EDHI 666-0101 – The Academic Profession
College of Education, University of Maryland

Spring 2013
Mondays 4:15-7 p.m.
Benjamin 0206

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Course Overview and Purpose
American faculty members face many challenges in the twenty-first century college and university, among them tightened resources, heightened accountability, and diminishing public faith in faculty ability to impact student learning and the public good. But faculty members also have enviable access to multiple opportunities to contribute and grow in their careers. Key questions include: how do faculty assume agency to achieve goals that are important to them, to their institutions, and to society? Given the changing nature of higher education as an enterprise, how can institutional missions and goals be better aligned with faculty expertise, priorities, and commitments to achieve goals?

We will use hot topics related to higher education faculty as a doorway into the study of the academic profession. For each hot topic we will consider various positions taken by key policymakers and stakeholders, case examples from across the country, and related research. We will also consider each hot topic from the perspective of historical changes and public perceptions of faculty, and differences in faculty appointment types, institutional type, disciplines, career stage and demographics of faculty (e.g gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation). Changes in how faculty conduct their work will be considered. For each issue we will draw implications for what individual faculty, their academic environments, and fields might do assume or scaffold agency to achieve key goals.

Studying faculty and considering linkages between research, policy, and practice is important for several reasons. Investing in the future of higher education organizations requires an understanding of and investment in its people. While not the only vital resource, faculty are at the heart of colleges and universities. Understanding their socialization, contexts, challenges, and what facilitates their growth is essential to good academic stewardship of institutions. Second,
higher education is about to hire a significant number of people to replace retiring professors. By studying faculty professional lives, their work, and changing environments we may be able to better prepare future faculty to be successful. Third, the national “narrative” on faculty has for some time been bleak. In this course we carefully consider what that narrative has been and how we might revise, re-imagine, and re-craft it to shed light on faculty contributions to key teaching, research and service goals.

Objectives
At the conclusion of this course, each student should have developed specific content knowledge about each hot topic we study as well as those he/she studies as part of a team project. But more importantly, students should have learned and practiced the ability to take current faculty issues and/or professional experiences with faculty and:

(a) place them in a historical context  
(b) place them in a contemporary philosophical and social context  
(c) understand how they may differ by institutional type, discipline, career stage and individual identities  
(d) draw implications for faculty growth and development; specifically for how faculty continue to learn throughout their careers, how they enact agency, develop and nurture professional relationships, and develop long-term goals and commitments  
(e) map interdisciplinary perspectives relevant to the issue (e.g. what research on motivation helps us understand about this issue as opposed to research on organizational cultures)  
(f) identify future trends and directions of the issue, potential institutional responses and directions for new research  
(g) identify policy implications at a national level  
(h) consider the issue in the context of the larger narrative on faculty work

To conclude, the course aims to create an intimate learning community for participants to study the academic profession in more depth than other courses allow, become skilled at placing current issues about the academic profession within different contexts, and refine analytic and writing skills. By participating in a team project, students will also have the opportunity to connect action research projects to reform efforts through the University of Maryland Advance Grant.

Major Required Texts

Academic Profession Course-pack. Most articles on the syllabus can be found on the course Canvas site. In some cases there will be a reference which students need to retrieve through the University of Maryland library system.

Course Assignments and Expectations
The grade for this course will be distributed between three areas: hot topic reviews and classroom engagement (35%), team projects (35%), and a book review (30%).

Updated April 14, 2013
Hot Topic Reviews and Classroom Engagement (35%)

Hot Topic Review
Each student will have the opportunity to design a learning experience, similar to faculty in their teaching/learning role. Students will sign up to lead a 1 hour discussion of one of the hot topics. In the first part of the class the instructors will work with students to place the issue in a historical and social context, identify relevant research and theories, and consider implications of the issue for faculty professional growth.

