

# Health Care and Health Care Policy

SOCY 28

Winter Quarter 2008 12: MWF 12:30-1:35 p.m.

X-hour T 1-1:50 p.m.

**Instructor:** Denise Anthony

**Office:** 124 Silsby Hall **Email:** danthony@Dartmouth.edu

**Office hours:** Mondays 1:45-4pm, or by appointment

**Course Description:** This course explores the policy issues and implications associated with health care in the United States. We will explore the social, economic, organizational and institutional contexts of health care and medicine to answer questions such as, who is healthy in American society and who is not? Why are some healthy and others not? How is our health care system organized? And why is it different from most other industrialized nations? How does the organization of medical care affect the quality and cost of that care? Our goal will be to gain a deeper understanding of the organization and delivery of health care in the U.S., and to appreciate some of the relevant policy issues.

**Course Requirements:** Students are expected to read and reflect upon the assigned readings before coming to class. Students are required to write a short **regional healthcare report** (further details given in class) due **February 25**. Please note well the course **Policy on Late Papers**. Finally, there is an in-class **mid-term exam** and a **final exam**.

**Grades** are based on:

Regional healthcare report	30%
Mid-term exam	35%
Final exam	35%

## Required Reading

The following materials are required, and can be purchased from Wheelock Books or Dartmouth Bookstore. Some are also available on reserve in Baker/Berry library.

1. Angell, Marcia. 2005. The Truth about the Drug Companies. New York: Random House.
2. Fadiman, Anne. 1997. The spirit catches you and you fall down : a Hmong child, her American doctors, and the collision of two cultures. 1st ed. New York : Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
3. Quadagno, Jill. 2005. One Nation Uninsured. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4. Swartz, Katherine. 2006. Reinsuring Health. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

**Additional required readings are available on the course Blackboard site under the Assigned Readings button, noted as \*BB in syllabus.**

**\*\*\* Students with learning, physical or psychiatric disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to talk with me as soon as possible, and by the end of the second week of classes (January 18, 2008). Also, stop by the Academic Skills Center in 301 Collis Center to register for support services. \*\*\***

## Week 1: The Basics

### Jan 7: Introduction

#### Jan 9: What is policy? What is health policy?

READ: Bodenheimer & Grumbach Ch1 \*BB

#### Jan 11: Health Insurance in the US part 1

READ: Quadagno, Introduction, pp. 1 – 12 (can skim 12-16)  
Swartz, Ch 1, pp. 1 – 9 (can skim 9-12)

## Week 2: Access: Health Insurance in the US

### Jan 14: Health Insurance in the US part 2 – the Uninsured poor

READ: Swartz, Ch 2 (skim pp.18-35) and Ch 3

### XHOUR Jan 15: Health Insurance in the US part 3 – the Uninsured employed

READ: Swartz, Ch 4, 7  
Miller & Miller, 2004. "Singled Out" \*BB

### Jan 16: International comparisons of health systems

READ: Brown, Lawrence. "Comparing health systems in four countries: Lessons for the United States" American Journal of Public Health 2003. 93(1):52-5 \*BB

### Jan 18: International comparisons of health systems

READ: Anderson, Gerard F., Bianca K. Frogner, and Uwe Reinhardt. "Health Spending In OECD Countries in 2004: An Update " 2007. Health Affairs 26(5): 1481-. \*BB

## Week 3: Health Disparities

### Jan 21: Martin Luther King Jr. Day – no class

\*\*Recommended: Keynote Address by Marian Wright Edelman, 7 p.m. Spaulding Auditorium

### X-HOUR: Jan 22: Fundamental causes of health disparities

READ: Link & Phelan, "Fundamental Sources of health inequalities" PC \*BB  
Lantz et al "Health Policy Approaches to Population Health: The Limits of medicalization." 2007. Health Affairs 26(5): 1253-. \*BB

### Jan 23: Race & Health

READ: Williams "Patterns and causes of disparities in health" PC \*BB  
Rosenbaum & Teitelbaum "Addressing racial inequality in health care" PC \*BB

### Jan 25: Addressing health disparities

READ: Blendon et al "Disparities in Health: Perspectives of a multi-ethnic, multi-racial America" 2007. Health Affairs 26(5): 1437-. \*BB  
Keppel, Bilheimer & Gurley "Improving population health and reducing health care disparities" 2007. Health Affairs 26(5): 1281-. \*BB

