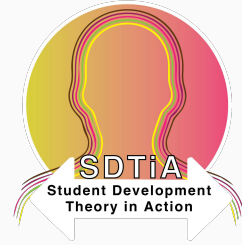


Real-Life Case Analysis



Assignment Rationale

Throughout this course, students will engage in case analysis using the chapter-based cases in our text. This assignment extends that practice by asking students to analyze a current higher education issue of their choice. The activity reinforces how theory choice influences what educators notice and prioritize when interpreting developmental outcomes. Consistent with the SDTiA framework, the assignment helps students learn to critically translate student development theory into practice and to design theoretically grounded interventions—such as teaching strategies, curricula, training, policy, and programs—that support college student learning and development. Through this case study analysis, students further strengthen their ability to build and assess theory–practice connections in deeper ways than the instructor-guided conversations inspired by the textbook case studies.

Assignment Overview

In Theory Work-Groups, students will identify a “real-life” exemplar (that occurred no more than 2 years ago) illustrating a developmental issue of interest. For instance, students may select an article from *Inside Higher Ed*, *The EDULedger*, or *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, or a short media clip from the *Huffington Post*. Once the Theory Work-Group selects an exemplar, members must identify a student development theory—or set of theories—that can help illuminate the significance of the developmental issue and prepare a case analysis to present to the class.

Assignment Requirements

Case analysis presentations should be no more than 40 minutes in length, with an additional 10 minutes allotted at the end for Q&A. Theory Work-Groups must share the exemplar (e.g., *The EDULedger* article with complete APA citation) with the class for review one week before their scheduled presentation. Because all students are expected to review the exemplar in advance, the presentation should focus exclusively on the Theory Work-Group’s analytical findings.

The analysis must address at least two of the following questions:

- a. How might theory be used to explain the perspectives of students at the heart of this developmental issue?
- b. How might theory inform how educators respond to those most affected by this developmental issue?
- c. How might theory clarify the implications of this developmental issue for relevant campus partners?

Finally, the presentation must conclude with a brief summary of any limitations regarding the utility of the theory or theories applied in the group's analysis.