



Have We Lost Faith in Higher Education?
Course Code SOCY 175/EDST S151E
Summer 2025

Course Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday, 9am – 12:15pm, Session A

Prerequisite: There are no prerequisites required for this course.

Instructor: Dr. Tycie Coppett (she, her, hers)

Email: tycie.coppett@yale.edu

Office Hours

You are always welcome to email me with questions or concerns. If you send an email after 5pm, I am most likely to respond the next day. If I do not respond within 24 hours, please feel free to follow up with a friendly reminder.

Course Description

This course is designed to explore the question, “Have We Lost Faith in Higher Education?” by first understanding the foundation and mission of higher education and the varying sectors that encompass the complexities of higher education. This course will also introduce students to the organization, administration, and governance of higher education. With this foundation, students will critique current higher education policy issues, debates and trends at the state and federal level with a concentration on six key issues: 1) student access, 2) financial aid and affordability, 3) technology and digital transformation, 4) accreditors and DEI, and 5) NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness) and college sports, and 6) leadership retention.

The course is intended to provide a broad overview of higher education and aims to cover the breadth of the sector and not the depth. Through research and one’s intellectual curiosity, individual student groups will explore the depth of one key issue aforementioned within higher education. Additional assigned readings will be offered for close reading if desired.

Students will learn the following research and presentation skills:

- a) Seek deeper understanding of higher education issues across multiple sectors and apply course content to real-world examples
- b) Solve complex higher education problems to hone critical thinking and analysis skills, strengthen written and oral communication abilities, and problem-solving skills.
- c) Learn how to create strong arguments defending reasoned decisions to develop a well-constructed solution.

Format

This course includes the following instructional strategies: lecture, discussions, practical applications, and presentations. The course has synchronous but contains some asynchronous discussion components.

Enrollment is limited to twenty students. To obtain instructor permission, please include a paragraph of interest in the instructor permission section. Students will be notified of admission via email.

Media, Text, & Resource Requirements

There is no required textbook from this course. Rather, the course will use online resources such as journals, excerpts from books, podcasts, etc., to support the learning in the course as a cost-effective means of obtaining course materials. All course materials are included in the syllabus as a link or they can be obtained through the [Yale Library](#), or other open-source materials.

Participation

I expect you to attend every class, to arrive on time, and to participate in all class activities. Missing more than two classes without a legitimate excuse will be officially acknowledged in an email to you. Regardless of the reasons for your absence, the first two will be considered “excused”, and every absence after that will not be excused and will be counted against your participation grade. If you have an emergency or illness that will prevent you from attending class, please contact me via email as soon as you are able.

Assessments & Grading

Students will be graded using Yale's grading system. Final grades are based on the weighted averages of all assignments. If you have questions or concerns about your grade, please reach out to me via email or see me during office hours.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Presentation Outline	15 points
Written Exercise 1	10 points (4-5 pages max)
Written Exercise 2	15 points (4-5 pages max)
Live Group Presentation	25 points
Individual Final Paper	15 points
Attendance/Discussions	<u>20 points</u>
	100 points

Group Presentation

Student groups will be assigned one of six salient concerns in higher education: 1) student access, 2) financial aid and affordability, 3) technology and digital transformation, 4) accreditors and DEI, and 5) NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness) and college sports, or 6) leadership retention. Students should

articulate how they will solve the existing challenge now and in the future with the goal to publish a research summary for a scholarly community or present at a conference.

Final Paper

Students should write a manuscript that investigates the existing challenges or opportunities to improve a sector within higher education. Students may turn their group presentation into an individual manuscript, or they may choose to use a different topic presented in class by their classmates to write their final paper.

In the paper, students should:

- Identify one question/issue they wish to solve
- Identify solutions that would address the existing issues supported by literature.
- What approach did you use to solve the problem?
- What conclusions or recommendations do you have?
- Explain if the solution is creating another issue and how the changes address solving future educational challenges

The paper should follow APA format, 8-10 pages, and cite 6-8 references.

Students must submit a written outline of their topic for approval by no later than March 5, 2025.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a core university value that ensures respect for the individuality of ideas and the development of knowledge. Writing for a course is not only a space to demonstrate knowledge, but a way to space where deep learning happens, where students exercise choice and agency in discovering their individual subject area interests.

Failure to properly cite sources or use writing generated elsewhere is considered plagiarism. Specifically, Yale's policy on academic dishonesty includes "cheating on a test or an examination, plagiarism, improper collaborating on assignments, or the submission of the same essay to two instructors without the explicit consent of both."

The rapid advance of artificial intelligence (AI) in the last year means that we are in a fluid and fast-changing time for teaching and learning. Right now, the University's policy is "Inserting AI-generated text into an assignment without proper attribution is a violation of academic integrity, and using AI tools in a manner that was not authorized by your instructor may also be considered a breach of academic integrity" although instructors have a lot of latitude in how they use AI. In general, however, this means using AI to generate arguments and writing without proper attribution is considered plagiarism.

Academic Honesty and AI:

In this class, any written work that you submit at any stage of the writing process—thesis, outline, draft, bibliography, final submission, blog posts, and more—must be your own ideas and writing, and not copied or AI generated.

Importantly, you may use AI as a research and editing tool. Any use of AI such as Chat GPT to support work on an assignment must be acknowledged in a citation that includes 1) the prompt you submitted to the bot, 2) the date of access, and 3) the URL of the program.

For more details, please consult the Poorvu Center's [guidelines on using sources](#).

Here are academically honest ways to use AI including CHAT GPT in SOCY 050:

- To conduct preliminary research and collect information alongside other search engines and library research tools
- To get editing help to refine your ideas, alongside support from a writing tutor
- To act as a tutor providing extra help on material - providing flashcards and study materials for the midterm
- To provide summaries to check your understanding of course material (but not as a substitute for reading course materials)

Buyer beware!

- AI chatbots can sound incredibly polished and authoritative, but they reflect biases and inaccuracies in academic fields and on the internet. Please don't take the information provided at face value.
- AI programs also tend to invent academic sources. Please don't get in trouble for having invented sources in your writing. Your TFs will do a source audit on student sources throughout the semester.
- Privacy questions - If you upload unpublished writing (your own or someone else's) to an AI site, it then enters the AI system database. Does the chat system have ownership of this writing?

If you have questions (and we all are learning with this new technology), please consult with your TF or me.

Accessibility

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. I am always happy to consider creative solutions if they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity. You are also welcome to contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations for this or other courses. I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students.

Wellness Statement

(adapted with thanks to Dr. Nicole Gonzalez Van-Cleve)

We don't know exactly what this semester holds, but as your professor, I value you, and your health and well-being. To succeed in this class, in college and beyond, it's critical that you work hard and balance that with rest, exercise, and attention to your mental and physical health. I will hold you to high expectations, and I hope you feel a sense of accomplishment for the work you create in this class. I will also do my best to take time for us to be present together, to take moments for reflection, and to model creating and maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Everyone's voice matters in this course. Sharing your unique perspectives, lived experiences, and research conducted for this course will tremendously enhance your classmate's, as well as your, learning

experience. We honor the right to step up and step back, and to agree to disagree. As scholars, we will honor the ability to engage in constructive conversations as tools for our personal and professional growth.

Please know that high achievement, high stress, and prestige do not need to be badges of honor on campus, especially currently. Deadlines are included in the course to create fairness among students, and to get work done. However, if you need support at any time, please ask! Your college Dean is your best first contact, as they have the fullest context to support you, but if you need additional assistance, please talk to your TF or me.

I hope you take time to find inspiration and joy in this course, and I am excited to be a part of your journey. I look forward to learning with you and from you.