HEALTH SYSTEMS AND POLICY

Course Description

Against the background of changes in population health, this course introduces the history, organization, financing and regulation of medical and public health services in the United States. Special emphasis is placed on the social and behavioral factors that shape health, and inequalities in health and health services. A central theme in this course is the tension between the need for health care organizations to position themselves for success in the changing economic environment and the basic public health principles of access, equity, quality care, health promotion and prevention.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Analyze how social, economic and cultural factors impact health care access and utilization;
2. Employ research skills to identify the pros and cons of current health policy issues;
3. Compare and analyze health services options for vulnerable population groups;
4. Identify how historical and current political factors influence health care access and population health in the U.S. and developing countries;
5. Apply systems thinking to analyze health system and related policy issues; and
Required Texts


Other Readings

The textbook will be supplemented with numerous journal articles as assigned by the instructor.

Course Structure

This course is taught online using the Rutgers-Newark Blackboard system ([http://blackboardinfo.newark.rutgers.edu/](http://blackboardinfo.newark.rutgers.edu/)). To enable downloading and viewing of documents, you will need to use Adobe Reader, which is available for free on the Web ([http://get.adobe.com/reader/](http://get.adobe.com/reader/)). You will also need to have access to Microsoft PowerPoint for some of the assignments.

In Blackboard, you will access online lessons, course materials, discussion groups, and class projects. I will make the week’s materials available at 11:59 pm on Sundays. During the work week, I’ll be visiting Blackboard at least every two days. On the weekends, I’ll be less available. In the month of July, I will be out-of-state. However, I will still be checking in three times per week. However, there will be times when I will be out of touch with the internet. However, I will give you advance notice of these dates.

Course Requirements and Grading

- Class Participation (Discussions, etc.) 25%
- Powerpoint (20 slides) 20%
- Final Paper (10-12 pages) 40%
- Weekly quizzes 15%
Discussion Forums

A major part of this online course is class participation. Starting the second week of the class, students will be expected to actively participate in discussion forums (at least 2 times per week). Each week, I will record a student participation grade from 1 to 3 (poor, good, excellent) based on thoughtfulness, accuracy, clarity, and frequency of participation.

Netiquette (adapted from University of San Francisco)

Please remember to be professional in all your communications. Please strive to do the following:

- Treat your fellow students with respect. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Respect others' thoughts and ideas. Some of the issues in this course are controversial, and legitimate differences of opinion can and do exist. Be respectful! When you disagree, explain how you disagree and why.
- Be clear and precise in your words. Remember that in the online environment it’s easy to misinterpret meanings: people can’t see faces or hear voices to get clues about intent. If you want to use “emoticons,” please feel free to do so!
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor.
- Proofread and check your spelling. While online communication can be relaxed, it should not be careless communication. A quick rereading of your text may help you avoid the need to clarify your posting, and save you some time and potential embarrassment.
- Do not plagiarize; cite your information.

Course Policies

Students are expected to have complete all the assigned readings and to be ready to discuss them.

All assignments must be submitted by the due dates specified on the syllabus, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Grades will be adversely affected if work is submitted late without prior approval.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is using other people’s words, ideas, opinions or theories without making proper attribution to that person or reference. In particular, students must not cut-and-paste materials text from the internet or elsewhere without appropriate use of quotation marks and attribution. This policy applies to all products created.
by students, including papers, annotated bibliographies, Powerpoints, etc. Rutgers University policies on plagiarism can be found at:

http://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/phd-university-policy-plagiarism

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Part One: Introduction to U.S. Health Systems & Policies

Week 1 (May 27- June 1): Is There a Right to Health Care?

