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## American Public University System

*The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind*

**School of Health Sciences  
PBHE 502  
Health Policy  
Credit Hours: 3  
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)

This course is designed to give the student an in-depth understanding of the roles that government and the consumer (the patient) can, and do, play in the ever-evolving health care industry. This course places special emphasis on politics and ethics and what results when they clash, as well as how politics and ethics form the mental attitudes of decision makers. This course is rich in information on the various political and ethical dilemmas facing the patients in the new millennium.

### Course Scope

This course is designed to provide you with the basic concepts of management and leadership. This course will introduce you to the United States health care system and compare other health care systems in other countries. It will review political, economic, and insurance concepts central to current health policy debates. Finally, this course will evaluate policy problems and health care systems.

*(Note to students: The course materials, assignments, learning outcomes, and expectations in this upper level 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).*

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## Course Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the critical factors that will influence health and health care in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
2. Compare, contrast, seek answers, and formulate ideas regarding health care systems
3. Evaluate health care policies and their influence on the development, operation, design and effectiveness of health care delivery systems
4. Assess the efficacy of public health programs and initiatives such as Medicare, Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP)
5. Examine the effects of unhealthy lifestyles and choices on the American Health Care System
6. Understand how the overall health of a nation directs that Nation's policy and national interests
7. Identify health care disparities in the American Health Care System and create solutions reducing the uneven 'health care burden' of disparate populations

## Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due weekly as noted on the course outline and can include Forum questions and written assignments. Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

## Course Materials

### Required Course Textbook:

Morone, J. A., & Ehlke, D.C. (Editors). (2014). *Health Politics and Policy*. (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Clifton Park, NY: Delmar, Cengage Learning. (ISBN-10: 1111644152, ISBN-13: 978-1111644154)

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (2010). 6th Edition. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. (ISBN 10; 1-4338-0561-8).

Other materials can be found in the Lessons section of the course.

### Academic Writing Requirements:

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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.

### **Web Sites**

In addition to the required course texts, the following public domain web sites are useful. Please abide by the university's academic honesty policy when using Internet sources as well. Note web site addresses are subject to change.

- None

## **Evaluation Procedures**

### **Forum**

Please join the forums each week. Replies must be posted in the week due and replies after the end of the each week will not be graded. The Forums are for student interaction and input should be submitted before the week ends in order to fully participate in the discussions. Students should demonstrate their own knowledge in the forums and avoid copying and pasting from websites.

#### ***Guidelines:***

- Post the initial response to each forum by 11:55pm, ET, Wednesday.
- Initial responses should be no less than 450-500 words.
- Initial responses are to be original in content and demonstrate a thorough analysis of the topic.
- Reply to at least 2 of your classmates in each forum by 11:55pm, ET, Sunday.
- Replies to classmates should be no less than 200 words.
- Responses to classmates are significant to advance the forum.
- All forums can be accessed in the Forums section of the course.

Students will be responsible for providing a peer response posting for at least two (2) of their peers' postings, unless there are less than 3 students in the course, where only one (1) peer posting will be required. Your peer postings should challenge or expound upon at least one of the points made by your peer, and "I agree" does not constitute as an adequate response. As graduate students, you will be expected to provide comprehensive, relevant and well supported points in your assignments.

We all bring something unique to the classroom, from our understanding, our experiences, and our value systems. We honor and respect each person's diverse beliefs to help us see beyond the classroom to be the most effective individuals we can be. Therefore, we should all be respectful of others while expressing our viewpoints and opinions. Proper netiquette behavior

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is expected. Any inflammatory, demining or disrespectful language in a posting will be immediately removed from the discussion space.

**Weekly Essays:** There will be seven (7) weekly essays in this course. Each weekly essay is due in the Assignment portal of the classroom by **Sunday, 11:55 p.m. EST each week**. Make sure you read and understand the directions for each assignment. Each assignment should be a minimum of two full pages of text in length and have a minimum of at least (2) outside sources (not our course text) in your response. Please ensure that you cite your references in APA format.

