

The Idea of the University: Past, Present, Future

Spring 2013
T, Th 3:00-4:15

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Office Hours: T, Th, 12:00-1:00, Heavilon 325B and also by appointment

This course is meant to challenge students and faculty alike to consider what our education experiences mean now and what they will have meant after we leave Purdue. All of us have made choices that have led us to our membership in the university community, but all too often, those choices go unremarked—are even invisible—or even if they are recognized, they are not considered critically. Moreover, many of us are unaware of the history of higher education in general and of the Land Grant Universities in particular. At the intersection of our personal choices and institutional history lies our lived experience of this place.

The unabashed argument of the course is that the public university is a vital and unique institution. By critically examining its past and present, students will be better equipped to steer a course through their time in residence here, and after graduation they will be informed alumni and citizens, able to contribute meaningfully to the debates that will shape the idea of the university for future generations.

Schedule of readings and assignments

- January 8 Introduction to the class
We'll be working through some exercises and discussions over the next several class periods. Begin reading Delbanco, *College* and Topping, *A Century and Beyond*. Although we won't have time to discuss these in full in class, I expect that you will read them as these works will comprise our common reading and background for much of what we'll be discussing and researching this semester.
- January 10 Discussion of the Morrill Act
Please read
- The first two "chapters" of *The Land Grant Tradition*, found here: <http://www.aplu.org/document.doc?id=780> as well as the text of the 1862 Morrill Act on p. 10.
 - Clark Kerr, "The Idea of the Multiversity" from *The Uses of the University* (Blackboard)
- Also, watch the 40-minute lecture by former Purdue president Martin Jischke, here: <http://www.c-span.org/Events/Morrill-Land-Grant-Act-of-1862/10737431337/>
Click on: "Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862" under Video Playlist on the right side of the page.

Blog post due Wednesday, noon: your three nominations for the place/memory that will be the focus of your portfolios. As you consider nominations and their rationales, consider how our general readings help inform your choice and your thoughts about your choice. Subject line, “Nominations.”

January 15 Planning day: we’ll be discussing the results of the “Idea of the University” survey, planning for the lecture series and workshopping your blog posts.

January 17 Please read the Wiley letter that I handed out in class; we’ll be discussing it through the lens of the Morrill Act. At this point, you should have the first two chapters of *Century and Beyond* read and digested as background for our discussion.

Please also read the following:

- William Zimmerman, “The Morrill Act and Liberal Education” in *Liberal Education* 50.3 (Jun 1964): 395-401.
- Archives biography of Harvey Wiley, which can be found in the on-line finding aid here:

<http://www4.lib.purdue.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/findingaid&id=609&q=#bioghist>

January 22 MEET IN HAAS HALL, room 101.

Over the next few classes, I’ll be presenting some of the research underpinning my lecture later in the term. In particular, for this class we’ll be discussing the “memory” behind the Memorial Gymnasium here on campus.

Please read the following:

- Packet of archival materials, handed out at the last class meeting
- Julian Bonder, “On Meaning, Trauma, Public Space, Monuments, and Memorials” in *Places* 21.1 (Spring 2009): 62-69.
- James Young, “Memorials and Meaning”: *Sculpture Review*. 55.4 (Winter 2006): 8-15.

Blog post due Wednesday, noon: Consider these questions: how does *A Century and Beyond* organize the history of Purdue? What influences on our identity does Topping identify as the most important? What influences or incidents are left out? How does he organize our past? How does that orientation to our past structure the way that he introduces the 1903 train wreck? What historical work does the incident perform in Topping’s history? How does the book present the incident as influencing Purdue’s identity as a celebrated university?

January 24 MEET IN ARMS B071

On this day, beginning at 3:30, I’ll be speaking at the Engineering Education seminar series, presenting my “theology of engineering” research. Much of what I’ll be discussing at this session will be a preview of my public lecture on February 5, so I’d like you to focus on the form rather than the content of this event. Play “participant observer” in the seminar series; look for both academic conventions and disciplinary conventions.

