

US Health Politics and Policy_(POL SC 4390)

Spring 2019

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00am-12:15pm

309 Middlebush

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Syllabus updated March 7, 2019

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Course Overview

Medicine is a social science and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale. Medicine as a social science, as the science of human beings, has the obligation to point out problems and to attempt their theoretical solution; the politician, the practical anthropologist, must find the means for their actual solution. -Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902)

This course deals with the politics and public policy of health in the United States. This topic is broader than you may think - when many Americans hear “health policy,” they probably think first of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) and other policies dealing with health insurance. There is no doubt that these issues are important and deserve our attention, they are just the tip of the iceberg of how politics and policy affect the health of the US population. In addition to issues of health insurance coverage, this course will cover topics ranging from the quality of medical care, to socioeconomic disparities in health outcomes, to substance abuse and addiction, to

gender and reproductive health, to climate change, and more. All of these issues are deeply political, whether you may realize it or not, and all present public policy challenges.

In addition to building your subject matter knowledge, this course will help you to develop critical thinking and argumentation skills about public policy issues. It will also give you experience in conceiving and drafting a policy memo, a common format of written communication in the policy world.

Readings and Required Texts

This course will feature less lecture and more discussion than a typical undergraduate course. As such, the assigned readings are absolutely vital to the course - careful and critical reading should form the basis of your participation in class.

Most of the assigned readings are available freely online or through the university library's subscriptions to various journals. A number of readings are from CQ Researcher - these can be accessed through the library webpage (on the home page, under "LOOKING FOR?" click "A database" and search for CQ Researcher, then search for the title of the assigned piece on the CQ Researcher page).

In addition, you will need to purchase the following two books. Both are available at the Mizzou store or through online book-sellers.

Eric M. Patashnik, Alan S. Gerber, and Conor M. Dowling. 2017. *Unhealthy Politics: the Battle Over Evidence-Based Medicine*. Princeton University Press.

Andrea L. Campbell. 2014. *Trapped in America's Safety Net: One Family's Struggle*. University of Chicago Press.

Assignments and Grades

Your grade for the course will be determined with a weighted average of the following items.

Class Participation - 15%

This is a small class, and I will run it as a hybrid between a typical undergraduate class and a graduate seminar. This means there will be a good deal of discussion and your participation will be crucial. Successful participation requires the following

- *Attendance*: This should be obvious. You should attend all class sessions and be ready to

participate on time at the beginning of class. If you have to miss a class due to illness, emergency, or an unavoidable conflict, please notify me *in advance*.

- *Actively joining in:* I will do my part to ensure there are equitable opportunities for everyone to participate, but you must also show some initiative to take advantage of these opportunities.
- *Completing the reading:* While we will also discuss current events and issues not covered in the readings, our discussions will draw heavily on the readings. You cannot participate successfully if you don't read.
- *Critical thinking about the reading:* To earn an outstanding participation grade, you have to do more than just read and recall. You should think critically about each reading. That means questioning the arguments and the empirical evidence the authors present. It also means thinking about issues the authors neglect to consider.
- *Respect:* This should also go without saying, and I do not anticipate any problems, but nonetheless, you should be respectful and polite to me, the teaching assistants, and your classmates.

Pop Quizzes - 10%

There will be a series of pop quizzes on the assigned readings. Each quiz will cover the readings due the day of the quiz, and previous readings as appropriate. The scheduling of these quizzes is at my discretion.

Evidence-Based Medicine Essay - 15%

This is a written assignment of 6-8 pages that you will write in reaction to *Unhealthy Politics* by Patashnik, Gerber, and Dowling. More detail will be provided in class and a forthcoming assignment sheet. **The paper is due on Friday, February 15 at midnight on Canvas.** All written assignments must be submitted as Word documents on Canvas so they can be run through the Turnitin plagiarism detection software.