**Research Paper:** For this course, students will be required to complete a research paper. This paper must be at **minimum** 10 full pages in length. This requirement does not include your cover sheet, reference pages, reiterating the assignment, inserting extra spaces, etc. Your topic must be related to Health Policy. You may select a current health care program (e.g. Medicare, Medicaid, and S-CHIP) or you can select any other health care system (e.g. HMOs, IMOs, and PPOs). In addition, government health policy is a fantastic topic; however, you must go in-depth with your assessments. A 10-page paper stating Universal Health Care is good or bad is not enough. You need actionable data and critical assessments in your work.

The paper must be typed, double-spaced with 1-inch margins in 12-point Times New Roman font with all references cited. You must use a minimum of 15 academic references. As always, Wikipedia and Answers.com are NOT academic/scholarly sources. Please remember this is a graduate level course and your papers are expected in line with graduate level work. Papers will be graded based upon: 1) the extent to which students followed directions for the assignment, and 2) overall presentation (including clarity of argument, grammar and spelling) (see grading rubric for more specific grading information). The paper can be submitted to me at any time, but cannot be submitted any later than the **last regularly scheduled day of class in Week 8 at 11:55pm EST**.

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.

#### Course Grading Outline

| Grading Instrument                      |          | Percentage of Final Grade |
|---|----------|---------------------------|
| <b>Forum</b> (7 @ 100 pts each)         | 700 pts  | <b>25%</b>                |
| Introductory Forum Post                 | 10 pts   |                           |
| <b>Weekly Essays</b> (7 @ 100 pts each) | 700 pts  | <b>40%</b>                |
| <b>Research Paper</b>                   | 100 pts  | <b>35%</b>                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | 1510 pts | <b>100%</b>               |

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| Course Outline |   |  |  |  |   |
|----------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Lesson         | Topic   | Learning Goals   | Reading(s)   | Assignment(s)                                      | Forum(s)  |
| 1              | Efficiency and Fairness in health care<br><br>Markets and government  | Recognize the role and impact of health politics and policy on health care delivery<br><br>Assess the interaction between markets and government in the U.S. health care system<br><br>Describe the concept of quality in health care and how it can be measured<br><br>Generate recommendations for addressing health care disparities in the U.S.                  | Morone & Ehlke (2014): Introduction and Chapters 1 & 2<br><br>Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (2010). National Healthcare Disparities Report. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nhdr10/nhdr10.pdf">http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nhdr10/nhdr10.pdf</a><br><br>National Committee for Quality Assurance. (2010). Health Care Report Cards. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.ncqa.org/tabid/60/Default.aspx">http://www.ncqa.org/tabid/60/Default.aspx</a><br><br><i>Unequal Treatment</i> (discussed in the National Healthcare Disparities Report) <a href="http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=10260">http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=10260</a> | Week 1 Essay: Health Care Disparities              | Forum:<br>Required APA Tutorial and Virtual Course Policies<br><br>Week 1 Forum: Virtual Class Introduction<br><br>Week 1 Forum-Health Care Disparities |
| Lesson         | Topic   | Course Objective(s)  | Reading(s)   | Assignment(s)                                      | Forum(s)  |
| 2              | Traditional models of American politics<br><br>Congress' role in public policy making<br><br>The President's role in health politics and policy | Evaluate the role of the U.S. Congress in the policy making process<br><br>Differentiate the U.S. legislative process from other industrialized countries<br><br>Analyze how the Obama Administration managed to pass the Affordable Care Act when earlier attempts at reform failed<br><br>Distinguish the roles of the American courts in U.S. health politics and | Morone & Ehlke (2014): Chapters 3-5  | Week 2 Essay: America's unique legislative process | Week 2 Forum: Congressional Influence on Health Care  |

