysis of employers' graduate careers websites. *Work, Employment and Society*, *32*(2), 239-256.
<u>Mini-lecture</u>: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (intro to course and assignments)
<u>Piazza discussion</u>: Initial understanding of "employability" concept and personal goals for the course (Self-Assessment writing #1)(Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates)

Note: each of these activities should be completed prior to the week's Monday meeting

Class 2: (Sept 14th): Models of the relationship between education and work
<u>Monday meeting:</u> Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
<u>Readings & Perusall annotation</u>:
Bills, D. (2004). The sociology of education and work. Chapter 1 (Education and Work: Establishing Some Terrain), pp. 1-13, Chapter 2 (Schooling and Socioeconomic Success) pp. 14-36, and Chapter 3 (Two Models of the Relationships Between Education and Work), pp. 37-60. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
Hora, M.T., Benbow, R., & Smolarek, B. (2018). Re-thinking soft skills and student employability: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change: The magazine of higher learning*, 50 (6).
<u>Mini-lecture</u>: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (implicit assumptions embedded in the employability discourse, contested nature of terms, meritocracy and credentialism, critical and cultural perspectives)
<u>Piazza discussion</u>: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid: Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)

Class 3 (Sept 21ˢᵗ): Neo-capital theory – focus on social capital
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Lin, N. (2001). *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. Chapter 1 (Theories of Capital) and Chapter 2 (Social Capital). Pp. 3-28. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (neo-capital theories, focus on social capital)
Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates
Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #1 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 4 (Sept 28ᵗʰ): Neo-capital theory – focus on human and cultural capital
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (human and cultural capital, impact on policy)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Lindsay, C., McQuaid, R., & Dutton, M. (2007). New approaches to employability in the UK: Combining 'human capital development' and 'Work First' strategies? *Journal of Social Policy*, *36*(4), 539-560.
Lareau, A., & Weininger, E. B. (2003). Cultural capital in educational research: A critical assessment. *Theory and Society*, *32*(5-6), 567-606.
Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates
Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #2 posts "employability in practice" video

Section II: A closer look at the "employability" concept

Class 5 (Oct 5ᵗʰ): Introduction to the concept
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (history of concept, key contextual forces and ways of framing the idea)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Holmes, L. (2013). Competing perspectives on graduate employability: possession, position or process?. *Studies in Higher Education*, *38*(4), 538-554.
McQuaid, R. W., & Lindsay, C. (2005). The concept of employability. *Urban Studies*, *42*(2), 197-219.
Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates
Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #3 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 6 (Oct 12ᵗʰ): Models and frameworks
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (various models of employability, I/O psych and capital theory)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Hogan, R., Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Kaiser, R. B. (2013). Employability and career success: Bridging the

gap between theory and reality. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *6*(1), 3-16.

Tomlinson, M. (2017). Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education+ Training*, *59* (4), 338-352.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #1 posts "employability in practice" video

Note: Short report #1 (Literature Review) due today.

Class 7 (Oct 19th): Implications for higher education policy and practice
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (impacts on educational practice, internships, skills-focused teaching)
Readings & Perusall annotations:
Cole, D. & Tibby, M. (2013). Defining and developing your approach to employability. York, UK: The Higher Education Academy.
Jackson, D., & Bridgstock, R. (2020). What actually works to enhance graduate employability? The relative value of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular learning and paid work. *Higher Education*, 1-17.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #2 posts "employability in practice" video

Note: The Cole & Tibby (2013) report is a good example of a practitioner-oriented publication.

Section III: A critical perspective on employability policy and practice

Class 8 (Oct 26th): Critical theory and questions of curriculum
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (critical theory, contested terms and underlying assumptions)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Apple, M. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum* (3rd Ed.). Chapter 4 (Curriculum history and social control) pp. 59-76 and Chapter 7* (Commonsense categories and the politics of labeling). Pp. 117-144. New York NY: Routledge.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #3 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 9 (Nov 2nd): Critiques of the dominant employability discourse
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (critical analysis of employability, positional conflict theory)
Reading & Perusall annotation:

Brown, P., Hesketh, A., & Wiliams, S. (2003). Employability in a knowledge-driven economy. *Journal of Education and Work*, *16*(2), 107-126.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #1 posts "employability in practice" video

Note: Short report #2 (Policy Analysis) due today.

Class 10 (Nov 9th): Focus on race and hiring discrimination Pt. 1
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (update on hiring discrimination data, focus on methods)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Pager, D., & Quillian, L. (2005). Walking the talk? What employers say versus what they do. *American Sociological Review*, *70*(3), 355-380.
Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates
Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #2 posts "employability in practice" video

Note: Short report #3 (Op-ed) due today.

Class 11 (Nov 16th): Focus on race and hiring discrimination Pt. 2
Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (Influence of DuBois, role of higher education, racism and hiring)

Reading & Perusall annotation:
DuBois, W.E.B. (1903). The souls of black folk. Chapter 6 (Of the training of Black men) pp. 55-68. Chicago, IL: Dover.
Moss, P., & Tilly, C. (1996). "Soft" skills and race: An investigation of black men's employment problems. *Work and Occupations*, *23*(3), 252-276.
Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates
Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #3 posts "employability in practice" video

Section IV: A cultural perspective on employability policy and practice

Class 12 (Nov 23rd): Cultural perspectives on work and labor
Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture dignity of work, skilled trades, nature of craft)
Reading & Perusall annotation:
Rose, M. (2004). *The mind at work: Valuing the intelligence of the American worker* (10th Ed.). Chapter 3*

(The intelligence of plumbing) pp. 56-66 and Chapter 7 (Rethinking hand and brain) pp. 141-166. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)

- Group #1 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 13 (Nov 30th): Employability in East Asia

Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)

Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture (Chinese education, guanxi, cultural expectations and norms)

Reading & Perusall annotation:

Hom, P. W., & Xiao, Z. (2011). Embedding social networks: How guanxi ties reinforce Chinese employees' retention. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *116*(2), 188-202.

