American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Health Sciences
HCAD301
Healthcare Principles and Policies
3 Credit Hours
Length of Course: 8 weeks
Prerequisite: None

Instructor Information

Please refer to the Syllabus tab for your instructor's contact information and biography.

Course Description (Catalog)

Healthcare administrators comply with health policy on a day-to-day basis and influence the drive for change to improve policies across the healthcare system. Principles for planning, managing, and evaluating healthcare policies and programs are examined. Students will explore modern and historical issues and determine the theoretical basis for the healthcare system to include the epidemiology for major health policy issues. Students will examine alternate opportunities to enhance healthcare systems from the perspective of health providers, community leaders, and community residents.

Course Scope

This course provides the opportunity to examine contemporary issues in the delivery of healthcare services in the United States and how organizations are shaped and influenced by policy and decision-making processes. The course will assist students in preparing for organizational managerial and support staff roles by assisting in policy analysis, understanding moral and ethical values driving healthcare policy within institutions, and focusing on management practices towards the initialization of new healthcare policies.

(Note to students: The course materials, assignments, learning outcomes, and expectations in this undergraduate course assume that the student has completed all lower level general education and career planning course work necessary to develop research, writing, and critical thinking skills. Students who have not fulfilled all general education requirements through courses or awarded transfer credit should strongly consider completing these requirements prior to registering for this course).

Course Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify key policies and procedures within the US healthcare system.
2. Examine principles for planning, managing, and evaluating healthcare policies and programs.
3. Analyze healthcare policies and develop strategies for maintaining quality, safety, and value in healthcare programs.
4. Apply quality and performance improvement strategies to address major healthcare safety concerns.
5. Compare and contrast healthcare options for various populations.

Course Delivery Method

This course will offer the student an interactive virtual classroom. Each week's lesson will have a course announcement, assigned readings, a discussion group question based on either course readings or an internet-based project, and online lessons.

The nature of an on-line course requires a significant amount of independent work. The student will be provided with structure, resources, guidance, and instructor experience for learning the course material. The student, however, is responsible for managing time, completing assignments on time, completing the readings and making inquiries as needed to complete the course effectively. This is an eight-week course, which means the material must be learned in a short period of time – this requires dedication and diligence on the part of the student. It is important for the student to check his/her e-mail and posted professor notes for each week's work. Additional readings, internet-work and assignments will be posted online at the beginning of each week of the course.

Assignment due dates will be posted with assignment directions. All assignments will have due dates of a week or more; therefore, no extensions or last-minute exceptions are anticipated. The student is expected to complete all work on time.

For the purposes of this course, a "week" is defined as the period between Monday to Sunday. The first week begins on the first day of the course and ends midnight of the first Sunday following the first day of the course.

Discussion is asynchronous, meaning you are not required to be on-line at a specific time with the professor or other students. Instead you may post your comments or questions on the Forum. Since the student is expected to fully participate in discussions and interact with the instructor and other students, reading assignments and assigned projects should be completed in a timely manner.

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Materials

Required Readings:

Textbooks: Select chapters from the following textbooks are used in this course. All readings are available via the APUS online library at no cost.
- Barton, P.L. (2010). Understanding the U.S. Health Services System (4th ed.) Chicago, IL : Health Administration Press. ISBN 978-1-56793-338-3.
- Kominski, G.F. (2014). Changing the U. S. Health Care System : Key Issues in Health Services Policy and Management (4th ed.). San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated. ISBN 978-1-118-41890-1.
- Shaw, G.M.(2010). The Healthcare Debate. Santa Barbara: Greenwood. ISBN 978-0-313-35667-4.

Articles: See details in course outline below.

All of required readings are located in the Course Tools section of your classroom under Lessons.

Academic Writing Requirements:
The School of Health Sciences requires use of APA format and style and all students are encouraged to have a current copy of the *APA Publication Manual.* All written assignments are to be submitted in APA format style unless otherwise noted in the assignment directions.

Evaluation Procedures

The grade scale and due dates for each of the evaluation are provided below:

Grading Weights

Week	Discussion Forum	Assignment
1	5	
2	5	10
3	5	
4	5	10
5	5	
6	5	10
7	5	
8		35

Totals	35	65

Weekly Assignments, Forum Responses, and the Final Project will be graded using the following as a general guideline:

Context Demonstrates understanding of topic	50%
Main points clearly articulated	20%
Following Directions	10%
Proper APA Format	10%
Grammar/Writing skills	10%

Work that is late, missing, or that does not follow the assignment requirements will lose assignment points, up to and including a zero grade for the assignment.

Weekly Forums
The initial response to the discussion question must be posted by 11:59 PM Eastern time on Wednesday. To ensure active engagement, you are encouraged to post earlier. The initial post is expected to be 450 words in length and draw from and cite at least 2 relevant, credible sources – use scholarly journal articles rather than the internet.