Once we turn the topic over to the student-teacher we would like the student to use a combination of powerpoint/handout, case examples from Inside Higher Education, the Chronicle of Higher Education and/or Change, and interactive exercises to help the class learn:

(a) different “sides” or positions that have been taken on the issue by D.C. think-tanks or associations
(b) how the issue is playing out in specific local contexts (at different colleges and universities)
(c) how and why stakeholders have different experiences with the issue based on institutional type, discipline, career stage, race/ethnicity, gender
(d) future trends and directions of the issue
(e) potential institutional responses and directions for new research

Two weeks after the class, students should hand in four products for their hot topic review:
- a bibliography of a minimum of 10 additional quality references on the issue
- the powerpoint or handout they use in class with key content covered
- any classroom exercise instructions—such as a case study, debate set-up, or forced choice exercise.
- A 2-3 page reflection on the teaching experience and how well they believe students learned the content of the hot topic (including evidence of such from an evaluation)

Classroom Engagement
Each class session will be problem-centered, task-oriented, and engage students in active-learning exercises in order to enhance understanding of the readings and their relevance in practice.

Contributions in class should reveal a substantial familiarity with assigned readings, a capacity to analyze the issues and problems under discussion, and an ability to listen, incorporate, synthesize and constructively criticize the comments and work of classmates. Class members are encouraged to bring questions, issues, critiques, and insights from the readings and from professional experiences to every class.

Because this course relies so heavily on classroom participation and interactive dialogue, it is essential for you to attend all classes. In the case of an absence caused by sickness, it is your responsibility to inform Dr. O’Meara of the your absence via email and to connect with
classmates to cover work covered during the absence. Attendance will influence this part of the student grade. Repeated lateness will result in a lower course grade.

**Grading Criteria for Hot Topic Review**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Criteria for Hot Topic Review</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality and comprehensiveness of content presented</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization and presentation (e.g. of material in the powerpoint, classroom exercises, bibliography, handouts)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection on teaching and learning experience</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL 6 points</td>
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6 points = A+/A  
5 points = A- /B+  
4 points = B/B-  
3 points = C+/C  
0-2 points = Fail

**Team Projects (35%)**
Each student will join with 2-3 other students in an action research project that uses current research and best practices nationwide to increase awareness and make recommendations for ways the issue might be addressed at the University of Maryland.

While topics will be discussed in class, each team project will include a (a) 20-25 page report plus appendices (b) a brochure, or user-friendly executive summary, or web resource aimed at increasing awareness of the issue or at reform and (c) a presentation of the results to the class and a panel of current campus administrators. Students will be asked to hand in a draft of the brochure or public project part of the project for feedback and then revise. They may also hand in the longer report for feedback but that is optional.

- The team project paper will have a timely and comprehensive literature review of the issue, including current national statistics, research from the *Journal of Higher Education*, *Review of Higher Education and Research in Higher Education*, and positions from national policy-making organizations and associations (such as AAUP, NEA, AACU, HERI, COACH, NSF).
- The team project paper will involve some original research of publicly available data on websites and in national databases (no interviews or original survey methods required).
- The team project paper will use timely data and literature to critically illuminate and analyze the significant issue or problem under investigation and present a set of recommendations.
- Each student will submit a one paragraph description of their contributions to the project with the final paper submission.
Grading Criteria for Team Projects

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<tr>
<td>Writing clarity, presentation, editing and grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization and focus (e.g. the practice brief is focused and concise; the written team project paper is well-organized with subheads and a logical flow of ideas; the powerpoint presentation is direct, and easy to understand)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical analysis—major points are clear, made effectively, and are persuasive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content analysis—major points are supported by research and best practice examples</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance—the authors make it clear why this issue is important, to whom, and why something should be done about it</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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5 points= A+/A
4 points A-/B+
3 points= B/B-
2 points= C+/C
1 point= Fail

Book Review (30%)

Students will each complete a book review of one book on the academic profession that was published between 2008-2013. Students should submit one paragraph by **March 4, 2012** describing the book and have the book choice approved by the instructors. The book review should be written in the style of book reviews submitted to the *Journal of Higher Education*, *Review of Higher Education*, or *Teachers College Record*. The book review should make connections when appropriate to other related works and note both the strengths and potential oversights of the book. The book review can be submitted for feedback on April 15, 2013, or submitted for a grade on the last day of class.

