This introductory course is designed to familiarize students with basic concepts and ideas concerning the distribution of health and illness in society, the organization of the health care system, and the relationship of one to the other. We begin by considering the future of health systems and the field of health policy and management (HPAM). We then present an international perspective on the U.S. health care system, an overview of health policy since passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and alternative government roles in health policy. In the second part of the course, we explore divergent perspectives for analyzing health and health care systems: clinical, epidemiological, economic, sociological/cultural, and community/population/public health. In the third part, we focus on selected issues in HPAM: social determinants of health; variations in medical practice and quality of care; health care rationing and access to care; trends in the evolution of the medical-industrial complex; and the challenge of mental health.

Class readings cover major topics in the study of population health and health care delivery: the organization and financing of health care systems; the roles of government in health systems and policy; cost and access to health care; health policy challenges and the ACA; the social determinants of health; the epidemiology of health and medical care, economic and ethical issues related to managed care and health care rationing; the medical-industrial complex; and mental health. In the process of covering these subjects, we emphasize the value of understanding diverse disciplinary perspectives, the challenges of meeting the varied (and often conflicting) needs and motivations of health care system stakeholders, and the ways in which the United States health care system differs from those of other wealthy nations.

**Course Competencies**

- The ability to assess population and community health needs from a public service perspective
- The ability to examine social and behavioral determinants of health and understand how health systems can address the needs of vulnerable populations
- The ability to understand how policy and delivery processes work, and to consider the demographic, cultural, political and regulatory factors involved in and influencing health policy and management decision-making. Relevant content for the following competencies is also include:
The ability to understand and apply ethical principles to managerial and leadership decisions affecting health care organizations

- The ability to measure, monitor and improve safety, quality, access and system/care delivery processes in health care organizations
- The ability to develop an evolving vision that enhances long-term organizational viability
- The ability to communicate and interact productively (by listening, speaking and writing) on matters of health care with a diverse and changing industry, workforce and citizenry
- The ability to present convincingly (to individuals and groups) evidence to support a position.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the organization, financing and performance of the U.S. health care delivery system
- Identify determinants of health and explain their impact on the distribution of health and disease
- Define the roles of key stakeholders – providers, government and private payers, employers, regulators, patients – and describe their incentives and behavior
- Compare the U.S. health care system to models of health care organization and financing abroad
- Explain fundamental concepts of health care payment and performance measurement
- Define major health policy developments over the past 50 years and explain their significance
- Analyze strengths, weaknesses and the feasibility of policy and management approaches that aim to promote health, prevent disease and improve health services delivery and assess the impact of these approaches on quality, access, cost and equity goals

CLASS READINGS

Every week, I expect students to complete the readings listed on this syllabus. The textbook, edited by Kovner and Knickman, focuses on the organization and financing of health care delivery in the United States. It also contains helpful websites and references. In addition, there are three books to read – one by TR Reid, a journalist; the other by J. Groopman, a physician; a third by a medical journalist, Lynne Payer. Reid’s book provides an overview of health care systems in other wealthy nations. Groopman’s book provides a clinical perspective on health care, often not appreciated by managers and policy analysts. Payer’s book, however dated, provides an analysis of the less scientific aspects of medicine among selected Western nations. These books are available at Bobst Library, most medical libraries, and the NYU Professional Bookstore. I recommend checking Amazon.com, as well. Most articles listed on this syllabus can be downloaded from the NYU Classes site for this course.

TEXTBOOK


ADDITIONAL BOOKS AND JOURNALS


Finally, I encourage students to browse recent issues of well-respected journals, e.g., American Journal of Public Health; Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA); New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM); The Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law (JHPPL), and Health Affairs (HA).
CLASS CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Future of HPAM and the Health Care System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The U.S. Health Care System in International Perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health Policy and The Affordable Care Act</td>
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<td>Oct. 3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Roles of Government in Health Systems and Health Policy</td>
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<td>Oct. 10</td>
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<td>Columbus Day</td>
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<td>Oct. 17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clinical and Epidemiological</td>
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<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Economic: The Case of Managed Care</td>
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<td>Oct. 31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sociological/Cultural</td>
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<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Community/Population/Public Health</td>
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<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Social Determinants of Health</td>
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<td>Nov. 21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Variations in Medical Practice and Quality of Care</td>
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<td>Nov. 28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Health Care Rationing and Access to Care</td>
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<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>The Health System and the Medical Industrial Complex: Trends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mental Health: An Area of Neglect and Growth</td>
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CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