Policy Memo - 20%

This is a written assignment of 8-12 pages. You will select a health policy problem and write a mock memorandum to a real public official outlining the problem and evaluating possible solutions. I will provide more information about the policy memo format during the semester. The choice of the issue is up to you, though you must clear it with me with **a brief, ungraded proposal due Friday, April 5.** (This is just to make sure your choice is focused enough and that there is not too much duplication between students.) You may select an issue covered on the syllabus, or one that is not. **The written memo is due on Friday, May 3 at midnight on Canvas.** All written assignments must be submitted as Word documents on Canvas so they can

be run through the Turnitin plagiarism detection software.

Exams - 40% (20% each)

There will be two exams. **The second exam will not be cumulative.** The exams will cover the issues covered in the readings and in our class discussions, with a mix of short answer and essay questions. Both exams will take place in class - the second exam will be taken in our last regularly scheduled class on Thursday, May 9, not during finals week.

Each student will be responsible for bringing a blue book to class for the exams. Blue books are available in the Mizzou Store and elsewhere on campus in vending machines.

Extra Credit Opportunity - Population, Education, and Health Seminar Series - +3%

Students who wish to earn extra credit can attend a talk in the Population, Education, and Health Seminar Series on campus and write a report on the research that was presented. More details will be made available over email and on Canvas.

Grading Scale

Final letter grades will be decided based on the following cut points:

<u>Final percentage</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>
94.0 - 100.0	A
90.0 - <94.0	A-
87.0 - <90.0	B+
84.0 - <87.0	B
80.0 - <84.0	B-
77.0 - <80.0	C+
74.0 - <77.0	C
70.0 - <74.0	C-
67.0 - <70.0	D+
64.0 - <67.0	D
61.0 - <64.0	D-
Below 61	F

Course Policies

Classroom Conduct

I expect everyone to be respectful and attentive in class. All phones, laptops and other electronic devices should be turned off and put away, unless you have worked out an accommodation with

the MU Disability Center (see below). (The research on electronic devices in the classroom is pretty definitive: they are harmful to learning except in specific circumstances of students with disabilities. See education expert Susan Dynarki's column in the *New York Times*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>) Do not put your head down on the desk or sleep in class, as this is rude and distracting. I don't mind beverages or small snacks in the classroom as long as you clean up after yourself. Please feel free to leave to use the restroom at any time (no need to interrupt to ask permission).

Extensions and Late Assignments

Late policy memos will be penalized ten points (out of 100) per day. There will be no extensions or make-up exams except in the case of a legitimate family or medical emergency, and only if arranged in advance.

Grade Disputes

If you feel a grade you have received from me or a teaching assistant is *unfair* for a reason that you can articulate, please email me with a written explanation of why you believe this to be the case. A two-line email does not qualify - you must make a convincing case in a professional and respectful manner. I will reevaluate the work and decide if a grade change is warranted. Note that I may revise your grade downward!

If a grade that you have received makes you *unhappy*, but you cannot articulate a reason why it is unfair (or you do not wish to dispute the grade), I advise you to come talk about it during office hours or at some other time by appointment (an aside: it's always a good idea to make an appointment even when you plan to come during office hours), either with me or one of the TAs. We can discuss ways to improve your performance. It's better to handle it this way rather than keep your frustration to yourself.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor. Please visit <https://osrr.missouri.edu/guidelines/index.html> to familiarize

yourself with your obligations related to academic integrity and conduct as a student enrolled at the University of Missouri.

Written assignments must be turned in on Canvas as Word documents, where they will be run through the “TurnItIn” plagiarism detection software.

Students with Disabilities

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning, use of a laptop or other device), please establish an accommodation plan with the [MU Disability Center](#), S5 Memorial Union, 573-882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. I defer all decisions on these sorts of accommodations to the experts at the Disability Center - do not make these requests of me directly. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Intellectual Pluralism

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the [Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities](#); the [MU Equity Office](#), or equity@missouri.edu.

All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor at the end of the course.

Course Schedule

All readings should be completed *before* the class session under which they are listed. This schedule is subject to change - the most up-to-date version of the syllabus will always be available on Canvas (note "syllabus updated" date on the first page).

Week 1

Tuesday, January 22 - Introduction & Overview

Sarah Chodosh. November 29, 2018. "The Decline in U.S. Life Expectancy is Unlike Anything We've Seen in a Century." *Popular Science*: <https://www.popsci.com/life-expectancy->

[declining](#)

Thursday, January 24 - Population Health & Health Disparities I

Geoffrey Rose. 1985. "Sick Individuals and Sick Populations." *International Journal of Epidemiology* 30: 427-432.

