

Course Title:	Higher Education Policy at Work: Case Studies from the World's Regions
Instructor:	Kata Orosz
ECTS:	2
Term:	Winter
Module:	Higher Education Policy specialization (Elective)
Relation to other courses:	None

Background and Overall Aim of the Course:

This course provides an opportunity for students to learn about, and critically reflect on, higher education policy initiatives around the world in an inquiry-based learning framework. The course is explicitly designed to center higher education issues in non-Western, non-Anglo-Saxon, and non-European contexts. The study of higher education issues in non-Western, non-Anglo-Saxon, and non-European contexts will not be limited to the inclusion of a more geopolitically diverse set of cases (e.g., discussing policies implemented in Africa, Latin-America, South-East Asia, etc.), but it will also involve a focus on policies which are implemented in or advocated for in Western contexts, but which are aimed to benefit marginalized groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, or linguistic minorities, refugees, etc.) in Western higher education contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Effectively collect, synthesize, and present information on policy initiatives;
- Appraise policy design and implementation in areas related to higher education through the lens of critical theoretical perspectives;
- Produce learning materials for peers; and
- Manage peer learning in graduate-level classes with confidence.

Learning Activities and Teaching Methods:

In this course, students will learn about higher education policy initiatives around the world through inquiry-based learning, which combines research and peer-teaching activities with critical reflection. Students enrolled in this course will

collectively define the specific content and learning outcomes for the course at the beginning of the term, with support from the instructor as needed. Students will take the lead on developing learning materials that will enable the entire class to study the policy initiatives selected. The course involves weekly classes, as well as regular meetings with the course instructor to discuss the case studies and learning materials.

Assessment:

Students enrolled in this course will be expected to attend class; conduct research on a higher education policy initiative of their choice and prepare learning materials for their peers based on it; actively engage with the learning materials prepared by their peers; manage peer learning in some of the classes; and submit a 2-page reflection paper at the end of the term.

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

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| - Quality of learning materials prepared | 50% |
| - Quality of peer learning management | 20% |
| - Class participation | 20% |
| - Reflection paper | 10% |

Course Content and Readings:

Class 1: Studying higher education policy – Issues and motivations

In the introductory class of the course, we will discuss main areas of inquiry in higher education research, with a focus on higher education policy research. Which higher education issues have researchers from around the globe studied, using what methodological approaches? What were the motivations for these research agendas? Which issues have not been studied and why?

Required readings:

- Tight, M. (2019). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses of higher education research. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 9(2), 133-152.
- Santos, J. M., & Horta, H. (2018). The research agenda setting of higher education researchers. *Higher Education*, 76(4), 649-668.

Class 2: Decolonizing policy studies in higher education

Required readings:

- Patel, L. (2016). Educational research as a site of coloniality. In: Author, *Decolonizing educational research: From ownership to answerability*. New York: Routledge, 11-28.
- Gyamera, G. O., & Burke, P. J. (2018). Neoliberalism and curriculum in higher education: A post-colonial analyses. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(4), 450-467.

In the second class of the course, we will discuss areas of higher education policy that have and have not been studied by scholars through the lens of post-colonialism. We will critically examine the underlying logic of educational research, and the ramifications of this underlying logic for the issues and people who have (not) been studied by higher education scholars. During this class, we will also begin identifying potential case studies for the course.

Class 3: Approaches to inquiry-based learning

In preparation for the case studies to be collectively conducted by course participants, we will familiarize ourselves with the principles and stages of inquiry-based learning during the third class of the course. We will look at existing examples of inquiry-based learning in higher education, and deliberate which approaches, if any, seem most suitable for the topics considered for cases to be studied by course participants.

Required readings:

- Pedaste, M., Mäeots, M., Siiman, L. A., de Jong, T., van Riesen, S. A. N., Kamp, E. T., et al. (2015). Phases of inquiry-based learning: Definitions and the inquiry cycle. *Educational Research Review*, 14, 47-61.
- Aditomo, A., Goodyear, P., Bliuc, A., & Ellis, R. A. (2013). Inquiry-based learning in higher education: Principal forms, educational objectives, and disciplinary variations. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(9), 1239-1258.

Class 4: Approaches to studying higher education issues

In this class, we will finalize the topics for the case studies. We will discuss case study methodology and discourse analysis as potentially useful methodological approaches for investigating the cases selected by course participants.

Required readings:

- Saarinen, T. (2008). Position of text and discourse analysis in higher education policy research. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33(6), 719-728.

- Harland, T. (2014). Learning about case study methodology to research higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(6), 1113-1122.

Class 5: Conceptualization of Case Study #1

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 6: Conceptualization of Case Study #2

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 7: Conceptualization of Case Study #3

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 8: Reflections on case studies 1-3

In this class, we will critically assess the conceptualizations of the three case studies covered in Classes 5-7. We will reflect on the extent to which these conceptualizations were successful in adopting a non-colonial stance towards understanding higher education policy initiatives in their particular socio-political contexts. We will also discuss strategies for the investigation stages of the three case studies, to be covered in Classes 9-11.

Class 9: Investigation of Case Study #1

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 10: Investigation of Case Study #2

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 11: Investigation of Case Study #3

The topic and questions to be addressed during this class will be determined collectively by students during weeks 1-3.

Required readings:

- To be determined by students assigned to manage peer learning in the class.

Class 12: Reflections on case studies 1-3; synthesis of what we learned

The course will conclude with a session during which we will critically reflect on what has been accomplished throughout the course. We will synthesize findings from the investigation stages of the three case studies, and consider which aspects of our inquiry yielded the most and least powerful insights.