The book review should include: (a) a summary of the book, describing its essential points, issues, or themes; (b) an explanation of its significance to education and the course’s subject; (c) a detailed explanation of how it “stacks up” with other works dealing with the same issue (cite examples); and (d) a detailed description of the book’s strengths and weaknesses. It might be helpful to read some of the book reviews included in issues of the JHE, RHE or TCR. As should be clear from the description above, your book review should be an in-depth, scholarly critique of your chosen book. This project will require you to do other readings in order to complete the assignment successfully. You must draw upon outside scholarship to discuss the book. Note: You may not review books included in the class. We suggest that you avoid looking at other reviews of your chosen book as this could bias your own voice in critique.

*Updated April 14, 2013*
Grading Criteria for Book Reviews

| Writing clarity, presentation, editing and grammar | 1 |
| Organization and focus | 1 |
| Critical analysis—major points are clear, made effectively, and are persuasive | 1 |
| Content analysis—the summary of the book is comprehensive | 1 |
| Significance—the author makes it clear why this book is important, to whom, and where it fits next to other scholarship | 1 |

5 points= A+/A
4 points A-/B+
3 points= B/B-
2 points= C+/C
1 point= Fail

Course Overview

Class #1 – January 28
The Faculty Today: Higher Education’s Biggest Asset or Obstacle?

Class #2 – February 4
Promising Theories and Research Methods to Study the Professoriate

Class #3 – February 11
Does Hiring of More Non-Tenure Track Faculty Help or Hurt the Achievement of Key Higher Education Goals?

Class #4 – February 18
Tenure: Does it Help or Hurt Universities?

Class #5 – February 25
Do Women Faculty “Lean Back?”

Class #6 – March 4
Unionization: Costs and Benefits

Assignments:
Book Review Proposal Due

Class #7 – March 11
High Impact Practices: If They Work, Why Not Require All Faculty to Use Them?

March 18 – No Class. Spring Break
Class #8 – March 25

Academic Life as a Career Choice: Do American Faculty Work Too Hard, or Not Hard Enough? Should We Encourage Graduate Students to Pursue Academic Positions or Not?

April 1 – No Class.

Class #9 – April 8

Bias in the Classroom: Is Assessment of Teaching Fair? Or Are Students and Faculty Biased in Treatment of Each Other?

Class #10 – April 15
The Plight of Interdisciplinary Scholars: Challenges and Opportunities

Assignments:
Book Review Due for Instructor Feedback (optional)

Class #11 – April 22
Faculty Diversity: Too Little for Too Long, Why?

Assignments:
Team Project Brochure Due (required) and Team Project Paper Due (optional) – feedback will be returned electronically or in hard copy by April 29

April 29 – No Class.

Class #12 – May 6 – Team Project Presentations

Assignments:
Team Projects Due

Final Book Review Due

Class Session One, January 28: The Faculty Today: Higher Education’s Biggest Asset or Obstacle? During this session we will consider the major changes that have occurred in the academic profession, with the greatest focus on the last 30 years. We will set the stage for the remaining classes by observing the kinds of questions scholars, policy-makers, and the public ask about the faculty. We will consider some of the strongest arguments that have been made that the way faculty are trained, evaluated, and rewarded do not meet 21st century needs as well as arguments that American higher education is the model for the world because of the quality of its faculty and the way they have traditionally worked and been rewarded.

- O’Meara, K., Terosky, A.L. and Neumann, A. (2008). Faculty Careers and Work Lives:
Class Session Two, February 4: Promising Theories and Research Methods to Study the Professoriate. There is a rich literature on the academic profession. In this session we consider the varied perspectives that have guided studies of the academic profession. We will also present a framework for studying faculty professional growth (defined as learning, agency, professional relationships and recognized commitments). Instructors and students will identify a number of hot topic issues and practice analyzing them using these different perspectives. We will also consider different methodological approaches to studying faculty.


Class Session Three, February 11: Does Hiring of more Non-Tenure Track Faculty Help or Hurt the Achievement of Key Higher Education goals?
The rise of full-time non-tenure track and part-time faculty is hardly breaking news. Yet the decision-making process to change appointment types from tenure to non-tenure track has occurred without much scrutiny, data, or consideration of consequences. In this class we consider this trend, the kinds of questions that should be asked in such decisions and consequences of different appointment types for student learning and retention, shared governance, and the professional growth of faculty. Students will consider under what circumstances different types of appointments make sense for different goals and institutional types.


