

The College of Charleston
POLI 309.01 – Health Policy
Spring Semester 2017
MWF 11:00 A.M.-11:50 A.M.
Education Center 118

Instructor: Marguerite Archie-Hudson, Ph.D.
Office hours: Monday/Wednesday /Friday: 1:00 P.M. -3:30 P.M and by appointment
Office location: 114 Wentworth Street, First Floor
Telephone: 843.953.8138
E-mail: archiehudsonm@cofc.edu; mjasper11@aol.com

Course Description and Objectives:

Political Science 309.01 will focus on the federal laws, public policies and institutional structures that impact the current status, financing and delivery of American 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?” From the passage of federal legislation that created Medicare and Medicaid in 1965, through the Children’s Health Insurance Program, The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA), the Medicare Prescription Drug Act to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 these questions have persisted even as these programs collectively contributed to the development of a public “Safety Net” with regard to the delivery of 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 historic 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 legislative achievement 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 Acts of 1965. However, for the past 8 years the repeal of the ACA has been a primary goal of the Republican dominated Congress. With the election of Donald Trump as President and his campaign promise to join in the repeal of the ACA, this may now be an attainable goal. If the ACA is successfully repealed, two policy questions will remain: how will the 20 million Americans currently covered receive the health care they need and what health care policies, if any, will replace the ACA?

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 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. Absences will be excused only if they are officially validated.
- B. Expectations for class participation include reading assignments prior to class, joining in class discussions, respecting the opinions of others and turning in assignments on time. Late assignments will incur severe grade penalties.
- C. The use of electronic devices during class is prohibited unless specific permission is granted to use these devices to take notes. Students who ignore this rule **will incur severe grade deductions.** Students granted permission to use electronic devices to take notes may at any time be required to submit copies of these notes to the instructor.
- D. Cell phone use during class is not permitted under any circumstance.
- E. Students are encouraged to utilize posted office hours and/or schedule appointments to discuss assignments and readings.
- F. 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.
- G. Papers will be due on the dates indicated on the syllabus. Late papers will incur severe grade deductions.
- H. Students are encouraged to utilize the **Center for Student Learning** (Addlestone Library, First Floor) academic support services for assistance in study strategies and course content. The Center offers tutoring, supplemental instruction, study skills and a variety of workshops; These services are available to you at no extra cost. You may visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843) 953-5635.
- I. Students who schedule personal (i.e. non-emergency) off-campus trips prior to a scheduled exam (i.e. Midterm or Final) will not receive excused absences nor the opportunity to make up the examination.
- J. All students are required to select a current health-related topic for research and study during the semester from a list provided by the professor. At the end of the semester students studying the same topic will be required to make a group presentation on the research topic; the presentation will include a group consensus on whether the solution proposed by the relevant health authority is an effective response to a contemporary health issue that is the subject of disagreement and/or conflict among the public.

Grades

Students are required to read, study, analyze and evaluate the role of major federal laws in shaping American health care policy. The semester grade will be based on (a) a five part policy research paper that examines the development and execution of a current health care policy; (b) a Mid-term Examination; (c) a Final Examination and (d) class participation as follows:

a. Policy Research paper – Part 1	10%
b. Policy Research paper- Part 2	10%
c. Policy Research paper - Part 3	10%
d. Policy Research paper - Part 4	10%
e. Policy Research paper- Part 5	10%
f. Midterm Examination	15%
g. Final Examination	20%
h. Class attendance/participation	15%

Required Textbook

Knickman, James R. and Kovner, Anthony R., Editors: **Health Care Delivery in the United States, 11th Edition**, 2015, Springer Publishing Company, New York, N Y.

Additional recommended readings:

1. Obama, Barack, J.D., "U.S. Health Care Reform: Progress to date and next steps", Journal of the American Medical Association, July 11, 2016.
2. McDonald, Margaret and Hertz, Robin, "Pfizer Facts: A Profile of Uninsured Persons in the United States. Pfizer.Org.
3. "The Uninsured – A Primer: Key Facts about Americans without Health Insurance"- the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.
4. Devore, Kathryn Pitkin, Gresenz Carol and Ringel, Jeanne: "Understanding Disparities in Health Care Access", Health Affairs Journal, Vol. 30: 1844-1851, October 2013.
5. Kaiser Family Foundation: "Focus on Health Care Disparities-Key Facts", December 2012.
6. Davis, Patricia A: Medicare Primer: CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, January 31, 2013.
7. Medicaid- A Primer 2013: The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.
8. "U.S. Healthcare Costs: Background Brief", Kaiser Edu.Org.
9. Berry, Daniel J: "Drivers of U.S. Health Care Costs", Journal of Health Affairs, Dec. 2011- Vol. 30, No. 12
10. "Crossing the Quality Chasm: The IOM Health Care Quality Initiative:" The Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Science.
11. "National Health Quality Report" – Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality", U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
12. National College of Emergency Physicians: Report on Healthcare Quality
13. United Health Foundation: America's Health Ranking- U.S. Health Overview"- 2015 Edition
14. Goldberg, Janet and Doonan, Michael- Massachusetts Health Care Reform 2006- An Analysis of the Pros and Cons" – Health Policy Institute of Ohio.
15. Kaiser Family Foundation- "Focus on Health Reform: Issue Brief: Massachusetts Health Care Reform Plan: 6 Years Later"-May 2012.
16. Kaiser Family Foundation. " Focus on Health Reform- Summary of the new Health Care Law", April 2011.