January 29 Prepare for the evening lecture; read Jon Wagner, "Social Contracts and University Public Service," *Journal of Higher Education* 64.6 (Nov/Dec 1993): 696-729.

6:30-7:30 Lecture, Professor Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, "Extension in 2013"

January 31 MEET IN KARNES ARCHIVES for a discussion of the archival traces of the train wreck.
Read Katherine Ott, "Introduction to the History of Scrapbooking" (Blackboard)

February 5 MEET IN KARNES ARCHIVES (bring laptops to access our digital copy of John Miller's scrapbook).

Read John F. Kassen, "Introduction" from *Houdini, Tarzan, and the Perfect Man: The White Male Body and the Challenge of Modernity in America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001: 3-21. (Blackboard)

6:30-7:30 Lecture, Kristina Bross "The Theology of Engineering"

Blog post due Wednesday, noon: reflect on your choice for the portfolio focus. You don't need to post the full draft of your reflection (though you may if you want whole-class feedback!). But do post your decision, sketch a couple of the reasons for your choice and suggest what you hope to discover as you work on the portfolio this term. I'd be especially interested to hear whether Delbanco's book is helping shape your expectations or helping you define what the idea of the university *should* be. Subject line: "Decision."

February 7 Site of the University workshop.

February 12 Prepare for evening lecture; discuss Pawley, "What counts as 'engineering'?: Toward a redefinition," in *Engineering and Social Justice* (Blackboard)

Lecture, 6:30-7:30: Professor Alice Pawley, "Engineering and Social Justice"

February 14 Conducting oral interviews workshop; readings TBA.

Blog post due Monday, noon: Choose 2-3 articles, letters or other information from *The Journal and Courier*, *The Exponent* or *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to recommend to the class. In your post, you might discuss what questions the articles raise, what further lines of research or discussion topics they suggest, whether they present a local angle on national issues or suggest a national issue's implications for us. This post can take the shape of an annotated bibliography. Subject line: "Media Club #1."

February 19 Prepare for evening lecture; readings TBA

6:30-7:30 Lecture, Professor Susan Curtis, "The Definition of Diversity"

February 21: Media club: discuss blog entries and recommended articles

February 26 TBA: I am working on adding an additional lecture to the series concerning sports and the university. Stay tuned!

February 28 NO CLASS (I'll be helping to run the biennial conference of the Society of Early Americanists).

March 5 Prepare for evening lecture; readings TBA

Lecture, 6:30-7:30: Professor Fabian Winkler, "Art and the Public University"

March 7 Presidential debates; we'll be reading and discussing media coverage concerning two university presidents: the appointment of our own president, Mitch Daniels and the controversy last summer concerning the University of Virginia board of trustees and its attempts to oust the president. Readings TBA.

DRAFT OF PORTFOLIO DUE with estimates of percentage completed and evaluation of its polish and promise.

March 12 BREAK

March 14 BREAK

March 19 Prepare for evening roundtable; read Annette Kolodny, "'60 Minutes' at the University of Arizona: The Polemic against Tenure" from *Failing our Future* (Blackboard). If we have time, we'll begin our discussion of *The Torch*

6:30-7:30, Roundtable: Tenure Tales and Academic Freedom

March 21 Book Club: *The Torch*

March 26 Prepare for evening lecture. Read and discuss Marjorie Gerber, "Disciplinary Envy" (Blackboard)

6:30-7:30 Lecture, Professor Venetria Patton, "On Interdisciplinarity"

Blog post due Wednesday, noon: Choose 2-3 articles, letters or other information from *The Journal and Courier*, *The Exponent* or *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to recommend to the class. In your post, you might discuss what questions the articles raise, what further lines of research or discussion topics they suggest, whether they present a local angle on national issues or suggest a national issue's implications for us. This post can take the shape of an annotated bibliography. Subject line: "Media Club Readings."

