

# **INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS**

**Course Number 26:834:581**

**Course Credit (3)**

**Spring 2003**

Professor Evan Stark

## **Course Description and Goals**

Against the background of the changing determinants of population health, this core course focuses on issues of health care organization and policy that are relevant to all public health practitioners.

The course has three goals. The first is to introduce students to the socio-economic and cultural determinants of health and illness. The second goal focuses on the organization, staffing and financing of health care in the U.S., particularly as it relates to health care costs, the composition of the health workforce, and issues of access, equity and quality. The last goal of the course is to broadly frame key health policy issues and debates in public health.

A central theme in this course is the ongoing tension between the broad social determinants of health status, and particularly of inequalities in health, and the biomedical focus of health services. A secondary tension is also examined, the restructuring and positioning of health care organizations to maximize success in the changing environment and basic public health principles of access, equity, quality care, health promotion and prevention. A final theme is the tension between restructuring and positioning health care organizations for success in the changing environment and basic public health principles of access, equity, quality care, health promotion and prevention.

## Learning Objectives

To meet the goals of the course, the class is divided in three sections, each designed to help students answer a particular question better.

Question 1. What are the major determinants of changes in population health and particularly of inequalities in health evident among urban and disadvantaged populations?

To answer this question, Section One considers historical trends in population health and the relative contributions to these trends of conventional medical and public health measures and of inequalities related to social class, work, sex, race, culture and age.

Question II. What are the major elements, dynamics and organizational themes in the development of public health and medical care in the U.S.?

To answer this question, Section Two introduces students to the history, organization, composition, financing and regulation of medical and public health services. This includes an examination of managed care financing mechanisms and organizational structures as they impact the practitioner/patient relationship, health care access and utilization, and internal and external regulatory quality assurance mechanisms.

Question III. What are the key health policy issues and debates that public health must address?

To answer this question, students will examine the dilemmas in biomedical, environmental and behavioral health policy created by multiple and often conflicting goals. Special attention will be given to special needs populations (e.g. victims of AIDS and the elderly, e.g.) as well as to policies affecting tobacco, environmental health, and nutrition. In all of these areas, we will learn to recognize the importance for health of public policies in non-medical as well as medical areas

Course Structure:

Assigned Texts:

The Nation's Health (Sixth Edition), Philip Lee & Carroll Estes, Jones & Bartlett.

Understanding Health Policy, Thomas S. Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach. Appleton & Lange. (Text B&G).

(\*) Health Packet. TBA.

Books are available from the UMD Book Store or can be ordered directly from Amazon.com, [Textbook.com](http://Textbook.com). They will also be put on reserve in the libraries. A limited number of texts are also available at the Rutgers U. Bookstore on the Newark campus.

Format:

Learning will be based on class lectures, guest presentations, readings and student journal reviews.

Students are required to attend all classes unless otherwise excused. More than two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade. In addition, students are required to complete all class assignments in a timely fashion.

Grading:

There will be a mid-term paper and a final, take-home, exam. The grade will be determined as follows:

35% mid-term paper 35% take-home final 20% class assignments  
(e.g. journal reports) 10% attendance and class participation.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### SECTION ONE: THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF POPULATION HEALTH

Question 1. What are the major determinants of changes in population health and particularly of inequalities in health evident among urban and disadvantaged populations?

September 6: Course Introduction and Overview.

The Concept of Social Determinants: Inequalities and Health

Comparing Medical and Public Health Paradigms The Stress Hypothesis

and Public Health

September 13: The 'Epidemic' as a Social Event

- . The Demographic/Epidemiological Transition
- . The Relative Contribution of Medicine, Public Health and Social Determinants to Declining Mortality
- . Explanations for Illness: Chadwick, Engels, Virchow and Koch

#### Chronic Illness and the Reorganization of the Economy

#### Readings:

Text: (L&E). Chapter 2. Article 1 and 2:

(\*). John McKinlay and Sonia McKinlay, "Medical measures and the decline of mortality."

(\*). Evan Stark, "The epidemic as a social event." Int. J. of Health Services. 7(4), 1977. Evan Stark, The epidemic as a social event.

September 20. Social Factors and Disease: The role of social class and work.

- . Public and Occupational Health
- . Work, Social Class or Life-Style?
- . Measuring Stress: Social, Structural and Individual Determinants.. Social Class and coronary disease Text: (L&E). Chapter 2. Article 2,

(\*). Marmot and Theorell, "Social class and cardiovascular disease"

(\*). Smith, "Black Lung: The social production of disease."

