

- Course Title:** Health Systems and Policy – Spring 2023
- Course Number:** PHCO 0501 - 033
- Course Prerequisite(s):** None
- Course Location:** Remote learning via BigBlueButton (link posted on Canvas)
- Course Date & Time:** Wednesday, 6pm – 8pm
- Course Instructor:** Gwyneth M. Eliasson, JD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Health Systems and Policy, Dept. of Health Behavior, Society, and Policy
Email: ge69@sph.rutgers.edu **When emailing, please include the course number [PHCO 0501-033] in the subject line.**
- Office Hours:** By appointment. Students are encouraged and welcome to contact the instructor by RSPH email or through Canvas Inbox.
- Course Assistant:**
- Course Website:** <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/227822>
- Required Course Text:** None. See Canvas for all required readings.

Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources: See Canvas for additional materials.

Course Description: This course is a requirement for all public health students. As such, the course focuses on issues of health care organization and policy that are relevant to all public health practitioners. Students are introduced to the history, organization, financing and regulations of health services in the United States. Emphasis is placed on the principles of access, cost and quality of care in the changing economic environment; the social determinants of health; disparities in health and health services both nationally and globally; the public health system and the health and health care issues of vulnerable populations; and the systems of care available to these groups.

Competencies Addressed: The competencies addressed in this course include:

- 1. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities;
- 2. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings;
- 3. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence;
- 4. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels;
- 5. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health;
- 6. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context;
- 7. Explain the role of qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population's health;
- 8. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity;

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- 9. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations; and
- 10. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- A. Understand the history, policy-making process, and structure of the U.S. health care system
- B. Identify three national healthcare regulatory and financing models (including the United States) and evaluate the health care access, quality and cost associated with each.
- C. Identify social, political, and economic determinants of health and their contributions to population health.
- D. Identify key health policy issues and the initiatives designed to address them.
- E. Evaluate the consequences of alternative policies.

Competency	Course Objectives(s)	Week(s)	Assessment(s)
1	C	2	Discussion Board
2	A, B	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Discussion Boards
3	A, D, E	1, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	Flip Video Introduction; Discussion Boards; Policy Debate Memo
4	C	2	Discussion Board
5	C	2	Discussion Board
6	B, C	2, 3, 4, 7, 8	Discussion Boards; Midterm Examination
7	C	8	Midterm Examination
8	C, D, E	8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	Discussion Boards; Midterm Examination; Policy Debate Memo
9	C, D, E	1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Flip Video Introduction; Discussion Boards; Policy Debate Memo; Course Reflection
10	D, E	8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	Discussion Boards; Midterm Examination; Policy Debate Memo

Course Requirements and Grading:

- **Course Expectations and Policies:**

- **Preparation:** Required readings should be completed BEFORE class sessions. Be sure to regularly check Canvas Announcements for important course information, such as weekly module introductions and assignment deadline reminders.
- **Attendance and Participation:** Attendance at scheduled class sessions is EXPECTED. Participation – during class sessions *and* on Discussion Boards – also is expected. Camera can be on or off – having it on during class sessions is NOT required.

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- **Assignments:** Submit all assignments to Canvas by their due dates. Be sure to spell check and proofread written assignments BEFORE submitting them.
- **Late Submissions:** Will receive a deduction of UP TO 1 point per day late.
- **Course Assignments:**
 - **#1: Flip Video Introduction:** Post a **short (2-minute maximum) video** introducing yourself, including (1) your name and pronouns, (2) your Rutgers school/program/degree/concentration, and (3) your #1 issue in health policy. Use the Flip video app, which is integrated with Canvas.
 - **#2: Discussion Boards:** Always submit TWO (2) posts: Your **1st post, due SUNDAY by 11.59pm**, responds to the Discussion Board question, and your **2nd post, due WEDNESDAY by 11.59pm**, responds to a classmate's post.
 - Your posts will be graded on the following 5 criteria: (1) Relevance: 1st post specifically answers the discussion question; 2nd post thoughtfully responds to a classmate – NOT just 1-2 sentences of agreement; (2) Conciseness: Posts with a **1-2 paragraph maximum**; (3) Accuracy: Posts refer to information in the Canvas module and/or Discussion Board prompt; (4) Thoughtfulness: Posts with a logical paragraph; and (5) Importance: Posts make 1-2 key points.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Boards

0 points: No credit – NO posts submitted

2.5 points: 1st post submitted, but NO 2nd post responding to a classmate

4 points: Insightful 1st post BUT less thoughtful 2nd post responding to a classmate

4.5 points: Insightful 1st post (but posted AFTER Sunday 11.59pm) + insightful 2nd post responding to a classmate

5 points: Full credit – insightful 1st post + insightful 2nd post responding to a classmate

