History of Health Policy & Health Systems  
Elective: MA in Bioethics, Stony Brook University Graduate School  
Course # HCB 515  
Time  
Location  
Instructor: Carla C. Keirns, MD, PhD, MSc, carla.keirns@stonybrook.edu, 631-444-2765  
Assistant Professor of Preventive Medicine; Assistant Professor of Medicine; Assistant Professor of History; Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care & Bioethics, Stony Brook University School of Medicine  
Who gets sick? Who gets health care, what kind, and in what setting? This course covers the major health policy issues of the United States today, including the health status of the U.S. as a whole, the social and economic determinants of health, the role of personal and public health services in affecting health, the organization and financing of health services, and the multiple factors affecting health policies. We will explore the evolution of the US health care system in the past century, and debates about rights to health care or lack thereof, health disparities, conflicts of interest, and the ethics of health policy and practice.  

Week 1: Introduction  
Week 2: What is a health care system and does the US have one?  
Week 3: The Burden of Disease & Epidemiologic Transitions  
Week 4: The Origins of Hospitals  
Week 5: Health Crisis and Health Reform in the Progressive Era  
Week 6: The Multiple Origins of Health Insurance  
Week 7: Blue Cross, Blue Shield & Employment-Based Health Insurance  
Week 8: The Many lives of Medicare  
Week 9: From Charity Care to Medicaid  
Week 11: The Rise and Fall of the Clinton Health Care Plan  
Week 12: HMOs and Health Reform in the 1990s  
Week 13: Continuing Crises of Cost and Coverage  
Week 14: What Now?  

Course Objectives:  
1. At the end of this class, students will be able to explain the historical origins of many of the programs that make up the US health care system, the constraints that were important at their creation, and the possibilities for change based on changing economic, social, and legal contexts.  
2. They will be able to identify and describe the principles, interests, and moral philosophies at stake in health policies, the impacts on different stakeholders, and the ways in which these values and principles are integrated into political and technical decisionmaking.
3. Students will have an appreciation for the context and history underlying modern health policy and how this may be relevant to their practice of public health, medicine, or as citizens.

**Course Requirements:**

This course will be run as a graduate seminar, with formal presentation of some background material by the instructors, but the core of each class will be discussion of the readings and the cases for the week, with each week designed to explore a different set of ethical, social, and regulatory issues raised by attempts to organize and improve medical and public health practice. Students are expected to read the assigned articles, chapters, and excerpts come to class prepared to discuss them.

1. Students will be asked to write a 1-2 page paper about each week’s readings to focus class discussion.

2. Mini-research assignments: occasionally students may be asked to use online or library resources to answer questions that come up in discussion and report their findings to the rest of the class at the next class session.

3. Final paper: Students will be asked to research and write a 1500-2000 word paper on the historical background of an issue in US health policy. To help develop the paper, students will be asked to submit a one-paragraph paper proposal, a thesis or argument statement, and an annotated bibliography 4 weeks before the paper is due. Papers will be due on the last day of class.

Students will be expected to adhere to standard academic conventions for quotation and citation of sources. Any standard reference system, such as the University of Chicago, MLA, AMA or other system of citation is acceptable as long as it allows your readers to trace the origins of your claims to the original publication or source.

**Evaluation:** Students will be graded on class participation (25%); weekly papers (25%); proposal and bibliography (10%); final paper (40%)

**Feedback:** The standard evaluation form includes a faculty feedback section. Student papers will receive written comments, and we will assess group dynamics and participation regularly.

**Course Readings:**

The required books for the course which will be available for purchase at the Stony Brook University Bookstore in the basement of Melville Library and in the Stony Brook Health Sciences Center Bookstore on Level 2 of the HSC building. They are also available from online bookstores and a variety of used book resellers. Additional readings will be posted to the course Blackboard site, available from the Stony Brook Library electronic journals collection, or
otherwise distributed. Please advise me immediately if you have any difficulty accessing course readings.

Core Texts:


Supplemental Texts:


**Week 1: Introduction**

**Week 2: What is a health care system and does the US have one?**


- Rosemary A. Stevens, Introduction (1-9)


**Week 3: The Burden of Disease & Epidemiologic Transitions**


**Further Reading:**

Week 4: The Origins of Hospitals


Further Reading:


Week 5: Health Crisis and Health Reform in the Progressive Era


Further Reading:


Week 6: The Multiple Origins of Health Insurance


Further Reading:


Week 7: Blue Cross, Blue Shield & Employment-Based Health Insurance


Week 8: The Many lives of Medicare


Further Reading:


**Week 9: From Charity Care to Medicaid**


**Further Reading:**


**Week 10: Unintended Consequences: Payment Reform and the Privatization of Social Welfare**


**Further Reading:**


**Week 11: The Clinton Health Plan**

PBS Timeline of Clinton Health Care Debate
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/forum/may96/background/health_debate_page1.html


**Week 12: Health Maintenance Organizations**


**Week 13: Continuing Crises of Cost and Coverage**


**Week 14: The Affordable Care Act and Beyond**


**Further Reading:**


*Keirns, History of US Health Policy*

**Additional Resources:**


Hayward RA, Kent DM. 6 EZ steps to improving your performance: (or how to make P4P pay 4U!). *JAMA*. 2008 Jul 16;300(3):255-6.


**Online Resources:**

For information on life expectancy, disease rates and health status around the world:
http://www.who.int/whosis/en/

European Observatory on Health System Policies
http://www.euro.who.int/observatory/ctryinfo/ctryinfo

The World Bank, Health Systems & Financing
PULATION/EXTHSD/0,,contentMDK:20184860~menuPK:376819~pagePK:148956~piPK:216
618~theSitePK:376793,00.html

Health Systems Performance Assessment: Debates, Methods & Empiricism
WHO commissioned report edited by Murray and Evans, Harvard School of Public Health

Glossary of Key Health Reform Terms, Kaiser Family Foundation
http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/7909.pdf

Department of Health & Human Services Site on Health Care Reform
http://www.healthreform.gov

2009 US Federal Poverty Guidelines and History of the Measure
http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/09poverty.shtml

New York Times Interactive Timeline for Health Care Reform

New York Times

New England Journal of Medicine Timeline of Health Care Reform with NEJM PDFs
http://healthcarereform.nejm.org/?page_id=1647

New England Journal of Medicine's series of columns, commentaries, and analyses
http://healthcarereform.nejm.org/


Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care
-- US expenditures by geographic region, created from Medicare data
Extensive query system available on their website to look at different maps
http://www.dartmouthatlas.org/index.shtm

Washington Post  http://voices.washingtonpost.com/health-care-reform/


Kaiser Family Foundation  http://healthreform.kff.org/

Commonwealth Fund  http://www.commonwealthfund.org/

American Enterprise Institute (Free Market Think Tank)
http://www.aei.org/ra/43

Heritage Foundation (Conservative Think Tank)
http://www.heritage.org/Research/HealthCare/
National Association of Manufacturers

America's Health Insurance Plans http://www.ahip.org/

American Association of Retired Persons
http://www.aarp.org/health/articles/health_reform_get_the_facts.html

============================================================================

From Official Stony Brook University Policy:

Statements required to appear in all syllabi on the Stony Brook campus:

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Academic Integrity:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report and suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (Schools of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

Critical Incident Management:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.