Course Title: Introduction to Health Systems and Policy
Course Number: PHCO 0501: Fall 2019
Course Prerequisite(s): None
Course Location: Newark: Room 1023
Course Date & Time: Monday, 6-8 PM
Course Instructor: Michael K. Gusmano, PhD (mkg93@sph.rutgers.edu; 732.235.9754)
Office Hours: By Appointment Only
Course Assistant: None
Course Website: CANVAS

Required Course Text: None

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 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;
- 4. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence;
- 5. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities’ health;
- 6. Explain the role of qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population’s health;
- 7. Select qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context;
- 8. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity;
- 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 and structure of the U.S. health care system
Course Requirements and Grading:

The course grades will be based on four online quizzes, a health policy debate, a final exam, and class participation.

HEALTH POLICY DEBATE (20 points)

Students are expected to participate in an oral debate. Early in the semester debate teams will be created. Each team will select a specific issue that will be framed as a question. For example: *Is obesity the government’s business?* Teams will be divided into those who will argue YES--*Obesity is the government’s business* and those who will argue NO--*Obesity is not the government’s business*. Each debate team is expected to conduct research in preparation for the oral debates. Debates will be held on the last night of the course. Team meetings will be held during the last part of designated class sessions to allow time for preparation for the debates. Each debate will last approximately half an hour. For the debate, each team can prepare a powerpoint slide that provides important background information on the topic that will be displayed during the debate. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLIDE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition: “Voluntary termination of one’s own life by administration of a lethal substance with the direct or indirect assistance of a physician”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently legal in many countries around the world as well as in US in four states: Oregon, Washington, Vermont, and California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research shows 75% of patients using PAS have terminal cancer; ~15% have neurodegenerative diseases (e.g., ALS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data on PAS is limited; in Oregon, approximately .22% per 10,000 deaths were the result of PAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arguments For: 
- Patients’ Rights
- Reduced Financial Cost
- Emotional Burden on Families

Arguments Against: 
- Prejudice in healthcare system
- Slippery slope effect
- Available alternatives

- A list of activities, assignments, projects, exams, etc. that contribute to course grade, and the respective point/percentage value of each. For example:
  1. Quizzes (4) 40 pts.
  2. Health Policy Debates 20 pts.
  3. Final Exam 35 pts.
4. Class Participation  
   Total: 100 pts.

- The participation grade will be based on class attendance, participation in class discussions and the timely completion of assignments, including the “online 30” assignments. Each week, students will be asked to spend at least 30 additional minutes completing work outside the classroom. During the first 9 weeks of the semester, this will involve developing questions or comments about the assigned readings and submitting them to CANVAS at least one day before the class in which we will review those readings. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to reflect on the readings and their implications for health policy. The questions/comments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. At the start of each class, we will spend a few minutes reviewing some of the comments and questions posted by the students. During weeks, 10, 11 and 12, the “online 30” assignment will involve group work to prepare for the health policy debates during weeks 13 and 14. The last two “online 30 assignments” involve a review of the final exam study guide.

- Please include information that links the course assessments to the course competencies. Choose one of two options:

  OPTION 1) Include a table after your Course Objectives that shows how your competencies, objectives, modules, and assessments are related.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Course Objectives(s)</th>
<th>Lessons</th>
<th>Assessment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B, C</td>
<td>5, 7, 10, 11, 12</td>
<td>Quiz #3, Health Policy Debates and Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Quiz #1 and Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B, C</td>
<td>5, 10</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2, 8</td>
<td>Quiz #1 and Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>5, 6, 12</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Quiz #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Quiz #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11</td>
<td>Quiz #4 and Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A, B, C</td>
<td>13, 14</td>
<td>Health Policy Debates and Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1, 6, 7</td>
<td>Quiz #1 and Final exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Please add the 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: The tables below provide details for each class session:

Week 1  
- US Health Care System in Comparative Perspective
• **Online 30**: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.

• **Assigned Readings Due**:

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### Week 2

• **Rationales for Public Policy: Equity and Efficiency**

• **Online 30**: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.

• **Assigned Readings Due**:
  - Stone, Deborah, *Policy Paradox*, Chapters 2 and 3.

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### Week 3

• **Public and Private Health Insurance in the US**

• **Online 30**: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.

• **Assigned Readings Due**:

• **Assignments Due**: Quiz #1

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### Week 4

• **Introduction to Data for Health Systems Research**

• **Online 30**: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.


Select one additional of the following studies to read:


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Week 5

Barriers to Care: Insurance, Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Place

Online 30: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.

Assigned Readings Due:

- Brown, Tyson H., Liana J. Richardson, Taylor W. Hargrove, and Courtney S. Thomas. 2016. “Using Multiple-hierarchy Stratification and Life Course Approaches to Understand Health Inequalities: The Intersecting Consequences of Race, Gender, SES, and Age.” Journal of Health and Social Behavior. 57(2) 200 –222.

Week 6
- Why Is US Health Care Spending Higher Than Other Nations?
- Online 30: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.
- Assigned Readings Due:
- Assignments Due: Quiz #2

Week 7
- The U.S. Public Health System
- Online 30: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.
- Assigned Readings Due:

Week 8
- Health Reform/Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- Online 30: Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.
Week 9

- **Aging and Long-Term Care**
- **Online 30:** Please develop at least one question or comment about the assigned readings and upload your question/comment on CANVAS in the folder provided.
- **Assigned Readings Due:**

- **Assignment Due:** Quiz #3

Week 10

- **Social Determinants of Health and Health Behaviors**
- **Online 30:** Meet with debate group to discuss research materials for the debate
- **Assigned Readings Due**
  - TBA

Week 11

- **Nutrition and Health**
- **Online 30:** Meet with your debate group to develop your presentation

Week 12

- **Local Public Health Systems**
- **Online 30:** Meeting with your debate group to finalize your presentation.
- **Assigned Readings Due:**
Week 13
- Health Policy Debate
- Online 30: review the study guide for the final exam
- Assignments Due: Quiz #4

Week 14
- Health Policy Debate
- Online 30: identify questions for discussion from the final exam study guide

FINAL EXAM

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.

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/school-calendar.html