- **#3: Online Midterm Examination:** This “open book/open notes” midterm will cover Weeks 1 – 7. There will be **ten (10) multiple choice and true-false questions** (worth one (1) point each) and **one (1) short answer (essay) question** (worth five (5) points). This exam will be open for **2 hours**, during the scheduled class time.
- **#4: Policy Debate Memo:** The 5 Policy Debates will cover current issues in health policy. Background materials will be posted on Canvas, but you will have to do further research. After being assigned a health policy issue and a Yes/No position on that issue, you will write a **1-page memo** (using the single-spaced, 10-point font template form on Canvas) and include **at least 3 new references** relevant/specific to your position, in APA citation. Review the posted Rubric (checklist) and then **upload your Memo by 6pm** – BEFORE the start of the scheduled class session for your assigned Policy Debate. * Further details will be discussed in class.*

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- **#5: Course Reflection:** In a text entry or by a file upload, answer: What is your **biggest “take-away”** from this course? Write your personal reflection – NOT a research paper. Be sure to read the Writing Guide on “Reflections” first.
- Your reflection will be graded on the following 5 criteria: (1) Relevance: At least 1 course topic selected; (2) Conciseness: **1-page answer**, single-spaced, 12-point font; (3) Accuracy: Specific course content discussed; (4) Thoughtfulness: 2-3 organized paragraphs, with a logical transition between paragraphs; and (5) Importance: 2-3 key points made.

- **Assignment Grading**

● Flip Video Introduction	5 pts.
● 10 Discussion Boards (5 pts. each)	50 pts.
● Online Midterm Examination	15 pts.
● Policy Debate Memo	20 pts.
● Course Reflection	<u>10 pts.</u>

TOTAL: 100 pts.

- **School-Wide Uniform Grading Scale:**

Grading Policy: 94 – 100	A
90 – <94	A-
87 – <90	B+
84 – <87	B
80 – <84	B-
77 – <80	C+
70 – <77	C
<70	F

Course Schedule:

- **WEEK 1: Wednesday, January 18**
- Topics: Student Orientation to the Course; Introduction to Health Systems, Policy, & Law
 - Assigned Reading: Course Syllabus & Other Resources module
 - Assigned Reading: Week 1 module
 - **Assignment Due:** Introductory Flip Video, due by 11.59pm SU 1/29
- **WEEK 2: Wednesday, January 25**
- Topic: Social Determinants of Health & Health Equity
 - Assigned Reading: Week 2 module
 - *Discussion Board #1* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 1/25
 - **Assignment Due:** Introductory Flip Video, due by 11.59pm SU 1/29
- **WEEK 3: Wednesday, February 1**
- Topic: Health Care Coverage in the U.S.
 - Assigned Reading: Week 3 module
 - *Discussion Board #2* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 2/1

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- **WEEK 4: Wednesday, February 8**
- Topic: Health Care Spending in the U.S.
 - Assigned Reading: Week 4 module
 - *Discussion Board #3* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 2/8

- **WEEK 5: Wednesday, February 15**
- Topic: Health Reform and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)
 - Assigned Reading: Week 5 module
 - *Discussion Board #4* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 2/15

- **WEEK 6: Wednesday, February 22**
- Topic: Public Health Systems in the U.S.
 - Assigned Reading: Week 6 module
 - *Discussion Board #5* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 2/22

- **WEEK 7: Wednesday, March 1**
- Topic: Comparative Perspectives on the U.S. Health Care System
 - Assigned Reading: Week 7 module
 - *Discussion Board #6* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 3/1

- **WEEK 8: Wednesday, March 8**
- No Topic
 - *No Discussion Board*
 - **Assignment Due:** Online Midterm Examination due by 8pm WED 3/8
 - Opens 6pm WED 3/8, closes 8pm WED 3/8

- **SPRING RECESS: Saturday, March 11 – Sunday, March 19**

- **WEEK 9: Wednesday, March 22**
- Topic: Data for Health Systems Research
 - Assigned Reading: Week 9 module
 - *No Discussion Board*

- **WEEK 10: Wednesday, March 29**
- Topic: Policy Debate #1 – Medicare
 - Assigned Reading: Week 10 module
 - *Discussion Board #7* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 3/29
 - **Assignment Due:** Policy Debate #1 Memo, due by 6pm WED 3/29

- **WEEK 11: Wednesday, April 5**
- Topic: Policy Debate #2 – Medicaid
 - Assigned Reading: Week 11 module
 - *Discussion Board #8* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 4/5
 - **Assignment Due:** Policy Debate #2 Memo, due by 6pm WED 4/5

- **WEEK 12: Wednesday, April 12**
- Topic: Policy Debate #3 – Veterans' Health Care
 - Assigned Reading: Week 12 module

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- *Discussion Board #9* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 4/12
- **Assignment Due:** Policy Debate #4 Memo, due by 6pm WED 4/12

