THE HELLER SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
Brandeis University
Waltham, MA 02454

HS 5.13A ISSUES IN NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY

Fall 2018
Tuesdays 2:00-4:50 PM
Heller School, Altman Amphitheater G01

Stuart H. Altman, Ph.D.
Sol C. Chaikin Professor of National Health Policy

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Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:50 PM

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This course will survey and analyze the health care system in the United States, emphasizing the major issues and trends, which have made the subject of intense public concern. The course will cover the financing, delivery and payment of health care by both the public and private sectors. The history of health reform will be discussed as well as passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) and the political battle to Repeal and Replace it. The course will analyze the impact of PPACA on the number of uninsured and its geographic distribution. Each of the major components of the U.S. health financing system, Medicare, Medicaid, and Pvt. Insurance will be discussed as well as the high level of health care costs. We will also discuss the importance of “Social Determinants” on health status and the continued existence of disparities in the availability of care and its quality for certain populations. Even though we spend a far higher percentage of our national income on health care services than other countries the quality of care in the U.S, is far from the best and access problems for certain populations abound.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have reasonable accommodation for you in class, please see the Instructor immediately.

Statement on Academic Integrity:
Brandeis University’s Rights and Responsibilities states:

Every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. A student shall not submit work that is falsified or is not the result of the student’s own effort. Infringement of academic honesty by a student subjects that student to serious penalties, which may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension from the University or other sanctions (see Section 21). A student who is in doubt regarding standards of academic honesty in a course or assignment should consult the faculty member responsible for that course or assignment before submitting the work. A student’s lack of understanding is not a valid defense to a charge of academic dishonesty.

Course Requirements:
Students will have a choice in terms of the requirements for a final grade. Either a student can only take a final exam which constitutes 100% of the grade, or a term paper and the final each of which contributed 50% to the final grade. The paper should be a policy analysis paper rather than a review, research or survey paper; discussing a health care problem, the reasons for the problem and potential solutions. The paper must be no longer than 12 pages (double-spaced). A short narrative and a title of the policy paper is required prior to paper due date. Please note the paper must not be related to a previous paper written, or if it is, how is it significantly different. There will also be an in-class final exam. Please contact Professor Altman if you have any questions.

POLICY PAPER NARRATIVE DUE: November 6, 2018
POLICY PAPER DUE: November 27, 2018
FINAL EXAM: December 11, 2018

Readings and LATTE:
Because the seminar concentrates on new and emerging issues, it is difficult to construct a reading list that is up-to-date and comprehensive yet challenging and realistic in scope. Scholarly articles, reports, policy briefs, book chapters, and other readings are assigned weekly. There are both required and recommended readings each week. Students are expected to read and synthesize required readings prior to class meetings. Readings are listed in the syllabus and are available to download/print via LATTE. Recommended readings are starred (*). Additional readings that address emerging national health policy issues may be added throughout the semester.

Required Readings

1. **Power, Politics, and Universal Health Care: The Inside Story of a Century Long Battle** by Stuart H. Altman and David Shactman (Prometheus Books, September 2011) is recommended. Readings from Dr. Altman’s book appear in the syllabus with the abbreviation PPUHC. It is available in the print and electronic editions.

2. The following books/reports are available on LATTE under “Introductory Material Reading”:

A list of health policy resources that may be helpful to review throughout the semester is posted on LATTE. Lecture slides will also be available to download via LATTE.

*For students with little or no background on the U.S. health system, it is recommended that you read ESSENTIALS OF Health Policy and Law, Third Addition, Joel Teitelbaum and Sara Wilensky Chapter 4,7-12. It is available in print and electronic editions.*
CLASS 1 SEPTEMBER 4

OVERVIEW OF COURSE: IS ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE A “RIGHT” FOR ALL AMERICANS; SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH, PAYING FOR HEALTHCARE IN THE U.S.


