

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
COURSE OUTLINE
Spring 2018

PCH 358, Section 3W – Health Policy – Monday 5:00 to 7:30pm, Pelz Gym Room 6B

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Office Hours: by appointment

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Course description

An investigation of issues and legislative procedures which shape health policy; a survey of important health legislation. Prerequisite: PCH 202

Course text:

There is no assigned textbook for the class. Assigned readings are available on the course’s Blackboard site.

Competencies:

- Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US.
- Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health and health services.
- Describe how policy and regulations impact the health status of populations.

Learning objectives:

1. Articulate the contribution of policy to the public’s health
2. Identify relevant stakeholders for the policy development process
3. Understand multiple perspectives of policy proposals
4. Describe the structure of the U.S. public health and health care system
5. Anticipate all consequences, positive and negative, of policy
6. Explain the major components in the creation of legislation, judicial decisions, regulations, and budgeting at the state and federal levels of government.
7. Explain the roles public health professionals can play in advocating for health public policies.

Content:

Date	Topic	Notes	Quiz	Debate
1/23	Introduction – overview health policy, writing			
1/30	Structure of the health care “system”, providers, Connecticut focus		1	
	Readings: CT Health Policy Module , August 2016			
2/6	Public health policy, quality of care, health equity		1	
	Readings: The Basics: The Public Health Service , National Health Policy Forum, 2013			

	The Relative Contribution of Multiple Determinants to Health Outcomes , Health Affairs Brief, August 2014			
2/13	Advocacy 101	Midterm first draft due	1	1
	Readings: CT Health Policy Toolbox , Separated by Velvet Ropes , Kevin Rennie, Hartford Courant, 2003			
2/20	Coverage, access to care, the uninsured		Quiz 1 due, start Quiz 2 material	2
	Readings: Key Facts about the Uninsured Population, Kaiser Family Foundation, September 2016 CT's Uninsured Rate continues to drop , CT Health Policy Project, September 2017			
2/27	Health care economics	Midterm revisions returned	2	3
	Readings: Health Care Costs: A Primer , Kaiser Family Foundation, 2012 CT Health Care Costs , CT Healthbook, CTHPP, July 2014			
3/6	Movie Night: Sick Around the World	Final midterm due		4
3/20	Medicare		2	5
	Readings: The Basics: Medicare , and The Medicare Drug Benefit (Part D) National Health Policy Forum, December 2014			
3/27	Medicaid, CHIP		Quiz 2 due, Start Quiz 3	6
	Readings: Policy Basics – Introduction to Medicaid , Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2015 CT Medicaid , CT Healthbook, CTHPP, Aug 2014 – 10p			
4/3	Health Insurance		3	7
	Readings: How Private Health Insurance Works: A Primer , Kaiser Family Foundation, 2008			
4/10	Research, Lobbying and Drugs		3	8
	Readings: The Complex Math Behind Spiraling Drug Prices, NY Times, Aug. 24, 2016 How healthcare's Washington lobbying machine gets the job done, Modern Healthcare, October 24, 2014			
4/17	ACA – the law	Draft of final due	Quiz 3 due Start quiz 4	9
	Readings: The Tanning Tax is a Public Health Success Story, Health Affairs Blog, Aug 2017 The Affordable Care Act at Five Years, NEJM, June 2015 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Implications for Public Health Practice, Public			

	Health Reports, 126: 130-135, 2011			
4/24	ACA – repeal and replace status		4	10
	Reading: R Blendon and J Benson, Public Opinion About the Future of the Affordable Care Act, NEJM, August 2017			
5/1	Delivery/payment reform	Final draft revisions returned	4	11
	Readings: Patient Centered Medical Homes , Health Affairs Briefs, 2010			
5/8	Debate/reflection make-ups, wrap up	Final paper and quiz 4 due by 5:00 pm		

Course requirements:

W Course Requirements

This course meets the University requirements of a “W” course. This means that students will write 5,000 words (at least 20 pages) of papers during the course.

Papers will be graded on content, writing style and organization. The student will proofread papers carefully. Some assignments will require students to read additional articles and do research.

Learning to write well is an essential part of this course. To that end, we will do preparation work in class for many of our assignments, and we will peer review some assignments. Students will be given an opportunity to revise drafts, however the draft and final versions will have the same point value. If students submit only a final version, they receive **zero points** for the draft grade. The instructor can require students to rewrite papers, with assistance from the Campus Writing Center, which she deems are inadequate. In such cases, the student will receive a passing grade for that paper only upon revision, and verification of attending the Writing Center. All students are encouraged to use the Writing Center to improve their writing skills.

