Course Description

This course is designed for students interested in a career in higher education administration, or those who wish to be active members of a college or university community while employed in some other capacity. The course will also be of value to those who are focused on higher education policy and would benefit from a deeper understanding of the purpose, organization and functioning of institutions of higher education. We will span issues of the higher education history, the mission and goals, organizational development, infrastructure and operations. Each student will be expected to build upon his/her experience and interests to further develop a personal ideology of higher education and, by extension, lifelong human development. While focusing on an array of specific administrative arenas and services, students will work toward a framework for an integrated, efficient and well-grounded infrastructure for the highest order institutional impact.

Learning Outcomes

Students, by virtue of taking this course, should be able to:

1. Understand and apply the core concepts of strategic planning & problem solving;
2. Articulate a personal philosophy of education aligning concepts of organizational development;
3. Develop a viable university/college organizational structure consistent with this philosophy;
4. Analyze a variety of academic, personal and professional development domains, including an integrated service and development model in a higher education setting;
5. Advance one’s own professional development through application of the concepts developed throughout the course.

Course Structure

Students in the class can anticipate six core components: class meetings, required readings, research/writing assignments, experiential opportunities, examinations, and the final project drawn primarily from the referenced writing assignments.

Final Project. The final project will be the culmination of the individual writing assignments, with the addition of some introductory, transitional and summary notes. While the final format may be distinct for each student, the core theme will be effective administration of an
institution of higher education and the design of an institutional infrastructure tailored to that end. For this reason, it is critical that students begin to frame the final project from the start of the course, relying on the weekly assignments to create the building blocks of the final, integrated and compelling project. The presentation of some manner of summary of the final project, distinct from the project itself, will take place during the exam period, noted below.

Course Evaluation

The primary purpose of the course is to meet the professional objectives of the students, as outlined in the course description. The instructors are committed to the design, preparation, and implementation of a course that will meet these core objectives, consistent with the professional development of each student. Depending on the composition and path of the course, there may be sound reason to alter the course design, adjust the delivery modality, or otherwise correct issues with either compatibility of course design or student instruction. As such, the instructors will welcome constructive feedback from students throughout the semester. In addition, a course ombudsman will be identified--one of the students in the course, volunteering for the role--to serve as a confidential resource for feeding information to the instructors, for those more comfortable with that manner of feedback. There will be a brief mid-course evaluation in week eight, in addition to the final course evaluation at the end of the term.

Instructors Background

Michael Murphy served from 2008 – 2016 as the university’s Vice President for Campus Affairs. Prior to his Vice President role, he served as the Associate Vice President, from 2005 – 2008, orchestrating a variety of campus life initiatives within the central administration, and as the university’s Dean of Student Affairs, from 1990 – 2005, leading the division of student affairs. Prior to his appointment as Dean, he served as Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Student Ombudsman, Director of Residence Life and Area Coordinator, respectively. He has served on numerous strategic planning, advisory and governance councils within the university, and as a consultant, advisor and accreditation reviewer for a number of institutions, including Columbia University Teacher’s College, Johns Hopkins, MIT, Northwestern and the University of Zagreb. Dr. Murphy holds his doctoral degree in higher education from the University of Pennsylvania. He also holds a master's degree in public management from Carnegie Mellon University and a master's degree in counseling and higher education from the University of Virginia. His bachelor's degree is in economics with a concentration in psychology, also from the University of Virginia.

Josh Centor was appointed the Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation in April 2014. He served as Assistant Director of Athletics from 2008-2012, overseeing the department’s financial, communications and compliance operations. He was promoted to Associate Director of Athletics in 2012 and later served as Interim Director of Athletics. Prior to arriving at Carnegie Mellon, Josh worked at the NCAA national office in Indianapolis, where he started the Association’s new media department, helped launch
Champion Magazine and served as an advisor to the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Josh is a 2004 graduate of Brandeis University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in economics with a minor in international business, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and played four years of varsity baseball. He received his master’s degree in applied communication from Indiana University in 2009 and is currently finishing a Ph.D. in higher education management at the University of Pittsburgh.

Class Schedule

I. Introduction, Course Overview, Topical/Skill Interest Inventory & Project Mapping (August 30th)

II. History, Future & Strategic Planning (September 6th)

III. The Architecture of the Academic Community (September 13th)

IV. Artistic & Intellectual Development (September 20th)

V. Professional Development (September 27th)

VI. Personal Development (October 4th)

VII. Research, Creativity & Transfer to Society (October 11th)

VIII. Debrief & First Examination (October 18th)

IX. Leadership (October 25th)

X. The Community Culture: Integrity, Inclusion & Service (November 1st)

XI. The Built & Virtual Environment (November 8th)

XII. Finances (November 15th)

XIII. Risk Management (November 22nd)

XIV. Advancement & Marketing & Communications (November 29th)

XV. Course Wrap-up (December 6th)

XVI. Final Project Presentation (December 13th)