POLI 306 – Health Politics and Policies, 3 credits Spring 2021

Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45 AM, Virtual Classroom Via Zoom

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Zoom Student Hours: Tuesdays 9-10 AM & Wednesdays 11-12 noon, and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the U.S. health care system, including its structure, main components and actors, the policies and laws that govern it, as well as how the system developed historically. The two central questions at the heart of this class are, how is the U.S. health care system structured and what are the consequences of this system for health outcomes and costs?

The U.S. spends more on health care in absolute terms, per capita, and as a percentage of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) than any other country in the world. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, "health spending per person in the U.S. was \$10,224 in 2017, which was 28 percent higher than Switzerland, the next highest per capita spender." Health care spending is a major and growing share of our economy. Despite this elevated level of spending, U.S. health care outcomes are consistently lower than many other developed countries. At the end of the semester, we will compare the U.S. to health care systems in the UK (United Kingdom), Canada, Germany, and Switzerland to see what we can learn from these other models.

How best to meet our population's health care needs in an economically sustainable way continues to be the subject of contentious political debate in the United States. We will engage in these debates at the very end of the semester based on our knowledge not only of the U.S. system but also of the other models mentioned above. Finally, throughout the semester we will have opportunities to consider how the U.S. health care system has performed in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic and what needs to be done from a policy standpoint to be better prepared for the next one.

This course is designed to serve the needs of students with a general interest in U.S. policy and politics, as well as students planning to pursue careers in the health care professions. It aims to provide students with a grounding and solid understanding of the U.S.'s unique and complex health care system.

Specific Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion this course, students will be able to:

1) Explain how the U.S. health care system is organized and how this organizational structure impacts overall health care costs, the ability of individuals and groups to access care, and the quality of care that individuals and groups receive in the United States.

¹ Peterson-Kaiser Health System Tracker, https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/health-spending-u-s-compare-countries/#item-start. Accessed Jan. 22, 2019.

- 2) Differentiate between primarily market versus public approaches to health care and correctly recognize which approach a specific policy reflects and why.
- 3) Identify and describe the functioning of key institutions, programs, and organizational structures that make up the U.S. healthcare system, including Medicare, Medicaid, managed care, and the ACA.
- 4) Outline overarching trends and changes in the evolution of the U.S. health care system from the start of the twentieth century through the Affordable Care Act of 2010 and point to key structural and political factors that led to these changes.
- 5) Understand key concepts related to public and global health.
- 6) Compare the U.S. health care system to models in other wealthy, industrialized nations based on metrics such as cost, access, and quality of care.
- 7) Articulate and defend their own recommendations for policy reform or change to the U.S. health care system.

General Education Learning Outcomes

This course fulfills the Social Sciences GEP requirement. The above course learning outcomes are tied to and incorporate the general learning outcomes associated with this requirement, which are as follows:

- Explain or apply major concepts, methods, or theories used in the social sciences to investigate, analyze, or predict human behavior.
- Examine and explain how social, cultural, or political institutions influence individuals or groups.

Required Texts

- Thomas Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach. 2016. *Understanding Health Policy: A Clinical Approach*, 7th Edition. McGraw Hill. (Available through Text Rental)
- All other assigned readings are available on Canvas in the e-Reserve module.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade will be based on your performance in the following areas:

Attendance & Participation	15%
Brief Assignments	8%
Current Events	2%
Mid-term Exam #1	25%
Mid-term Exam #2	25%
Final Exam	25%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

Course grades will be calculated on a straight percentage scale. An A equals 93 or above, A- 90-92.99, B+ 87-89.99, B 83-86.99, B- 80-82.99, C+ 77-79.99, C 73-76.99, C- 70-72.99, D+ 67-69.99, D 60-66.99, F 59.99 and below.

Viewing Grades in Canvas

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted in the Canvas Gradebook. Click on the Grades link to view your scores for different assignments and exams. Grading takes a while. Please allow a week for short written assignments and approximately 2 weeks for exam grades to be posted.

Attendance & Participation

This class will meet synchronously via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30-10:45 AM. All students are expected to attend class sessions and take part in class discussions, breakout sessions, and exercises. Attendance and participation are crucial parts of this course and represent 15% of the final course grade. All students will be allowed 2 unexcused absences with no penalty. Points will be deducted from this part of your grade starting with the third unexcused absence. More than 6 unexcused absences (3 weeks) will result in a failing grade for Attendance and Participation.

Students who need to miss class and do not want to lose points will be allowed to make up their attendance points by watching the recorded lecture and submitting a lecture response to Canvas. All make-up work must be completed by Sunday at midnight before the start of the next week.