Complete all reading assignments before classes and participate in the discussions

The teaching method for this class is a combination of lecture, student presentations and discussions. Frequent, high quality contributions can improve a student’s course grade. Reading assignments must be completed before class and students must be prepared to discuss them. **There will be quizzes on the reading.** Students are encouraged to bring in current reports on public health issues from the news.

All assignments are **due at the beginning** of class on the designated date. **All assignments must be submitted in Word format to the correct place on Blackboard by that time.** In the event that you are unable to meet one of the deadlines due to illness or personal emergency, it is essential that you contact the instructor as soon as possible and make alternative arrangements before class. In most cases, **late assignments will result in a grade reduction of 10% per week. It is always better to submit an assignment late rather than never. Assignments can be submitted until the date given by the professor to close grades.**

Students are responsible for tracking which assignments have been submitted and which are missing.

The professor will not send individual reminders of missing assignments, but questions are encouraged.

To receive credit, students must submit papers in Word format through BlackBoard to the correct place and on time. Sending an assignment to the instructor by email will not be considered submitted. Papers will be marked late if submitted to Blackboard late.

Student debates, fact sheets and reflections

Each student will participate on one side of a debate concerning timely health policy questions currently being considered by policymakers. Students will sign up for a debate date and question at the first class. Students will prepare slides for the presentation and may include auxiliary slides with information to address anticipated rebuttal arguments. Students will also prepare a fact sheet for policymakers to support their position. Students must provide copies of the fact sheet for the entire class. Slides and fact sheets are due by 5 pm on the Friday before the debate. Submissions after that date/time will be marked late. Students will review copies of the fact sheet and return it to each debater with comments at the end of that class. Format and expectations for the debates and fact sheets will be provided at the first class.

After each debate, the entire class will submit a two-page reflection on the debate and the topic due by the next class. Students can choose whether to submit one reflection of both debates to both debaters or separate reflections for each debater. In either case, reflections from each debate must be at least two pages in total. Students will submit reflections to both Blackboard and email to the debaters. Reflection grades only for students **with one excused absence** due to illness or personal emergency will be the average grade on the other reflection assignments.

Writing assignments:

In addition to written debate reflections, slides and fact sheets, students will have two, more extensive written assignments – testimony for a public hearing and an op-ed media piece. Each of the two assignments will be submitted to Blackboard in two parts. The first part will consist of a draft, which will be returned to students with comments from the professor two weeks later. Students will then have one week to revise the draft and submit a final assignment. Both the draft and final versions of each assignment will be assigned points and graded. **Failure to submit a draft will result in loss of those points.** Details about the first assignment will be provided at the first class.

Quizzes:

There will be regular quizzes on Blackboard related to the readings, assignments and lectures.

Study Hours:

In addition to the 2-1/2 hours spent in class each week, this course will entail approximately 6-1/2 hours of study time per week to fulfill course requirements and complete assignments.

Student evaluation and grading criteria:

The basis for grades is below. Grade Center on Blackboard will reflect these point values, not percentages.

Testimony assignment -- draft	10 points
Testimony – final version	10
Debate presentation, slides	15

Debate fact sheet	10
Debate reflections – 11 @ 2 points each	22
Quizzes – 4 @ 2 points each	8
Op-Ed assignment -- draft	12.5
Op-Ed assignment -- final	12.5
Total	100 points

The basis for calculating final grades is:

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 0-61
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Mid-Course Evaluation:

Students will be notified of their performance midway through the course. For undergraduates the distribution of a midterm grade is a University requirement. The midterm grade will be based on the grade for assignments, quizzes and debates completed and graded as of the midterm date.

Attendance policy:

Attendance is mandatory. Students will be punctual. Class lectures and discussions are the sole source of a significant portion of the teaching material in this course, and will enhance the students' understanding of the written material.

Academic honesty statement:

Plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty are not tolerated.

The integrity of scholarship is the cornerstone of the academic and social structure of the University. It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of academic life, related in whatever fashion to the University, shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Violations of academic honesty are grounds for a failing grade and may result in dismissal from the University.