March 28 *The Torch* discussion

April 2 **Roundtable: Alumni Stories**
Prep for the roundtable; Media Club discussion

6:30-7:30, Roundtable

April 4 Research Workshop

Monday, April 8: Portfolio Drafts due

April 9 Research Workshop

April 11 Research Workshop

Monday, April 15: Portfolio Drafts due

April 16 Research Workshop

April 18 Research Workshop

April 23 “My Idea of the University” presentation of results

April 25 “My Idea of the University tours” presentation of results

Tuesday, April 30: Final Portfolio Due

Assignments

My Idea of the University Portfolio (60 points)

The portfolio will comprise several entries of varying genres. We will have draft dates throughout the semester, and several of the entries will be posted to our blog for out-of-class comments before in-class discussion. I will assign preliminary grades to the drafts so that you can see where you stand, grade-wise, but my comments and grades at draft time are meant to help you see strengths and weaknesses; you can revise any element of the portfolio up to the final due date, when I will assign a final grade to it.

Entries in the portfolio are as follows:

1. Three nominations for your focus of reflection and research in this portfolio. These should be personally meaningful to you—a place that you can associate with a memory that exemplifies your idea of what the university *should* or *could* be. You should be able to share each memory with others, as one will be the starting point of your investigations. For your nomination, give the location of your place/memory’s site on campus and a description of both the place and the memory. Class comments should discuss the potential of each nomination for the portfolio’s research, and in particular give feedback

on the appeal to a general audience. We will develop other criteria for selection in class.
DUE on our blog by Jan. 10.

2. Choose one of your nominations and write a brief (about 2 page) reflection on your choice of site/memory to focus your work this semester. Why did you choose it over the other two? For whom in the Purdue community would your choice resonate? Who might not see their own experience represented in your choice? What are you hoping to confirm, learn or establish with your research and reflections? What questions do you have for me and the class concerning research direction? What do you anticipate will be the pleasures and difficulties of researching and analyzing your choice? **You should have this entry into your portfolio drafted by our class time on February 7.**
3. Primary source bibliography—list all materials that are objects of your analyses, typically archival materials, news media from the period you are studying; period publications, etc. **You should almost all of this research completed by April 9.**
4. Secondary source bibliography—list all materials that you are using to help you make sense of and understand the site and the primary sources associated with it. **You should have almost all of this research completed by April 9.**
5. Oral history report; interview at least one individual who can help you make sense of the past and present significance of your site as important to our idea of the university. **You should have this report drafted by April 9.**
6. 8-12 page academic paper presenting your analysis about the significance of your site for our idea of the university. **This paper should be started by April 9; you should have a reasonable draft of the paper ready to discuss by April 16.**
7. Reflection on the ongoing significance of your site, questions raised but yet to be answered, future research directions and/or any recommendations you have for either the site itself or for its documentation and analysis. **This reflection should be in a draft stage by April 18, but not finalized until after the tours.**

Community/Citizenship assignments

Grant proposal: The Vice-Provost for Engagement offers community service grants to students. I'm hopeful that we can snag one of these to support receptions for our public lectures. We'll write this grant collaboratively. (5 points)

Hospitality Committee: for each of our speakers, two of you will serve as "hosts." Duties include providing me with talking points for the introduction at the lecture (which means researching the speaker's professional experience and publications), standing at the ready to initiate Q&A after the presentation and writing a 1-page reflection on the lecture for our class blog. (10 points)

Blog Postings: roughly every two weeks until the research workshops start I'll ask you to respond to a prompt or provide a draft of some element of your Portfolio on our class blog. I'll be evaluating your contributions both on the thoughtfulness and fullness of your direct response to the prompt and also on your responses to other members of the class. Keep in mind that these are public documents—at least in a limited sense—and so should adhere to conventional grammar, punctuation, and other academic standards. In addition to the required prompts, I encourage you to post questions, observations, findings and frustrations at any time. (25 points)

Optional assignment—to be decided on by the class: one of the most useful local resources for researching campus sites, memories and identities is the *Debris*, Purdue's yearbook (now discontinued). One way we might collaborate on research this semester is to assign a representative issue of the *Debris* (perhaps one per decade) and have each member of the class read his or her issue with an eye toward indexing relevant articles or information for the rest of the class.