## Week 4: Health Care Costs

**Jan 28:** Rising Health Care Costs in the U.S.

READ: Bodenheimer, Thomas. 2005. "High and Rising Health Care Costs. Part I & Part II." Annals of Internal Medicine 142:847-854; 932-937. \***BB**

Heffler, Stephen; Smith, Sheila; Keehan, Sean; Borger, Christine; Clemens, M. Kent; Truffer, Christopher. 2005. "U.S. Health Spending Projections For 2004-2014" Health Affairs; Jan-Jun2005 Supplement Web Exclusiv, Vol. 24, p74-85. \***BB**

**Jan 30:** Variation in practice patterns

READ: Bodenheimer, Part III, Annals of Internal Medicine 142:996-1002. \***BB**

Wennberg, Fisher & Skinner. "Geography and the debate over Medicare reform" 2002 Health Affairs Web Exclusive. \***BB**

Mahar "The state of the nation's health" \***BB**

Bodenheimer, Part IV Annals of Internal Medicine 143:26-31. \***BB**

**Feb 1:** Other explanations for rising costs: Medical Malpractice

READ: Chandra, Amitabh, et al. "The Growth of Physician Medical Malpractice Payments: Evidence from the National Practitioner Data Bank." Health Affairs. 2005. Jan-Jun2005 Supplement Web Exclusiv, Vol. 24, p240-249. \***BB**

Gawande, Atul. "THE MALPRACTICE MESS; Who pays the price when patients sue doctors?" The New Yorker, November 14, 2005, Pg. 63 + \***BB**

## Week 5: Health Care Costs (cont.) and Midterm

**February 4:** Other explanations for rising costs: Pharmaceuticals

READ: Intro and chs 1-6, 13 in Truth about Drug Companies

**XHOUR February 5:** Review for exam – optional

**February 6: In-class Mid-term**

**February 8:** No class Winter Carnival

## Week 6: Health Care Quality

**Feb 11: Trends in Health and Death/ Deciphering Health Statistics**

READ: Rothstein, William. "Trends in Mortality in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" pp. 10-29 in Nation's Health 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Edited by Philip Lee and Carroll Estes. Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Publishers. \***BB**

Starfield, Barbara. "Is US Health Really the Best in the World?" JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association, 7/26/2000, Vol. 284 Issue 4, p483-6. \***BB**

**XHOUR Feb 12: Mistakes in Medicine**

READ: Leape "Preventing Medical Errors" \***BB**

**Feb 13: The Social Context of Science: Specialization in Medicine**

READ: Stevens "Specialization, Specialty Organizations and the quality of health care" \***BB**  
Aronowitz, Robert A. 1998. Making Sense of Illness. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch 3: "Lyme Disease: The social construction of a new disease and its social consequences." Pp. 57-83. \***BB**

**Feb 15: Improving quality: the role of FDA**

**Guest Speakers: Drs. Steve Woloshin, MD and Lisa Schwartz, MD**, White River Jct VA Hospital & The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice

**Week 7: Health Care Delivery**

**Feb 18: End of life care in the Hospital**

READ: Kaufman, pp. 21-60 \* **BB**

**Feb 20: Doctor-patient communication**

READ: Groopman "The Right questions" \* **BB**  
Mahar "Making Choice an Option" \***BB**  
O'Connor, Llewellyn-Thomas, Flood "Modifying unwarranted variations in health care: shared decision making using patient decision aids" \***BB**

**Guest Speaker: Alice Andrews, PhD**, The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice

**Feb 22: NO CLASS**

**Week 8: Culture Clash/System Failure**

**Feb 25: Understanding Stratification and Health**

**Regional Health Report Due**

Read: The spirit catches you and you fall down Chapters 1-7

**Feb 27: Understanding Stratification and Health**

Read: The spirit catches you and you fall down Chapters 8-13

**Feb 29: Inequality, social control and medicine**

Read: The spirit catches you and you fall down Chapters 14-19

**Week 9: Is Health Care Reform Possible? Desirable?**

**March 3: Why hasn't reform worked in the past?**

READ: Quadagno chs 1 - 4

**March 4: History of reform efforts**

READ: Quadagno Chs 5-6

**March 5: Reform in the current system**

READ: Quadagno Chs 7-8

**March 7: Reform at last?**

READ: Quadagno and 3 others discuss possible policies to reform health care \***BB**