



Public Policy and Higher Education

Winter Quarter: Wednesdays from 3-5:50pm

We are at a vital moment in American history in which the importance of access to and success in higher education has entered the political discourse on a national scale. Several states have proposed or passed “free college” plans. Total outstanding student loan debt has grown to over \$1.3 trillion, surpassing in volume all other forms of debt except home loans. In addition, the most significant piece of higher education legislation at the federal level (the Higher Education Act of 1965) is overdue for reauthorization. As the area of public policy for higher education has seen growing public discussion and concern, it has been accompanied by important policy innovations in recent years. This course will explore many of the public policies through which federal, state, and local governments in the US address higher education. We will also consider how public policy for higher education differs cross-nationally. Each week will include a discussion of recent trends, policy-relevant academic scholarship, theoretical models, and policy innovations for higher education. In addition, students will have the opportunity to engage with the course material through in-class discussions and exercises.

The course will cover a range of topics such as:

- **Accreditation:** including the role of accrediting agencies, the interplay of federal and state operating authority, and diploma mills.
- **Need-based aid:** including the federal Pell grant and the Illinois MAP grant
- **Non-need-based aid:** including merit aid (like the Georgia HOPE scholarship) and community-based Promise programs (like the Kalamazoo Promise)
- **Student loans:** including federal direct loans and income share agreements
- **Tax policy for higher education:** including college savings plans, the American Opportunity Tax Credit, and tax deductions for student loans and tuition.
- **“Free” college policies:** including geographically-based Promise programs and the state-level “free” college movement.
- **State budgeting for higher education:** including performance funding and guaranteed tuition policies.
- **Federal research funding:** including federal peer reviewed research funds and academic earmarks.
- **Undocumented students:** including federal and state DREAM Acts, and public policies related to in-state tuition and access to student aid for undocumented students.

- **Higher education and the military:** including conflicts between academic freedom and classified research, the funding of military academies, the GI Bill, and Yellow Ribbon schools.
- **University athletic finance:** including state regulation of institutional subsidies for athletic departments and the tax-exempt status of the National Collegiate Athletics Association.
- **For-profit higher education:** including regulation of the sector through gainful employment, the 90/10 student aid rule, veterans benefits, and student loan cohort default rates.

Assignments for the course include:

- An Op-Ed
- A Policy Memo
- A White Paper

All are welcome. There are no course pre-requisites and no prior experience in higher education is expected (other than being a Harris student).

Course instructor:

Dr. Jennifer A. Delaney will be visiting the Harris School during the 2018 Winter and Spring quarters. She is an Associate Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is also the Director of the Forum on the Future of Public Education at the University of Illinois. Dr. Delaney's research focuses on higher education policy, with an emphasis on finance. She has published extensively in the areas of student financial aid, state budgeting for higher education, and on related topics of higher education policy. She worked for the US Department of Education and the US Congress on issues of student financial aid with the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance from 2000-2002. From 2003-2005, she was a policy analyst with the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, where she contributed to the *Measuring Up* reports, state-by-state report cards on higher education performance. She also served as a consultant for the Commission on the Future of Higher Education (under US Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings) in 2005-2006. Dr. Delaney served as chair of the Council for Public Policy in Higher Education from 2011-2014 with the Association for the Study of Higher Education. In 2014, she was the Faculty Fellow for the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Previously she was an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Dr. Delaney earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Stanford University, an Ed.M. in Higher Education from Harvard University, and a B.A. in English from the University of Michigan.

Questions about the course can be directed to: delaneyj@uchicago.edu