

Course Title: Aging: Legal Challenges and Policy Opportunities – Spring 2025

Course Number: HBSP 0605

Course Pre- and Co-requisite(s): PHCO 0501: Health Systems and Policy (pre-requisite)

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 [HBSP 0605] in the subject line.**

Office Hours: By appointment. Students are encouraged and welcome to contact Prof. Eliasson by RSPH email or through Canvas Inbox.

Course Assistant: None

Course Website: Access course via canvas.rutgers.edu

Required Course Text: None. See Canvas for all required readings.

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

Course Description: This course examines the unique legal and policy challenges facing older adults in the United States, focusing on such marginalized populations as women, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ seniors, and veterans. This course emphasizes the effect of Medicare and Medicaid provisions on aging outcomes. Students will explore recent judicial and legislative case studies. Students will also write a policy memo analyzing international approaches to long-term care for older adults and recommending feasible options for the United States.

Selected Concentration Competencies Addressed: Each Concentration identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course include:

- MPH-POPA1. Explain the obstacles to, or facilitators of, improved older adult outcomes and population aging outcomes;
- MPH-POPA2. Compare the experience of aging in the United States with the experience of aging outside the United States; and
- MPH-POPA3. Analyze interventions or policies to improve population aging outcomes (physical health, mental health, well-being, morbidity, mortality, etc.).

Please visit the Concentration webpages on the School of Public Health's website at sph.rutgers.edu for more information about the curriculum and competencies for our degrees and concentrations.

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

- A. Assess the health of older adults in the United States, including special populations
- B. Analyze the effect of Medicare and Medicaid law and policy on aging outcomes
- C. Evaluate long-term care (LTC) policies and programs in the United States and other countries

Competency	Course Objectives(s)	Week(s)	Assessment
MPH-POPA1	A, B	8	Midterm Examination
MPH-POPA2	C	6, 10, 15	Policy Memo
MPH-POPA3	A, B	3-7, 9-13	Discussion Boards

Course Communication: The instructor will primarily communicate with students through two Canvas course tools: Announcements and Inbox. Have a course question that might help other students too? Post it on the Course Q & A board. Have a personal question or concern? Email or Inbox the instructor directly. Personal emails and Inbox messages will receive prompt responses, but more so on weekdays. Grades will be posted within seven (7) days of the assignment's due date, in most cases.

Fostering Course Community: The instructor will work to foster community through the Discussion Boards, the Course Q & A and Breaking News on Aging boards, and other online activities. Get to know other students and contribute your expertise/experience to enrich the class. Working with classmates, explaining concepts to each other, and interacting with the instructor (and course assistant, if assigned) are effective ways to understand the course concepts and thus succeed in this course. Again, consider posting course questions on the Course Q & A board so the entire class benefits from posted answers.

Canvas Announcements: Review your notification settings in Canvas to ensure you receive course Announcements using your preferred contact method.

Module Schedule: All course deadlines are listed in Eastern Time (ET) Zone, and Canvas will record all deadlines in ET. If you are in a different time zone, adjust accordingly. Each week will begin on MONDAY and will end on SUNDAY. To complete each module, plan to spend approximately nine (9) hours per week on the course material and activities: readings, discussion boards, and other assignments.

Discussion Board Guidelines and Expectations: Discussion prompts will be posted on Canvas. You will use readings, videos, and other information to inform and engage in these discussion boards. Respect, critical thinking, and application of knowledge will guide these discussions. Your original post for Discussions will be due by FRIDAY at 11.59pm ET and your reply post by SUNDAY at 11.59pm ET. The instructions and expectations for the Discussion Board, including a rubric, are specified below.

Course Requirements and Grading:

- **Course Expectations and Policies:**

- **Pacing:** Each week of this 15-week course is one (1) module. Every Monday at 12.01am Eastern Time (ET), a new module will open for that week. Be sure to keep up with each week's work. Modules CANNOT be completed in advance.
- **Engagement:** Participation – through Discussion Boards, the Breaking News on Aging board, and the Course Q & A board – is EXPECTED. Be sure to frequently check Canvas Announcements for important course information, such as weekly module introductions and assignment deadline reminders.
- **Assignments:** Submit ALL assignments to Canvas by their due dates in ET.