Simon Szreter. 2003. "The Population Health Approach in Historical Perspective." *American Journal of Public Health* 93(3): 421-431.

Week 2

Tuesday, January 29 - Population Health & Health Disparities II

Nancy E. Adler and Katherine Newman. 2002. "Socioeconomic disparities in health: Pathways and policies." *Health Affairs* 21(2), 60-76.

Julia Berenson, Yan Li, Julia Lynch, and José A. Pagán. 2017. "Identifying Policy Levers and Opportunities for Action Across States to Achieve Health Equity." *Health Affairs* 36(6): 1048-1056.

Michelle Ko, Cary Sanders, Sarah de Guia, Riti Shimkhada, and Ninez A. Ponce. 2018. "Managing Diversity To Eliminate Disparities: A Framework For Health." *Health Affairs* 37(9): 1383-1393.

Thursday, January 31 - Quality of Care and the Medical Profession I

Patashnik, Gerber and Dowling Introduction & chapters 1 & 2

Week 3

Tuesday, February 5 - Quality of Care and the Medical Profession II

Patashnik, Gerber and Dowling Chapters 3 & 4

Thursday, February 7 - *Weather cancellation - schedule updated*

Week 4

Tuesday, February 12 - Quality of Care and the Medical Profession III

Patashnik, Gerber and Dowling Chapters 5 & 6 and Conclusion

Thursday, February 14 - The Economics of Health Insurance

David M. Cutler and Richard J. Zeckhauser. 1998. "Adverse Selection in Health Insurance." In Alan M. Garber, ed., *Frontiers in Health Policy Research, Volume 1*: <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c9822.pdf>

The Affordable Care Act I

Paul Starr. 2013. *Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle Over Health Care Reform (Revised Edition)*. Yale University Press. "Introduction: An Uneasy Victory." (PDF on Canvas)

Jacob S. Hacker. 2010. "The Road to Somewhere: Why Health Reform Happened, Or Why Political Scientists Who Write about Public Policy Shouldn't Assume They Know How to Shape It." *Perspectives on Politics* 8(3): 861-876.

Week 5

Monday, February 18 - evidence-based medicine essay due on Canvas

Tuesday, February 19 - The Affordable Care Act II

Samantha Liss. July 23, 2018. "Is there renewed hope for Medicaid expansion in Missouri?" *St Louis Post-Dispatch*: https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/is-there-renewed-hope-for-medicaid-expansion-in-missouri/article_6c444f4c-8507-5dbf-a824-6721e78ed430.html

David K. Jones. November 8, 2018. "The Medicaid Wave." *Health Affairs* blog: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hblog20181108.484046/full/>

Thursday, February 21 - The Affordable Care Act III

Michael F. Cannon. January 4, 2018. "Is Obamacare Harming Quality? (Part 1)." *Health Affairs* blog post: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hblog20180103.261091/full/>

Sarah Kliff and Dylan Scott. July 31, 2017. "Why Obamacare Repeal Failed, and Why It Could Still Come Back." *Vox*: <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/31/16055960/why-obamacare-repeal-failed>

Timothy S. Jost. January 9, 2019. "2018: The Year of Renewed Affordable Care Act Litigation." Commonwealth Fund To the Point blog: <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/blog/2019/2018-year-renewed-affordable-care-act-litigation>

Week 6

Tuesday, February 26 - The Affordable Care Act IV

Sarah Kliff and Dylan Scott. December 19, 2018 (updated). "We Read Democrats' 8 Plans for Universal Health Care. Here's How They Work." *Vox*: <https://www.vox.com/2018/12/13/18103087/medicare-for-all-single-payer-democrats-sanders-jayapal>

Jeanne M. Lambrew. June 26, 2018. "Getting Ready for Health Reform 2020: What Past Presidential Campaigns Can Teach Us." Commonwealth Fund: <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2018/jun/getting-ready-health-reform-2020-presidential>

Thursday, February 28 - Disability and the Health Safety Net I
Campbell, Chapters 1-3

Week 7

Tuesday, March 5 -Disability and the Health Safety Net II
Campbell, Chapters 4-6

Thursday, March 7 - Health Costs, Finance, and Bureaucracy I

Anne B. Martin, Micah Hartman, Benjamin Washington, Aaron Catlin, and The National Health Expenditure Accounts Team. 2019. "National Health Care Spending In 2017: Growth Slows To Post–Great Recession Rates; Share Of GDP Stabilizes." *Health Affairs* 38(1): 96-106.

