



What is College For?

POSC / THEO 4055

An Interdisciplinary Capstone Course

MR 4-5:15 pm, Duane 353

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What is college for? Most parents and students expect college to prepare young people to start a career and, if they wish, a family. Yet institutions of higher education, particularly Jesuit ones, expect students to do *more*, to think about philosophy, deepen one's religious commitments, serve the community, participate in civic life, and so forth. These questions have added urgency today as people wish to hold colleges accountable for outcomes and religious institutions grapple with the problem of how to maintain their traditions in a secular age.

In this course, Professor Charlie Camosy (Theology) and Nicholas Tampio (Political Science) draw upon their respective disciplines to think about the past, present, and future of college.

The course begins with a history of American higher education and Catholic higher education in particular. We will study the origins of liberal arts college, the emergence of land grant and research universities, the growth and popularization of American higher education after World War II, and the current education landscape that includes community colleges and online options. The section will discuss the history of Catholic higher education and Fordham.

In the second part of the course, we will consider how John Henry Newman defends theology and the liberal arts in *the Idea of a University*, consider a critique of this worldview made by Bryan Caplan and then consider how Martha Nussbaum's reply in turn in *Not for Profit*.

In the final and largest part, we will discuss controversies in higher education, including about free community college, online learning, US News & World Report college ratings, Title IX, affirmative action, and the theology requirement in the Fordham core.

Required books:

- Newman, John Henry. *The Idea of a University*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996. ISBN: 9780300064056
- Thelin, John R. *A History of American Higher Education: Third Edition*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019. ISBN: 9781421402673
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. ISBN-10: 069117332X

Grades:

Midterm exam	20
Research paper	30
Research presentation	10
Class participation	10
Response papers	30 (5 papers, each worth 6 points)

The midterm exam will be on March 2nd. We will distribute 6 questions 1 week before and you will have one hour to answer two questions.

Students will be assigned to groups to write 3000-word research papers (including bibliography) on their questions. Papers should present facts of the issues, have sections considering different sides to the issue, and a conclusion presenting the student's thoughts. Good papers will have at least 10 sources including newspapers, academic articles, and books. Students will present a PowerPoint as a group but write their papers individually. Students should send the professors electronic copies of their papers the night before the presentation; students may submit revised papers up to one week after the professor returns the first draft with comments.

Students will write 5 response papers to the policy questions starting on March 5th. You will write one paper a week, rotating between "group A" (surnames A-L) who will be first to turn in on March 5th and "group B" (surnames M-Z) who will have it due the next class. Then A, then B and so on until the end of the semester. We will begin each class after the midterm exam by meeting in small groups of 4-5 in which at least two of you will informally share your work in these papers as a way of facilitating discussion. Please print out these papers and have them ready to refer to during the small group meetings. Here are some other requirements for these papers:

1. They should be *single-spaced* and be 500 words in length. (Please turn in only one piece of paper to the GTA, who will be grading them. Print on the reverse side if necessary.)
2. At the top of the paper put your name, date, and a critical question you had about a central point from the readings due that day. The best papers will engage multiple readings.
3. Each paper should have three paragraphs. The first paragraph should be *your response* to the critical question, the second paragraph should be what you imagine *a strong opposing view* to your opinion would be, and the third paragraph should be *your response to this opposing view*. (A word to the wise: it is always better to give the best opposing argument you can and possibly struggle with the response than to give a 'straw man' argument in the second paragraph which can be knocked down easily.)
4. There should be at least *one cited quote from the readings in each paragraph*. To cite a quote, "Use the format used in this sentence." (Book or article title here, 106) No need to give a full bibliography of the text cited. No need for a page number if it is an internet article without such numbers.

5. Each paper should show at least two things. First, show that you have done the reading and have a basic grasp of the major points which relate to the topic given. Second, show *critical thinking*—both of the reading you do did and with regard to your own views.
6. Please take the time to carefully proofread your paper. You will be graded down for typos and grammar mistakes.

COURSE POLICIES

1. You must attend class. Discussion (in both small and large group) is a major part of this course.
2. Dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with in the most serious way possible under university regulations.
3. Late work will not be accepted unless you have made previous arrangements.
4. Laptops and mobile phones are not permitted. Use of a mobile phone during class will result in a lower participation grade. A tablet, used only for reading electronic texts, may be used without a keyboard if it is flat on your desk.
5. You may have something to drink in the classroom, but eating is not permitted.

