



Lincoln University

FALL 2025

COURSE:	BA 391 Seminar on Higher Education (Wednesdays 9:00-11:45 AM); 3 units (45 hours of lectures & discussions)
LEVEL	Mastery 1 (M1)
INSTRUCTOR:	Igor Himelfarb, Ph.D. ihimelfarb@lincolnuca.edu
OFFICE HOURS:	Before and after the class and by appointment in room 407
TEXTS:	St. John, E.P., Daun-Barnett, N., & Moronski-Chapman, K.M. (2012). <i>Public policy and higher education</i> . Rutledge. (ISBN: 978-0-415-893596). Zwick, R. (2002). <i>Fair game?</i> Routledge Falmer. (ISBN: 978-0-415-925600).

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is offered to students in the doctoral program or to master's degree students as an elective course for extra credits. The seminar examines the core values, structures, processes, language, and personnel of higher education, analyses critical issues facing colleges and management skills for tracking them. It includes oral presentations required for each participating student. (3 units)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

During the first half of this course, students will be introduced to core concepts in higher education in the business, economic and social contexts. We will review from the business perspective the changes that have occurred in higher education policies over the past decades. During the seminar discussions, students will examine how policymakers and higher education administrators can work to inform and influence change within systems of higher education using research-based evidence along with consideration of political, social, and historical values and beliefs. The second half of the course will concentrate on the assessment in higher education. During this part of the class, we will discuss several standardized tests used for admission decisions, test fairness for different

populations, and whether tests can be fair if average scores are higher for some ethnic groups than others, or higher for men than women? Students will learn how much tests count in admissions decisions today and what impact coaching programs have on the fairness and usefulness of standardized tests. We will focus on the primary standardized tests used today in admissions decisions in colleges, graduate schools, and professional schools.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

The class will follow seminar format, which is a combination of lectures and round-table discussions. Typically, the instructor will lecture at the beginning of the class, then, each day, a discussion of articles read for that day will follow. Students will be exposed to the current trends in the literature; they will analyze, and critique journal articles assigned for homework reading.

Assignments and projects require students to actively use resources of the library. Detailed guide to business resources of the library as well as the description of Lincoln University approach to information literacy are available at the [LU Library](http://lincolnuca.libguides.com) website (lincolnuca.libguides.com)

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

Students MUST attend class. Attendance is crucial to performing well in this course, as some of the material presented may not be found in the textbook. Class participation is a main component in this class; therefore, attendance is essential.

ZOOM:

<https://lincolnuca-edu.zoom.us/j/82553469373?pwd=ecvI9rB4KfKvr5fTksiZBSrmoWrB8A.1>

Meeting ID: 825 5346 9373

Passcode: 522911

ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be a number of readings (mostly journal articles) assigned weekly in addition to the reading in the textbooks. Journal articles will be made available to students via e mail. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and critique the readings. Critical thinking is important! Periodically, short written reflection of readings will be assigned. These reflections may be shared in class with other students and the instructor or collected by the instructor. To master the teaching skills, each student will have a chance to lead the classroom in a presentation and a discussion.

In accordance with the university policy on cheating and plagiarism, any student who does not do his/her own write-up completely independently on any assignment will fail the assignment.

FINAL PAPER:

A final literature review paper on the topic chosen by the student but related to the policy and practice of higher education or assessment in higher education will be required. The final paper

should not exceed 15 pages (not counting the references). The best way to approach this assignment is to base your literature review on the articles read for this seminar.

CLASSROOM POLICY:

Please turn off your cell phones. If you do need to text message or receive a call, please take it outside the classroom.

I am available and will do my best to help you learn and succeed. Questions and points of discussion are encouraged. I am also highly accessible for discussions if you wish to receive additional information or learn more about a certain topic or need help with data analysis. Please visit me during my office hours, or talk to me immediately after class, if you need study tips or additional help. No appointment is required for my office hours.

GRADING:

Percentage	Grade
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
below 60%	F

Weights	
Reflections	10%
Class participation	10%
Presentation	20%
Discussions	20%
Final paper	40%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Week 1-3:

Lac, A., Hemovich, V., & Himelfarb, I. (2010). Predicting position on teaching creationism (instead of evolution) in public schools. *Journal of Educational Research*, 103, 253-261.

Week 4:

Himelfarb, I., Lac, A., & Baharav, H. (2013). Effects of extracurricular activities and school-related problems on academic performance. *Educational Studies*, 40(1), 81-97.

Week 5:

Zwick, R., & Himelfarb, I. (2011). The effect of high school socioeconomic status on the predictive validity of SAT scores and high school grade-point average. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 48(2), 1-21.

Week 6:

Duh, S., Paik, J. H., Miller, P. H., Gluck, S. C., Li, H., & Himelfarb, I. (2016). Theory of mind and executive function in Chinese preschool children. *Developmental Psychology*, 52(4), 582-591.

Week 7-12:

Zwick, R. (2002). *Fair game?* Routledge Falmer.

Week 13:

Himelfarb, I, & Esipova, N. (2015). Exploring the patterns of religious observance in post-Soviet Central Asia and Azerbaijan. *The Central Asia and the Caucasus: Journal of Social and Political Studies*, 16(1), 37-57

Week 14:

Fall Recess: Thanksgiving holidays.

Week 15 -16:

Final Presentations.

Note: Instructor reserves the right to modify any part of this syllabus.

GOOD LUCK!

Syllabus Reviewed: 8/11/2025