COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall/October 2014

This is a 7 week course for management and policy students, particularly for those interested in the delivery of health and social services. Learning objectives include:

- Foster critical awareness of the student’s values in relation to the underlying management and policy issues
- Identify and enhance knowledge and skills to respond to specific caring dilemmas encountered in today’s environment.
- Improve analysis of caring dilemmas and evidence-based practice in suggesting recommendations to respond to these dilemmas.
- Promote competence in telling stories to gain attention and influence others regarding management and policy interventions

Class sessions will explore narrative in specifying caring dilemmas faced by managers and policymakers. The course will demonstrate the practical value of story telling in persuading resource allocators and other stakeholders to make management and policy interventions. Emphasis will be on critical thinking, real-world application and decision-making in a professional environment.

Instructional Methods

To meet these goals, this course uses narratives, readings, lectures, assignments and class discussion. Narratives and readings provide an important foundation for class discussion and must be completed prior to each class session. The due dates for all readings and other assignments are listed in the syllabus. Lectures will be used focus discussion from and provide additional information to supplement the readings. Because each of you brings unique perspectives and experiences to the class, participation in class discussions is essential to your own learning as well as that of other class members.
Narratives and Readings

There are six required novels and a few stories and poems. Other required readings will be posted online. It is important that you have completed the assignments before class on the day shown on the schedule. We shall not have time to talk about everything covered in the readings in class, so be sure to email us about anything you do not understand. You will be expected to have read the narratives and readings before making your class presentation and writing the assigned paper.

All assigned readings other than the novels will be posted on NYU classes.

Assignments and Grading

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following assignments:

- Class presentation (33%) due weeks 2-6.
- Written Paper (33%) due week 6.
- Class participation (33%) weeks 1-7.

Each of these assignments is discussed in more detail below.

ASSIGNMENTS:

#1 Presentation: Applying Narrative to a Caring Dilemma.

At the end of Session 1, students will be assigned to topics and class sessions.

Summarize the narrative and explain how the narrative is relevant to the caring dilemma. Discuss options from the readings or elsewhere to respond to the caring dilemma. Explain as applicable how you or your loved ones of yours dealt with or will deal with the caring dilemma.

The presentation to the class should last no longer than 7 minutes. Share with the class a 1-2 page outline in advance of your presentation. Do not read your presentation, as this is an opportunity for you to improve presenting skills.

Students in the audience will evaluate your presentation according to the following criteria:

- How relevant you make the narrative to the dilemma.
- The relevance of the options in responding effectively to the dilemma.
- How compelling was your presentation.

2 Written paper: Translating a Caring Dilemma into an Answerable Research Question.

Select a topic. You may or may not wish to use the same topic as your presentation.

- specify the nature and causes of the caring dilemma
- reframe the dilemma so that it becomes an answerable research question
- present three options to better respond to the caring dilemma and give a rationale for each option.
Class Participation  (33%)

I think the best way for you to learn is to actively participate in your education. In this class “participation” is defined in terms of quality contribution to class discussion. Part of this includes evaluation of the presentations. There are four prerequisites for successful participation:

- Be here on time. If you’re not here, you can’t contribute to class discussion. Taking a course assumes meeting expectations of your professors. I shall be here each class and I expect you to show up too. Obviously there are times when there are good reasons why students have to miss a class because of work or illness or when you have to be late through no fault of your own.
- Be prepared. If you have to be here anyway, you may as well be prepared. This will help you participate and get the most out of class. It’s a good idea to read ahead in the assignments just to cover any last minute emergency. If you are unprepared and are called on to participate, just say “pass.”
- Step up. View the course as a safe home for assertiveness training (speaking up) and filter control (thinking before you speak). Speak in a loud enough voice so that the professor and your classmates can hear what you have to say. I call on students who don’t raise your hands to give everyone a chance to participate. E-mail me ahead of class if for any reason you don’t want to be called on in class.
- Be polite. It is not polite to eat in class because it may anno other students or the professor. When you disagree with what someone else has to say in class, be courteous. Don’t interrupt. This is how you would like to be treated if you have something to contribute to the discussion.

