Course description:
This undergraduate class introduces students to some of the themes central to a broad understanding of the American health care system, as well as health systems the world over. It focuses on the social determinants of health and disease, the organization and financing of health care systems, different perspectives for thinking about health and society, and health care reform.

In the first part of the course, we begin with an international perspective on health care in America, as well as an introduction to national health insurance and national health service systems. In the second part, we introduce students to a range of perspectives for thinking about health and society: clinical, epidemiological, sociological and economic.

In the third part, we explore a range of contemporary issues that ‘headline’ our health care system and, in many cases, health care systems around the world. For instance, we will study the extent to which demographic shifts—most notably, the graying of the population—will continue to place strains on the system and help shape debates on the proper level of investment in health care, and the form that spending should take. One class session will be dedicated to the exploration of the American approach to mental health care, and how the legacy of the ‘deinstitutionalization’ policy of previous decades continues to impact the delivery of care (and aspects of the criminal justice system) in myriad ways.

In the fourth part of the course we examine efforts to reform the health care system in the United States and abroad. We present a whirlwind study of the historical context of health reform in America, spanning the better part of a century. This will be followed by a session dedicated to the many complexities associated with the Affordable Care Act (ACA)—though it should be noted that elements of the ACA will be introduced, and then elaborated upon, throughout the semester. Finally, we will speculate on future developments in health reform.

Required books:
There are three required books for this course: Morone J and D. Ehlke eds., Health Politics and Policy, 5th ed. (Cengage, 2014), Groopman J., How Doctors Think. (Mariner, 2008), and Reid T.R. The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health
*Care.* (Penguin, 2010). These books are available at NYU’s Bookstore.

In addition to these books, other required readings posted on blackboard, which you may access through the internet at NYU home.

**Course format, requirements and grading:**
This class will meet once a week for almost 3 hours. A portion of each class session will be dedicated to lecture, with another comprised of class discussion, which will take place within the context of the full course membership on some occasions, and in small groups on others. The first three class sessions (Sept. 2, 9, and 16) will be led by Prof. Rodwin; overall responsibility for the class rests with Prof. Ehlke.

We expect students to attend class having completed all of the assigned readings. There will be a total of five written assignments—three short (two-page, double-spaced) reading response papers, a midterm exam comprised of short answer and essay questions, and a six-page policy arc paper. The short papers will collectively make up 30% of the final grade, the midterm 30%, the policy arc paper 30%, with 10% of the grade based on the quality of class participation.

**RESPONSE PAPERS**
These three papers are to be two double-spaced pages in length, containing a (brief—no more than a paragraph!) summary of a particular point or concept from the reading, followed by a far lengthier section dedicated to original analysis and criticism. Response papers may address any single aspect from any of the readings encountered to date (and since submission of the last such paper). You should not, however, attempt to treat the entire expanse of the reading—just a point derived from them that is of particular interest. Each individual paper will be awarded a mark between 1 and 5 (measured in .5 increments). Only those papers exhibiting substantial mastery of the material, and making cogent arguments (and relevant connections to other sources and bodies of thought) will receive a score of 5. Please be sure to proofread papers carefully, and edit accordingly—part of the grade, after all, will be based on clarity, and here grammar and punctuation count. Avoid conversational wording/turns of phrase in this, and every written assignment submitted in the course.