In addition to regular attendance, active participation in class is important. Before attending class, make sure you have completed the assigned reading or film viewing for that day (see Class Schedule and Reading Assignments below). Come to class ready to listen attentively, ask questions, take quizzes, engage in discussion, and complete occasional exercises and assignments. Sometimes I will start off with a Kahoot Quiz. I do not use quiz scores to calculate final grades, but instead use them for review and to keep track of attendance and participation.

I will use the same Zoom link for all class meetings. This link is also provided in Canvas:

Join Zoom Meeting https://uwsp.zoom.us/j/91424898968?pwd=cHEyQ2s2Y0dtenpBQ1FPYW1EWkZJdz09

Meeting ID: 914 2489 8968

Passcode: 198144

Absences due to Military Service

As stated in the UWSP Catalog, you will not be penalized for class absence due to unavoidable or legitimate required military obligations, or medical appointments at a VA facility, not to exceed two (2) weeks unless special permission is granted by the instructor. You are responsible for notifying faculty members of such circumstances as far in advance as possible and for providing documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students to verify the reason for the absence. The faculty member is responsible to provide reasonable accommodations or opportunities to make up exams or other course assignments that have an impact on the course grade. For absences due to being deployed for active duty, please refer to the Military Call-Up Instructions for Students.

Brief Assignments

Over the course of the semester, I will assign several brief homework or in-class assignments for credit. Together these will count for 8% of your grade. They will be announced in class. If you miss a class, make sure to watch the recorded lecture to see if there are any assignments associated with that class.

Current Events

During this past year, the coronavirus pandemic has brought health care issues to the forefront of national and global news in an unprecedented way. Even before the pandemic, health care policy was

and continues to be a critical issue in U.S. politics. Because what we are studying is so relevant to what is in the news, we will keep current events front and center in the classroom. Students will be expected to keep up with the news, especially stories having to do with the pandemic, public health, and health care policy.

Once during the semester each student will choose a news story related to health or health care broadly defined to share with the class. Some students will present their news story in class while others will post a commentary on their chosen story with a link to the original article to the Current Events Discussion Board on Canvas. Students will sign up for a slot to present or a day to post to the discussion board at the start of the semester. Current events presentations will take place at the start of class and be limited to 5 minutes during which you should briefly describe what the story is about and explain how you see it relating to this class. Write-ups for the discussion board should follow a similar model but focus a bit more on commentary and significance. Current event posts should be 2 paragraphs long. Everyone who completes this assignment satisfactorily will receive full points standing for 2% of the course grade.

When choosing your story, please use highly respected publications and news sources and look for stories with some depth. Here are suggested publications that provide excellent coverage of health care issues and the pandemic:

- Kaiser Health News https://khn.org/
- The New York Times www.nytimes.com
- The Atlantic https://www.theatlantic.com/
- The Guardian (London) www.guardian.co.uk

I also recommend listening to National Public Radio's (NPR) news programs; this is a terrific way to keep up with both domestic and international news, even when you do not have time to read the newspaper. You can hear NPR news on Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR), which has two local radio stations: The Ideas Network at 99.1 FM and News and Classical at 90.9 FM. You can also listen live and access podcasts of earlier shows at www.wpr.org. There are many terrific podcasts that can help you learn about and keep up with the news, both domestic and international. One that I recommend for delving deeper into top news stories is "The Daily," which is produced by the *New York Times* and is available for free on various podcast platforms.

Exams

There will be 3 exams, all of which will be taken on Canvas. Exams will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blanks, and long-answer or essay questions. The dates for each are listed on the course schedule below. Exams will cover material from the readings, lectures, and movies. I will provide you with study guides at least one week before each exam.

Communications and Technology

There is a **Canvas** site set up for this class, which will be our main point of contact outside of the virtual classroom. The syllabus, instructions, course materials, and e-Reserves will be provided through Canvas. You should get accustomed to accessing our Canvas site several times during the week to check for notifications, access readings, films, and recorded lectures, and to complete assignments and exams.

If you find you are having any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure to reach out to me as early as possible. Building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming a successful professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me and your other instructors when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution.

I welcome your questions, thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. There are several ways you can communicate with me: the "Hey Prof. Collins!" discussion board, Canvas Inbox, regular e-mail, and Zoom Student Hours. I will be available Tuesdays from 9-10 AM and Wednesdays from 11-12 noon if you want to meet with me via Zoom. Use the Student Hours link on Canvas, not the class meetings link. Feel free to pop in if you have questions or concerns or if you would like to chat.

