

Health Care Policy
34:833:580
Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Rutgers University
Fall, 2010
Wednesdays, 9:50 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Room 253, Civic Square Building

Introduction

This graduate course is intended engage students in the complex issues of health care policy in the United States. Students are expected to have a good general understanding of the policy formation process in the US context, although the course has no prerequisites. The course combines in-depth reading, discussion, lectures, and written and oral presentation assignments. It explores health system performance, roles of the federal and state governments, and opportunities and limits of government intervention in addressing deficits in health system performance. Emphasis is placed on using available research evidence to inform health care policy choices. Federalism in health care policy in the US is discussed, with case examples drawn from New Jersey and other states' experiences. No text book is used. Rather, an extensive reading list (reprints available at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/>), drawn from the current health policy literature, is assigned. Class discussions draw extensively on the assigned reading and it is essential that students complete the reading prior to each session.

This course is intended to provide students with:

- Knowledge of current concepts, institutions, and challenges in US health care policy;
- Guided opportunities to engage in the systematic critique of health reform options; and
- Skills in identifying, critiquing, and using health policy research to inform health care policy development.

Requirements and Grading

Students are evaluated based on their class participation and assigned work. A series of four short papers is required. Three of the papers will draw primarily on assigned reading and the fourth will require independent research. Each student will also be required to give a short oral presentation to the class, based on the fourth written assignment. More details about the written assignments and oral presentation will be given in class. There will be no final exam.

Written assignments must be received via email by midnight of the due date. Assignment deadlines are absolute, late papers will not be accepted and zero points will be assigned. Special accommodation needed due to illness or disability must be arranged as far in advance of deadlines as possible.

Attendance and active participation are critical parts of the course experience. Participation will be evaluated based on attendance, the extent to which students' exhibit evidence that they have completed assigned reading prior to class, and the extent and quality of engagement in class discussions. Attendance and participation points will be assigned regardless of excuses for missing class, arriving late or leaving early.

Grades will be assigned based on total points follows: A: 93-100; B+: 86-92; B: 80-85; C+: 75-79; C: 70-74; and 69 or below is a failing grade. The final grade will be calculated based on the following weights:

Final Grade Weight	Assignments
45%	15% for each of three written assignments based on assigned reading
25%	Fourth written assignment and its underlying research
5%	Oral presentation
25%	Attendance, class participation, evidence of timely completion of readings

Class Etiquette and Academic Integrity

It should go without saying (but regrettably doesn't always) that respect for instructors and classmates is important and expected. The classroom should be a place for open and frank discussion. Class participants should avoid distracting or rude activities such as arriving late or leaving early, talking, texting, emailing, browsing, receiving calls or otherwise using cell phones, laptops or PDAs, or other equipment (taking class notes on a computer is acceptable so long as care is taken not to disturb others). The classroom has wireless access which should not be used during class.

University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic integrity will be adhered to strictly. Plagiarism may lead to the assignment of a failing grade for the course, suspension or even dismissal from the University, and possibly other sanctions. University guidelines are at:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Office Hours

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. on class days or by appointment at the following address:

Joel C. Cantor, Sc.D.
Professor of Public Policy
Director, Center for State Health Policy
112 Paterson Street, 5th Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
732-932-4653 or jcantor@ifh.rutgers.edu

For an appointment contact:
Patty Calogero, Executive Assistant
732-932-4651 or
pcalogero@ifh.rutgers.edu

Session 1: Introduction (9/3)**CLASS MEETS ON FRIDAY THIS WEEK ONLY**

- Course overview and requirements
- Key concepts (e.g., public policy, health, health care, and health care policy)
- How well does the US health care system perform?
- Overview of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA)

Required reading:

Davis K, Schoen C, Stremikis K. Mirror, mirror on the wall: how the performance of the U.S. health care system compares internationally. 2010 update. New York: The Commonwealth Fund; 2010 Jun. Commonwealth Fund Publication No.: 1400.

NO CLASS – Labor Day Schedule Change (9/8)

Session 2: Health Care Spending and the Role of Government (9/15)

- Health care financing in the U.S.
- Major federal health care programs
- Who pays, who benefits?
- Paper #1 assigned: Prescription drug pricing in Medicare

Required reading:

Truffer CJ, Keehan S, Smith S, Cylus J, Sisko A, Poisal JA, et al. Health spending projections through 2019: the recession's impact continues. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2010 Mar-Apr;29(3):522-9.

