

Political Science 383/483
Health Policy and Politics in the U.S.
Professor Joseph White
Fall, 2007
MWF 10:30 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.
MTHM 225

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The Topic:

Health care in the United States consumes 16 percent of the national economy, and the share is rising quickly. Access to, cost, and quality of medical services are of fundamental interest to all Americans, even or especially those who are too young or too frail to know what their interests are. Government is involved with health care in more ways than anyone can count

These factors all make health policy important for its own sake. They also make evaluation of how health policy is made a good way to study politics. Instead of talking about institutions in isolation, this course studies politics by looking at what government actually does about public problems.

Therefore this course is designed especially for two groups of students. One is political science students. The other is those who might choose careers in public health, medicine, or related fields. It may have a bit too much politics for one group, and a bit too much health policy for the other. I hope each will conclude that both aspects of the course are important and interesting.

Outline of the Course and its Objectives:

In the first half of the course we will focus on health policy itself. We will work to understand the extremely complex system of health care finance and delivery in the United States, and the extensive range of issues that people can raise if they want to improve the system. As a matter of political theory, this part of the course should give students a sense of how hard a task politicians and bureaucrats face in trying to meet our demands to make the system better. For those who expect to work in the health care system in some way, this should give you a more realistic sense of what you will be getting into.

In the second half of the course we will focus on how health policy is made. The text for this half of the course covers the main political institutions and concludes with an overview of the policy process and one case study, the Medicare Prescription Drug and

Modernization Act of 2003 (the name itself was a political statement). We will also take a closer look at two other health policy cases: the failure to enact any guarantee of health insurance for all Americans, and the controversies in 2007 about reauthorization of a program called S-CHIP, the State Children's Health Insurance program.

Course Requirements:

The work for this course will include reading done by all students; **two in-class exams during the first half of the course; a final exam on December 11; and separate reports on supplementary reading, due in class on November 30.** Undergraduates will be required to do one reading report, of a minimum of 2000 words. Students will also be expected to participate in class discussion by reporting to the class about what they found interesting (or dubious) in their supplementary reading. **Graduate students will be required to read two supplementary books, both on the same policy topic, and complete a 3500 word report on those two books.**

Grades for undergraduates will be based 20% for each of the first two exams; 20% for the reading report; and 30% for the final.

Grades for graduate students will be based 15% for each of the first two exams; 30% for the reading report, and 30% for the final.

YOU WILL NOTE THAT THIS ONLY ADDS TO 90%. The balance will be determined by class participation. **HOWEVER:** it is difficult to grade class participation on an "A/B/C" basis. My expectations are that students attend the class and participate in class discussion. If a student's attendance and participation are particularly scant, the 10% for participation will receive a lower than average grade, so weight the person's total grade downward. If a student's attendance and participation are particularly strong, it will be graded so as to weight the overall grade upward. Of course, on an A/B/C/D/F system, 10% usually will not swing the overall grade. But it will be better to attend and participate.

All assigned readings should be done prior to the class for which they are scheduled, as they will be discussed on the indicated date.

Reading for all students will include two texts and a selection of articles. Some of the articles can be downloaded directly from public websites. Others will be placed on electronic and hardcopy reserve. In a few cases I may hand out copies.

There is virtually a third book (in volume) of articles that I have written. Those will be placed on the course blackboard site as well as on e-reserves, but I could arrange to create a reader of those articles if students so request, figuring that copyright on my own work should not be an issue.

There are two required texts. Please note that you need the specific editions of each text:

Thomas S. Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach. 2001. *Understanding Health Policy: A Clinical Approach 4th ed.* (Lange Medical Books)

Carol S. Weissert and William G. Weissert. 2006. *Governing Health: The Politics of Health Policy 3rd ed.* (Johns Hopkins University Press)

NOTE: This book will be arriving late in the bookstore, but that should not be a problem, as the first assignment is not until October.

The supplementary texts from which students will choose their books for book reviews are listed at the end of this syllabus. Articles are listed below on the schedule of assignments.

Schedule of Assignments and Readings:

Section I: Perspectives

August 27: First class. Introduction and explanation of the course

August 29: James A. Morone, "Morality, Politics, and Health Policy." From David Mechanic et al. eds., *Policy Challenges in Modern Health Care* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), pp. 1-25.

