The College of Charleston

POLI 309.01-Health Policy

Spring Semester 2013
Tuesdays-Thursdays 1:40 P.M.-2:55 P.M.
Maybank 111

Instructor: Marguerite Archie-Hudson, Ph.D.
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Course Description and Objectives

Political Science 309.1 will focus on American health policymaking, with particular focus on how current federal and state policies address the three pillars of health: Access, Cost and Quality. The course will examine the status, financing and delivery of health care, the political and social environments in which health policymaking occurs and the key policy actors that drive federal and state decisions regarding health care for all Americans.

In March 2010 the 111th U.S. Congress passed, and President Barack Obama signed into law, the most comprehensive and far-reaching health policy legislation in decades – the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148), as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act (P.L. 111-152). This enactment followed a bitter partisan battle over health care reform and was passed with nearly united opposition from the Republican members of Congress. The Affordable Care Act (ACA), as the combined legislation is known, is considered a landmark law in the history of health and social welfare policy in the United States, the most significant since the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Medicare and Medicaid Act of 1965.

The opposition to the implementation of the ACA remained a topic of active debate in the 112th Congress and in the public. A series of lawsuits were filed in the federal courts by states, legal groups and individuals challenging the constitutionality of the new health care law, in particular the “individual mandate.” The lack of consensus among the federal courts hearing these appeals placed the issue before the United States Supreme Court which heard the landmark case in the Spring of 2012. On June 28, 2012 on a 5-4 vote the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. The majority opinion was written by Chief Justice John Roberts.

The Affordable Care Act will serve as a case study in understanding the development of national health policy in the United States and the effects of federal law on current statutory health responsibilities of state and local governments. The course will also examine the existing primary public “Safety Net”: Medicare, Medicaid, State Children’s Health Insurance Program and the Medicare Prescription Drug Program both with regard to their current effectiveness in
providing access, cost and quality to the public and the major changes (if any) that these programs will undergo as the ACA becomes fully implemented.

The course may also touch on broader aspects of the health care debate including the effects of environmental issues, the obesity epidemic, food safety, the status and quality of the health care work force and other issues that impact American health policy.

At the conclusion of the semester students should be able to (a) identify the historic and current policies that shape and inform the delivery of health care in America, (b) discuss the effect of these policies on the issues of access, cost and quality and (c) be able to make informed analyses regarding the effectiveness of current federal and state health care policies in addressing the healthcare needs of the American public.

**Course Requirements**

A. Regular class attendance is expected of all students. Attendance will be recorded via a daily sign-in sheet.

B. Expectations for class participation include reading the assignments prior to class, joining in class discussions and turning in assignments on time. Late assignments will incur severe grade penalties.

C. The use of telephones, I pads, tablets or any other electronic device is prohibited during class. Personal computers will be allowed for note-taking only and verification may be required at any time. Failure to observe this policy will result in severe grade penalties and may result in expulsion from the class.

D. Students are encouraged to utilize posted office hours and/or schedule appointments to discuss assignments and readings.

E. Students who are receiving services through the Center for Disability Services, are scheduled to travel with an athletic team or will participate in a student government-related or other official off-campus activity during the semester must present a letter of verification signed by the appropriate college official.

F. Students who schedule personal trips before the end of the semester (ex. scheduling early travel facing Spring Break or the end of the semester) will not receive excused absences.

G. All students are required to participate in a group class presentation at the end of the semester. Failure to do so will result in a severe grade penalty.

**Grades**

Students are required to read, study, analyze and evaluate the role of major federal legislation in shaping present healthcare policy. The semester grade will be based on a three part Policy Analysis that examines the implementation of a current health care policy, a Midterm Examination, a Final Examination and class participation as follows:

a. Policy Analysis – Part I 15%

b. Policy Analysis – Part II 15%

c. Policy Analysis-Part III 15%

d. Midterm Examination 20%

e. Final Examination 25%

f. Class Participation 10%
**Required Reading:**


The Henry Kaiser Family Foundation: Focus on Health Reform: Summary of Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148)


Kaiser Family Foundation: ” The Uninsured- A Primer: Key Facts about Americans Without Health Insurance” - The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, October 2012.

McDonald, Margaret and Hertz, Robin: Pfizer Facts: “ A Profile of Uninsured Persons in the United States.Pfizer.org


Goldberg, Janet and Doonan, Michael: “Massachusetts Health Care Reform 2006- An Analysis of the Pros and Cons”, Health Policy Institute of Ohio


**Additional Recommended Reading:**

CRS: “Health Care: Constitutional Right and Legislative Powers”, April 5, 2010


Journal of Health Affairs- “Legal Challenges to Health Reform”. Nov. 30, 2011


Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Th January 10  
Introductions and class overview

Tu January 15  
Class overview and semester assignments

Th January 17  
Public Policy Defined (Handout)

Tu January 22  
Health Care Evolution in America (Handout)

Th January 24  
Profile of the Uninsured in America

The Three Pillars of Health Care: Access, Cost and Quality

Access to Health Care

Tu January 29  
“Health Care Access” defined (Handout)

Th January 31  
Private Health Care Access  

Tu February 5  
Public Health Care Access  
Federal and state Roles (Handout)  

Th February 7  
The Current Public “Safety Net” (Handout)

