## NYU Wagner logo

**HPAM-GP 2852**

**Comparative Analysis of Health Systems**

**January, 2024**

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Class Sessions meet on January 3,5 and 8, from 10:00AM-5:00PM; and on January 10 and 11 from 11:00AM-2:00PM. A summary of your final project is due on January 16th.

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## Course Description

We tend to be ethnocentric in our views of health care organization and policy. A look abroad, however, can provide insights about problems at home. In spite of differences in the organization and financing of their health care systems, most countries share a number of common problems with the United States. First, is the question of deciding - or not explicitly deciding - what proportion of GNP should be devoted to health and welfare. Second, is the problem of agreeing on appropriate criteria to allocate health and social service expenditures. Third, is the problem of how to implement established policies: through regulation, promotion of competition, budgeting, or reimbursement incentives directed at health care providers.

This intensive 3 day J-Term class is preceded by a required introductory session on Friday, Dec.15th (5-6 pm). We will attempt to cover most of the material in the full semester-long class but the approach will be different, of course. The instructor will cover much of the material covered in readings by organizing discussions on the organization, financing and performance of health systems in wealthy nations. We begin by considering conventional health system models around the world and alternative perspectives for studying them and evaluating their performance. We will discuss how so much of the literature draws on selective evidence to evaluate healthcare systems in the U.S. and abroad. Finally, we will study a range of different approaches to the empirical analysis of health system performance in selected nations, and examine the extent to which the available evidence supports or refutes widely shared views of different health care systems.

In addition to these articles listed below, to which you will find links on Brightspace, I urge all of you to read as much as you can of the books by Paul Dutton and Thomas Rice over the winter break preceding the class. You will also find a bibliography on Brightspace for your reference.

## Recommended Books

1. Dutton, P. (2021) *Beyond Medicine: Why European Social Democracies Enjoy Better Health Outcomes than the United States.* Ithaca,Cornell U. Press.
2. Emanuel, E. (2020) *Which Country Has the World’s Best Health Care?* New York, Public Affairs.
3. Rice, T. (2021) *Health Insurance Systems: An International Comparison*, Cambridge. MA. Elsevier. [Link through NYU Library](https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6607135)
4. T.R. Reid (2010) *The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper and Fairer Health Care*. Penguin.

## Course Learning Objectives

* Analyze conceptual and methodological issues in the study of health systems
* Identify common problems and differences among diverse health systems
* Highlight key features of health systems in OECD nations and other countries.
* Assess the impact of globalization on health system development
* Analyze the U.S. health system from a comparative perspective
* Examine the uses of comparative analysis in learning from abroad
* Present an argument, based on relevant concepts and evidence