OFFICE HOURS

Professor Charlie Camosy: Duane 139; Thursdays 2:30pm-3:30pm and by appointment
 Professor Nicholas Tampio: Faber 665; Mondays 1:00pm-2:00pm and by appointment
 GTA Srdjan Maksimovic: Duane Lobby; Thursdays 12:30pm-1:30pm and by appointment

Class Schedule

1. January 13 – What is a Jesuit education? How is it under threat?

- Fr. Barton T. Geger, S.J. “*Cura Personalis*: Some Ignatian Inspirations”. 2014.
<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/resources-by-theme/documents/GegerCuraPersonalisIgnatianInspirations2.pdf>
- Fordham University Board of Trustees. "Mission Statement | Mission Statement | Fordham". April 28th, 2005. *Fordham.Edu*.
https://www.fordham.edu/info/20057/about/2997/mission_statement
- La Berge, Leigh Claire, “A Market Correction in the Humanities – What Are You Going to Do with That?” *LA Review of Books*. August 26th, 2019. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/a-market-correction-in-the-humanities-what-are-you-going-to-do-with-that/>
- Kreighbaum, Alexander, “Alexander Releases Narrow Higher Ed Package”. *Higher Education*, September 27th, 2019.
<https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2019/09/27/alexander-releases-narrow-higher-ed-package>

HISTORY

2. January 16 – Colonial colleges

- Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, chapters 1-2

3. January 20 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Class)

4. January 23 – Research universities, 1860-1910

- Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, chapters 3-4
- von Humboldt, Wilhelm, "On The Internal and External Organization of the Higher Scientific Institutions in Berlin", 1810. http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3642

5. January 27 – Land grant universities, 1890-1945

- Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, chapters 5-6
- 51st United States Congress, "Chapter 841". August 30th, 1890. <https://govtrackus.s3.amazonaws.com/legislink/pdf/stat/26/STATUTE-26-Pg417a.pdf>

6. January 30 – The GI Bill and the mid-twentieth century

- Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, chapters 7-8
- 78th United States Congress, "Servicemen's Readjustment Act" (Public Law 346, Chapter 268), June 22nd, 1944. <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=76>

7. February 3 – The Higher Education Act until the present

- Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, chapters 9-10
- 89th United States Congress, "Higher Education Act of 1965". U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, November 8th, 1965. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-79/pdf/STATUTE-79-Pg1219.pdf>

8. February 6 – Catholic higher education: Looking at the Past and Anticipating the Future

- Rizzi, Michael T., "We've Been Here Before: A Brief History of Catholic Higher Education in America". *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*, 2018.
- Ospino, Hosffman, "Ten Reality Checks about Young Hispanics in Catholic Schools and Colleges". *Our Catholic Children: Ministry with Hispanic Youth and Adults*, 2018.

PHILOSOPHY

9. February 10 – Mission, Identity, and Academic Freedom in a Catholic university

- Land O'Lakes Statement. Jenkins, John I. 2017. "The Document That Changed Catholic Education Forever". *America Magazine*. July 11th, 2017. <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/07/11/document-changed-catholic-education-forever>
- "Ex Corde Ecclesiae | John Paul II". *W2.Vatican.Va*. August 15th, 1990. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae.html

10. February 13 – What is Fordham's Mission?

- Fordham University Mission Priority Examen Self-Study, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55d1dd88e4b0dee65a6594f0/t/5d3f5ceb7050320001db6b59/1564433644093/Fordham+Mission+Priority+Examen+self-study+text.pdf>

11. February 17 – Presidents' Day (No Class)

12. February 18 – The role of the liberal arts in a Catholic university

- Newman, The Idea of a University, Discourse V
- Recommended: John Henry Newman, The Idea of a University, Discourses Lecture IV
- Hesburgh, Theodore. "Theodore Hesburgh On What Cardinal Newman Missed About Catholic Universities". *America Magazine*. March 3rd, 1962/March 23rd, 2015. <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/1962/03/03/theodore-hesburgh-what-cardinal-newman-missed-about-catholic-universities>

13. February 20 – The role of professional training in a Catholic university

- Newman, The Idea of a University, Discourse VII
- Parker, Martin. "Why We Should Bulldoze the Business School". *The Guardian*. April 27th, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/apr/27/bulldoze-the-business-school>
- Parker, Martin, and Ken Starkey. "Shut Down Business Schools? Two Professors Debate". *The Conversation*. June 20th, 2018. <http://theconversation.com/shut-down-business-schools-two-professors-debate-96166>
- Cheng, Michelle. "Students at Most Colleges Don't Pick 'Useless' Majors". *Fivethirtyeight*. August 14th, 2017. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/students-at-most-colleges-dont-pick-useless-majors/>

14. February 24 – A rude critique

- Caplan, Bryan. "The World Might Be Better Off Without College for Everyone". *The Atlantic*. January/February, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/01/whats-college-good-for/546590/>