- **Late Submissions:** Will receive a deduction of UP TO 1 point per day late. Contact the instructor as soon as possible about late assignments due to personal health issues, family medical emergencies, or major religious holidays
- **Use of Generative AI:** Tools such as ChatGPT are permitted for outlining and proofreading – but NOT for writing assignments, e.g., the Policy Memo

• **Course Assignments:**

- **#1: Discussion Boards:** Always submit TWO (2) posts:
- Your **1st post, due FRIDAY by 11.59pm ET**, responds to the Discussion Board question, and your **2nd post, due SUNDAY by 11.59pm ET**, responds to a classmate’s post.

Grading Criteria & Grading Rubric for Discussion Boards

Points	Credit	Number of Posts & Content/Timing	5 Criteria for Posts
0	None	0 – NO posts submitted	Relevance: 1 st post clearly answers the DB question; 2 nd post thoughtfully responds to classmate’s post – more substantive than 1-2 sentences of agreement
2.5	Half	1 – NO 2 nd post submitted	Conciseness: Posts with 2-paragraph (200-word) maximum
4	Partial, with deduction	2 – but 1 less insightful post submitted	Accuracy: Posts refer to information in Canvas module &/or DB prompt
4.5	Almost full, with deduction	2 – 2 insightful posts submitted, but 1 st posted AFTER Fri 11.59pm ET	Thoughtfulness: Posts with logical paragraph(s)
5	Full	2 – 2 insightful posts submitted	Importance: Posts make 1-2 key points

- **#2: Quiz (Midterm Examination):** The midterm examination will cover Weeks 1 – 7 of the course. There will be two (2) short-answer (essay) questions, worth ten (10) points each. This midterm will be available for three (3) days (~72 hours) and, once started, will remain open to be completed within three (3) hours. This is an “open book/open note” exam so Canvas course materials may be referred to. APA citation should be used.
- **#3: Policy Memo to the Administration on Aging (AoA):** This assignment has **3 components:**
 - (1) **Outline 1:** Using the posted Outline 1 template form, you will select a country with a system of long-term care (LTC) for its residents, and list **at least 3 initial references** relevant/specific to that selected country and its LTC system;



- (2) Outline 2: Using the posted Outline 2 template form, you will provide a 1-paragraph Introduction to the selected country’s LTC system, three (3) 1-sentence Policy Options: how 3 aspects of that system might work in the United States, and a 1-2 sentence Policy Recommendation of the “best” option; and
- (3) Policy Memo: Using the posted Policy Memo template form (single-spaced, 12-point font), you will write a **2-page document** with these **4 sections**: (i) Introduction; (ii) Policy Options; (iii) Policy Recommendation; and (iv) References, with **at least 5 relevant/specific references**, in APA format. Be sure to review the posted Checklist (Grading Rubric) BEFORE uploading it!

• **Assignment Grading:**

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|---|----------------|
| • 10 Discussion Boards (5 pts. each) | 50 pts. |
| • Quiz (Midterm Examination) | 20 pts. |
| • Policy Memo: Outline 1 (5), Outline 2 (10), Memo (15) | <u>30 pts.</u> |
| TOTAL | 100pts |

• **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: Tuesday, Jan. 21 – Sunday, Jan. 26 (Monday, Jan. 20: MLK Day)**
- **Topics: Student Orientation to the Course; Introduction to Aging, Intersectionally**
 - Assigned Review: Week 0/Course Information module
 - Assigned Reading: Week 1 module
 - Icebreaker: Introductions – 1 post due by 11.59pm ET MON 2/3
- **WEEK 2: Monday, Jan. 27 – Sunday, Feb. 2**
- **Topic: Overview of Health Insurance Coverage for Older Adults in the U.S.**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 2 module
- **WEEK 3: Monday, Feb. 3 – Sunday, Feb. 9**
- **Topic: Coverage Under Original (Traditional) Medicare Program**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 3 module
 - Discussion Board #1 – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 2/9
- **WEEK 4: Monday, Feb. 10 – Sunday, Feb. 16**
- **Topic: Coverage Gaps Under Original (Traditional) Medicare Program**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 4 module
 - Discussion Board #2 – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 2/16