- **WEEK 13: Wednesday, April 19**

- Topic: Policy Debate #4 – Pharmaceutical Costs

- Assigned Readings: Week 13 module
- *Discussion Board #10* – 2 posts due by 11.59pm WED 4/19
- **Assignment Due:** Policy Debate #5 Memo, due by 6pm WED 4/19

- **WEEK 14: Wednesday, April 26**

- Topic: Policy Debate #5 – “Surprise” Medical Bills

- Assigned Reading: Week 14 module
- *No Discussion Board*
- **Assignment Due:** Policy Debate #5 Memo, due by 6pm WED 4/26

- **WEEK 15: Wednesday, May 3**

- No Topic

- *No Discussion Board*
- **Assignment Due:** Course Reflection, due by 11.59pm WED 5/3

Student Well-Being: The School of Public Health recognizes that students may experience stressors or challenges that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. If the source of your stressors or challenges is academic, students are encouraged to discuss these challenges and circumstances with their instructor, if they feel they may need additional support or temporary accommodations at the beginning or during this course. The course instructor may consider making reasonable temporary adjustments depending on the student’s situation. For personal concerns or if additional support is needed, students may reach out to the [Office of Student Affairs \(studentaffairs@sph.rutgers.edu\)](mailto:studentaffairs@sph.rutgers.edu) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the [SPH Student Connect Canvas page](#).

Overview of School Policies: Academic and non-academic policies and procedures, such Auditing a Course, Retaking Courses, Grade Grievance and others that cover registration, courses and grading, academic standing and progress, student rights and responsibilities, graduation and more may be found under [Policies](#) on the School of Public Health website. Below are select specific policies; however, students are responsible for keeping informed about academic and non-academic policies and procedures beyond those noted on this syllabus.

Learning Management System: Canvas will be used extensively throughout the semester for course syllabus, assignments, announcements, communication and/or other course-related activities. It is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with Canvas and check it regularly. If you have difficulties accessing Canvas, please inform the instructor and Canvas Support (help@canvas.rutgers.edu). Canvas is accessible at canvas.rutgers.edu.

School of Public Health Honor Code: The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the School Catalog (sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html). Each student bears a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her graduate work. For example, all students are expected to observe the generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another’s work, to refrain from falsifying data, and to refrain from receiving and/or giving aid on examinations or other assigned work requiring independent effort. In submitting written material, the writer

takes full responsibility for the work as a whole and implies that, except as properly noted by use of quotation marks, footnotes, etc., both the ideas and the works used are his or her own. In addition to maintaining personal academic integrity, each student is expected to contribute to the academic integrity of the School community by not facilitating inappropriate use of her/his own work by others and by reporting acts of academic dishonesty by others to an appropriate school authority. It should be clearly understood that plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to sanctions up to and including separation from the Rutgers School of Public Health.

Students with Disabilities: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student must apply for Services by first completing a Registration Form with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (ODS) at ods.rutgers.edu. The student will also be required to participate in an ODS intake interview and provide documentation. If reasonable accommodations are granted, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations which should be shared with your instructors as early in your courses as possible.

Commitment to Safe Learning Environment: The Rutgers School of Public Health is committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the School as a whole. Free expression in an academic community is essential to the mission of providing the highest caliber of education possible. The School encourages civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and constructive engagement. Provocative ideas respectfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with responsibility. The School encourages all students to disclose any situations where you may feel unsafe, discriminated against, or harassed. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will be not tolerated and violations may lead to disciplinary actions.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment: If you experience any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. You may report such incidents to the [RBHS Title IX Office](#) or to the School of Public Health's [Office of Student Affairs](#). Rutgers University has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. If you experience any other form of discrimination or harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious, political, or academic, please report any such incidents to the School's [Office of Student Affairs](#). The School strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to the School. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the School and potentially the University. For example, if you tell a faculty or staff member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty or staff member must share that information with the [RBHS Title IX Coordinator](#). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University [Policy 10.3.12](#). For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#).

Graduate Student Computer Policy: Students are required to possess a personal laptop, no older than approximately two years, that must meet minimum requirements which may be found online at: sph.rutgers.edu/student-life/computer-support.html

Policy Concerning Use of Recording Devices and Other Electronic Communications Systems: When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communications or recording devices.

Policy Concerning Use of Turnitin: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

Withdrawal/Refund Schedule: Students who stop attending their course(s) without submitting a completed [Add/Drop Course](#) form will receive a failing grade. Furthermore, students dropping to zero credits for the semester are considered withdrawn and must submit a completed [Leave of Absence](#) form from the School of Public Health's Office of Student Affairs. The School of Public Health refunds tuition only. Administrative and technology fees are non-refundable. You may find the Withdrawal/Refund Schedule on the School of Public Health website at: sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html