15. February 27 – A Democratic Defense of the Humanities

- Nussbaum, *Not for Profit* (entire)

16. March 2 – Midterm

POLICY

17. March 5 – Should community college be free?

- Goldrick-Rab, S., & Kelly, A. P. (2016). Should community college be free? *Education Next*, 16(1), 54-60. ([link](#))
- Tampio, Nicholas. "OPINION: There Is No Such Thing as Free Community College". *America.Aljazeera.Com*. August 3rd, 2015. <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/8/there-is-no-such-thing-as-free-community-college.html>

18. March 9 – How can Catholic higher education reach out to Latinos/Hispanics?

- A National Town Hall on Latinos & Catholic Education. <https://www.americamagazine.org/community/2018/09/10/national-town-hall-latinos-catholic-education>
- "Catholic School Advantage // ACE at Notre Dame". *Alliance for Catholic Education*. 2020. <https://ace.nd.edu/catholic-school-advantage/>

19. March 12 – Did Title IX work?

- Chadband, Emma. "Nine Ways Title IX Has Helped Girls and Women in Education - NEA Today". *NEA Today*. June 21st, 2012. <http://neatoday.org/2012/06/21/nine-ways-title-ix-has-helped-girls-and-women-in-education-2/>
- Anderson, William. "Title IX: How A Good Idea Became Higher Education's Worst Nightmare – The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal". *The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal*. April 29th, 2016. <https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2016/04/title-ix-how-a-good-idea-became-higher-educations-worst-nightmare/>
- Greenberg, Susan H., and Linda Flanagan. "How Title IX Hurts Female Athletes". *The Atlantic*. February 27th, 2012. <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2012/02/how-title-ix-hurts-female-athletes/253525/>

20. March 16 – Spring Recess (No Class)

21. March 19 – Spring Recess (No Class)

22. March 23 – Should traditional colleges embrace online learning?

- Bettinger, Eric P., Lindsay Fox, Susanna Loeb, and Eric S. Taylor. "Virtual classrooms: How online college courses affect student success". *American Economic Review* 107 (9):2855-2875. 2017. <https://scholar.harvard.edu/erictaylor/publications/virtual-classrooms-how-online-college-courses-affect-student-success>
- Nguyen, Tuan. "The Effectiveness of Online Learning: Beyond No Significant Difference and Future Horizons". *MERLOT The Journal of Online Teaching and Learning*. 11. 309-319. June 2015. https://jolt.merlot.org/Vol11no2/Nguyen_0615.pdf
- Neem, Johann. "Online Higher Education's Individualist Fallacy | Inside Higher Ed". *Insidehighered.Com*. October 6th, 2011. <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2011/10/06/online-higher-educations-individualist-fallacy>

23. March 26 – Should Catholic schools try to raise their US News & World Report college rankings?

- Morse, Robert, Eric Brooks, and Matt Mason. "How U.S. News Calculated The 2020 Best Colleges Rankings". *U.S. News*. September 8th, 2019. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/how-us-news-calculated-the-rankings>
- Tierney, John. "Your Annual Reminder to Ignore the U.S. News & World Report College Rankings". *The Atlantic*. September 10th, 2013. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/09/your-annual-reminder-to-ignore-the-em-us-news-world-report-em-college-rankings/279103/>
- Weigel, George. "The Perils of "Preferred Peers". *First Things*. August 12th, 2015. <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/08/the-perils-of-preferred-peers>

24. March 30 – How Do European Universities Differ from American

- Romero, Aldemaro. "U.S. vs. Europe in Higher Education." *The Edwardsville Intelligencer*. January 10th, 2018. <https://www.theintelligencer.com/commentary/article/U-S-vs-Europe-in-higher-education-12487364.php>
- Ross, Kelly Mae. "Compare U.S., European Bachelor's Degree Programs". *U.S. News & World Report*. August 11th, 2017. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/articles/2017-08-11/how-bachelors-degree-programs-in-the-us-and-europe-differ>
- Carey, Kevin. "Americans Think We Have the World's Best Colleges. We Don't.". *Nytimes.Com*. June 28th, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/29/upshot/americans-think-we-have-the-worlds-best-colleges-we-dont.html>
- Gapinski, Andrzej. "Higher Education: Europe vs. USA". June 2010. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267998436_Higher_Education_Europe_vs_US
[A](#)

- Ripley, Amanda. "Why Is College in America So Expensive?". *The Atlantic*. September 11th, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/09/why-is-college-so-expensive-in-america/569884/>