For private matters or questions that are of concern only to you, the most efficient way to contact me outside of Student Hours is via Canvas Inbox or regular email. For questions about the syllabus, course organization, specific assignments, or course content, I encourage you to use the "Hey Prof. Collins!" discussion board. This is meant to serve as a venue for you to ask me questions that might be of interest to the whole class, such as those concerning content or the mechanics of how the course is working. The board is NOT graded and will not have any impact on your final grade. Feel free to post questions or simply check in to see what questions other students are raising.

Technology Support

- Visit with a <u>Student Technology Tutor</u>
- Seek assistance from the IT Service Desk (Formerly HELP Desk)
 - o IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
 - o IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to abide by the guidelines for academic integrity contained in the UW System Administrative Code. As a student it behooves you to be well acquainted with these guidelines and to understand clearly what constitutes plagiarism, as violations can result in severe consequences. For the purposes of this class, the basic rule is to do your own work on exams, quizzes, and short writing assignments. I take cheating seriously and will take action if an incident comes to my attention. Please let me know if you are aware of cheating taking place during quizzes or exams.

Privacy and Recordings

Lecture materials and recordings for POLI 306 – Health Politics and Policies are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright

infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Protecting your Data and Privacy

UW-System approved tools meet security, privacy, and data protection standards. For a list of approved tools, visit this website. https://www.wisconsin.edu/dle/external-application-integration-requests/

Tools not listed on the website linked above may not meet security, privacy, and data protection standards. If you have questions about tools, contact the UWSP IT Service Desk at 715-346-4357.

Here are steps you can take to protect your data and privacy.

- Use different usernames and passwords for each service you use
- Do not use your UWSP username and password for any other services
- Use secure versions of websites whenever possible (HTTPS instead of HTTP)
- Have updated antivirus software installed on your device

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1: Introductions

1/25 – Introduction to the course - No assigned readings

1/27 - Views of U.S. Healthcare and Introducing Key Concepts

Read: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 1 – "Introduction: The Paradox of Excess and Deprivation"

Watch: "Is U.S. health care the best or 'least effective' system in the modern world?" *PBS Newshour,* August 31, 2020. (Running time: 12:23 mins.) Link available here and on e-Reserves: https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/is-u-s-health-care-the-best-or-least-effective-system-in-the-modern-world

Week 2: Paying for and Access to Health Care in the U.S.

2/1 – Who pays for health care?

Read: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 2 – "Paying for Healthcare"

2/3 – Who has access to health care?

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 3 "Access to Health Care", pp. 19-28, ending at "The Relation Between Health Care and Health Status"
- Michael Sainato. "The Americans dying because they can't afford medical care." *Guardian*, January 7, 2020. (e-Reserves)
- Noam Levey. "Soaring insurance deductibles and high drug prices hit sick Americans with a 'double whammy". *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 2019. (e-Reserves)

Week 3: Access & Health Disparities

2/8 – In-class discussion of the documentary, "The Waiting Room". *Watch*: "The Waiting Room", 2012. *Running time: 62 minutes*. (link is on e-Reserves)

2/10 - Health Disparities

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 3 "Access to Health Care", pp. 28-30.
- <u>"Covid 19's Unequal Consequences" World 101</u> Online resource (Link also available on e-Reserves)
- Andrew Curry. "Why living in a poor neighborhood can make you fat." *Nautilus*, Dec. 17, 2015. (e-Reserves)

Week 4: Organization of Health Care

2/15 – Paying Providers

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 4 "Paying Health Care Providers"
- Elisabeth Rosenthal. "Paying Till it Hurts: American Way of Birth, Costliest in the World." *New York Times*, June 30, 2013. (e-Reserves)

2/17 – Organization of Healthcare

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach. Ch. 5 "How Healthcare is Organized I: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Care"
- Nicolas Kristoff. "Opinion: Why Infants May be More Likely to Die in America Than Cuba." *New York Times,* Jan. 18, 2019. (e-Reserves)

Week 5: Organization of Healthcare Continued and Exam Review

2/22 – Delivery System Organization, including HMOs

Read:

- Bodenheimer & Grumbach, Ch. 6 "How Healthcare is Organized II: Health Delivery Systems"
- Reed Abelson. "When Hospitals Merge to Save Money, Patients Often Pay More." *New York Times*, November 14, 2018. (e-Reserves)

2/24 - Exam review

Week 6: Midterm Exam & Prevention

3/1 – MIDTERM EXAM #1 - EXAM AVAILABLE ON CANVAS ALL DAY WITH TIME LIMIT ONCE THE EXAM IS OPENED

3/3 – Prevention and Public Health - **RECORDED LECTURE & RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT**

Read: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 11, "Prevention of Illness"

Week 7: Race and Healthcare in America

3/8 – The Historical Impact of Racism on Health Care Disparities and Policy

Read: Jeneen Interlandi. "1619 Project: Why doesn't the United States have universal healthcare? It has everything to do with race." *New York Times Magazine*, August 14, 2019. (e-Reserves)

Watch: "Power to Heal: Medicare and the Civil Rights Revolution." Running time: 56 minutes. (Link is available on e-Reserves)

Note: We will discuss the first half of the movie on Monday and the second half on Wednesday.