Gerard F. Anderson, Peter Hussey, and Varduhi Petrosyan. 2019. "It's Still The Prices, Stupid: Why The US Spends So Much On Health Care, And A Tribute To Uwe Reinhardt." *Health Affairs* 38(1): 87-95.

Week 8

Tuesday, March 12 - Health Costs, Finance, and Bureaucracy II

Sarah Kliff. October 16, 2017. "The Problem is the Prices: Opaque and Sky High Bills are Breaking Americans - and Our Health Care System." *Vox.com* post: <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/10/16/16357790/health-care-prices-problem>

Dean Baker. 2016. *Rigged: How Globalization and the Rules of the Modern Economy Were Structured to Make the Rich Richer*. Washington, DC: Center for Economic and Policy Research. Chapter 7 (focus on discussion of physicians). Available free here: <https://deanbaker.net/images/stories/documents/Rigged.pdf>

Aaron Carroll. November 20, 2018. Twitter rant starting here: <https://twitter.com/aaronecarroll/status/1064619230048460801>

Thursday, March 14 - First Exam

Week 9

Tuesday, March 19 - Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco I

New York Times. January 6, 2017. "Inside a Killer Drug Epidemic: A Look at America's Opioid Crisis." http://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/06/us/opioid-crisis-epidemic.html?_r=0
(Feature written by a number of reporters.)

Chuck McCutcheon. June 14, 2018. "Opioid Addiction: Will New Strategies Be Effective?" *CQ Researcher* Short Report.

Thursday, March 21 - Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco II

Rebecca L. Haffajee, Michelle M. Mello, Fang Zhang, Alan M. Zaslavsky, Marc R. Larochelle, and J. Frank Wharam. 2018. "Four States with Robust Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs Reduced Opioid Dosages." *Health Affairs* 37(6): 964-974.

Jessica L. Gregg. 2017. "The Promises and Pitfalls of Treating Addiction." *Health Affairs* 36(12): 2204-2206.

Spring Break, March 25-29

Week 10

Tuesday, April 2 - Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco III

Peter D. Jacobson and Kenneth E. Warner. 1999. "Litigation and Public Health Policy Making: the Case of Tobacco Control." *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 24(4): 769-804

Tom Price. June 8, 2012. "Alcohol Abuse: Can Underage Drinking be Curbed?" *CQ Researcher*.

Thursday, April 4 - Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco IV

Ashley C. Bradford and W. David Bradford. 2016. "Medical Marijuana Laws Reduce Prescription Medication Use in Medicare Part D." *Health Affairs* 35(7): 1230-1236.

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. "Constitutional Amendment 2 - Medical Marijuana." See timeline and FAQ: <https://health.mo.gov/safety/medical-marijuana/index.php>

Karen O'Keefe. 2013. "State Medical Marijuana Implementation and Federal Policy." *Journal of Health Care Law and Policy* 16(1): 39-58. (PDF on Canvas)

Friday, April 5 - ungraded policy memo proposal due on Canvas

Week 11

Tuesday, April 9 - Mental Health I

David Mechanic. 2014. "More People Than Ever Before Are Receiving Behavioral Health Care In The United States, But Gaps And Challenges Remain." *Health Affairs* 33(8): 1416-1424.

Alexander J. Cowell, Shivaani Prakash, Emily Jones, Alan Barnosky, and Brendan Wedehase. 2018. "Behavioral Health Coverage In The Individual Market Increased After ACA Parity Requirements." *Health Affairs* 37(7): 1153-1159.