In addition to your initial post, you must also read a minimum of two of the postings by your classmates and post a **substantive response** to those two classmates. Your response must be a minimum of 250 words and content must be related to the readings. If you present an opinion, then you must validate it with a fact that is supported from the textbook, an article from a peer-reviewed journal, or a credible, relevant web site (**NOT** Wikipedia or other web-based materials). An opinion, without validation, is not applicable. The reference must be cited in proper APA format. Each response must list references specific to those responses.

You must respond to at least two classmates by 11:55 PM on Sunday of each week. Active participation is required by replying to classmates during the week of the assignment. To ensure active engagement, you are encouraged to post earlier. The forums are for student interaction, and submitting input after the end of the week serves no learning objective and does not constitute participation. Therefore, **under no circumstances (to include course extensions and incompletes) are late posts accepted**.

Further considerations about Discussion Forums:
1. Timeliness (Your post and responses are on time).
2. Grammar and spelling (A foundation of academic work is attention to detail).
3. Premise and Conclusion (Your post is "set up" with your idea and you "complete" your idea in your post).

4. Open Ended for Questions (Your post offers thinking points for your classmates to respond to).
5. Clear (Your post and responses are concise and easy to understand).

Assignment 1 (Week 2): Planning, managing, and evaluating healthcare policies and programs (LO 1 & 2)
For this assignment, you will write a 4-6 page, APA-formatted paper that identifies and explores five key policies / procedures of the US healthcare system and applies principles for planning, managing, and evaluating healthcare policies and programs. You are expected to draw from at least 3 recent (no more than 5 years old) scholarly journal articles.

Assignment 2 (Week 4): New Healthcare Policy Implementation Plan (LO 3).
For this assignment, you will write a 4-6 page, APA-formatted paper that proposes a new federal or state policy that will: a) enhance access to care, b) enhance quality of care, and c) reduce the cost of care. You are expected to draw from at least 3 recent (no more than 5 years old) scholarly journal articles.

Assignment 3 (Week 6): Improving Healthcare Safety (LO 4).
For this assignment, you will write a 3-4 page, APA-formatted paper that identifies and explores a major healthcare safety concern. In addition, the paper is expected to provide a 1-2 page quality / performance improvement checklist or strategy guide. You are expected to draw from at least 3 recent (no more than 5 years old) scholarly journal articles.

Final Project (Week 8): Population Health Management (LO 5).
For your final assignment, you will submit a Power Point Presentation that examines a specific population / demographic change, or a specific issue relating to disparities in access to care. In developing your presentation, consider and address following: a) the effect of the change or disparity on the capabilities and delivery of healthcare, b) specific recent events or developments related to the change or disparity that have been influential, and c) methods (such as population health) that the government or local healthcare organizations can use to determine and address the healthcare needs of the identified population. The presentation is expected to be 15-20 slides in length (this count does not include the required title slide and reference list). The presentation must include detailed speaker's notes (75-100 words per slide) that offers relevant data and examples from credible sources (be sure to properly cite sources). You are expected to draw from at least 6 recent (no more than 5 years old) scholarly journal articles.

Refer to the Student Handbook for policies relevant to academic honesty and other procedures and policies related to this course. Refer to Online Resource Center for any research assistance.
- More in-depth specific instructions for each assignment can be found in the Assignment tab within the course.
- Assignments submitted late without advance notice will receive a 5% per day late penalty and will not be accepted for grading five (5) days past the due date.

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Grading Outline

Grading Instrument	Percentage of Final Grade
Forum Discussions (Weeks 1-7)	**35%**
Assignments (weeks 2, 4, and 6)	**30%**
Final Project (Week 8)	**35%**
TOTAL	**100%**

Course Outline

Lesson	Topic	Course Objectives	Reading(s)	Assignment	Forum
1	Overview of the US Healthcare System	1	Barton, Chapters 1 and 2. Shaw, Chapters 2 and 3, and Appendix 1.	N/A	Major Impacts on the Health System
2	Access to Care and the Affordable Care Act	1, 2	Kominski, Chapters 1, 2, and 6.	Key Policies Paper	Access to Care
3	Cost of Healthcare	1, 2, 3	Kominski, Chapters 8 and 9. Shaw, Chapter 5.	N/A	Cost Containment
4	Financing the U.S. Health Services System	1, 2, 3	Barton, Chapters 6 and 7.	Implementing New Policy Paper	Financing Sources
5	Presidents and Healthcare Reform	1-5	Kominski, Chapters 20 and 23. Articles: • Blumenthal & Morone, (2016). • Morone (2017).	N/A	Impact of the ACA
6	Improving Quality	1-4	Kominski, Chapters 11, 12, and 13.	Quality Improvement Paper	Pay for Performance
7	Medicaid and Medicare	1-5	Shaw, Chapter 4. Kominski, Chapter 21. Article: Morone (2017).	N/A	Medicare Solvency
8	Determinants and Disparities	5	Kominski, Chapters 3, 4, and 5.	Population Health Presentation	N/A

Policies

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Please see the Student Handbook to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

       Drop/Withdrawal Policy
       Plagiarism Policy
       Extension Process and Policy
       Disability Accommodations