Class 1. September 12. The Future of HPAM and the Health Care System

- Overview of course
- Review of required readings and trends

Required reading

Textbook:
Chapter 16: Knickman, J. and Kovner, A. The Future of Health Care Delivery and Health Policy

Articles:
Class 2. September 19. The U.S. Health Care System in International Perspective

- Health care financing and organization
- Is the U.S. the odd-man out?
- Differences between national health insurance (NHI) and national health service (NHS) systems?

Required reading

Textbook:
Chapter 4, Gusmano, M. and Rodwin, V. Comparative Health Systems

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

Article:

Class 3. September 26, Health Policy and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

- The place of HPAM in Obamacare
- Can the ACA achieve cost control?
- Reform and Policy

Required reading

Textbook:
Appendix on ACA, optional

Articles:

Class 4. October 3, The Roles of Government in Health Systems and Health Policy

- History, trends, and characteristics of government policy and regulation
- What are the 3 key roles of government in U.S. health care?

Required reading

Textbook:
Ch. 3: Sparer, M and Thompson, F. Government and Health Insurance: The Policy Process

Article:
II. DIVERGENT PERSPECTIVES ON HPAM

Class 5. October 17. Clinical and Epidemiological

- Do doctors and other clinicians think differently than managers and policymakers?
- How do their units of analysis compare?
- How to assess and measure health status?
- How are health status and health care related?
- Descriptive vs. analytic methods

Required reading

Book:
Groopman, J. How Doctors Think (Introduction, Chapters 1, 2 and 9).

Articles:

Class 6. October 24. Economic: The case of managed care

- Cost containment vs. efficiency
- Models of medical care organization
- Strengths and weaknesses of managed care

Required reading

Textbook:
Chapter 9: Landry, A. and Erwin, C. Organization of Care

Book Chapter:

Article:

Class 7. October 31. Sociological/Cultural Perspectives

- To what extent is health affected by culture and class?
- To what extent is medicine a science and an art?
- What makes some populations more vulnerable than others?
Required reading

Book:
*Payer, L. Medicine and Culture* (Chapters 1-2, pp.15-34; and read two of the four cases on France, Germany, Great Britain and United States.

Articles:

Class 8. November 7. Community/Population/Public Health
- How can hospitals assess population health and community health needs?
- How do hospitals collaborate with public health authorities?
- What should be the role of HPAM with regard to public health?

Required reading

Textbook:
Ch.5: Russo, P. Population Health

Articles:

Optional:

III. SELECTED ISSUES IN HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

- Public health vs. medicine, and other dichotomies
- Public health and the built environment
- Ethics and public health

Required reading

Articles:
Class 10. November 21. Variations in Medical Practice and Quality of Care
• What factors account for small-area variations in medical practice?
• Are such variations related to quality of care?
• Can measuring and monitoring quality and safety in health care organizations improve outcomes?

Required Reading
Textbook:
Ch. 13: Clancy, C. & Fraser, I. High Quality Health Care

Articles:

Class 11. November 28: Health Care Rationing and Access to Care
• Is health care rationed in the U.S. and Abroad?
• What ethical principles may be used as a basis for health care rationing?
• Vulnerable populations and access to care

Required Reading
Textbook:
Ch. 8: Garcel, J.M. et al. Vulnerable populations: A tale of two nations

Articles:

Class 12: December 5. The Health System and the Medical Industrial Complex: Trends
• What is the role of powerful stakeholders in affecting HPAM?
• What are the salient characteristics of the U.S. medical-industrial complex?
• Is there a trade-off between commercial forces and promoting the public good?