Cost of Health Care

Tu February 12  
“Health Care Costs” defined (Handout)

Th February 14  
Cost of Health Care  

Tu February 19  
Cost of Health Care

Assignment, Part One due
### Health Care Quality

**Th February 21**

“**Health Care Quality**” defined (handout)

“Crossing the Quality Chasm: the IOM Health Care Quality Initiative”, The Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

**Tu February 26**

**Health Care Quality**


National College of Emergency Physicians Report on Healthcare Quality

**Th February 28**

**Midterm Examination**

**Tu March 5**

**No Class - Spring Break**

**Th March 7**

**No Class – Spring Break**

### Health Care Reform

**Tu March 12**

**The Massachusetts Health Care Reform Model**

Goldberg and Doonan – Ohio Health Policy institute

**Th March 14**

**The Massachusetts Health Care Reform Model**


Journal of Health Affairs, Vol. 26, # 6

**Tu March 19**

**The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act**

McDonough, Chapters 2 and 3

**Th March 21**

**The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act**

McDonough, Chapter 4 and 5

**Tu March 26**

**The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act**

McDonough, Chapters 6 and 7

**Th March 28**

**The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act**

McDonough, Chapters 8 and 9

The Henry Kaiser Family Foundation: Focus on Health Reform: Summary of Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148)

**Assignment, Part Two due**

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Legal Challenges to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Tu April 2
State Lawsuits against the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Th April 4
Federal Court Decisions

Tu April 9
Legal Challenge at the U.S. Supreme Court

Th April 11
Class Presentations - Group One

Tu April 16
Class Presentations – Group Two

Th April 18
Class Presentations – Group Three

Tu April 23
Class Presentations – Group Four
Assignment, Part Three due

Th April 25
Reading Day- No classes

Tu April 30
Final Examination
Noon – 3 P.M.
Maybank 111

Required Assignments

Following the passage of the Affordable Care Act 26 states (Florida, South Carolina, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, Louisiana, Alabama, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Washington, Idaho, South Dakota, Indiana, North Dakota, Mississippi, Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, Alaska, Ohio, Kansas, Wyoming, Wisconsin, Maine, Michigan and Iowa) joined in a suit before the U.S. Supreme Court against the United States Department of Health and Human Services asking the Court to declare the law unconstitutional. States charged that the implementation of parts of the law – in particular the individual mandate to purchase insurance and the expansion of Medicaid coverage -would represent a significant hardship on states and their ability to provide health care services to their constituents.

Your assignment is to investigate the impact of these allegations on state health policy by selecting two states to study – one that sued the federal government and one that did not join the suit.

The specific question: Is implementation of the Affordable Care Act (a) a benefit or (b) an obstacle to the state’s ability to provide access to health care for its uninsured population via (1) the individual mandate and (2) expansion of its Medicaid population? The provisions of the
ACA that will be the primary focus of your analysis are outlined in The Kaiser family Foundation’s “Focus on Health Reform: Summary of New Health Reform Law” under the sections The Individual Mandate, Employer Requirements, Expansion of Public Programs and Premium and Cost-Sharing Subsidies.

You are required to select a pair of states from the list below and conduct a Policy Analysis on its effects on the access, cost and quality of health care in America:

1. Wisconsin and Illinois
2. South Carolina and North Carolina
3. Texas and California
4. Pennsylvania and New York

The Policy Analysis will be divided into three parts as follows:

**Part One – State Health Profiles** – Two primary sources are recommended to assist you in developing comparisons between your two states on critical elements of health: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation- the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured: “The Uninsured- A Primer” and United Health Foundation: “America’s Health Rankings-2012.” Your comparisons will compare the percentage of uninsured adults in each state, the type of coverage provided for those who are insured; the percentage of uninsured children; the states’ health rankings on the following core health problems: obesity, infant mortality, diabetes, cardiovascular deaths, primary care physicians, preventable hospitalizations and overall determinants of health. **Maximum length: 10 pages**

**Part Two- The State Health Delivery System** - The current organization and delivery of health care to the uninsured. This section of your research will identify the basic health policies and delivery infrastructure of the states by describing the following policies and infrastructure with responsibility for the uninsured: (a) The policy committees in the State Legislature responsible for health policy and their specific policy jurisdictions; The State Children’s Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP); the current Medicaid Program; the number of public hospitals, emergency centers and public clinics; shortages in critical medical areas, i.e. nurses, primary care physicians, etc. **Maximum length: 10 pages**

**Part Three- A comparison of policy responses to the Individual Mandate and Medicaid Expansion in the ACA.** This section will explain the states’ response to the uninsured including will the individual mandate be enforced? Will the state expand Medicaid? If not, how does it plan to handle its uninsured poverty-level population? Will the state adopt a health insurance exchange or leave that responsibility to the federal government?

**Conclusions and Recommendations**- At the conclusion of Part Three- you will answer the following questions?

1. Is there a discernible difference between the uninsured populations of the two states?
2. Are there identifiable differences between the states’ health delivery systems?
3. Are there significant differences between the political structures of the two states?
4. In your judgment does each state have a viable plan for meeting the needs of all of its uninsured population? **Maximum length : Ten pages**

Each group will make a joint presentation to the class on its findings and analyses.