Policy for Late Assignments

If you are late on the assignment, your grade will be reduced by a letter grade for the first few days after the assignment is due. You are always welcome to hand in an assignment before its due date if you know that you will be busy as the date approaches.

Academic Honesty  is expected in this course. Please be aware that plagiarism is a serious violation. If you have any question about this policy, please let me know.

Feedback and Questions

I am committed to making this course a valuable learning experience for you. After the first few weeks of the course, I shall spend part of a class session evaluating our progress, and I shall make any necessary changes to keep us on track. However, I welcome your feedback regarding the class at any time in the semester. Also, please feel free to ask questions as they arise. It is easiest to reach me by e-mail, but I shall also be available to set up an appointment with you. Additionally, if you have a disability that requires special accommodation, please let me know ASAP so that I can be helpful to you.
Instructor Bio

**Anthony R. Kovner** is a Professor of Management at NYU/Wagner. He received his B.A. from Cornell University in 1957, where he was an English Literature major. He received his M.P.A. from Cornell University in 1963, and his Ph.D. in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh in 1966. He has consulted, presented and taught managers at a wide range of organizations, including St. Luke’s Episcopal Medical Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York Presbyterian Hospital, Montefiore Medical Center, Visiting Nurse Service, Mt. Sinai Health System, Lutheran Medical Center, Yonsei Medical Center, Brandeis University and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Professor Kovner has directed the Executive MPA in Management, concentration for nurse leaders, served as board member of Lutheran Medical Canter, directed the program in health policy and management at NYU/Wagner. He has served as senior program consultant to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the United Autoworkers Union. He has management experience in a large community health center, a nursing home, an academic group practice and a community hospital where he was CEO.

Professor Kovner is the author or editor of 11 books, 48 peer-reviewed journal articles and 33 published case studies. His text with Jim Knickman, *Healthcare Delivery in the United States* has sold over 400,000 copies. His work has been published in *Health Affairs, Frontiers of Health Services Management, Medical Care, Inquiry, The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* and the *Harvard Business Review*.

### COURSE SESSIONS

1. Population Health and Medical Care.
2. Medical Care in the Last Six Months of Life
3. Changing Health Behavior: Regulating What We Eat and Drink
4. Qualifying Parents to Care for Pre-School Children
5. Working on Toxic Work Teams
6. Caregivers and Quality of Care
7. Maintaining Work-Life Balance

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**Course Sessions**

**Session 1—Population Health and Medical Care**  Oct 24

**Readings:**

- “An Enemy of the People” by Henrik Ibsen *(Bookstore)*

**Discussion Questions:**
1. Why is it important for managers to be effective story tellers?
2. How does critical thinking affect effective story telling?
3. In “An Enemy of the People,” Why are the town fathers driving Dr. Stockman away when he is trying to save the town?
4. Is there anything Stockman could have done to avoid or ameliorate his fate?
5. Are the attitudes of the townspeople in Ibsen’s play reflective of how opponents of Obama-care view “government health care?”
6. What is the caring dilemma in “An Enemy of the People?”

Session 2--Medical Care in the Last Six Months of Life  Oct 31

Readings:
- “The Death of Ivan Ilyich” by Leo Tolstoy (Bookstore)
- Schroeder, Stephen, “What to Do With a Patient Who Smokes,” JAMA, July 2005 (Online)

Discussion Questions:
1. Would Ivan Ilyich have lived his life differently if he knew years before what he learned during the end of his life while dying?
2. What is your own personal experience and that of your loved ones? How does this affect your policy views on provision of medical care during the last six months of life?
3. How should insurance pay for medical care during the last six months of life?
4. If an important cause of unequal medical care in the last six months of life is income inequality, what should we do about it?
5. If an important cause of premature death is smoking behavior, to what extent should smokers pay more of their health costs now paid by taxpayers?
6. Should government and employers provide services, (such as cash for funerals) that survivors cannot afford and to what extent?