Meryerson N, Huntley J, Page B, Papenfuss S. The long-term outlook for the federal budget. In: Congressional Budget Office. *The long-term budget outlook*. Washington (DC): Congressional Budget Office (US); 2010. p. 1-24.

Additional Reading for Assignment #1:

YouTube [Internet]. San Bruno (CA): YouTube; 2005 Feb. [Video], Welch introduces prescription drug price negotiation bill; 2010 Mar 3 [cited 2010 Jul 12]; [4 min., 9 sec.]. Available from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xY59BG4h2pw>

Antos J, Helms RB, Miller TP, Badger D, Goldberg R, Pitts PJ, et al. Medicare part D and prescription drug prices. Policy fact sheet [Internet]. Washington (DC): American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research; 2007 Jan 5 [cited 2010 Jul 12]. Available from: <http://www.aei.org/article/25420>

Frank RG, Newhouse JP. Should drug prices be negotiated under part D of Medicare? And if so, how? *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2008 Jan-Feb;27(1):33-43.

Otterson K, Kesselheim AS. How Medicare could get better prices on prescription drugs. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2009 Sep-Oct;28(5):w832-41.

Session 3: Financing Care for Low Income Populations (9/22)

- Medicaid, CHIP, and safety net programs

Required reading:

Kaiser Family Foundation. *Medicaid: a primer*. Menlo Park (CA): Kaiser Family Foundation; 2010 Jun. Publication No.: 7334-04.

Kenney GM, Pelletier JE. How will the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 affect children? Princeton (NJ): Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; 2010 Jul.

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE - Tuesday, 9/28**Session 4: Financing Care for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (9/29)**

- Discuss assignment #1
- Medicare and long-term care

Required reading:

Kaiser Family Foundation. *Medicare: a primer*. Menlo Park (CA): Kaiser Family Foundation; 2010 Apr. Publication No.: 7615-03.

Rosenbaum S. *Olmstead v. L.C.: implications for older persons with mental and physical disabilities*. Washington (DC): AARP Public Policy Institute; 2000 Nov. Report No.: 2000-21.

Session 5: Health Care Costs (10/6)

- Rising health care cost: trends and causes
- Should government act to curb health care cost growth, and if so, how?
- Cost control and the PPACA
- Paper #2 assigned: Potential of electronic health information technology

Required reading:

Aaron HJ, Ginsburg PB. Is health spending excessive? If so, what can we do about it? *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2009 Sep-Oct;28(5):1260-75.

Ginsburg PB. High and rising health care costs: demystifying U.S. health care spending. Princeton (NJ): Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; 2008 Oct. Research Synthesis Report No.: 16.

Jensen E, Mendonca L. Why America spends more on health care. Washington (DC): National Institute for Health Care Management (US); 2009 Nov.

Additional Reading for Assignment #2:

Buntin BB, Jain SH, Blumenthal D. Health information technology: laying the infrastructure for national health reform. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2010 Jun;29(6):1214-9.

Fernandopulle R, Patel N. How the electronic health record did not measure up to the demands of our medical home practice. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2010 Apr;29(4):622-8..

DesRoches CM, Campbell EG, Vogeli C, Zheng J, Rao SR, Shields AE, et al. Electronic health records' limited successes suggest more targeted uses. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2010 Apr;29(4):639-46.

Health IT. Meaningful use matrix [Internet]. Washington (DC): U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; 2009 Jun 15 [cited 2010 Jul 12]. 7 p. Available from: <http://healthit.hhs.gov/> (use the version posted on Sakai)

Session 6: Health Care Quality, Patient Safety, and Medical Malpractice (10/13)

- Discuss patient safety case studies (see assigned reading)
- The quality/patient safety problem and potential solutions
- Medical malpractice

Required reading:

Patient safety case studies (posted on Sakai)

Berwick DM. A user's manual for the IOM's 'Quality Chasm' report. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2002 May-Jun;21(3):80-90.

Fung CH, Lim YW, Mattke S, Damberg C, Shekelle PG.. Systematic review: the evidence that publishing patient care performance data improves quality of care. *Ann Intern Med*. 2008 Jan 15;148(2):111-23.

Mello MM. Medical malpractice: impact of the crisis and effect of state tort reforms. Research Princeton (NJ): Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; 2006 May. Research Synthesis Report No.: 10.

ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE - Tuesday, 10/19

Session 7: The Delivery System (10/20)

- Discuss assignment #2
- Problems in the organization of the health care delivery system
- Improving quality and value by changing incentives
- Reform strategies and the PPACA

Required reading:

Gawande A. The cost conundrum: what a Texas town can teach us about health care. *New Yorker*. 2009 Jun 1;85(16):36.

Mechanic D. Replicating high-quality medical care organizations. *JAMA*. 2010 Feb 10;303(6):555-6.

Hackbarth GM. Reforming the health care delivery system: Testimony Before the Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives (Mar. 10, 2009).

Session 8: Private Health Insurance & the Problem of the Uninsured (10/27)

- Drivers of trends in private health insurance and the uninsured
- Is insurance coverage important (don't the uninsured have access anyway)?
- Health insurance regulation
- Changes in the PPACA
- Paper #3 assigned: Adequacy of the physician supply

Required reading:

Claxton G. How private health insurance works: a primer - 2008 update. Menlo Park (CA): Kaiser Family Foundation; 2008 Apr. Publication Number: 7766.

Hadley J. Sicker and poorer: the consequences of being uninsured: executive summary: updated February 2003. Menlo Park (CA): Kaiser Family Foundation; 2003. (Executive Summary only).

Additional reading for Assignment #3:

Blumenthal D. New steam from an old cauldron--the physician-supply debate. *N Engl J Med*. 2004 Apr 22;350(17):1780-7.

Goodman DC, Fisher ES. Physician workforce crisis? Wrong diagnosis, wrong prescription. *N Engl J Med*. 2008 Apr 17;358(16):1658-61.

Cooper R. Weighing the evidence for expanding physician supply. *Ann Intern Med*. 2004 Nov 2;141(9):705-14.

Association of American Medical Colleges. AAMC statement on the physician workforce. Washington (DC): Association of American Medical Colleges; 2006 Jun.

Greenberg JO, Greenberg H. More physicians are not the answer. *Am J Cardiol.* 2007 May 15;99(10):1476-8.

Session 9: Federalism and the Role of States (11/3)

- State capacity and barriers to reform
- Lessons from Massachusetts
- State policy implementation and the PPACA
- Paper #4 assigned: Self-selected topics

Required reading:

Holahan J, Blumberg L. Massachusetts health reform: solving the long-run cost problem. Princeton (NJ): The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; 2009 Jan.

Suggested reference materials for paper assignment #4:

Donatiello J. How to do a literature search. New Brunswick (NJ): Rutgers Center for State Health Policy; Unpublished Mimeo 2003 Sep 8.

U.S. National Library of Medicine [Internet]. Bethesda (MD): National Institutes of Health; c1993-2010 [updated 2010 Jul 23; cited 2010 Jul 12]. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Sample References; [about 6 screens]. Available from: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html

ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE - Tuesday, 11/9

Session 10: Health Care Resource Policy (11/10)

- Discuss assignment #3
- Human and capital resource policy
- Role of government
- Current policy challenges in workforce and hospital capacity

Required reading:

Buerhaus PI, Donelan K, Ulrich BT, Norman L, Dittus R. State of the registered nurse workforce in the United States. *Nurs Econ.* 2006 Jan-Feb;24(1):6-12, 3.

Session 11: Inequalities and Disparities (11/17)

- Extent and causes of geographic and demographic differences in health and health care
- Public policy to address disparities and variations

Required reading:

Williams DR. Patterns and causes of disparities in health. In" Mechanic D, Rogut R, Colby D, and Knickman J, editors. *Policy challenges in modern health care.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press; 2005. p. 115-34.

Session 12: National Health Reform Update and Discussion (11/22)**CLASS MEETS ON MONDAY THIS WEEK ONLY**

- Update and discussion of federal health reform
- Role of research in the reform process
- Discuss oral presentations

Required reading:

Hacker JS. Speaking truth to power--the need for, and perils of, health policy expertise in the White House. N Engl J Med. 2008 Sep 11;359(11):1085-7.

Brodie M, Altman D, Deane C, Buscho S, Hamel E. Liking the pieces, not the package: contradictions in public opinion during health reform. Health Aff (Millwood). 2010 Jun;29(6):1125-30.

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break (11/24)

ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE - Tuesday, 11/30

Session 13 & 14: Student Presentations and Discussion (12/1 and 12/8)
