The College of Charleston

POLI 309.01-Health Policy

Spring Semester 2014
 Tuesdays-Thursdays 3:05 P.M.-4:20 P.M.
 Robert Scott Small 103

Instructor: Marguerite Archie-Hudson, Ph.D.
Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00 A.M.- 3:00 P.M. and by appointment
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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 laws and 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.

The debates around the scope, practice, delivery and sustainability of health care have engendered policy disagreements and conflicts for decades. The passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 initiated the development of a complex system of health delivery that has continued to be the subject of contentious debate around the questions of “who pays? – And who benefits? ” The passage of federal legislation to create Medicare, Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program, The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) and The Medicare Prescription Drug Act all contributed to the development of a public safety net with regard to health care.

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 course will also review broader aspects of the health care debate including the effects of environmental issues, the obesity epidemic, food safety, the status and quality of the American 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.

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 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 four part Policy Research Paper that examines the implementation of a current health care policy, a Midterm Examination, a Final Examination and class participation as follows:

- a. Policy Research – Part I 10%
- b. Policy Research – Part II 10%
- c. Policy Research – Part III 10%
- d. Policy Research – Part IV 10%
- e. Midterm Examination 20%
- f. Final Examination 25%
- g. Class Participation (includes Research Presentation) 15%

Required Reading:
The series of assigned articles and reports below will constitute the primary required readings for the semester. Additional readings may be assigned during the course of the semester.


Medicaid: A Timeline of Key Developments. The Kaiser Foundation on Medicaid and the Uninsured. [http://kff.org/medicaid/timeline/medicaid-a-timeline-of-key-developments/]


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


The Uninsured and the Difference Health Insurance Makes.” September 2010. [www.kff.org]


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


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


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


National College of Emergency Physicians: Report on Healthcare Quality

Course Outline

January 2014

Th January 9 Introductions and class overview
Tu January 14 Class overview and semester assignments

The Language of Health Care- Key Definitions

Th January 16 Public Policy Defined (Handout)
Tu January 21 Public Policy Defined
Th January 23 Glossary of health care terminology (Handout)
Tu January 28 The Language of Insurance (Handout)

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

Access to Health Care

Th January 30 Health Care Access defined (Handout)

February 2014

Tu February 4 Health Care Access- State roles (Handout)
Th February 6 No Class – Library Research
Cost of Health Care

Tu February 11  Health Care Costs defined (Handout) – Paper # 1 Due
Th February 13  Cost of Health Care
Tu February 18  Cost of Health Care

Health Care Quality

Th February 20  Health Care Quality defined (handout)
Tu February 25  Health Care Quality – Paper # 2 Due
Th February 27  Midterm Examination

March 2014

Tu March 4  No Class- Spring Break
Th March 6  No Class – Spring Break

The Health Care “Safety Net”

Tu March 11  The Social Security Act of 1935 and Amendments
Th March 13  The Social Security Amendments of 1965 – Medicare and Medicaid
Tu March 18  The Medicare Improvement and Prescription Drug Act of 2006
Th March 20  The Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act of 1986

Health Care Reform

Tu March 25  The Massachusetts Health Care Act of 2006– Paper # 3 Due
Th March 27  The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010

April 2014

Tu April 1  The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010
Th April 3  The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010
Tu April 8  The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010
Th April 10  Class Presentations - Group One
Tu April 15  Class Presentations – Group Two
Th April 17  Class Presentations – Group Three
Tu April 22  Class Presentations – Group Four – Paper # 4 Due
Th April 24  Reading Day- No classes
Tu April 29  Final Examination
4 – 7 P.M.
RSS Room 103

**Required assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for you to examine a specific current health care issue to determine the policy goals, make an assessment of its current implementation and an evaluation of any policy gaps that need to be addressed in order to increase its effectiveness as a health policy. You will select a topic from the six issues described below:

1. **Drug Medication Errors** – Since 2000 the federal Food and Drug Administration has received more than 95,000 reports of errors in drug medication that result in adverse medical results, including deaths. A complex set of factors in the management and execution of prescription, generic and over the counter drugs contribute to making this a serious issue for patient safety and health care quality. The Policy question: *Should the U.S. Congress pass new, stronger laws relating to the labeling and management of prescription and over the counter drugs to address the incidence of drug medication errors?* (Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration).

2. **Childhood Obesity** - Approximately 20% of American children between the ages of 6-11 are considered obese. Nearly one third of the 3.7 million low-income children ages 2-4 are projected to be obese or overweight before their 5th birthday. The potential physical effects of obesity on the development of young children is described by pediatricians as a critical health issue that can have devastating effect on the health conditions of these young Americans. The Policy question: *Should state legislatures require all public school districts to reinstate a mandatory physical education curriculum as a condition of state funding?* (Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

3. **Food Safety** – Every year, one of six persons in the U.S. -48 million- suffer from foodborne illness; more than 100,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die. A multiplicity of factors affect our food supply and present grave threats to the health and welfare of the American public. The Policy question: *Should the federal government pass stricter food production and inspection policies to reduce the incidence of contaminated foods reaching local markets?* (Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, DHHS).

4. **Antimicrobial Drug Resistance**: This is a major public health threat as the infectious organisms these antibiotics are designed to kill have adapted to them, making the drugs less effective or, in some instances, completely ineffective. The impact on cost and quality of health care is a serious policy issue. The Policy question: *Should the federal government revise the patent protection rules for existing drugs so as to facilitate the introduction of potentially more effective antibiotics?* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, DHHS).
5. **Sex Education in Public Schools** – Since the 1990s teen pregnancy is the U.S. has declined by 42 percent and the teen birth rate is down 52 percent. Despite these encouraging statistics, U.S. teen pregnancy, abortion and birth rates for teens 15 to 19 remain among the highest in the industrialized world. The debate about how to reduce these rates have included questions about the role of sex education in public schools as a deterrent, specifically what should be the content of the curriculum. The federal government has addressed this issue in a variety of ways depending on which party is in control of policy. State policies provide a variety of models. The **Policy question**: Should the federal government define a standard, comprehensive (and funded) curriculum for sex education in public school that includes both abstinence and education on reproductive issues, including birth control options? (Source: National Conference of State Legislatures). [www.ncsl.org/research/health/state](http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/state)

6. **Regulation of Medical Waste Generated by health Care Facilities**. Health care facilities including hospitals, physicians offices, dental practices and veterinary hospitals, routinely generate a variety of medical waste products, many of them toxic and potentially very dangerous. The threat of harm to the public and to individuals exposed through their work-related occupation continue to be a major health and safety concern. Currently management of these products are dictated by a variety of federal, state and local rules and procedures. The **policy question**: Should the federal government have sole responsibility for promulgating regulations and sanctions for the management and disposition of potentially infectious medical waste? (Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-EPA)

Your are required to select a topic from those listed above and write four short papers using the steps in the cyclical policymaking model which you will receive in a handout on Thursday, January 16th. The handout will detail the specific information required in each of these steps and you will receive a template for writing each of the four required papers.

Please review the topics and be prepared to sign up for one on Thursday.