3/10 – The Civil Rights Movement and the Passage of Medicare

Discuss: Come to class prepared to discuss "Power to Heal", specifically the politics of how Medicare was passed, and the role played by the Civil Rights movement in its passage.

Week 8: Medicare

Reading for the Week: Barr. Chapter 6, "Medicare". (e-Reserves)

3/15 – Overview of Medicare

3/17 – Dilemmas of Medicare and its future

March 20-28 - Spring Break - Enjoy!!!

Week 9: Medicaid, CHIP, & Long-Term Care

3/29 – Medicaid & CHIP

Read: Barr. Ch. 7, "Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program," pp. 196-216. (e-Reserves)

3/31 – Long-Term Care

Read: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 12 – "Long-Term Care"

Week 10: The ACA and the Future of Medicaid

4/5 – The Affordable Care Act - **RECORDED LECTURE & RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT**

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 15, "Health Care Reform and National Health Insurance"
- Elisabeth Rosenthal. "Healthcare's Road to Ruin." *New York Times*, Dec. 21, 2013. (e-Reserves)

4/7 – Impact of the ACA and the Future of Medicaid - **RECORDED LECTURE & RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT**

Read: Barr. Ch. 7, "Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program," pp. 216-227. (e-Reserves)

Week 11 – MIDTERM EXAM #2

4/12 - Exam review

4/14 – MIDTERM EXAM #2 - EXAM AVAILABLE ON CANVAS ALL DAY WITH TIME LIMIT ONCE THE EXAM IS OPENED

Week 12 – The Perils of Profit and Market Failure

4/19 - Big Pharma

Watch: "Big Bucks, Big Pharma", 2006. Running Time: 46 mins. (link is on e-Reserves)

Read: Stephen Buranyi, "How profit makes the fight for a coronavirus vaccine harder." The Guardian, March 4, 2020. (e-Reserves)

4/21 - The U.S. Healthcare System and the Pandemic

Read:

• Elisabeth Rosenthal. "Opinion: We Knew the Coronavirus Was Coming, Yet We Failed." *New York Times*, May 6, 2020. (e-Reserves)

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/opinion/coronavirus-health-care-market.html

- Anne Applebaum. "The Coronavirus Called America's Bluff: Like Japan in the mid-1800s, the United States now faces a crisis that disproves everything the country believes about itself." *The Atlantic*, March 15, 2020. (e-Reserves)
- Farhad Manjoo. "How the World's Richest Country Ran Out of a 75-Cent Face Mask." *New York Times*, March 25, 2020. (e-Reserves)

Further Recommended Reading:

- Ed Yong. "Where Year Two of the Pandemic Will Take Us." *The Atlantic*, Dec. 29, 2020. See, especially section VI. Lessons Learned. (Link provided here and on e-Reserves)
 - https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/12/pandemic-year-two/617528/
- David Blumenthal, Elizabeth Fowler, Melinda Abrams, and Sara Collins. "Covid 19 Implications for the Health System." *New England Journal of Medicine*, Oct. 8, 2020. (Link provided here and on e-Reserves) https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmsb2021088

Week 13: Global Health

4/26 - Global Health - NO CLASS MEETING OR RECORDED LECTURE, INSTEAD ASSIGNMENT/QUIZ BASED ON THE ASSIGNED MATERIALS

Watch and Read: Go to the World 101 Global Health webpage (link on Canvas e-Reserves). This is a collection of resources produced by the Council on Foreign Relations. Read and watch the following short pieces in the module. Feel free to engage with all of them, but for the exam you will be responsible for the information in the following:

- 1. "What is global health?", 4 min. video
- 2. "Global Health Then and Now". Brief reading with charts.
- 3. "The Rising Tide of Diabetes in Mexico", 4 min. video.
- 4. "Noncommunicable Diseases and How They are Measured." Short reading.
- 5. "How Health Care Works Around the World." Short reading with charts.