Thursday, April 11 - Mental Health II

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. 2018. *Children & Young People's Mental Health in the Digital Age: Shaping the Future*. <http://www.oecd.org/health/health-systems/Children-and-Young-People-Mental-Health-in-the-Digital-Age.pdf>

Brian A. Primack, Ariel Shensa, Jaime E. Sidani, Erin O. Whaite, Liu yi Lin, Daniel Rosen, Jason B. Colditz, Ana Radovic, and Elizabeth Miller. 2017. "Social Media Use and Perceived Social Isolation Among Young Adults in the U.S." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 53(1): 1-8.

Week 12

Tuesday, April 16 - Seniors and Long-Term Care I

Robin Osborn, Michell M. Doty, Donald Moulds, Dana O. Sarnak, and Arnav Shah. 2017.

"Older Americans Were Sicker and Faced More Financial barriers to Health Care than Counterparts in Other Countries." *Health Affairs* 36(12): 2123-2132.

Kaiser Family Foundation. Nov 22, 2017. "An Overview of Medicare." <https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/an-overview-of-medicare/>

Thursday, April 18 - Seniors and Long-Term Care II

Robert P. Saldin. 2017. *When Bad Policy Makes Good Politics: Running the Numbers on Health Reform*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 3, "A Legacy of Failure: Long-Term Care's Policy History and the Genesis of the CLASS Act." (PDF on Canvas)

Barbara Ehrenreich. April 9, 2018. "Why I'm Giving Up on Preventative Care." Literary Hub: <https://lithub.com/barbara-ehrenreich-why-im-giving-up-on-preventative-care/>

Week 13

Tuesday, April 23 - Gender and Reproductive Health I

Bara Vaida. July 13, 2018. "Abortion: Can Opponents of the Procedure Maintain their Momentum?" *CQ Researcher* Short Report.

Katy B. Kozhimannil. 2018. "Reversing the Rise in Maternal Mortality." *Health Affairs* 37(11): 1901-1904.

Thursday, April 25 - Gender and Reproductive Health II

Corinne Lewis, Yaphet Getachew, and Mekdes Tsega. November 8, 2018. "Federal Protections in Health Care at Risk for Transgender Americans." Commonwealth Fund To the Point blog:

https://www.commonwealthfund.org/blog/2018/federal-protections-health-care-risk-transgender-americans?redirect_source=/blog/2018/federal-protections-health-care-transgender-americans-risk

Laura Arrowsmith. 2017. "'Go Back to California': When Providers Fail Transgender Patients." *Health Affairs* 36(9): 1679-1682.

Week 14

Tuesday, April 30 - Children's Health

Kevin Drum. February 1, 2018. "An Updated Lead-Crime Roundup for 2018." *Mother Jones*: <https://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2018/02/an-updated-lead-crime-roundup-for-2018/>

Karen Kaplan. January 8, 2018. "Why the United States is 'The Most Dangerous of Wealthy Nations for a Child to be Born Into.'" *Los Angeles Times*: <http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-childhood-mortality-usa-20180108-story.html>

Rachel A. Burton. 2018. "The Biological Effects of Childhood Adversity (review of *The Deepest Well* by Nadine Burke Harris)." *Health Affairs* 37(5): 824-825.

Thursday, May 2 - Obesity, Nutrition, and Junk Science

Peter Suderman. November 21, 2017. "You Don't Have to Listen to the Government to Eat the Foods You Like" (interview with Aaron Carroll). *Reason*: <http://reason.com/blog/2017/11/21/you-dont-have-listen-to-the-government-e>

Mitesh S. Patel, David A. Asch, Andrea B. Troxel, Michele Fletcher, Rosemary Osman-Koss, Jennifer Brady, Lisa Wesby, Victoria Hilbert, Jingsan Zhu, Wenli Wang, and Kevin G. Volpp. 2016. "Premium-Based Financial Incentives Did Not Promote Workplace Weight Loss In A 2013–15 Study." *Health Affairs* 35(1): 71-79

Friday, May 3 - Policy memo due on Canvas

Week 15

Tuesday, May 7 - Climate Change and Health

Fourth National Climate Assessment, Chapter 14: Human Health: <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/14/>

Thursday, May 9 - Second Exam