August 31: S. Rosenbaum et al. 1998. The Children's Hour: The State Children's Health Insurance Program. *Health Affairs* 17 (1): 75-89.

Genevieve Kenney and Justin Yee. 2007. SCHIP At A Crossroads: Experiences To Date And Challenges Ahead. *Health Affairs* 26(2): 356-369.

Sept 3: No class, Labor Day

Sept 5: Joseph White. 2003. Three Meanings of Capacity: Or, Why the Federal Government Is Most Likely to Lead on Insurance Access Issues. *Journal of Health Policy, Politics and Law* 28(2-3).

Sept 7: Joseph White. 2001. National Health Care/Insurance Systems. From *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences, 4th ed.* (2001).

Mark V. Pauly. 1998. Trading Cost, Quality, and Coverage of the Uninsured: What Will We Demand and What Will We Supply? From Stuart Altman, Uwe E. Reinhardt, and Alexandra E. Shields eds., *The Future U.S. Healthcare System: Who Will Care For the Poor and Uninsured?* (Health Administration Press)

Section II: Problems 1 (The Financing and Organization of American Health Care)

Sept 10: Bodenheimer and Grumbach Chapters 1-3 and 15, pages 1-29 and 158-166.

- Sept 12: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 4, Reimbursing Health Care Providers, and Chapter 5, Capitation Payment in Managed Care: 30-45.
- Sept 14: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapters 6-7, How Health Care Is Organized I and II: 46-68.
- Sept 17: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 8, Painful vs. Painless Cost Control, and Chapter 9, Mechanisms for Controlling Costs: 69-92.
- Sept 19: Joseph White. Drafts for book on health care cost control
- Sept 21: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 10, Long-term Care: 93-101.
Robert H. Binstock. 2005. Scapegoating the Aged: Intergenerational Equity and Age-Based Rationing. From Jonathan Oberlander et al. eds., *The Social Medicine Reader* (Duke University Press): 267-283.

Students must select the book or books for their supplementary reading by this date.

- Sept 24: Selected readings about the 2007 SCHIP debate. Downloadable from university library electronic resources: National Journal Policy Central and Congressional Quarterly. Details to be supplied.
- Sept 26: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 14, Health Care in Four Nations: 143-157.

Sept 28: First Exam

Section III: Problems 2 (Health, Health Care, and Quality of Care)

- October 3: Bodenheimer and Grumbach Chapter 11, The Prevention of Illness.

Sara Gifford senior capstone paper on preventing lead poisoning in Cleveland
- October 3: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 12, The Quality of Health Care.
Joseph White, Choice, Trust, and Two Models of Quality. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 24:5 (1999).
- October 5: Michael L. Millenson. 2004. Still Demanding Medical Excellence.
Lucian L. Leape. 2004. Preventing Medical Errors. Both from David Mechanic et al. eds., *Policy Challenges in Modern Health Care* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press), pp. 151-77.
- October 8: Malpractice Readings:

Marc A. Rodwin, Hak J. Chang, and Jeffrey Clausen. 2006. Malpractice Premiums and Physicians' Income: Perceptions Of A Crisis Conflict With Empirical Evidence. *Health Affairs* 25(3): 750-758.

Michelle M. Mello et al. 2007. Changes in Physician Supply And Scope of Practice During A Malpractice Crisis: Evidence From Pennsylvania. *Health Affairs Web Exclusives*: W425-W435.

Teresa M. Waters et al. 2007. Impact of State Tort Reforms on Physician Malpractice Payments. *Health Affairs* 26(2): 500-509.

October 10: Bodenheimer and Grumbach Chapter 13, Medical Ethics and the Rationing of Health Care: 129-142.

Joseph White. 2004. "Health Care at the End of Life." Ms.

October 12: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Chapter 17, The Health Care Workforce, and Chapter 18, Conclusion: Tensions and Challenges: 176-189.

October 15: Mark Schlesinger. 2002. A Loss of Faith: The Sources of Reduced Political Legitimacy for the American Medical Profession. *Milbank Quarterly*, downloadable from <http://www.milbank.org/quarterly/8002.feat.html>.

October 17: Deborah Stone. 1998. The Doctor as Businessman: The Changing Politics of a Cultural Icon. From Mark A. Peterson ed., *Healthy Markets? The New Competition in Health Care* (Duke University Press)

October 19: Second Exam

Section 4: The Health Care Policy Process

October 22: NO CLASS, Fall Break.