CLASS 2 SEPTEMBER 11 (DOONAN)

THE NEED FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM, THE PASSAGE OF OBAMACARE (ACA)

SINGLE PAYER VS. OBAMACARE VS. REPUBLICAN REFORM PLANS/NO REFORM

1. PPUHC Prologue, Introduction, Forward, Chapters 1-3


CLASS 3 SEPTEMBER 18 (DOONAN)

MEDICAID ITS HISTORY AND ITS FUTURE

8-22-18
1. PPUHC, Chapters 4 and 7
5. Section 1115 Medicaid Waivers: A Look at Key Themes and State Specific Waivers, MB Musameci, Kaiser Family Foundation, Aug. 16, 2017
6. Republican Changes to Medicaid Could Have Longer Impact Than Changes to Obamacare, H. Park, NY Times March 7, 2017

**Sept. 25 – NO Class – Brandeis Monday**

**CLASS 4, OCTOBER 2**

THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF PRIVATE INSURANCE


**CLASS 5 OCTOBER 9**

MEDICARE AND ITS FUTURE

1. PPUHC, Chapters 5, 6, and 8

**CLASS 6, OCTOBER 16 (THOMAS)**

MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS: THEIR USE AND COSTS

Required Readings:
Diffusion of innovation/technology and health care costs


Prescription drugs


5. New York Case Study (application of ICER estimates for policy): Hwang TJ, Kesselheim AS, Sarpatwari A. Value based pricing and state reform of prescription drug pricing. JAMA 2017;318(7):609-610. Available at: https://jamanetwork.com/resources.library.brandeis.edu/journals/jama/fullarticle/2643729

Additional references/interest:
The White House Blueprint to lower drug prices. Available at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trumps-blueprint-lower-drug-prices/

National Academy for State Health Policy Blog: While the Administration Mulls How to Curb Prescription Costs, State Legislatures Take the Lead. Available at: https://nashp.org/while-the-administration-mulls-how-to-curb-drug-costs-state-legislatures-are-acting/


CLASS 7 October 23

GROWTH IN HEALTH COSTS, ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL IT AND END OF LIFE SPENDING

1. PPUHC Chapters 9 & 10


   *White, C., J. D. Reschovsky, and A. M. Bond. 2014. “Understanding Differences Between High- And Low-Price Hospitals: Implications For Efforts To Rein In Costs.” Health Aff (Millwood).

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**CLASS 8, OCTOBER 30 (MECHANIC)**

**DELIVERY SYSTEM CHANGES & PAYMENT REFORM BY GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE INSURANCE**


**Recommended reading (optional but short):**


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**CLASS 9, NOVEMBER 6 (TBA) (POLICY PAPER NARRATIVE DUE TODAY)**

**HEALTH DISPARITIES AND EMERGING ISSUES**


*The American Public Health Association (APHA) is hosting a series of webinars about the effects of racism on the health of the United States. This looks like a terrific series. You can find details here: http://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/webinars/racism-and-health

Emerging Issues
*Corlette, S., Volk, J., Berenson, R. and Feder, J. Narrow Provider Networks in New Health Plans: Balancing Affordability with Access to Quality Care. The Center on Health Insurance Reforms, Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, and Urban Institute. May 2014

### CLASS 10 NOVEMBER 13

**HOW HOSPITALS AND PHYSICIANS ARE PAID**


3. Quentin, et al., “Hospital Payment Based on Diagnosis Related Groups Differs In Europe And Holds Lessons For The United States”, Health Affairs April 2013, 32:713-723.


### CLASS 11, NOVEMBER 20 (GARNICK)

**QUALITY OF CARE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS**


CLASS 12, NOVEMBER 27  

POLICY PAPER DUE TODAY

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON IN HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS, UTILIZATION AND PRICES

1. Health Care Systems In Transition: United Kingdom and Germany.

Supplement

CLASS 13, DECEMBER 4

PHYSICIAN SUPPLY & PAYMENTS AND THE ROLE OF NON-PHYSICIAN PROFESSIONALS


CLASS 14

FINAL EXAM IN CLASS

DECEMBER 11, 2018

TA SESSION DATE/TIME TBD (OPTIONAL)
TA SESSION DATE/TIME TBD (OPTIONAL)

8-22-18