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**Instructional Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes**

Public policies are the legal and administrative actions of government that reflect the judgments, values and goals of elected and appointed policy makers. Through the lawmaking process – judicial, legislative or administrative - they define both the functions of government and the mechanisms under which these activities are carried out. Under our dual system of government - commonly described as federalism - some of these functions are assigned to the federal government by the United States Constitution, some are under the purview of state governments based on their individual constitutions, and some are carried out by both.

Health policy falls into the third category – the major national “Safety Net” has been developed by federal legislation to address national concerns while states bear principal responsibility for the health and welfare of their individual citizens. As the nation has grown from one million persons in 13 colonies in 1790 to over 330 million in fifty states today, health care has emerged as a major policy debate with a central unresolved question: Is health care a right for all Americans to be secured by the federal government - or a privilege for some to be determined by the states based on their public priorities?

The current policy debates are anchored in three major issues:

- **Access**: should universal health care for 330 million Americans be a national policy?
- **Cost**: who benefits the most from health care - and who should pay the cost of maintaining the system? and
- **Quality**: what are the minimum infrastructures and standards that define equity and excellence in the American health care system?

There is an additional policy question: Is American health care a universal, integrated system with some defining characteristics or a disjointed, state specific set of activities with no central infrastructure?
As these questions continue to be debated among federal and state governments, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced a real analysis and evaluation of our health care system, including the following questions:

- Is there a functional federal health infrastructure - agencies, laws, regulations, financing and planning structures to assist states in curbing the ravages of this pandemic?
- Are the health infrastructures of states sufficient to meet the current COVID-19 challenges - the health agencies, legislation, medical and health facilities, staffing, the essential workers, equipment, training institutions, insurance coverage, funding capacity, medical responses (including vaccinations and treatments,), etc. sufficient to manage the catastrophic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Policymakers have now had a year to ponder these questions – and find answers.

In January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) announced a new viral infection identified as COVID-19 and described it as a potentially lethal airborne disease that threatened to become the world’s worst pandemic in 100 years. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recognized the potential policy impact by declaring a national emergency. In response, states began to make critical policy decisions regarding the organization and delivery of the health infrastructure required to respond to their citizens affected by COVID-19. As the pandemic grew into a full-blown national crisis, the ability of both the national and state health infrastructures to respond became a major concern – and continues to be.

The United States now reports over 22 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 infections and more than 358,000 confirmed deaths affecting all 50 states. Many states are reporting that the pace of COVID-19 illnesses and deaths threaten to overwhelm their ability to provide staff, facilities, equipment, space and hospital beds. Some states are making critical decisions regarding which patients should receive treatment and which should be allowed to die as this pandemic continues to rage at dangerous levels. Policymakers at the federal, state and county levels find themselves challenged to engage in health policy decisions that is effective, affordable, equitable and sustainable into the unknown future.

At the end of the semester students should be able to demonstrate a firm understanding of the basic theories that undergird the policymaking process, the major federal laws and institutions that currently comprise the federal health care “Safety Net”, the critical state institutions that form the health care delivery system, the current policy debates around COVID-19 and the impact of all of these policy activities in shaping who has access, who pays and the measures of quality that are related to positive health outcomes.

**Attendance policy** - This is an on-line class. Attendance will be tracked and recorded through the appropriate web-based technology. Students who miss class due to personal illness, COVID-19 related illness, a requirement that they isolate or quarantine, the need to care for a family member who is ill due to COVID-19, other significant medical or family emergencies, etc. are responsible for contacting the instructor directly. Students who fail to meet the stated deadline dates for any written mandatory assignments without a confirmed acceptable reason may incur a grade deduction. The dates for receipt of assignments and/or exams are listed in this syllabus in the appropriate sections.
Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following assignments:

Paper # 1 20%
Paper # 2 20%
Paper # 3 20%
Paper # 4 20%
Final Examination 20%

Grade values will be assigned as follows:

A= 93-100       A-= 90-92
B+= 88-89       B=83-87        B-=80-82
C+= 78-79       C=73-77        C-= 70-72
D+=  68-69      D= 63-67       D-= 60-62
F=59 and below

Required Readings and Resources

No textbook is assigned for this class. Students are required to utilize the following on-line resources during the course of the semester:

1. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
2. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
3. The Office of the U.S. Surgeon General
4. South Carolina State Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)
7. The New York State Department of Public Health
8. The Kaiser Family Foundation
9. The Affordable Care Act
10. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
11. The following documents and reports:
    A. CDC- Symptoms of COVID-19 (document or video)
    B. CDC- Health Equity -Promoting Fair Access to Health Care
    C. CDC: Coronavirus Disease 2019
Required assignments to assess student learning outcomes:

The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique opportunity to study how American health policy is developed and implemented during a national health emergency in which over 22 million Americans have become infected with the virus since August, 2020 and over 358,000 have died. Our economic, educational and social structures have been drastically realigned although the shape of this re-alignment differs across states depending on a variety of factors. Both our national government and each of our 50 state governments have been required to design plans and programs in response to COVID-19 in three specific areas of health policy: (1) protecting the public’s health; (2) managing the state’s economy and (3) delivering public education as required by state laws.