Textbook Readings:
- None

Other Readings:

Exercises:
- Introduce self
- Discuss: Is there are right to health care?
- Discuss: what is the role of government?
- Do readings (3 points)

Videos:
- Video: John Rawls Shares Some Thoughts
- Video: Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?
Week 2 (June 2-June 8): United States Health Disparities

Textbook Readings:

- None

Other Readings:


Exercises:

- Discuss: Do readings (3 points)
- Watch plagiarism video

Video/Web Resources:

- Video: Unnatural Causes “In Sickness and In Health” (56 minutes)
- [http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa](http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10eg_GB_A9E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10eg_GB_A9E) (APA format)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrSRSgHCl_8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrSRSgHCl_8) (APA web)
Week 3 (June 9-June 15): Social Conditions & Health

Textbook Readings:

- None

Other Readings:


Video/Web Resources:

- Video: Unnatural Causes “Place Matters” (29 minutes)
- Video: Unnatural Causes “Becoming American” (29 minutes)

Week 4 (June 16-June 22): The Evolution of American Public Health & Medical Care Systems

Textbook Readings:

- None

Other Readings:

Week 5 (June 23-June 29): Federal Regulatory Power: Nutrition, Food & Smoking

Textbook Readings:

• None

Readings:


• Building a Healthy America: A Profile of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis, April 2012 (read pp. 1-26)

• Olson ED. Protecting food safety: more needs to be done to keep pace with scientific advances and the changing food supply. Health Affairs 2011;30:915-923.


Video

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7ddfRuVXWs (Taking Stock of Tobacco Control)

• http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/10/opinion/soda-ban-explained.html?_r=0

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5PjEOARGy8
Part Two: Organization and Financing of Health Care in the U.S.

Week 6 (June 30-July 6): The American Health Care “System”

Textbook Readings:

- Preface
- Chapter 1. The Affordable Care Act and the Politics of Health Care Reform
- Chapter 2. Health, Health Care, and a Market Economy

Other Readings:

- Rheinhardt UE. The United States Health Care System: Recent History of Prospects. Presented to the Commonwealth Fund’s 2001 (pp. (delete)

Video:

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmdbIIWOOzs (Health Reform Hits Street)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0Ef0WKjuC8 (Four Years After Health Reform, an Update on Care in Massachusetts, PBS)
- http://video.pbs.org/video/2283573727/ (Money & Medicine, PBS)(belongs later: quality of care)

Week 7 (July 7-July 13): The Organization of Health Care

Textbook Readings:

- Chapter 3. Health Care as a Reflection of Underlying Cultural Values and Institutions
- Chapter 4. The Health Professions and the Organization of Health Care

Video:

- PBS Frontline video. Sick Around the World.

Week 8 (July 14-July 20): The Business of American Health Care

Textbook Readings:

- Chapter 5. Health Insurance, HMOS, and the Managed Care Revolution
- Chapter 8. The Increasing Role of For-Profit Health Care

Other Readings:

**Video:**

• [http://fora.tv/2013/05/07/TIMEs_Steven_Brill_Bitter_Pill_-_The_Truth>About Health](http://fora.tv/2013/05/07/TIMEs_Steven_Brill_Bitter_Pill_-_The_Truth)

**Week 9 (July 21-July 27). Medicaid & Medicare**

**Textbook Readings:**

• Chapter 6. Medicare
• Chapter 7. Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program

**Other Readings:**

• TBA

**Videos:**

• [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=693XQSujAh8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=693XQSujAh8) (Story of Medicare: Timeline)

**Week 10 (July 28-Aug 3). The Quality of Health Care**

**Textbook Readings:**

• None

**Other Readings:**

• TBA

**Video:**

• [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUbfRzxNy20](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUbfRzxNy20) (Brian Goldman)
• [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GL7CvwMFMMs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GL7CvwMFMMs) (The Good, The Bad, the Take-aways of Medicaid Politics)

**Week 11 (August 3-August 13). Long Term Care & Access to Health Care**

**Textbook Readings:**
• Chapter 10. Long-term Care
• Chapter 11. The Uninsured
• Chapter 12. Factors Other than Health Insurance that Impede Access to Health Care

Other Readings:


Video:

• http://kff.org/interactive/long-term-care-tutorial/ (The Kaiser Foundation)
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRew81Yb1rM (The NewsHour)