January 2017

Wed 11	Introductions and semester overview
Fri 13	Review of semester research assignments
Mon 16	Martin Luther King Holiday –No Class
Wed 18	Defining Public Policy – (Handout)
Fri 20	Defining Public Policy – Major Policy Typologies
Mon 23	Defining Public Policy- Major Policy Activities of government
	Three Pillars of U.S. Health Care: Access, Cost and Quality
Wed 25	Access to health care: Profile of the Uninsured
Fri 27	Access to health care defined <u>Paper One Due</u>
Mon 30	Key issues in health care access Knickman, Chapter One

February 2017

Wed 1	Health care cost defined Knickman, Chapters Twelve and Thirteen
Fri 3	Factors driving health care costs
Mon 6	Health care quality defined Knickman, Chapter Thirteen
	Key Challenges in Health Care Policymaking and Delivery
Wed 8	Defining characteristics of the U.S. Health care system –organization
Fri 10	Major challenges for the U.S. health care system- structure <u>Paper Two Due</u>
Mon 13	Defining Challenges for the U.S. Health care System – Delivery Challenges Knickman, Chapter One
Wed 15	Federal Policy Making- policy goals Knickman, Chapter Two
	<u>Core Federal Health Care Policy Functions</u>
Fri 17	Core federal Health care policy functions

Mon 20 Federal **Financing** of Health Care
Knickman, Chapter Eleven
Wed 22 Federal Financing of Health Care
Fri 24 Federal Financing of Health Care
Mon 27 **Midterm Examination**

March 2017

Wed 1 Federal Financing of Health Care
Fri 3 Federal Role in **Public Health Protection**
Mon 6 **Spring Break**
Wed 8 **Spring Break**
Fri 10 **Spring Break**
Mon 13 Federal Role in Public Health Protection
Wed 15 Federal Role in **Collection and Dissemination of Health Information**
Fri 17 Federal role in collection and dissemination of health information
Mon 20 **Federal Role in Capacity Building for Population Health
Paper Three Due**
Wed 22 Federal Role in Capacity Building for Population Health
Fri 24 **Federal Role in Direct Management of Health Services**
Mon 27 Federal Role in Direct Management of Health Services
State Roles in Health Care Policymaking and Delivery
Wed 29 State Roles in Health Care Policymaking – key governance functions
Fri 31 State Roles in Health Care Delivery –key legislative functions

April 2017

Mon 3 State roles in health care delivery (Handout)
Paper Four Due

Local Government Roles in Health Care Policy-making and Delivery

Wed 5	Local government roles in health care policy-making
Fri 7	Private financing of health care- a health care glossary (handout)
Mon 10	Decoding private health insurance
Wed 12	Class Presentation – Group One
Fri 14	Class Presentation- Group Two
Mon 17	Class presentation – Group Three
Wed 19	Class presentation- Group Four
Fri 21	Class Presentation- Group Five
Mon 24	Class Presentation – Group Six
Wed 26	Last Day of Spring Classes <u>Paper Five Due</u>
Thu 27	Reading Day
Fri 28	FINAL EXAMINATION 12 noon- 3:00 P.M. Education Center 118

Required Research Assignment

This required assignment provides the opportunity to study a current health issue with the potential for major impact on the access, cost and/or quality of health care for the Americans public.

The goal of this assignment is do analyze and understand the effect of a specific health policy on Americans in general or on a specific group. It is intended to be a **Policy Brief or Memorandum** and not a series of essays. **The goal of a Health Policy Brief is to research and gather data about a particular issue or problem that is (a) governed under the laws of a federal, state or local government agency or (b) is brought to the attention of the government due to its negative impacts or magnitude.**

The policy goal is to evaluate the current state of the problem with the intention of finding a solution that is effective and able to be implemented.