Session 3--Changing Health Behavior: Regulating What We Eat and Drink  Nov 7

Readings:
- “Brave New World” by Aldous Huxley (Bookstore)

Discussion Questions:
1. To what extent has Huxley’s brave new world come to be? Comment on his views of reproduction, marriage, work and happiness.
2. To what extent should employers attempt to influence in what ways their employees’ (and their dependents) health?
3. To what extent should public schools attempt to influence in what ways the health of children attending them?
4. To what extent should NYU/Wagner attempt to influence your health behavior? What if you have bad health habits?
5. To what extent are you in favor of “a soda tax” or labeling alcohol a dangerous drug to be actively discouraged as smoking has been discouraged?
6. What hasn’t diabetes self management been more effective? To what extent has it been successful? What does this tell us about changing health behavior?

**Session 4—Qualifying Parents in Caring for Pre-School Children Nov 14**

Readings:
- Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert, Parts 1 and 2 through chapter 8, 135 pages (in Davis translation), Viking Penguin, 2010. *(Bookstore)*
- D’Onise et al., “Can Preschool Improve Child Health Outcomes?” *Social Science and Medicine*, 70:9, May 2010, pp 1423-1440. *(Online)*

Discussion Questions:

1. How should parents like Madam and Charles Bovary be helped to be more qualified?
2. How would you know whether someone is qualified to be a parent?
3. How will you learn to be qualified to be a parent?
4. What would have to happen for all eligible mothers to enroll their kids in Medicaid?
5. Why don’t hospitals see that neonates receive better care after they leave the nursery?
6. What should schools do to improve health services for their enrolled children?

**Session 5--Working in Toxic Organizations Nov 21**

Readings:
- What Makes Sammy Run, (Budd Schulberg), Vintage 1990, 1-158. *(Bookstore)*

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you find compelling about the narrative in Schulberg’s novel? Is there anything that you can learn from “What Makes Sammy Run” that is applicable to working in non-profit and public organizations?
2. What are the similarities and differences in how movies are made and health care is delivered?
3. How can team leaders and followers promote healthy teams when they are currently not functioning effectively?
4. How do you stand up for yourself and toot your own horn as a team member working in an organization?
5. What has to happen for teams and organizations to minimize the effects of toxic team members?
6. How can we stop free-riderism on team papers and projects at Wagner? What has to happen to diminish free riderism?

**Session 6- Caregivers and Quality Care Dec 5**
Guest Lecturer (Carol Levine)

**Readings**
- Koren, “Person-Centered Care for Nursing Home Residents: The Culture-Change Movement,” *Health Affairs*, 29(2) February 2010, pp 312-317 (Online)

**Discussion Questions**
1. What kinds of policies and community programs might have eased Mr. Cassidy’s difficult caregiving situation?
2. If Mrs. Cassidy had been placed in a nursing home, what policies and programs would have helped Mr. Cassidy accept this choice?
3. Mrs. Dumpty is taking care of her mentally ill husband who is in and out of hospitals. What can policy makers do to improve the care of people like Mr. Dumpty?
4. Support groups are a common response to helping family caregivers, as described in the poem “Parents Support Group.” Should policy makers encourage caregivers to attend by making them more accessible? Should they be led by professionals or peers?
5. What kinds of policies and programs should be in place to work with children who have behavioral problems? How do schools handle these situations now and can better ways of managing these behaviors be instituted?
6. Family care givers are the basic source of care and support for people with chronic illness and disabilities. How should policy makers and managers balance family and public responsibilities?

**Session 7--Maintaining Healthy Work-Life Balance Dec 12**

**Readings:**
- Little Dorrit, Chapters 6-10 by Charles Dickens, Modern Library Classics, 2002, 59-127. *(Bookstore)*
Discussion Questions:
1. What does Little Dorrit have to do with work-life balance? Discuss from the points of view of Little Dorrit and her father?
2. What has to happen to protect women like Little Dorrit being exploited by fathers and husbands?
3. What is the responsibility of government, employers, schools, and health care organizations for helping women’s like Little Dorrit in today’s America?
4. How is or is not Lois Quam working too hard?
5. How do you advise colleagues or fellow students who are “working too hard” or “not working hard enough”?
6. What should organizations and or society do, if anything, for staff who regularly work nights and weekends?
Evaluation Form

YOUR NAME _____________________________________

Name of Presenter ____________________________

1. In what ways was the narrative relevant to the dilemma?

2. In what ways were the options clear and relevant in responding to the dilemma?

3. How well did the presenter relate the dilemma to personal or family experience?

4. Other