### Course Information
- **Course:** 90-861 Health Policy
- **Offering:** Mini (6 units)
- **Location:** HBH 1001
- **Time:** 6:00-8:50 p.m.
- **Dates:** October 27, 2015 – December 8, 2015
- **Instructor:** Elizabeth Van Nostrand, JD  
  Phone: 412.383.2231  
  Email: schmidte@pitt.edu; ebjerke@andrew.cmu.edu
- **Office hours:** Please send an email requesting an appointment. I will be happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

### Prerequisites
90-836 Health Systems

### Description
This course introduces students to the concepts, theories, and tools of health policy. The aims of this course are to provide students with (1) the ability to identify key problems facing the United States health system, (2) an increased appreciation for and understanding of health policy as an important and useful tool for enhancing population health, and (3) mechanisms to address a current health policy issue from legal, economic, behavioral, and political perspectives. The students will use this knowledge to analyze a current health policy issue. In addition, students will be introduced to a cross-national comparison of health systems.

### Course Materials
There is no required textbook for this course. Peer-reviewed journal articles from a variety of disciplines, articles from the popular press, and policy analyses produced by government agencies, think tanks, and research organizations will be available to students. All readings will be available online unless otherwise specified. Readings not available electronically will be distributed in class.

### Evaluation Methods
Four assessments will be used to evaluate student performance.

- **Professionalism – 20%**
  - Students will be assessed individually using a rubric measuring attendance, class preparation (including leading discussions about current health policy issues), attitude, and arriving on time for class.

- **Health Policy Paper – 20%**
  - Students will be placed in three groups. Each group will work collaboratively on the selected health policy issue.
  - Students will collaboratively write a 10-15 page paper that addresses the selected health policy issue. Each Health Policy Paper must be double spaced, using 11 point font. Endnotes must be used and will not count toward the page requirement. Additional requirements will be given to the students in a hand-out and discussed in class.
  - Students will be assessed as a group on the quality of their Health Policy Paper using a rubric measuring content, comprehensibility, organization, effort, and sophistication.
Each Health Policy Paper is due by **6:00 p.m. on December 1, 2015. Absolutely no extensions will be given without resulting in a reduction of grade.** A 20% reduction will be made for each Health Policy Paper turned in after 6:00 p.m. but before midnight on December 1, 2015. An additional 20% reduction will be made for each subsequent day the Health Policy Paper is late. No Health Policy Paper will be accepted after December 5, 2015.

- **Health Policy Presentation – 20%**
  - Each group will present its policy recommendations to the class on **December 8, 2015.**
  - Students will be assessed individually using a rubric measuring quality of research, information gathering, and communication.

- **Peer Assessment – 20%**
  - Students will be assessed by their group members using a rubric measuring the individual’s contribution to the group effort, completion of individual tasks, attitude, and, work ethic. Additional comments will also be solicited. The Peer Assessment evaluations will be averaged and collectively worth 20% of the individual’s final grade.

- **Final Examination – 20%**
  - The final examination will be a multiple choice, closed book examination assessing the reading materials and lectures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning/Course Objectives</th>
<th>Specific instructional objectives include (but are not limited to) the following. Upon completion of the course, each student should be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Understand critical issues facing the U.S. health system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Define health policy problems and assess alternative solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Analyze a range of contemporary health policies from legal, economic, behavioral, and political perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Describe the role of interest groups and public opinion in health policy issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Describe the United States health care system and compare it to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Present and defend solutions to health policy problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Prepare clear and concise policy papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
<th>A+ 99.0-100%</th>
<th>B+ 88.0-90.9%</th>
<th>C+ 78.0-80.9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 94.0-98.9%</td>
<td>B 84.0-87.9%</td>
<td>C 74.0-77.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- 91.0-93.9%</td>
<td>B- 81.0-83.9%</td>
<td>C- 71.0-73.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grade of A+ is reserved for truly exceptional performance. **There will be no rounding.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course/Topical Outline</th>
<th>Below is an overview of the course outline.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class 1. October 27, 2015. Introduction to the Course</strong></td>
<td>Guest Lecturer: Tafoi Kamara, MPH, Administrative Director, Aging Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Topics</td>
<td>- Health and Health Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Is There a Right to Health Care?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The Art of Structuring and Writing Public Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Required Reading</td>
<td>- Bennett A. End-of-Life Warning at $618,616 Makes Me Wonder Was It Worth It. <em>Bloomberg.</em> March 4, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Institute of Medicine, The Future of the Public’s Health in the 21st Century, pgs. 51-53, 72.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Guest Lecturer: Marian P. Jarlenski, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Health Policy and Management, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh

• Topics
  - Public Opinion
  - Interest Groups
• Required Readings


Guest Lecturer: Julia Dreissen, PhD, Assistant Professor, Health Policy and Management, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh

• Topics
  o Efficiency and Equity
  o The Cost of Health Care

• Required Readings

Class 4. November 17, 2015. Assessing Health System Performance: How Does the U.S. Compare?

Guest Lecturer: Jacob S. Collins, MS, Advisory Services, International Division, UPMC

• Topics
  o Review of the US Health Care System
  o Cross National Comparison of Health Care System

• Required Reading


• Topics
  o The Affordable Care Act
  o Government’s Responsibility to Protect Health

• Required Reading
  o *DeShaney v Winnebago County Department of Social Services*
  o *Bush v. City of Utica*

Class 6. December 1, 2015. Determinants of Health

- **Topics**
  - Environmental Determinants
  - Behavioral Determinants
  - Social Determinants

- **Required Readings**
  - Institute of Medicine, The Future of the Public’s Health in the 21st Century, pgs. 53-56.
  - Behavioral Determinants. Richard J. Bonnie and Ruth Gaare Bernheim.
  - Institute of Medicine, The Future of the Public’s Health in the 21st Century, pgs. 56-61
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: A Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke [http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/action_plan/](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/action_plan/)

Class 7. December 8, 2015. Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plagiarism and Cheating Notice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism and other forms of academic misrepresentation are taken extremely seriously. Misrepresentation of another’s work as one’s own is widely recognized as among the most serious violations. The violation is clearly flagrant when it occurs as plagiarism on a required paper or assignment or as cheating on an examination, regardless of whether it is a take-home or in-class examination. The punishment for such offenses can involve expulsion from the program. There are many other ways in which a violation can occur.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Academic Dishonesty:* Students are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards inside and outside the classroom. Cheating on exams and term papers (i.e. plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration) is obviously discouraged and will be treated appropriately. The usual penalty for violations is a failing grade for the particular assignment in question; however, in some instances, such actions may result in a failing grade for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Policies &amp; Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Each student is expected to attend each class. Role will be taken at 6:00 p.m. A lack of attendance or tardiness of any kind may result in a lowered Professionalism grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Potentially controversial topics will be discussed in class. Each student is expected to be respectful of other’s perspectives. Any disrespectful behavior of any kind may result in a lowered Professionalism grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Food and beverages are permitted in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The students will decide during the first class whether the use of laptops is permitted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- There will be no use of cell phones during class. Any use of cell phones may result in a lowered Professionalism grade.
- The best way to reach me is through my email. I will also be happy to arrange telephone or in-person conferences with you at a mutually convenient time.