Class Session Four, February 18: Tenure: Does it Help or Hurt Universities?
At the same time that universities have been increasing the number of faculty hired on non-tenure track lines for reasons of cost and flexibility, there has been a wider discussion going on in higher education about the relative benefits of tenure as a concept and career structure. In this class we consider both critiques and defense of the very idea of tenure, and the relative value of tenure to faculty recruitment, academic freedom, motivation, productivity, shared governance and professional growth.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303610504577418293114042070.html


**Class Session Five, February 25: Do Women Faculty “Lean Back?”** Over the last 3 years, the *Atlantic Monthly, Time Magazine, New York Times* and *TED* lectures have been full of critiques of women’s progress in ascending to the highest levels of leadership in corporations, political office, government, universities, and the professions. Whether the topic is women in STEM, as CEO’s, leading government agencies or launching businesses the critique is that women are “leaning back” and not reaching for the brass ring because of a desire to balance work and family, fear of failure, lack of agency, or interest in being “the boss.” Others argue that it is not the women themselves who are to blame for a lack of progress but the organizations and fields they try to move up in that have remained stubbornly resistant to differences between men and women in family care and responsibilities, leadership styles, approaches to competition and definitions of success. We consider how this debate relates to the current status of women in the professoriate including their retention, satisfaction, advancement and well-being.


Class Session Six, March 4: Unionization for Faculty and Graduate Students: Costs and Benefits. As time to degree has risen and graduate students spend more time as teaching and research assistants questions have arisen as to whether they should have unions to represent their interests as employees, or whether they should be treated foremost as students. Unions have formed to work for better benefits and rights for graduate students. At the same time, faculty unions have begun to represent non-tenure track and part-time faculty looking for some kind of job security for their work, higher pay and a voice in decisions made about their working conditions. The union argument that “faculty working conditions are student learning conditions” has met up against the resistance of some universities arguing that such efforts hurt the flexibility that these positions were created to serve. In several states Governors have gone up against state employee unions, sometimes winning, sometimes not. We will consider costs and benefits of unions for graduate students and different groups of faculty.


- The New Faculty Majority. [Please review this website and the various projects underway to increase the legal rights, benefits and job security of adjunct and contingent faculty] http://www.newfacultymajority.info/equity/learn-about-the-issues/litigation-a-legislation


Class Session Seven, March 11: High Impact Practices: If They Work, Why Not Require All Faculty to Use Them? A significant body of research suggests that high impact practices, classroom assessment techniques, and teaching practices that engage different learning styles enhance college student learning. If this is true, why don’t we require all faculty to use such teaching techniques? In this class we consider academic freedom in teaching, the kinds of requirements that have been placed on faculty teaching in recent years, and the best ways to support student learning, faculty autonomy, and innovation in the classroom.


March 18 – Spring Break

Class Session Eight, March 25: Academic Life as a Career Choice: Do American Faculty Work too Hard, or Not Hard Enough? Should We Encourage Graduate Students to Pursue Academic Positions or Not? In this class we will consider the faculty position as a career choice.
We will contrast studies of faculty in research universities, striving liberal arts, and comprehensive institutions where stress is high and burnout and exhaustion common with a recent study positioning faculty as one of the least stressful positions. We will also consider the over-supply of applicants for many faculty positions and the viability and challenges for graduate students choosing the faculty career track.


- Class handouts.

**Class Session Nine, April 8: Bias in the Classroom: Are Students and Faculty Biased in Treatment of Each Other?** In this class we delve more deeply into how bias may be influencing faculty and student treatment of each other in the classroom, in mentoring, and in evaluation of each other’s performance. We also consider what might be done to diagnose and increase awareness of subtle and overt bias, micro-aggressions and negative climates.


• Sue, D.W. Short you-tube clip on micro-aggressions. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BL2P0JsAS4

• Wright, J. Lesbian instructor comes out: The personal is pedagogy. Chapter 38, p. 516-525. ASHE Reader on Faculty.