Your policy research assignment this semester is a case study that focus on area (1)- protecting the public’s health. The specific policy question: How is COVID-19 vaccination policy being made and implemented in states in response to the COVID-19 pandemic- what is the essential infrastructure in place and supported by state law, institutional capacity and patient load? You will write four papers in which you will compare the COVID-19 vaccination policies developed and executed by two states in response to the COVID-19 epidemic: South Carolina – a small, mostly rural, conservative state with 5 million citizens, 46 counties and an overall national health ranking of 36 out of 50 states and New York State – a large, primarily urban state with 19.4 million residents and ranking 13 out of 50 states in overall health rankings.

Paper # 1 – The CDC recommended COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution Schedule.


Paper # 3 - Description of each state’s COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan for the following critical cohorts: (1) Rural Areas; (2) homeless populations; prison populations.


You will be provided a template for each of these assignments.

Note: The deadline (due date) for the receipt of each paper is stated in the syllabus. Late papers will be subjected to very severe grade deductions. Papers that are more than five days late without a confirmed and acceptable excuse will not be accepted.

Maximum page numbers for these assignments are not defined as the content of official communications such as Executive Orders, official memoranda, etc. cannot be determined in advance. Students are expected to use judgment in determining whether information may be more effectively presented in charts, bullet form, as attachments, etc. It is noted here that writing vague, rambling essays is not recommended!
All assignments will be submitted via the OAKS drop box.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** This College abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see an administrator at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP, 843-953-1431 or me so that such accommodations may be arranged.

**Honor Code and Academic Integrity:**

“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed by both the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive an XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/in-depth.](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/in-depth.)”

**OAKS**

OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

**Recording of Classes (Via Zoom)**

Class sessions will be recorded via both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, the student consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.

**Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction**

If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped
with a web camera, microphone and internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

**Center for Student Learning**

The Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services provide assistance in study strategies, speaking and writing skills and course content. Services include tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments and workshops. Students of all abilities have become successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843) 953-5635.

**Class schedule**

**January 2021**

- Tuesday 12: Introduction and Syllabus Review
- Thursday 14: Overview of semester assignments
- Tuesday 19: Public Policy defined (handout)
- Thursday 21: Public Policy defined
- Tuesday 26: Federalism and Health Policy
- Thursday 28: COVID-19 - Describing a pandemic

**February 2021**

- Tuesday 2: President Joe Biden’s Proposed COVID-19 Health Policy Administrative Actions
- Thursday 4: President Biden’s proposed COVID-19 Administrative Actions
- Tuesday 9: Evolution of the American Health Care System – a snapshot
- Thursday 11: Evolution of the American Health Care System
- Tuesday 16: The Federal Health Care Safety Net (Handout)
- Thursday 18: The Federal Health Care Safety Net
- Tuesday 23: The Federal Health Care Safety Net

**Paper # 1 Due**

**March 2021**

- Tuesday 2: Review and Study Day – No Classes
Thursday 4  Review and Study Day – No Classes

**Monday March 8**  Midterm grades due at Noon

Tuesday 9  The States’ Responsibilities for Health Care

**Midterm Grades posted at Noon**

Thursday 11  The States’ Responsibilities for Health Care

Tuesday 16  The States’ response to COVID-19

Thursday 18  Health Care “Access” defined

Tuesday 23 – Health Care “Access” defined

Thursday 25  Health Care “Costs” defined

Tuesday 30  Health Care “Costs defined”

*Paper # 3 Due*

**April 2021**

Thursday 1  Health Care “Quality” defined

Tuesday 6  Health Care “Quality “ defined

Thursday 8  Health Care Insurance: A glossary of terms (Handout)

Tuesday 13  Health Care Insurance

Thursday 15 – Kaiser Family Foundation: A Primer of the Uninsured

Tuesday 20  **Last Day of Class – Final Examination Issued by Instructor**

*Paper # 4 Due*

Tuesday 27  5 P.M.- Final Examination Due to Instructor via Drop Box

**Monday May 3, 2021**  5 P.M. – Deadline for posting Final Grades