

**TPS1806**  
**Systems of Higher Education**  
**Winter, 2011**

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**Introduction and Objectives:**

In this course we will look at systems of higher education in Canada, selected Canadian provinces, and other countries in order to obtain a glimpse of how different jurisdictions define, organize, and provide higher education. While the course will provide you with an opportunity to learn about higher education in other jurisdictions, our emphasis is on understanding and analyzing differences between higher education arrangements in other countries compared with our own.

The objectives of the course are:

1. To increase your understanding of differences and similarities between higher education systems in different jurisdictions.
2. To learn about sources of data and analysis on higher education in different jurisdictions.
3. To critically analyze your assumptions about higher education in Ontario (or your home province or jurisdiction) by coming to a clearer understanding of the assumptions that underscore higher education arrangements in some other jurisdictions.

**Systems of Higher Education:**

What is a "system" of higher education? Perhaps the most common answer to this question is that a system of higher education is the sum of the structures, arrangements, and institutions that comprise the higher education infrastructure of a specific jurisdiction. While at first glance the answer may seem satisfactory, on further reflection one might conclude that the answer simply restates the question; a system of higher education is made up of all of the "stuff" that is inside the system. In order to explore systems of higher education, we need to move beyond simply describing what is inside the box of the "system" and consider a series of questions and issues that can help us understand the complexity of these arrangements.

Some of the questions and issues that we will be considering are:

- a) What is the historical, political, social, and economic context in which the "system" emerged? Some discussions of higher education systems ignore these contextual features, but this can be quite problematic. One simply cannot understand higher education in Iran

without considering the political and religious context of that country, or discuss higher education in Kenya and ignore the legacy of colonialism.

- b) What are the boundaries of the higher education system in a particular jurisdiction? Different countries have defined “higher education” in quite different ways and it is important to understand what is inside the “system” and what is left outside. What are the assumptions underscoring a narrow (or broad) definition of higher education in terms of institutional types, public/private dimension, religious orientation, or notions of theoretical, practical, and/or vocational orientation?
- c) To what extent do the component parts of the “system” fit together to create a meaningful whole, or is the system largely comprised of independent units that are brought together only in name as a function or organizational convenience?
- d) To what extent is the system influenced by external, global forces such as international competition, international rankings or external performance assessment mechanisms, and/or international organizations (foundations, IMF, etc.)?
- e) What are meaningful ways of comparing higher education systems? To what extent do differences between systems assist in explaining differences in, for example, equity in terms of participation, research productivity, economic development, and quality of life?

These are not easy questions, but they provide a foundation for exploring some of the complex arrangement, contextual features, and assumptions that underscore higher education systems. Aside from learning about “systems” generally, and reviewing some of the features of different systems, we will also discuss how learning about other jurisdictions can help us understand our own.

### **Organization of the Course:**

The course is organized into four components. We will begin by looking at the notion of a "system of higher education" and discuss some of the very different ways in which systems can be analyzed and understood. In the third week of the course we will focus on comparative analysis as a form of research and discuss sources of information, data, and analyses and some of the problems and limitations associated with comparative scholarship. The third component of the course focuses on systems of higher education in Canada. The fourth component of the course will focus on higher education in other jurisdictions, first through class discussions of common readings and then, in the last few classes, through student presentations.

The class is designed to be a graduate seminar. While I have made some preliminary decisions on readings and course topics, it is not uncommon for this course to evolve as we all become aware of our interests and as new resources become identified. It is important that all students read the required materials before each class so that they can engage in an informed discussion of the issues and themes.

## **Assignments and Evaluation:**

There are three course assignments:

1. Paper proposal (10%). A short, one-page proposal that summarizes your objectives for the final term paper and describes at least three of the major sources that you have identified. You will be asked to provide copies of your proposal to the other students in the course and briefly review the proposal during our class on February 3rd. A proposal form is attached to this document.
2. Class presentation (20%). A 20 minute presentation based on your final paper. The class presentation will be designed to be an educational activity similar to presenting a paper at a conference. Students in the class will provide you with feedback following the presentation, and I will provide a detailed evaluation. The presentations will be scheduled for class sessions in March.
3. Term paper (70%). The term paper (roughly 20-30 double-spaced pages) should analyze the higher education system in a country/jurisdiction of your choice and/or compare elements of that system with Ontario (or your home province or jurisdiction). We will discuss my expectations for the paper in more detail early in the course. The term paper is due on April 18th.

## **A Note on Readings and Sources:**

I have created a Blackboard site for this course that all registered students have access to. Information on using Blackboard can be found on the OISE website at the following address:

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/online/Toolbox/Blackboard/index.html>

The “content” section of the course site includes the newest version of this document as well as folders with all of the required readings for the course. As we will discuss in class, some elements of this course may evolve in response to our discussions and group decisions, and so will the course site and the course schedule and readings sections of this document. Check the Blackboard site frequently for class announcements or updates.