Test your knowledge: Take the Global Health Knowledge Assessment at end of the module.

4/28 - Preparing for the Next Pandemic

Read:

- "Pop-up Case: Preparing for the Next Pandemic." Model Diplomacy, Council on Foreign Relations. (e-Reserves)
- Annie Sparrow. "How to Stop the Next Pandemic Before It Starts." *Foreign Policy*, February 14, 2020. (e-Reserves)
- Lawrence O. Gosten, Eric A. Friedman, and Suerie Moon. "Wealthy Countries Should Share Vaccine Doses Before It's Too Late." *Foreign Affairs*, January 19, 2021. (e-Reserves)
- Uri Friedman. "We Were Warned." *The Atlantic*, March 18, 2020. (e-Reserves)

Week 14: How Do They Do It? Health Care in Other Wealthy, Developed Nations

5/3 - Single-Payer Systems – The UK and Canada

Read:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 14, "Health Care in Four Nations", sections on Canada and the UK, pp. 172-178.
- Aaron E. Carroll and Austin Frakt. "The Best Health Care System in the World: Which One Would You Pick?" *The New York Times*, Sept. 18, 2017. (e-Reserves)
- Barr, Ch. 2, "Health Care as a Reflection of Underlying Cultural Values", pp. 42-53. (e-Reserves)
- Abigail Abrams. "The U.S. Spends \$2,500 Per Person on Health Care Administrative Costs. Canada spends \$550. Here's why." *Time,* January 6, 2020. (e-Reserves)

Watch:

• "Sick Around the World", Frontline, PBS, April 15, 2008. (e-Reserves)

Note: For Monday, watch the first 13 minutes of this documentary which introduces the topic and then talks about the UK. The total Frontline episode lasts about 56 minutes. You should watch the segments on Germany and Switzerland for Wednesday. There are 2 segments we will not be discussing -- Japan and Taiwan -- feel free to skip those.

• "Should U.S. look to UK's single-payer National Health Service for next care moves?" *PBS Newshour*, September 1, 2020. (Running time: 9 mins.) Link available here and on e-Reserves:

https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/should-u-s-look-to-uks-single-payer-national-health-service-for-next-health-care-moves

5/5 – Multi-payer Models: The German and Swiss Health Care Systems

Readings:

- Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 14, "Health Care in Four Nations", section on Germany, pp. 169-172.
- Jamie Daw. "A Better Path to Universal Healthcare: The United States should look to Germany, not Canada, for the best model." *The New York Times,* Feb. 20, 2019. (e-Reserves)
- Nelson D. Schwartz. "Swiss Health Care Thrives Without Public Option." *New York Times*, September 30, 2009. (e-Reserves)

Watch:

• "Sick Around the World", Frontline, PBS, April 15, 2008. (e-Reserves)

Note: Watch segments on Germany (mins. 24 to 35) and Switzerland (mins. 43:17 to the end). The total Frontline episode lasts about 56 minutes. There are 2 segments that we will <u>not</u> be discussing -- Japan and Taiwan -- feel free to skip those.

• "How Switzerland delivered health care for all – and kept its private insurance." *PBS Newshour*, September 2, 2020. (Running time: 9:42 mins.) Link available here and on e-Reserves: https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-switzerland-delivered-health-care-for-all-and-kept-its-private-insurance

Week 15: The Future of U.S. Health Care and Review

5/10 – The Future of Health Care in the U.S.: Which way should we go?

Readings:

- William C. Hisiao. "What Other Countries Can and Can't -- Teach the United States." *Foreign Affairs*, Jan./February 2020. (e-Reserves)
- Elizabeth Wallace. "How Biden's and Sanders' Health Care Plans Measure Up." *Healthline*, March 2, 2020. (Link to webpage is available on e-Reserves)

• Diane Archer. "22 studies agree: 'Medicare for All' saves money." *The Hill,* February 24, 2020. (e-Reserves)

Further <u>Recommended</u> Readings:

- Adam Cancryn. "The Army Built to Fight 'Medicare for All". *Politico*, November 25, 2019. (e-Reserves)
- Christopher Cai, et al. "Projected costs of single-payer health care financing in the United States: A systematic review of economic analyses." *PLOS Medicine*, Jan. 15, 2020. **Note**: this is the original article that is described in the Archer article from *The Hill* (see above). (e-Reserves)

5/12 – Conclusions & Review for Final Exam

Reading: Bodenheimer and Grumbach, Ch. 17, "Conclusion: Tensions & Challenges"

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: MONDAY, MAY 17th, 12:30-2:30 pm,

EXAM WILL BE TAKEN ON CANVAS