Class Session Ten, April 15: The Plight of Interdisciplinary Scholars: Challenges and Opportunities. Faculty who work across disciplinary borders find enormous opportunities for learning, discovery and the solution of problems. However, they also face significant challenges as they strive to gain legitimacy for their research in disciplines not used to such work. In this class we examine the nature of interdisciplinary research, challenges of finding publication venues and external funding, and new efforts being made by some institutions to change academic reward and support structures to meet these challenges.


Class Session Eleven, April 22: Faculty Diversity: Too Little for Too Long. Why? While the American faculty is more diverse than ever before progress has been slow and uneven. Women are under-represented in the higher ranks, in leadership positions and in STEM fields and both women and faculty of color are more likely to leave faculty positions pre-tenure. Studies come out each week showing subtle and overt bias in the experiences of graduate students and faculty. We will consider what has and has not worked in attempts to make colleges and universities more inclusive academic homes.


No class April 29: AERA

Class Session Twelve, May 6: Team Project Presentations

During this session we will have team project presentations. We will invite in a guest set of responders to each presentation to provide reactions.

Policy on Incomplete Grades

I will restrict the grade of Incomplete to documented emergencies at the end of the semester only. Such emergencies are not based on work commitments; rather students should not take the course if work or other course responsibilities make it clear at the beginning of the semester that
they will not be able to complete assignments by the end of course deadlines. A grade of incomplete requires the instructor’s prior approval.

**Policy on Students with Documented Disabilities**
Please let the instructor know at the beginning of the class if you have a documented disability so that accommodations can be made to support your learning.

**Course Evaluation**
As a member of our academic community, you as a student have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit your course evaluations each term through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. Please watch for the dates the system will open for evaluation of the semester and make a note of the link at which you can access the submission system: [https://www.courseevalum.umd.edu/](https://www.courseevalum.umd.edu/). I greatly appreciate your completing the course evaluations when the email invitation is sent to you.

**Academic Honesty**
All students are expected to abide by the code of academic integrity throughout this course. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Student Honor Council. The full text of the code is available on the university’s website at [www.inform.umd.edu/Campus Info/Departments/jpo/code acinteg.html](http://www.inform.umd.edu/Campus Info/Departments/jpo/code acinteg.html).

**Method of Communication**
Should the instructors need to contact you for any reason, their preferred method of communication is e-mail, with the addresses listed on the first page of the syllabus. Their student e-mail distribution will be populated through the university canvas system. If you wish for them to use another e-mail address, please let them know prior to the start of the semester.

**Absence Due to Religious Holidays**
You will not be penalized because of religious beliefs and observance. Please inform the instructor of any conflicts between the course schedule and religious observances as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Absence Due to Sickness**
In the case of an absence caused by sickness, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor of your absence via email and to connect with classmates to cover work covered during the absence.

**Inclement Weather**
Official closures and delays are announced on the university website ([www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu)) and on the snow phone line (301) 405-SNOW. Please check these to determine if our class has been canceled due to inclement weather.

**Course Contingency Plan**
Should an emergency arise that closes the University for an extended period of time, the instructor will be in contact, if possible, with additional instructions. Assignment due dates and readings may be altered depending on the length of time class might be canceled.

**Copyright Restrictions**

Class lectures and other course materials are copyrighted by the University of Maryland and they may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the course instructor.
Examples of Book Reviews


Resources for Team Projects

**Relevant Websites**

AAUP Website: [www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org) (go to “AAUP Publications”)

Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey: [www.gseis.ucla.edu/HERI/facoverview.php](http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/HERI/facoverview.php)


Chronicle of Higher Education [www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com)

Academe [www.aaup.org/AAUP](http://www.aaup.org/AAUP)

Liberal Education [www.aacu.org/liberaleducation](http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation)

COACHE at Harvard Graduate School of Education: [http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache](http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache)

*NEA Advocate Online*: [www.nea.org/he/adv-new](http://www.nea.org/he/adv-new)

TIAA-CREF Website: [www.tiaa-cref.org](http://www.tiaa-cref.org)

UMD ADVANCE [www.umd.advance.edu](http://www.umd.advance.edu)