

PLSC 660: Health Policy

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Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to give the students an understanding of how health care policy is made and implemented in the U.S. More specifically the course will

- (a) examine the evolution and major components of the health care system in the U.S.;
- (b) compare the U.S. health care system with those of a few selected industrial countries;
- (c) study the problems associated with the provision of health care services at the present time; and
- (d) review the solutions attempted and/or proposed to reform the current health care system.

Course Format: This course will be conducted as a seminar and, thus, requires significant preparation and regular attendance by the students.

Required Texts:

White, Competing Solutions: American Health Care Proposals and International Experience(1995)

Aaron, The Problem That Won't Go Away (1996)

Thompson, Medicaid and Devolution (1998)

Mann, Intensive Care: How Congress Shapes Health Policy (1995)

Assessment/Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

- (1) Weekly Home Assignments: Every week students will be given a topic or a number of questions dealing with a topic, about which each student will write a short paper. This topic will, then, be discussed in class. It is very important that the papers should be done on time and, thus, students should be ready for class discussion.
- (2) Research Paper and Presentation: Each student will select (in consultation with the instructor) a research topic related to health care policy area, write a research paper on this topic, and present it in class. Presentation time will be 25 minutes, which will be followed by a class discussion.

Weekly home assignments will be worth 60 percent and the research paper and presentation will account for 40 percent of the final grade.

Topics to be Covered:

Introduction: Defining health care; financing health care; delivering health care.

American Health Care System: How Americans are insured; Medicare; Medicaid; private insurance.

Managed Care: The theory of managed competition; the attractions of managed competition; the flaws in managed competition; the difficulty of regulating managed competition; managed care and universal coverage.

The Making of Health Policy: Congressional structures and processes.

The Clinton Plan: Managed Competition with a Global Budget: Clinton's combination of competition and regulation; evaluation of Clinton Plan.

Comparison of Health Care Models: Health care systems in Canada, Germany, and the U.K.

Recent Developments in Managed Care.