This course will review the history of healthcare insurance in the United States, focusing on the problems of high costs and inadequate coverage. The course will then discuss how the new healthcare law addresses these problems, its prospects for success, and how the rapid changes may affect the medical student’s career goals.

### Instructors

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### Syllabus

The American healthcare reimbursement system is in a state of turmoil. About the only thing everyone agrees with is that the system is broken and needs repair. We find ourselves in the unenviable position that we have the most expensive system per capita in the world by double, yet large parts of our population remain uncovered or inadequately covered, and there are those who question the quality of the care that is being given.

While the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) attempts to address these problems, polls show that at least half our population is not in favor of it. The law is very complex and the vast majority of people, doctors and politicians included, are unaware of its many provisions. In fact, many of its important features have not yet been completely defined.

The first part of the course will review the history of health insurance in the United States since World War II focusing on how we got into the situation we are in. We will look at the two main payment systems, namely fee-for-service and capitation. We will see how each affects doctors (primary care and specialists), hospitals, insurance companies, patients, and industry. We will also look at how other western countries have addressed healthcare coverage.

Second part of the course will review the main features of the ACA, including the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) which is the ACA’s main model designed to reduce costs while improving care. We will look at the arguments for and against the ACA and its prospects for success.

Finally we will analyze the effects these changes may have on the future practice of medicine, how it will affect the different specialties, and what this means for an individual medical student’s career goals.

### Educational Objectives

At the conclusion of this course you will have the ability to:

1. Understand the evolution of healthcare insurance from World War II to the present.
2. Provide an overview of the effects of different payment models on doctors, hospitals, patients and industry.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the major elements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA).
4. Articulate some of the arguments for and against the ACA.
5. Understand the design of the Accountable Care Organization feature of the ACA.
6. Anticipate how the rapid changes in American medicine may affect your career goals

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| Week 1           | Evolution of Healthcare Insurance in the United States
|                  | Medicare/Medicaid  HMO, PPO, Capitation, Fee-for-Service, DRGs, RVS, etc.
|                  | *How did we get where we are?*
| Week 2           | How have other industrialized countries dealt with these issues.
|                  | How does healthcare in those countries compare to the United States?
| Week 3           | The main provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA)
|                  | *(Don’t worry, you won’t have to read all 2000 pages!)*
| Week 4           | Focus on the Accountable Care Organization model of the ACA which is mandated to roll out January 1, 2112. This is the part of the ACA that will probably have the greatest impact on physicians’ practices.
| Week 5           | How will this all affect the different specialties and the career goals of the individual student? Is the day of the solo practitioner or even small group practice over?

**Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated on the following:

1. Attendance and active participation at all sessions
2. Preparation for each class including assigned readings and take home assignments
3. Each student will be given assignments (2-3) to demonstrate the techniques learned in class. It is anticipated each will require demonstrated proficiency of analytical techniques learned in class along with 1-2 pages of explanation/rationale for proposed solutions.

**Feedback**

As this session will be primarily interactive and participatory, each student will receive regular verbal feedback during class. Written assignments will be graded according to the techniques learned as well as for creative and imaginative thinking often requisite in healthcare.

**Class Size**

Minimum 5
Maximum 10

Last updated on: 1/26/2012