October 24: Weissert and Weissert. Introduction and Chapter 1, Congress: 1-80

October 26: **NO CLASS (Professor at a meeting on the incredibly screwed up federal budget process)**

October 29: Weissert and Weissert Chapter 2, The Presidency: 81-125

October 31: Weissert and Weissert Chapter 3, Interest Groups: 126-187

November 2: Catch-up discussion. A few news articles about groups or presidency, to be determined.

November 5: Weissert and Weissert, Chapter 4, Bureaucracy: 183-230

November 7: Weissert and Weissert, Chapter 5, States and Health Care Reform: 231-297

November 9: Discussion. REVIEW material on S-CHIP so we can relate it to the Weissert and Weissert readings.

November 12: Weissert and Weissert, Chapter 6, The Policy Process: 301-342.

November 14: Allen Schick. 1995. How a Bill Did Not Become a Law. In Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein eds., *Intensive Care: How Congress Shapes Health Policy*. (American Enterprise Institute and The Brookings Institution).

November 16: Sven Steinmo and Jon Watts. 1995. It's the Institutions Stupid! Why Comprehensive National Health Insurance Always Fails in America.

Joseph White. 1995. The Horses and the Jumps: Comments on the Health Care Reform Steeplechase. Both from *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 20:2.

November 19: Thomas A. Oliver, Philip R. Lee, and Helene L. Lipton. 2004. A Political History of Medicare and Prescription Drug Coverage. *Milbank Quarterly* 82(2): 283-354

November 21: Weissert and Weissert, Chapter 7, Problem to Policy: Politics of the Medicare Prescription Drug Law: 343-384

November 23: NO CLASS, Thanksgiving Break

November 26: Jonathan Oberlander. 2007. Through the Looking Glass: The Politics of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 32(2): 187-219.

November 28: Weissert and Weissert, Chapter 8, Conclusion: 385-396.

November 30: ***Reading Reports Due Today***

First discussion on supplementary readings

December 3: Second discussion on supplementary readings.

December 5: Third discussion on supplementary readings.

December 7: Concluding lecture and class discussion.

Final Exam: DECEMBER 11: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Suggested Books for Supplementary Reading Reports:

The books on this list are definitely acceptable. Students may request permission to report on another book, but consent is at the discretion of the instructor.

Topic 1: National Health Insurance.

Jacob S. Hacker. 1997. *The Road to Nowhere: The Genesis of President Clinton's Plan for Health Security*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Haynes Johnson and David S. Broder. 1996. *The System: The American Way of Politics at the Breaking Point*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Rick Mayes. 2004. *Universal Coverage: The Elusive Quest for National Health Insurance*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Jill Quadagno. 2005. *One Nation Uninsured: Why the U.S. Has No National Health Insurance*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Theda Skocpol. 1996. *Boomerang: Health Care Reform and the Turn Against Government*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Topic 2: Politics and Public Health

Eric Feldman and Ronald Bayer eds., 1999. *Blood Feuds: AIDS, Blood, and the Politics of Medical Disaster*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Christopher H. Foreman, Jr. 1994. *Plagues, Products & Politics: Emergent Public Health Hazards and National Policymaking*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

David A. Kessler. 2001. *A Question of Intent: A Great American Battle With a Deadly Industry*. New York: Public Affairs.

Michael A. Pertschuk. 2001. *Smoke in Their Eyes: Lessons in Movement Leadership from the Tobacco Wars*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Randy Shilts. 1987. *And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic*. New York: St. Martins Press.

Topic 3: Quality and Efficiency

Henry J. Aaron and William B. Schwartz, with Melissa Cox. 2005. *Can We Say No? The Challenge of Rationing Health Care*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution

Institute of Medicine. 2001. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Medicine.

Ichiro Kawachi and Bruce P. Kennedy. 2002. *The Health of Nations: Why Inequality Is Harmful to Your Health*. New York: The New Press.

Edward F. Lawlor. 2003. *Redesigning the Medicare Contract: Politics, Markets and Agency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Peter J. Neumann. 2005. *Using Cost-Effectiveness Analysis to Improve Health Care: Opportunities and Barriers*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Thomas Rice. 2002. *The Economics of Health Reconsidered 2nd ed.* Chicago: Health Administration Press.