**MIDTERM EXAM**
The Midterm will be distributed in class on October 14, and due at the start of the following class (October 21). It will be composed of ten short answer (a few words to a few sentences) questions, worth five points each. Three essay questions will be provided, of which you must answer two (worth 25 points each). The exam will be open-book and open-note, but students may not work on the exam cooperatively. As you will have a full week to complete the exam, all answers should be crafted with great care, with attention to grammar and spelling. Exam answers will lose points to the extent that they are muddled or exhibit limited understanding of course material. Though the use of outside sources (that is, readings not assigned in the course) is encouraged, extensive research is not expected. Any outside readings employed in the completion of essay questions should receive citation.
POLICY ARC PAPER
This assignment is designed to span the bulk of the semester. You are to select an aspect of contemporary health care policy (examples include Medicaid expansion, performance of health marketplaces, congressional Republican ‘repeal and replace’ proposals, accountable care organizations [ACOs]). Upon topic approval by the instructor, which should be obtained no later than September 30, you are to follow its ‘journey’ over the course of the semester through news coverage and (where relevant) contemporary academic literature. At semester’s end, you will submit a paper of around six pages in length explaining the developments defining your topic’s narrative during this time, considering such questions as the identity of key players and how they interacted, larger political context, and future prospects. Papers will be graded on the basis of clarity, coherence, and proper incorporation of source material. ‘A’ papers will contain a clear narrative arc, telling a crisp, coherent story, with comprehensive treatment of the key players populating this story, and a good sense of how they have interacted during the course of the past two to three months. If a particular story loses prominence during the course of the semester, disappearing from media sources, be sure to offer a hypothesis as to why that may have occurred. Students should not limit themselves to daily perusal of the Times or Wall Street Journal, but regularly comb online media for reportage on selected policy stories. Do not wait until the last minute to complete this assignment; the best papers will take shape over time, and will be far less effective if written up hurriedly just before the deadline.

Please send proposed policy arc paper topics to Dr. Ehlke via email prior to September 30.

An informal paper status report is also due to Dr. Ehlke via email by November 4. Though this portion of the overall assignment will not itself receive a grade, students who fail to submit a status report will face a reduction of ten points in their final paper grade.
Course Outline and Required Readings

I. AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE U.S. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
1. The U.S. Health Care System: Are we the odd man out? September 2
   Morone, Chapter 23

   Reid, T.R. *The Healing of America*, Chapters 1, 4, 7, and 13

II. DIVERGENT PERSPECTIVES FOR THINKING ABOUT HEALTH AND SOCIETY
3. Clinical Perspectives September 16
   Groopman, J. *How Doctors Think*. (Introduction, chapters 1, 2, 6, 9 and 10).
   Campo, R. Just the facts *NEJM*, September 16, 2004; 351:12.

4. The Epidemiologic Perspective September 23
   Haddon W. Advances in the Epidemiology of Injuries as a Basis for Public Policy.


5. The Sociological Perspective September 30
   [online: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/98438/e81384.pdf]

   Isaacs SL, Schroeder SA. Class — the ignored determinant of the nation’s health.


First response paper due

6. The Health Economics Perspective October 6
   Morone, Ch. 2.
III. CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN AMERICAN HEALTH CARE

7. Medicare, Medicaid, and the Unique American welfare state
   Morone, Chapters 8 and 10 (Oberlander and Campbell)
   Take-home midterms distributed in class
   October 14

8. Public Health and the Health Delivery System
   Midterm due by start of class
   October 21

9. The Graying of America
   Morone, Chapter 18
   Shoven, J. New Age Thinking: The aging of the world’s population won’t be the crisis we fear. *Foreign Policy*. Jan/Feb 2008.
   Second response paper due
   October 28

10. Mental Health: Deinstitutionalization and Beyond
    Mechanic, D. Seizing Opportunities Under The Affordable Care Act For Transforming The Mental And Behavioral Health System. *Health Affairs*. February 2012.
    November 4

IV. THE PERPETUAL SAGA OF HEALTH REFORM

11. American Antecedents: From (Teddy) Roosevelt to Clinton
    Morone, Introduction
    November 11

12. The Affordable Care Act: Theory and Practice
    Morone, Chapter 7
    Third response paper due
    November 18

13. Reform around the World
    Morone, Part IV
    November 25

14. The Reform Agenda in Years to Come
    Morone, Eyewitness 6
    December 2

Policy arc paper due December 9 by 5PM