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| Lesson | Topic  | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)  | Assignment(s)   | Forum(s)                                   |
|--------|--|---|---|---|--|
| 3      | <p>Three models of American health law</p> <p>State discretion and bargaining power</p> <p>Similarities and differences of state governments</p> | <p>Examine the political subcultures in the U.S.</p> <p>Appraise the balance of power between federal and state government with respect to regulation of the health sector</p> <p>Examine varying policy landscape based on cultural, economic, and historical diversity across the U.S.</p> <p>Evaluate the role of medical authorities on insurance companies and/or the government</p>                       | <p>Morone &amp; Ehlke (2014): Chapters 6 &amp; 11</p>   | <p>Week 3 Essay: Political subcultures</p>                                  | <p>Week 3 Forum: Medical Authority</p>     |
| Lesson | Topic  | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)  | Assignment(s)   | Forum(s)                                   |
| 4      | <p>Privatizing health politics topics</p> <p>Medicare</p>  | <p>Critique the role of government in provision of social services through private actors</p> <p>Assess the accomplishment of ACA and compromises made for the reform to pass</p> <p>Assess Medicare from a historical perspective to identify tensions and conflicts surrounding the program</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of government-related initiatives such as the largest federal health care program,</p> | <p>Morone &amp; Ehlke (2014): Chapters 7, 8, &amp; 10</p> <p>Review U.S. Department of Health &amp; Human Services Medicare website at <a href="http://www.medicare.gov/">http://www.medicare.gov/</a> &amp; Review the <i>2012 Medicare &amp; You Handbook</i></p> | <p>Week 4 Essay: Health Insurance Provision and the Social Security Act</p> | <p>Week 4 Forum: Universal Health Care</p> |

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| Lesson | Topic   | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)  | Assignment(s)                                     | Forum(s)                               |
|--------|---|---|---|---|--|
|        |   | Medicare within the context of universal health care  |   |   |  |
| 5      | Public opinion and health policy topics<br><br>Lobbyists                        | Assess the role and importance of major stakeholders (e.g. lobbyists, business leaders) in shaping health policy<br><br>Critique the ten myths about health lobbyists in terms of their power and influence in Washington<br><br>Analyze the essentials of public opinion as exemplified in attitudes towards obesity policy and national health reform<br><br>Attribute the contribution of key stakeholders to recent health policies | Morone & Ehlke (2014): Chapters 15-17   | Week 5 Essay: Employer-based Health Care Coverage | Week 5 Forum: Lobbyist Influence       |
| Lesson | Topic   | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)  | Assignment(s)                                     | Forum(s)                               |
| 6      | Medicaid<br><br>AIDS/Reproductive Health<br><br>Environmental Policy and health | Assess the efficacy of public health programs and initiatives such as Medicaid in meeting its target population's needs<br><br>Evaluate the current state of Medicaid as an example of a federal-state program designed to grow in its coverage of low-income people<br><br>Integrate the impact of environmental policy on the U.S. population health status given recent examples such  | Morone & Ehlke (2014): Chapter 9, 19 & 22<br><br>Review Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' website at <a href="http://www.cms.hhs.gov/">http://www.cms.hhs.gov/</a><br><br>Review the Medicaid Handbook/Amendments for your state at <a href="http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidGenInfo/StatePlan/list.asp#TopOfPage">http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidGenInfo/StatePlan/list.asp#TopOfPage</a> | Week 6 Essay: Current Events in Health Policy     | Week 6 Forum: Health of the Population |

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|        |  | as Hurricane Katrina<br><br>Critique the policies and programs surrounding the three stages of reproduction: sexual intercourse, conception and gestation   |   |   |   |
|--------|--|---|---|---|---|
| Lesson | Topic  | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)                                  | Assignment(s)                           | Forum(s)  |
| 7      | The elderly<br><br>Health Savings Account<br><br>American Health care system and International Perspective | Analyze the current health care system for the elderly<br><br>Examine the interaction between actors, policies and complications of aging policy<br><br>Assess the U.S. health care policies within the context of other industrialized nations and consumer-driven options such as Health Savings Account<br><br>Differentiate between the U.S. and other countries such as England and Canada in terms of financing and organization of health care systems | Morone & Ehlke (2014):<br>Chapters: 18 & 23 | Week 7 Essay:<br>Health Savings Account | Week 7<br>Forum: Health Care Systems and the Elderly                      |
| Lesson | Topic  | Course Objective(s)   | Reading(s)                                  | Assignment(s)                           | Forum(s)  |
| 8      | Research Paper   | Synthesize information regarding U.S. policymaking process and its influence on health policy<br><br>Organize major points regarding a selected health policy topic into a logical paper<br><br>Construct an argument and/or thesis focused   | No readings assigned.                       | Research Paper Due                      | Week 8<br>Forum: Course Feedback<br><br>Assignment:<br>Research Paper Due |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | <p>on a selected aspect of health politics or policy, as supported by literature</p> <p>Defend thesis/argument with ample justifications and scholarly work on health policy</p> |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

**Policies**

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](#)