Once you select a topic you will be required to **write five papers on the subject and draw a conclusion in paper five as to whether :**

- (a) The problem stated is a significant **health policy issue** or the responsibility of other areas of government (i.e. criminal justice, education, economics, etc.).
- (b) The magnitude and impact of the problem warrants a solution that is effective and can be implemented.
- (c) The current policy or administrative solution **is effective** in responding to the stated problem;
- (d) The current policy **is ineffective (or inadequate)** and a new law or administrative solution is necessary to solve the stated problem.
- (e) If a new solution is required state the **level of government** (local, state or federal level) that should have responsibility for developing the new policy.
- (f) If you feel a new solution is required you should make **two recommendations for changes in the current law or policy** that you feel will be beneficial in addressing the problem.

Several students will be researching the same topic and at the end of the semester there will be a group presentation to the class regarding whether the current solution solves the identified problem or presents additional problems for the government and/or the public.

You will select a topic for your policy brief from the six issues described below:

Topic One – Regulation of prescription drug pricing – The EpiPen has become the prescription of choice for reversing life-threatening allergic reactions by children and adults to a variety of common food products. Many states require schools and other public facilities to keep supplies of this drug on hand in case of an emergency. The price of a prescription for the EpiPen had risen rapidly in the last 4 years making access to this life saving drug a serious cost issue for many Americans. **The policy question – Should the federal government have authority to regulate price increases for the EpiPen and similar potentially life-saving drugs ?**

Topic Two- Domestic Violence –The Charleston Post and Courier newspaper recently won a Pulitzer Prize for its path-breaking series on domestic violence. Domestic violence is described as occurring at epidemic proportions across America and South Carolina continues to rank as a state where this issue is a leading cause of death for women. The most recent South Carolina example involves a member of the S.C. House of Representatives. **The Policy Question: Is domestic violence a public health issue?**

Topic Three – Regulation of Air Ambulances- Current federal law bans states from regulating or negotiating the fees charged by air ambulance companies to transport critically ill patients to the necessary medical facilities, leaving families with exorbitant costs (as much as \$80,000 one way),that may or may not be covered by their health insurers.. **The Policy Question: Should the current federal law be revised to allow state governments some degree of regulation of these companies?**

Topic Four- The Crisis in Rural Health Care – The National Rural Health Association asserts that rural areas face major health disparities in access to health care far beyond those found in urban areas- and that this situation has reached epidemic proportions. **The Policy Question: Should state governments include establishing and supporting rural health as a specific policy responsibility of their health departments?**

Topic Five- Mandatory vaccinations and communicable diseases- Children in public and private schools are at risk for contracting a series of diseases that can present serious health threats. **The Policy**

question: should all children entering public and private schools be required to be vaccinated against specific diseases as a condition of enrollment?

Group Six- Suicide prevention-while suicide continues to be a very understood and under-researched issue, it is currently the 10th leading cause of death for Americans. **The Policy question: Is suicide prevention a public health issue?**

Outline for writing the Policy Brief

Topic One: Regulation of Prescription Drugs Pricing- the Epi-pen.

1. Paper One-
 - a. List the major foods and environmental factors to which most Americans have life-threatening allergic reactions.
 - b. Give the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions annually according to the CDC.
 - c. State how many children annually experience life-threatening allergic reactions.

2. Paper Two-
 - a. Explain why the EpiPen is currently the prescription of choice in treating a major allergic reaction.
 - b. Identify the states that require public schools to purchase and store EpiPens so as to be responsive to an in-school allergic event.
 - c. How do public schools fund these mandates?

3. Paper Three –
 - a. State the increase in the cost of purchasing the Epi-pen from 2010 to 2016.
 - b. State the reasons provided by the manufacturer for the annual increases

4. Paper Four –
 - a. Identify the federal agency that has responsibility for approving the manufacture and cost of prescription drugs.
 - b. What is the current policy of this agency regarding the manufacturing of Epi-pens and the cost increases over the past five years?

5. Paper Five – Based on your research :
 - a. Do you believe that the current regulations regarding the manufacture and sale of Epi-pens are effective?
 - b. If not, what proposals would you make for policy changes?
 - c. In your opinions should any policy changes be made by the agency or by the U.S. Congress?

Topic Two: Domestic Violence

1. Paper One –
 - a. Provide the commonly accepted definition of domestic violence.
 - b. List the stages of domestic violence behavior

2. Paper Two –
 - a. Provide the current national statistics on the incidence of domestic violence.
 - b. Name the top three states in which this is a major problem and the statistics which provide this ranking for these states
3. Paper Three –
 - a. Summarize the Charleston, SC Post and Courier study of domestic violence in South Carolina.
4. Paper Four-
 - a. Describe a law passed by the South Carolina Legislature in response to the Post and Courier study.
 - b. Describe the Task Force established by the Governor in response to the Post and Courier report.
5. Paper Five
 - a. In your opinion, is the law passed by the South Carolina Legislature effective in reducing the incidence of domestic violence or increasing penalties for domestic violence in South Carolina?
 - b. What alternative or additional law(s) do you believe is necessary to have a positive effective on reducing the incidence of domestic violence in South Carolina?