September 27. The Role of Sex

- . Why do women live longer than men?  
Witches and midwives: Women as invisible caretakers

- . Violence as a public health issue
- . The feminization of old age

Text (L&E). Part 5, Chapter 11, "Women's health and aging" Articles 1 & 4

(\*). U.N. Fourth World Congress on Women: Strategic Objectives and Actions

(\*). Evan Stark and Anne Flitcraft, Medicine and patriarchal violence. From Women at Risk

(\*). Waldron, 'What do we know about causes of sex differences in mortality?'

October 4: Race, Culture and Illness

- . Why do whites live longer than blacks?

- . The health of black children

- . Ethnicity and Alternative Care

Readings:

Text (L&E). Chapter 2, article 3; Chapter 11, Article 2.

(\*) Wornie Reed, Suffer the children: some effects of racism on the health of black infants

## SECTION TWO. THE MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

Question II. What are the major elements, dynamics and organizational themes in the development of public health and medical care in the U.S.?

October 11. How is Health Care Organized?

- . The Rise of Professionalism in Medicine and Nursing
- . The Transformation of the Hospital
- . The collaboration of Medicine and Public Health
- . The Health Workforce

Text (L&E). Chapter 6, 215-225. Articles 1,4 & 6. Chapter 7, Article 3;

Bodenheimer (Text) Introduction. Chapters 6,7.

October 18. Economic Dimensions: Markets and Health Politics I.

- . Medical markets and medical costs
- . The Structure of Health Payment
- . Access and Cost
- . Paying for the Poor

Assigned readings:

Text (L&E). Chapter 8. Medicare and Medicaid and Articles 1, 4,5 & 6.

Bodenheimer (text) 2, 3 and 4

Guest Speaker, Sandy Kelman, Ph.D, NJ Department of Health "The Economics and Politics of Medicaid in New Jersey."

October 25: Structural Dilemmas in Health Delivery . Access to Care

- . Measuring Quality . Controlling Costs

Bodenheimer (Text) 8, 9 and 12

Text (L&E). Chapter 10, Article 2.

### SECTION THREE: HEALTH POLICY, HEALTH PRACTICE AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH

Question III. What are the key health policy issues and debates that public health must address?

November 1. The Health Policy Process . Is Health Political?

. The Failure of Health Reform . The Politics of Prevention Readings:

Text (L&E). Chapter 3, Article 1,2, 3 & 4; Ch.8, Article 2. Bodenheimer (Text). Chapters 10, 11

November 8. Values in Primary Care and Preventive Health Services for the Medically Underserved.

. Access and Utilization

. Persistent Inequalities in Health . Rationing Care

Readings:

Text (L&E). Chapter 4, Article 1 and 3. Bodenheimer (Text). Chapter 13.

(\*) Case:

Matters of Life and Death: Defunding Organ Transplant  
in Arizona

November 15. The Politics of Public Health  
Public Health Law

(\*) Institute of Medicine, "The Future of Public Health."

(\*) Thacker et al., "Surveillance in environmental public health."

. The Role of Environment Politics

. The Role of Communities in Health Policies

Text (L&E). Chapter 4, Article 2; Ch. 6, Article 2

November 22. Health Policy Close to Home

- . Managed Care Reconsidered
- . Medicaid and Managed Care
- . Medicare Reform

Text (L&E). Chapter 9 and Articles 1,2 and 3. Chapter 8, Article 3.

Guest Speaker: Sally Guttmacher, NYU

November 29. The Politics of AIDS

- . Public Health and Medical Approaches
- . The Role of Community Advocacy in Policy Reform
- . The International Perspective

(\* Case: Coping with Pediatric AIDS (A): A comprehensive care model at Newark's Children's Hospital

(\* Kimball et al., "International aspects of the AIDS/HIV epidemic. Public Health Policy in the Era of Globalization

Guest Speaker TBA

December 6. Public Health Policy in the Era of Globalization

- . The Future of Public Health
- . The Impact of Globalization
- . Medicine, Public Health and Managed Care

Text (L&E). Chapter 5, Article 1.

Bodenheimer (Text). Chapter 16.

(\* Linda Whiteford and Lois Nixon, Comparative Health Systems: Emerging Convergences and Globalization" (\* Steven Lewis, Marcel Saulnier and Marc Renaud, Reconfiguring health policy: Simple truths, complex solutions.

December 13: Catch Up and Review Session for Final Exam