25. April 2 – How can institutions of higher education prepare for the “looming demographic storm?”

- Jaschik, Scott. "Are Prospective Students About to Disappear?". *Insidehighered.Com*. January 8th, 2018 <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2018/01/08/new-book-argues-most-colleges-are-about-face-significant-decline>
- Seltzer, Rick. "The High School Graduate Plateau". *Insidehighered.Com*. December 6th, 2016. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/12/06/high-school-graduates-drop-number-and-be-increasingly-diverse>

26. April 6 – Should college athletes be paid?

- Dwyer, Colin. "NCAA Plans to Allow College Athletes to Get Paid for Use of Their Names". *Npr.Org*, October 29th, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/29/774439078/ncaa-starts-process-to-allow-compensation-for-college-athletes>
- Coil, Alex. "Opinion: Paying College Athletes Is Not the Answer". *The Arizona State Press*. September 29th, 2019. <https://www.statepress.com/article/2019/09/sp-opinion-college-athletes-should-not-be-paid>
- Johnson, David V. "Let's Make Football a College Major". *Aeon*. April 5th, 2016 <https://aeon.co/ideas/the-philosophy-behind-majoring-in-football>
- Cheslock, J. J., & Knight, D. B. (2015). Diverging revenues, cascading expenditures, and ensuing subsidies: The unbalanced and growing financial strain of intercollegiate athletics on universities and their students. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 86(3), 417-447. ([link](#))

27. April 9 – Easter Recess (No Class)

28. April 13 – Easter Recess (No Class)

29. April 16 – Should Jesuit universities require all students to take 2 theology courses?

- Daley, Brian. "Don't Drop Theology Requirements: They Are the Foundation of Catholic Education". *America Magazine*. May 20th, 2015. <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/dont-drop-theology-requirements>
- O'Loughlin, Michael J. "Is Catholic Identity Hurting Enrollment at Catholic Colleges?". *America Magazine*. May 16th, 2018. <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2018/05/16/catholic-identity-hurting-enrollment-catholic-colleges>
- Smith, Randall. "When Catholic Colleges Abandon Theology Requirements". *Crisis Magazine*. July 15th, 2014. <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2014/professionalization-secularization>

30. April 20 – Should Fordham provide students with contraception and anti-abortifacient drugs?

- North, Anna. "Fordham Students Protest Hidden Anti-Birth-Control Policy [Updated]". *Jezebel*. November 28th, 2011. <https://jezebel.com/fordham-students-protest-hidden-anti-birth-control-poli-5863023>
- Green, Emma. "Notre Dame Switches Its Position On Birth-Control Coverage—Again". *The Atlantic*. February 7th, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/notre-dame-switches-its-position-on-contraception-coverage-again/552605/>
- Camosy, Charles. "Is Fertility Awareness a Natural Alternative to The Pill?". *Crux*. April 19th, 2017. <https://cruxnow.com/interviews/2017/04/fertility-awareness-natural-alternative-pill/>
- Stacey, Dawn. "How Is the Morning-After Pill Different from The Abortion Pill?". *Verywell Health*. August 19th, 2019. <https://www.verywellhealth.com/the-morning-after-pill-vs-the-abortion-pill-906574>

31. April 23 – Are income share agreements a good idea for students?

- Kreighbaum, Andrew. "Senate Lawmakers Introduce Bill to Spur Growth of Income-Share Agreements". *Insidehighered.Com*. July 17th, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/07/17/senate-lawmakers-introduce-bill-spur-growth-income-share-agreements>
- Zaber, Melanie A., & Edwards, Kathryn A. "Income Share Agreements: What's Risky, What's Promising, And What We Still Need to Know". *Rand.Org*. June 5th, 2019. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/06/income-share-agreements-isas-whats-risky-whats-promising.html>

32. April 27 – Does higher education still need affirmative action?

- Cornell Law School "Affirmative Action". *LII / Legal Information Institute*. https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/affirmative_action
- Fernández Campbell, Alexia, & Lockhart, P.R. "The Harvard Admissions Case That Could End Affirmative Action, Explained". *Vox*. October 2nd, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2019/10/2/20894934/harvard-admissions-case-affirmative-action>
- Webster, Emma. "This Is How Affirmative Action Actually Works". *Teen Vogue*. August 14th, 2017. <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/what-is-affirmative-action-explainer>

33. April 30 – Is there free speech on American college campuses?

- "Ben Shapiro On Defending Free Speech On College Campuses". *YouTube*. April 11th, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHOZMkBF18>

- Bauer-Wolf, Jeremy. "States Passing Laws to Protect College Students' Free Speech". *Insidehighered.Com*. September 16th, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/09/16/states-passing-laws-protect-college-students-free-speech>
- Bollinger, Lee. "Free Speech On Campus Is Doing Just Fine, Thank You". *The Atlantic*. June 12th, 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/06/free-speech-crisis-campus-isnt-real/591394/>