- **WEEK 5: Monday, Feb. 17 – Sunday, Feb. 23**
- **Topic: Prescription Drug Coverage Under Medicare Part D Plans**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 5 module
 - **Discussion Board #3** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 2/23

- **WEEK 6: Monday, Feb. 24 – Sunday, March 2**
- **Topic: Coverage Under Medicare Advantage (Part C) Plans**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 6 module
 - **Discussion Board #4** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 3/2
 - **Assignment:** Policy Memo Outline 1 – due by 11.59pm ET SUN 3/2

- **WEEK 7: Monday, March 3 – Sunday, March 9**
- **Topic: Litigation on Medicare Coverage Issues**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 7 module
 - **Discussion Board #5** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 3/9

- **WEEK 8: Monday, March 10 – Sunday, March 16**
- **Topic: Social Determinants of Health: Food and Housing**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 8 module
 - **Assignment:** Quiz (Midterm Examination) due by 11.59pm SUN 3/16
 - Opens 12.01am ET FRI 3/14, closes 11.59PM ET SUN 3/16

- **SPRING RECESS: Monday, March 17 – Sunday, March 23**

- **WEEK 9: Monday, March 24 – Sunday, March 30**
- **Topic: Coverage Under Medicaid Programs**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 9 module
 - **Discussion Board #6** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 3/30

- **WEEK 10: Monday, March 31 – Sunday, April 6**
- **Topic: Long-Term Care in the U.S.**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 10 module
 - **Discussion Board #7** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 4/6
 - **Assignment:** Policy Memo Outline 2 – due by 11.59pm ET SUN 4/6

- **WEEK 11: Monday, April 7 – Sunday, April 13**
- **Topic: Special Populations of Older Adults**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 11 module
 - **Discussion Board #8** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 4/13

- **WEEK 12: Monday, April 14 – Sunday, April 20**
- **Topic: Federal Legislation and Initiatives**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 12 module
 - **Discussion Board #9** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 4/20

- **WEEK 13: Monday, April 21 – Sunday, April 27**
- **Topic: State Policies and Programs**
 - Assigned Reading; Week 13 module
 - **Discussion Board #10** – 2 posts due by 11.59pm ET SUN 4/27



- **WEEK 14: Monday, April 28 – Sunday, May 4**
- **Topic: Caregiving and Other Concerns of an Aging Population**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 14 module
 - *NO Discussion Board*

- **WEEK 15: Monday, May 5 – Sunday, May 11**
- **Topic: Law, Policy, and Health Equity for Older Adults**
 - Assigned Reading: Week 15 module
 - *NO Discussion Board*
 - **Assignment:** Policy Memo, due by 11.59pm ET SUN 5/11
 - **NOTE:** Classes end Monday, May 12

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@oit.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.

Use of Generative AI: Each instructor at the School of Public Health determines how generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) may or may not be used in their course. Please check with your instructor regarding the specific policy for their course. However, the use of generative AI in academic coursework is integrally related to academic integrity and is governed by the School's Honor Code. It is a violation of the Honor Code policy for students to represent work they did not do as their own, and work generated by an AI system, such as ChatGPT, falls under that policy.

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.

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 for Student Experiences and Alumni Affairs](#) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the [SPH Student Connect](#) Canvas page.

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 for Student Experiences and Alumni 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 for Student Experiences and Alumni 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 Appendices A and B to [Policy 60.1.33](#)) 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 Appendices A and B to University [Policy 60.1.33](#). For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#).

Overview of School Policies: Academic and non-academic policies and procedures, such as 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.

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 ([Computing Requirements](#)).

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 for Student Experiences and Alumni 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.