We will discuss plagiarism and the penalties for submitting plagiarized papers in the first class. However, it is each student's responsibility to know the definition of plagiarism and the SCSU policy. The consequences for plagiarism are written notification of the offense to the Chairman of the Department of Public Health and the Dean of the School of Health and Human Services AND an academic penalty that may be as severe as requesting a student's withdrawal from the university. Once I have determined plagiarism has occurred, the only recourse a student has is through the University academic appeals process, including the Department of Public Health's Grade Appeals Committee. Rewriting a plagiarized assignment is NOT an option for avoiding these penalties.

MAJORS STATEMENT:

To become and remain a public health major, students must have the declaration paperwork approved by the Undergraduate Coordinator and have the required GPA (2.5 for those enrolled in the University prior to Fall 2016 and 2.75, for those who enrolled Fall 2016). Students must have the required GPA (or higher) in order to receive a Bachelor of Science in Public Health at the time of graduation. For

registration, only declared public health majors will receive a PIN from a public health faculty member; all non-majors must receive their PIN from Academic Advising or their current major.

Disability Statement

Southern Connecticut State University provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, for students with documented disabilities on an individualized basis. If you are a student with a documented disability, the University's Disability Resource Center (DRC) can work with you to determine appropriate accommodations. Before you receive accommodations in this class, you will need to make an appointment with the Disability Resource Center located at EN C-105A. To discuss your approved accommodations with me or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to meet as soon as possible.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Southern Connecticut State University reaffirms and emphasizes its commitment to maintain a workplace and educational environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is reprehensible and subverts the mission of the university and will not be tolerated at Southern Connecticut State University. It threatens the careers of faculty and staff, and the educational experience of our students. The purpose of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment and to offer students and employees who believe they have been sexually harassed a means to redress any such claim with the goal of ending the harassment and providing an environment conducive to learning and working. Retaliation against an individual who complains about sexual harassment or who cooperates with an investigation of a complaint is unlawful and, if found to have occurred, will not be tolerated by the University.

Bibliography:

Matthew Hahn (2017), Distracted: How Regulations are Destroying the Practice of Medicine and Preventing True Health-Care Reform, Skyhorse Publishing, New York, NY.

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Barr, D.A. (2011), Introduction to U.S. Health Policy: The Organization, Financing, and Delivery of Health Care in America, 3rd edition, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore MD.

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Gawande, A., (2007), Better, Picador, New York NY.

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[Guide to Effectively Educating State and Local Policymakers](#), Society for Public Health Education, 2011

Phipper, M. (2006), Writing to Change the World, Riverhead Books, New York NY.

Reid, T.R. (2009), The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health Care, Penguin Press, New York NY.

Rosenthal, E. (2017), An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back, Penguin Press, New York NY.

Staff of *The Washington Post* (2010), Landmark: The Inside Story of America's New Health Care Law and What It Means for Us All, Public Affairs, New York, NY.

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Tufte, E., (2001), The Visual Display of Information, 2nd edition, Graphics Press, Cheshire CT.

Wydick, R. (2005), Plain English for Lawyers, 5th edition, Carolina Academic Press, Durham, NC.

Anything from the CTHPP Book Club, www.cthealthpolicy.org/bookclub.htm

Internet Resources: Most have at least one listserv available to anyone for regular updates

Health Affairs, www.healthaffairs.org, a prominent peer-reviewed health policy journal focused on US health policy. The Health Affairs Blog (<http://healthaffairs.org/blog/>) has updates on timely health policies and proposals.

The Kaiser Family Foundation (www.kff.org) is a highly respected source of independent information on health policy and data. Particularly recommended is signing up for daily newsletters from Kaiser Health News (<http://khn.org/>).

CT Health Policy Advocacy Toolbox (www.cthealthpolicy.org/toolbox) consumer-friendly explanations of CT government processes, including legislative, regulatory, budget and electoral, and tools for individuals and non-profits to advocate for better health policies.

www.cthealthbook.org Overview of CT health care system, candidate briefing books on CT health issues

www.cthealthblog.org Updates on timely issues, research, and trends in CT health policy

The Commonwealth Fund (www.cmwf.org) provides timely, respected policy analysis focused on health systems, delivery of care, state and international health policy.

STATNews (www.statnews.com) is an exceptional, nationally recognized health-focused news source.

Governing magazine (www.governing.com) is an important resource for state health policy, including health policy.

CT New Junkie (www.ctnewsjunkie.com) is the best source to keep up with state-level policies and proposals. And, by the way, your professor is a columnist for CTNJ.

Politico Health (www.politico.com/healthcare) and Vox Care (www.vox.com/health-care) are great sources for the latest on national health policy.