

Health Policy.

Course Number 26:834:585 Course Credit (3)

Summer 2001

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HEALTH POLICY

The purpose of this course is to develop skills in the analysis, application, evaluation, and development of policies related to public health, including the delivery of medical care. The course focuses on three areas in policy making, the political context in which health policies arise, broad policy questions related to health services, (access, costs, utilization, rationalizing, etc.) and policy in specific substantive areas that disproportionately affect the health and well-being of urban and disadvantaged populations, particularly inequalities in health. A key question is on whether and how formal policies can modify so-called social determinants of health status. An additional concern is which ethical framework best helps to guide such a process. The course combines background reading with the analysis of specific case materials that focus on real situations in which specific policy decisions must be made by public or private health managers or officials.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students should:

- Understand the historical, political, economic, and cultural contexts of U.S. policy-making in health;
- Describe the dimensions of health inequity in the U.S. and possible solutions;
- Delineate the principles that can be used to make reasonable policy choices;
- Apply principles in health policy to a specific substantive area of public health or health care services.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance is crucial. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the final grade. Students are to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading.

There are three assignments.

Term Paper. Students will select a major substantive area in medical services or public health and critically examine relevancy in the area. The paper (10-15 pp) will review the history of policy in the area, identify the major dilemmas or limits to current policy, describe the policy options for action available and recommend the best course of action.

. Oral presentation. Students will present a review of their paper topic to the class. The 15 minute presentation will include an annotated bibliography of at least 5 published sources as well a review of relevant web-based sites.

. E-mail reviews. Students will provide weekly summaries of assigned readings. Each review should include both a summary paragraph on the content of the assignments and a critical paragraph

REQUIRED TEXTS

James Marone and Gary Belkin (ed.) The Politics of Health Care Reform, Duke University. 1994.

Recommended

Thomas Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach, Understanding Health Policy. Appleton & Lange, 2nd edition** (2000)

Class Reading

Part I. INEQUALITIES, INEQUITIES AND SOCIAL DISPARITIES

Class One: Introduction and Overview

Txt. Rothman, "A century of failure." 11-26.

Class Two: Justice and Inequality

From Is inequality bad for our health?. Beacon Press. 2000

N. Daniels, B. Kennedy and I. Kawachi, "Justice is good for our health." Michael Marmot, "Do inequalities matter?" Marsha Angell, "Pockets of poverty." Sudhir Anand and Farienne Peter, "Equal opportunity." and Ted Marmor, "Policy options."

Recommended: Bodenheimer txt. Chps. 2 & 3. "Paying for Health Care" & "Access to Health Care."

Class Three: Disparities in Health Services

Marian E. Gornick, Vulnerable Populations and Medicare Services. Why do disparities exist? A Century Foundation Report. 2000.

Carroll Estes & Karen Linkins, "Critical perspectives on health and aging." In Gary Albrecht, R. Fitzpatrick & S. Scrimshaw (eds.) The Handbook of social studies in health and medicine. Sage, 2000.

Class Four: Equity

Lu Ann Aday, "An expanded conceptual framework for equity: Implications for assessing health policy." In Gary Albrecht, R. Fitzpatrick & S. Scrimshaw (eds.) The Handbook of social studies in health and medicine. Sage, 2000.

Nancy Moss, Socioeconomic disparities in health in the United States: An agenda for action. From The Nation's Health P. Lee & C. Estes, eds. 6th edition. Jones & Bartlett. 2001.

Class Five: Values

Txt. Jacobs, "The politics of American government."

Beauford Longest. "Ethics in the political marketplace." From The Nation's Health

Term Paper Topics Due

Class Six: Race