Required Reading
Articles:

Class 13: December 12. Mental Health: An Area of Neglect and Growth
• Recent trends in mental health care in the U.S.
• Implications of the ACA for substance abuse and mental health care
Required Reading

Articles:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

In addition to attending and participating in class meetings, all students are required to complete the following assignments by the following deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Final Grade</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Exercise:</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Final grades will be calculated according to the percentages noted above. Assignments, exams and/or class participation will assess understanding of course readings and progress against the course competencies and relevant content noted on pp. 1-2 of the syllabus, and no student will receive a B or higher without demonstration of satisfactory progress toward the mastery of each competency.

Lateness Policy – Please submit written assignments on time. Late assignments will be penalized by one- half letter grade for each day late.

Class Participation – Participation performance is assessed based on preparation, engagement and quality of contributions to in-class discussion and group work. Please do not go online during class. We all have our reasons to miss class, on occasion. If you cannot make it to class, there is no need to write me an e-mail explaining why.

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 (posted on NYU Classes) prior to submitting written work: [http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies](http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies)

GUIDELINES FOR CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

General Instructions: All written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch page margins. Write in full paragraphs, in the first person, and active voice (see Strunk and White, Elements of Style, and buy yourself a copy as it will serve as the basic guide to good writing in this class). No lists (it’s boring!). No titles of books and full authors’ names in the text (use endnotes or footnotes or references for this). No Latin and bureaucratic writing (e.g. “as per your request”)! Use subheadings for clarity. Please use verbs, avoid gerunds and unnecessary adverbs (e.g. “interestingly”) and adjectives (like “very”). Be concise (when in doubt, strike it out!). Please review your short papers and rewrite them at least twice before posting for all of us to read. Please see NYU/Wagner’s resources for writing workshops and assistance: [http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring](http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring). None of us can fail to benefit from such assistance!
Please submit written assignments directly to me in class (printed copies two sides to a page). In addition, you must submit a copy of all written assignments to the appropriate forums set up on NYU Classes for this course. There are three reasons for doing so. First, because the audience to whom you should address your papers is: the rest of us. Second, because the purpose of these assignments is to improve communication skills and to get to know one another. Third, because another purpose of these assignments is to convince the class of your point of view.

All written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch page margins. Write in full paragraphs in the first person using active voice. No lists (it’s boring!). No titles of books and full authors’ names in the text (use endnotes or footnotes or references for this). Please see NYU/Wagner’s resources for writing workshops and assistance: [http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring](http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring). None of us could fail to benefit from such assistance!

A week before each of the assignments is due, Dr. Rafael Ayoub, who will assist me in grading the papers, will hold office hours to answer questions and help develop your research (for the group exercise).

First Essay: Based on readings for the first four classes, write a 3-page concise essay in which you speculate on how the role of government will evolve, over the next decade, in the U.S. This will require distinguishing different roles of government and drawing on the most relevant readings from sessions #1-#4, making sure to cite your sources.

Second Essay: Drawing on the readings from sessions #5-#8, discuss how different perspectives on HPAM might contribute to thinking about the following question: How should hospitals transform themselves to improve their capacity for serving vulnerable populations and working with other partners to improve population health. Be sure to ground your response by citing relevant readings from the syllabus.

Group Exercise: For sessions 9-13, we will form 5 groups. Each group will engage in a three-part exercise. First, the group will make a 20 minute presentation to the class on one of the selected issues in HPAM. The presentation should be based on additional research – beyond the required readings – including presentation of some relevant data in charts and/or tables in a powerpoint file. Second, the group must write a two page summary of what they found, followed by an Appendix that includes three of the best refereed journal articles they read, selections of relevant blogs and/or selections from trade journals or newspapers articles, and a copy of their powerpoint presented to the class. Third, based on this work, the group must write a one-page note and attempt to add it to Wikipedia’s embryonic section on HPAM ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_policy_and_management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_policy_and_management)). This note should explain how the issue you have selected is an important dimension of HPAM. And of course the note should be backed up by relevant references (from the readings on this syllabus), as called for by Wikipedia. Please submit a paper copy of Parts 2 and 3 of this group exercise by Dec. 19th – at the very latest – and post a copy on the designated class forum in NYU Classes for all to read.