Yang, H., Cheung, C., & Song, H. (2016). Enhancing the learning and employability of hospitality graduates in China. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *19*, 85-96.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #2 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 14 (Dec 7th): Culture and hiring

Monday meeting: Discuss prior week reading and related topics (assignments from prior week due)

Mini-lecture: Dr. Hora mini-lecture hiring for cultural fit, person-fit models, gatekeeping)

Reading & Perusall annotation:

Hora, M. T. (2020). Hiring as cultural gatekeeping into occupational communities: implications for higher education and student employability. *Higher Education*, *79*(2), 307-324.

Piazza discussion: Respond to instructor prompt and reply to at least 2 classmates

Flipgrid:
- Post video reflections on key concept in reading, supporting points/evidence, how it applies to related topic(s) (post video reply to at least 2 classmates)
- Group #3 posts "employability in practice" video

Class 15 (Dec 14th): Course projects, final presentations and 3rd self-assessment writing due

Post your final project (written or multi-media form) in Canvas

Record your final presentation (using QuickTime, YouTube, etc) and post in Canvas

In Piazza do your 3rd self-assessment writing - reflect back on your 1st and 2nd writings, give self-evaluation

Complete List of Readings

Apple, M. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum* (3rd Ed.). Chapter 4 (Curriculum history and social control) pp. 59-76 and Chapter 7* (Commonsense categories and the politics of labeling). Pp. 117-144. New York NY: Routledge.

Bills, D. (2004). The sociology of education and work. Chapter 1 (Education and Work: Establishing Some Terrain), pp. 1-13, Chapter 2 (Schooling and Socioeconomic Success) pp. 14-36, and Chapter 3 (Two Models of the Relationships Between Education and Work), pp. 37-60. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Brown, P., Hesketh, A., & Wiliams, S. (2003). Employability in a knowledge-driven economy. *Journal of Education and Work*, *16*(2), 107-126.

Cole, D. & Tibby, M. (2013). *Defining and developing your approach to employability*. York, UK: The Higher Education Academy.

DuBois, W.E.B. (1903). The souls of black folk. Chapter 6 (Of the training of Black men) pp. 55-68. Chicago, IL: Dover.

Handley, K. (2018). Anticipatory socialization and the construction of the employable graduate: A critical analysis of employers' graduate careers websites. *Work, Employment and Society*, *32*(2), 239-256.

Hogan, R., Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Kaiser, R. B. (2013). Employability and career success: Bridging the gap between theory and reality. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *6*(1), 3-16.

Holmes, L. (2013). Competing perspectives on graduate employability: possession, position or process? *Studies in Higher Education*, *38*(4), 538-554.

Hom, P. W., & Xiao, Z. (2011). Embedding social networks: How guanxi ties reinforce Chinese employees' retention. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *116*(2), 188-202.

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Hora, M.T., Benbow, R., & Smolarek, B. (2018). Re-thinking soft skills and student employability: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change: The magazine of higher learning*, 50 (6).

Jackson, D., & Bridgstock, R. (2020). What actually works to enhance graduate employability? The relative value of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular learning and paid work. *Higher Education*, 1-17.

Lin, N. (2001). *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. Chapter 1 (Theories of Capital) and Chapter 2 (Social Capital). Pp. 3-28. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lareau, A., & Weininger, E. B. (2003). Cultural capital in educational research: A critical assessment. *Theory and Society*, *32*(5-6), 567-606.

Lindsay, C., McQuaid, R., & Dutton, M. (2007). New approaches to employability in the UK: Combining 'human capital development' and 'Work First' strategies? *Journal of Social Policy*, *36*(4), 539-560.

McQuaid, R. W., & Lindsay, C. (2005). The concept of employability. *Urban Studies*, *42*(2), 197-219.

Moreau, M. P., & Leathwood, C. (2006). Graduates' employment and the discourse of employability: a critical analysis. *Journal of Education and Work*, *19*(4), 305-324.

Moss, P., & Tilly, C. (1996). "Soft" skills and race: An investigation of black men's employment problems. *Work and Occupations*, *23*(3), 252-276.

Pager, D., & Quillian, L. (2005). Walking the talk? What employers say versus what they do. *American Sociological Review*, *70*(3), 355-380.

Rose, M. (2004). The mind at work: Valuing the intelligence of the American worker (10th Ed.). Chapter 3* (The intelligence of plumbing) pp. 56-66 and Chapter 7 (Rethinking hand and brain) pp. 141-166. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Tomlinson, M. (2017). Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education+ Training*, *59* (4), 338-352.

Yang, H., Cheung, C., & Song, H. (2016). Enhancing the learning and employability of hospitality graduates in China. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *19*, 85-96.