## Class Calendar

**Introduction**

| Date | Class | Topic |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Jan. 3  Wednesday  Morning  10:00-1:00 | 1 | **Overview of the Field: The Case For and Against Comparative Analysis**  **of Health Systems**  **Overview of Class: Required Readings and Assignments**  Readings:  L. Brown. Comparing health systems in four countries: Lessons for the United States. (2003). American J. of Public Health 93(1), 52-56.  Okma, KG. & Marmor, TR. (2013). Comparative studies and health care policy: Learning and mislearning across borders. Clinical Medicine 13(5), 487-491  Optional Reading:  T.R. Reid, The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper and Fairer Health Care. Penguin, 2010. Chapters 1-8.  Optional Film:  Film:  - Fix It: Healthcare at the Tipping Point: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ZDpYjKVAU5> |
| Jan. 3  Wednesday Afternoon  1:00-5:00 | 2 | **The Quest for Better, Cheaper, Fairer, even Perfect Health Systems**  Readings:  Papanicolas, I. Woskie, L. Jha, A. Health care spending in the United States and other high-income countries. JAMA 319 (10), 2018.  Dutton, P. Introduction: Relative decline is decline all the same.  Emanuel, E. Which Country has the World’s Best Health Care? Read the Introduction and selections on systems that interest you |
| Jan. 5  Friday  Morning  9:00-12:00 | 3 | **Health System Performance Metrics** **(I):** **The World Health Organization and its Critics: Discrete components of performance vs. composite scores/rankings**  Readings:  Frenk, J and Murray, C. (2000). A Framework for Assessing the Performance of Health Systems. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 78(6), 717-31.  P. Musgrove. (2003). Judging Health Systems: Reflections on WHO’s Methods. Lancet 361(9371), 1817-1820.  Coyne, J. and Hilsenrath, P. (2002). “The World Health Report 2000: Can Health Care Systems Be Compared Using a Single Measure of Performance?” American Journal of Public Health 92(1), 30.  Navarro, Vicente. (2002). “The World Health Report 2000: Can Health Care Systems Be Compared Using a Single Measure of Performance?” American Journal of Public Health 92(1), 31. |
| Jan.5  Friday  Afternoon  1:00-4:00 | 4 | **Health System Performance Metrics (II):** **The continuing contributions of the Commonwealth Fund**  Readings:  Schneider et al. (2021). *Mirror, Mirror: Reflecting Poorly*. New York, the Commonwealth Fund. <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2021/aug/mirror-mirror-2021-reflecting-poorly>  Schneider, E. (2017). From last to first – Could the U.S. health care system become the best in the world? NEJM 377, 901-904.  Doty, M. et al. (2021). Income-related inequality in affordability and access to primary care in eleven high-income countries. Health Affairs.40(1).  Dutton, P. Chapter 1 (France) or 2 (Germany) or 3 (Sweden)  Optional Reading:  R. Osborn, D. Squires, M. M. Doty, D. O. Sarnak, and E.C. Schneider, “In New Survey of 11 Countries, U.S. Adults Still Struggle with Access to and Affordability of Health Care,” *Health Affairs* Web First, 2016. |
| Jan. 8  Monday  Morning  10:00-1:00 | 5 | **Student Presentations**  Readings:  McGlynn, E. (2004). There is no perfect health system. Health Affairs. 23 (3).  Appleby, J. (2011). Which is the best health system in the world? BMJ 343, 722-723.  Oliver, A. (2012). The folly of cross-country ranking exercises. JHEPL. 7(1), 15-17.  Wolf and Aron (2013). US Health disadvantage. JAMA.309(8). Emanuel, E. (2020). Which Country has the world's best health care?  Public Affairs. New York. Ch. 12: Who's the Best? |
| Jan 8  Monday  Afternoon  2:00-5:00 | 6 | **What’s the Best Health Care System and How Would You Know?**  Readings:  Emanuel, E. (2020). Which Country has the world's best health care?  Ch. 12: Who's the Best?  -Hsiao, W. (2020). How to fix American health care: What other countries can - and can’t - teach the United States. *Foreign Affairs*.  -Dutton, P. *Beyond Medicine*, Conclusion |
| Jan 10  Wednesday  11:00AM-2:00 PM | 7 | **Student Presentations**  Readings:  -Marmor, T. (2018). Our lost vocabulary of social insurance.  <https://niskanencenter.org/blog/lost-vocabulary-of-social-insurance/>  Part III, Rice, T. (2021) *Health Insurance Systems: An International Comparison*, Cambridge. MA. Elsevier. [Link here through NYU Library.](https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6607135) |
| Jan 11  Thursday  11:00AM-2:00 PM | 8 | **Student Presentations**  Discussion of Conclusions by Emanuel and Rice. |

## Course Assignments

There is neither a mid-term nor a final examination. You will “get out” what you “put in” to this class, as far as what you learn. I ask that you read the articles we will discuss before we meet. I will also ask students the day before to come to class prepared to respond to one of the questions I will raise about readings for the next day. This assignment is important because it will enhance the quality of our class discussions. There is also a mid-term exercise due the evening before we meet for Session #5. This involves choosing 2 countries among the 11 surveyed by the Commonwealth Fund (CF) in Mirror, Mirror and comparing them along 5 of the CF’s 71 discrete indicators. I will ask you to present your results on a Table followed by answering 3 questions. We will discuss in class during Session #6.

The final assignment involves conducting comparative documentary research on two health systems of your choice. This assignment does not call for a term paper. Rather it provides you the opportunity to dig deeper into the recent evolution and performance of two health care systems and how they compare to one in another nation. The output for this assignment should be delivered in three parts. The first part is due on session #5 of the class. You will give a one-slide oral presentation in which you define a few research questions you would like to explore in your comparison of two health systems. You should state why these questions are important to you and explain your approach to answer them. Please post a 1-page written draft version by midnight before session #6 on Discussion #1 of Brightspace. The second part, due by midnight before session #7 involves assembling relevant materials (articles, tables, charts) that provide some answers/insights in response to the questions you have posed. Key sections of these materials should be highlighted in yellow. Please post on Discussion #3 of Brightspace. Finally, for our last session (#8), prepare an oral presentation on what you found and what you learned from the process and post a one to two page summary (<500 words) on Discussion #4 of Brightspace by January 16th.

## Grading

The first part of the research dossier (posted on Discussion #1) will count for 10% of the grade. The mid-term exercise posted on Discussion #2 will count for 20% of the grade. The second part of your research dossier (posted on Discussion #3) will count for another 20% of your grade. Your final summary (posted on Discussion #4) will count for another 20% of your grade and is due before January 16th, at the latest. Class participation will count for 30% of the grade.

*Plagiarism Policy*: Academic integrity is crucial to the mission of NYU Wagner. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated since you have all signed an Academic Oath at NYU/Wagner and are bound by the academic code of the school. Please review the [NYU policy on plagiarism](http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies) (posted on Wagner Website) prior to submitting written work.