I have included a few links in the “resources” section of the course site that may be helpful as you begin to look for literature and resources for your paper. Some of the best sources of international data can be found on the web by reviewing the sites associated with international (e.g. OECD, IAU, UNESCO, World Bank) or regional (e.g. SEAMEO, EU) organizations and agencies. Some of the most important sources of information on national higher education systems can be found on government and national organization sites (including, in some cases, recent legislation, task force reports, national statistics, etc.). Some international higher education research centres provide web links to relevant agencies and information sources. For example, look at the web site for the Boston College Center for International Higher Education (<http://www.bc.edu/cihe/>) to find a list of links that they have compiled (and also to view electronic versions of the *International Higher Education* publication that includes interesting short summary articles on recent issues in different higher education systems). The specialized

higher education media (such as the Chronicle of Higher Education, the Times Higher Education Supplement, and the University World News can also be helpful in identifying relevant sources.

It is, of course, important to be a critical consumer of research. Some documents found on the web have no basis in reality, so be extremely careful of a web-based document or factoid where the pedigree or legitimacy is unknown. It is also important to remember that some governments are quite reluctant to place documents or reports that are critical of government policy on their websites, so you may need to look for other sources in order to obtain a more balanced perspective. With this in mind, most papers submitted for this course will draw heavily on peer-reviewed journal articles and chapters in academic books as source material for papers, supplemented with recent data and materials from reputable websites.

Finally, it is extremely important to remember that plagiarism is unacceptable. This means that you will need to be very careful when cutting and pasting from multiple sources and ensure that all direct quotations are properly noted and formatted, and that detailed reference information is provided for all source materials following a standard and consistent style.

**TPS1806**  
**Systems of Higher Education**  
**Schedule for Winter, 2011**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
January 6	Introduction and Overview	None
January 13	Systems of Higher Education	<p>Clark, B.R. (1983). <i>The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective</i>. University of California Press: Berkeley. (Chapters 4 and 5).</p> <p>Task Force on Higher Education and Society. (2000) <i>Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise</i>. Washington, DC: World Bank. (excerpts).</p>
January 20	Comparing Systems and Discussion of Sources	<p>Mouton, J. and West, R. (2009). Comparative Study on National Research Systems: Findings and Lessons. In Meek, V.L., Teichler, U., and Kearney, M-L (eds) <i>Higher Education, Research Innovation: Changing Dynamics</i> (pp. 147-171). Kassel: International Centre for Higher Education Research.</p> <p>Guri-Rosenblit, S., Sebkova, H., and Teichler, U. (2007). <i>Massification and Diversity of Higher Education Systems</i>. Paris: UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge.</p>
January 27	The Canadian "System"	<p>Fisher, Don, Rubenson, Kjell, Bernatchez, Jean, Clift, Robert, Jones, Glen, Lee, Jacy, MacIvor, Madeleine, Meredith, John, Shanahan, Theresa, and Trottier, Claude. (2006). <i>Canadian Federal Policy and Post-Secondary Education</i>. Vancouver, BC: Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training, University of British Columbia. (Focus on Chapter 5).</p> <p>Jones, Glen A. (2006). Canada. In Forest, J. and Altbach, P. (Eds.), <i>International Handbook of Higher Education</i> (pp. 627-645). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.</p> <p>Jones, Glen A. and Weinrib, Julian (in press, 2011). Globalization and Higher Education in Canada. In Roger King, Simon Marginson and Rajani Naidoo (Eds.), <i>A Handbook on Globalization and Higher Education</i>. Camberley, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.</p>

February 3	Ontario (and Paper Proposals)	Clark, I., Moran, D., Skolnik, M.L., and Trick, D. (2009). <i>Academic Transformation: The Forces Shaping Higher Education in Ontario</i> . Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. (Read Chapter 6 pp. 137-174.)  Shanahan, T., Fisher, D., Jones, G., and Rubenson, K. (2005). <i>The Case of Ontario: The Impact of Post-Secondary Policy on Ontario's Higher Education System</i> . New York: Alliance for International Higher Education Policy Studies (AIHEPS).
February 10	British Columbia	Fisher, D., Lee, J., MacIvor, M., Meredith, J., and Rubenson, K. (in press). <i>The Development of a Post-Secondary Education System in British Columbia: Transformation and Change</i> . Chapter 2 of forthcoming book on higher education policy in Canada
February 17	United Kingdom	
February 24	United Arab Emirates	Fox, W. H. (2007). <i>The United Arab Emirates: Policy Choices Shaping the Future of Public Higher Education</i> . Research and Occasional Paper Series: CSHE.13.07. San Francisco: Center for Studies in Higher Education, University of California, Berkeley.  Findlow, S. (2005) International networking in the United Arab Emirates higher education system: global-local tensions. <i>Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education</i> , 35 (3), 285-302.  Godwin, S. (2006). Globalization, Education and Emiratisation: A Study of the United Arab Emirates. <i>Electronic Journal on Information Systems in Developing Countries</i> , 27(1), 1-14.  Guest Speaker: Mary Catharine Lennon
March 3	Moldova	Padure, Lucia (2009). <i>The Politics of Higher Education Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe: The Development Challenges of the Republic of Moldova</i> . Excerpts from an unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto.  Guest Speaker: Lucia Padure
March 10	Presentations	
March 24	Presentations	
March 31	Presentations	

**TPS 1806: Systems of Higher Education  
Paper Proposal Form**

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Paper Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives of the Paper:

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Major Sources:

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