Topic Three: Regulation of Air Ambulances

1. Paper One –
 - a. Identify the 1978 federal law that prohibits state governments from imposing any restrictions or rules on air ambulances.
 - b. State the primary policy reasons for this federal law.
 - c. State the reasons why the Association of Air Medical Services supports the current federal law.
2. Paper Two-
 - a. State the typical medical conditions for which air ambulances are necessary forms of transportation.
 - b. State whether the preferred mode of transportation is typically determined by the medical staff, the ambulance companies, the insurance companies, the family or the state.
3. Paper Three-
 - a. Explain the principal reasons why air ambulance services are so costly, including the role of insurance networks in cost calculations.
 - b. Explain how states fund air ambulance services for critically ill patients with no insurance but whose medical conditions require this mode of transportation.
4. Paper Four – U.S. Senators Jon Tester (Montana) and John Hoeven (N.D.) recently introduced legislation to amend the current federal law.
 - a. Explain the proposal introduced by Senator Tester and why it failed.

- b. Explain the proposal introduced by Senator Hoeven and why it failed.
 - c. State the principal organizations in opposition to each proposal and their support for the existing law.
5. Paper Five – Based on your research, do you support changes in the current law to allow states to regulate air ambulances? If you were a sitting member of Congress would you support or oppose such regulations?

Topic Four: Crisis in Rural health Care

1. Paper One –
 - a. Based on data from the National Rural Health Association, state the ten major problems currently faced by rural communities in comparison to urban communities.
 - b. Explain why each of these is a specific problem for rural versus urban communities.
2. Paper Two – The NRHA asserts that suicide rates are higher for men and increasing for women in rural areas than in rural ones.
 - a. What are the primary factors that contribute to these statistics?
3. Paper Three – Rural Healthy People 2020 is a project funded by the federal Office of Rural Health Policy.
 - a. State the principal findings from this project on the current crisis in rural health care.
4. Paper Four –
 - a. Identify the states that have health departments that focus on rural health issues.
 - b. State whether the above states have created specific responses to the identified health problems of rural communities.
 - c. Identify the area agencies or organizations that fill this gap in states where health departments do not have specific rural-focused departments or agencies.
5. Paper Five –
 - a. Base on your research do you agree that rural health issues are significantly different from those of urban areas?
 - b. Should rural health issues become a specific, articulated responsibility of each state?
 - c. If so, should this responsibility be established by the Governor or the State Legislature? Give specific reasons why you support or oppose such a policy.

Topic Five: Mandatory vaccinations and communicable diseases.

1. Paper One
 - a. Identify the 16 diseases that the Centers for Disease control reports constitute potential health threats to the public.
 - b. Identify which of these diseases pose particular health threats to children.
2. Paper Two
 - a. Identify the states that have mandatory laws on vaccination for public school enrollment.
 - b. State the policy on exemptions for states which allow them.
3. Paper Three

- a. For states with mandatory vaccination laws, are there specific policies in place to ensure that an adequate supply of vaccines will be available in the event of a public health crisis?
 - b. If there is a limited supply of vaccines during an outbreak, how do states determine which agencies (ex: schools, hospitals, etc.) have priority?
- 4. Paper Four
 - a. Explain the concept of “herd immunity” in describing the effect of vaccines on those who are not vaccinated.
- 5. Paper Five
 - a. Given the number and potential impact of infectious diseases and their threat to public health, do you support or oppose a national policy of mandatory vaccinations for all children enrolled in public schools?
 - b. Do you support the same policies for private schools?

Topic Six: Suicide Prevention

- 1. Paper One
 - a. Provide the statistics for the incidence of suicide in the U.S. in according to the Centers for Disease and Prevention April 2016 report.
 - b. State the population ages with the highest percentage of suicide annually in the U.S.
- 2. Paper Two
 - a. Identify any gender disparities in suicide attempts and completion.
 - b. Identify the preferred method of suicide among Americans. State if there are gender differences in preferred methods.
- 3. Paper Three
 - a. Describe any racial disparities in the incidence of suicide among Americans.
 - b. Describe any socio-economic disparities in the incidence of suicide among Americans.
- 4. Paper Four –
 - a. Is there a “typical” profile of the individual who successfully carries out a suicide attempt?
- 5. Paper Five
 - a. Based on the above statistics, do you believe that suicide is a public health issue?
 - b. What agencies of government, in your opinion, should make suicide prevention a policy priority?

Suggested initial sources for data and research:

- (1) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- (2) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHS)
- (3) The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
- (4) The National Association of Counties (NACO)