



HPM 754
Health Care in the United States:
Structure and Policy
(Credit Hours: 3)
Department of Health Policy and Management
School of Public Health
Fall 2018

Syllabus, Reading, and Assignment Schedule

Class Location: 133 Rosenau

Meeting Times: Monday & Wednesday 11:15 am – 12:30 pm

Three sessions, as noted on the schedule, will meet from 11:15 am – 1:10 pm

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|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Email: | rslifkin@email.unc.edu | Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:45-1:45pm and |
| Telephone: | 919-843-1219 | by appointment |
| Office hours: | On request | Location: Rosenau 116 |

This core course is designed to provide students with an overview of the structure, systems, and policies of health care delivery in the United States. The goal is to increase students’ knowledge and abilities to analyze and address health care issues from both management and policy perspectives. The major structural/system issues include Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance. Other system topics include the uninsured, hospitals, long-term care, mental health, oral health, safety net systems of care, the Veterans Administration Health System, and public health. The course applies learning techniques that are highly interactive, encourages discussion and debate, and prompts learners to seek out their own answers to complex problems in our health care system.

Learning Objectives and HPM Competencies

| | <i>Course Learning Objective</i> | <i>Competencies</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Distinguish among various health care payers, providers, organizations and functions | Analytical Thinking |
| 2 | Understand past, current, and emerging key issues in health care financing, insurance, delivery, organization, policy, administration, access, and quality in the United States | Analytical Thinking |
| 3 | Apply knowledge of these issues to administrative decision-making and policy development | Political Savvy |

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| 4 | Explore and analyze an important health policy issue and recommend a realistic approach to addressing the issue | Analytical Thinking Information Seeking Political Savvy Innovative Thinking Communication Skills |
| 5 | Achieve Objective #4 by working effectively in a team of fellow students | Accountability Team Dynamics |
| 6 | Cogently discuss and debate complex, current and future public health and health services issues | Communication Skills |

Requirements and Expectations

Hardware requirements: Both exams for this course will be taken in class on Sakai, and so will require a laptop.

Level of Effort: It is expected that you will attend all classes and complete required reading.

Team Assignments: You will have two team projects. Teams will be assigned at the beginning of the semester.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Turn off cell phones in class and during quizzes. Laptops should be used in class only for taking notes and for looking up information relevant to the topic being discussed. Please be courteous to those who are around you, as other uses of laptops can be distracting.

Assignments and Quizzes

Descriptions of all assignments can be found below and on the Sakai site in the “Assignments” tab. Completed assignments are to be submitted in Sakai. If it is a team assignment, only one member of the team needs to submit the document.

For the written assignments and presentation, students are expected to use resources from the library, Internet, and course materials in documenting their work. Include a list of resources, including websites and the date you visited each site as an addendum to both your county proposal and state-wide presentation. Projects should integrate concepts from course lectures and readings, and from other academic and professional literature.

There will be two quizzes over the course of the semester. Both are closed book, will be taken during the class period on Sakai, and are subject to all provisions of the UNC Honor Code.

Quizzes will likely consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short essay questions. Quiz 1 will cover material from the beginning of the course through the October 3rd class. Quiz 2 will cover the remainder of the semester.

Instructions for accessing a quiz:

1. In Sakai, click on the **Tests and Quizzes** tab in the Sakai Course Tool Bar (left side of screen).
2. Click on the HPM 754 Quiz (1 or 2)
3. You will see some information about the quiz, including a note telling you how much time you have to submit the quiz from when you begin the assessment.
4. Click on the honor pledge and then click on Begin Assessment. The clock begins at this time.
5. When you are finished, click "Submit for Grading".
6. DO NOT OPEN ANY OTHER WINDOW, even to check spelling, as this may cause your quiz to freeze.

Group Proposal/Presentation Projects:

Team Charter (2% of grade): Students work in assigned groups of 5 people for the purpose of completing the two team components, a county health funding proposal and a presentation of a state-wide proposal. Teams must meet and complete a Team Charter, which is found on Sakai. Charters must be submitted by September 9th.

County Health Funding Proposal (14% of grade)

You and your team are the Board of Health for the county assigned on Sakai. The state is giving your county \$500,000 to implement a program to improve the health of your community. You are writing a brief proposal that will be shared with the county commissioners, who make the final decision as to how to spend the funds. You must recommend how best to use the funds to improve health in your county. Your recommendation cannot split the money across multiple programs. Your goal is to convince the commissioners to adopt your recommendation.

Visit the website <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/> and become familiar with the contents. In addition to learning about how your county is ranked relative to the rest of the state, find the data file that contains the raw data on the various measures that contribute to that ranking.

You are to carefully review the statistics for your assigned county and decide as a group the issue you want to focus your resources on to have the **maximum impact** on the health of your county's residents. You can choose to focus on an area that is directly measured in the data (for example, tobacco use or alcohol consumption), or, if you think those issues result from some other factor(s) you can choose to focus your resources on something not directly measured in the data **as long as you can justify your decision and explain how your program will address the identified problem. Recommendations must be based on evidence-based practices.**

You are encouraged to use research to support your choice. If you do, you must include references. Below are several links that may be a good starting point to investigate evidence-based solutions that might be included in your recommendation:

- Washington State Institute for Public Policy. See Benefit-Cost Results:
<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>

- Guide to Community Preventive Services (community prevention best practices): <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/>
- US Preventive Services Task Force (clinical preventive services): <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/>
- National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)(SAMHSA) (mental health and substance abuse best practices): <https://www.samhsa.gov/nrepp>
- Best Evidence Encyclopedia (education best practices): <http://www.bestevidence.org/>
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention (violence prevention best practices): <https://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/ratings.html>
- What works for health (RWJF community health rankings listing of best practices): <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health>
- Child Trends What works to improve child or youth outcomes: <https://www.childtrends.org/what-works/>
- Promising practices network <http://www.promisingpractices.net>
- Social programs that work: <http://evidencebasedprograms.org/>

Your assignment is to produce a 2-4 page proposal that communicates your recommendation for consideration by the Board of Health. Your proposal should include:

- Major health issues you identified in the data and an assessment of the overall health of your community
 - Discuss both directly measured health indicator and factors that could negatively influence health outcomes
- Your assessment of competing priorities and opportunities
 - Consider the relative seriousness of problems identified in the data, the pervasiveness of problem, and whether the problem is amenable to correction
- Area you have chosen to focus on with the state funds
 - Why you chose this particular area
- A succinct description of how you recommend funds are to be used (one paragraph only)
- An evidence-based justification explaining why you chose this action
- Identification of the most important stakeholder groups that are likely to support the program
 - Why you believe they will support it
 - How their support is relevant to the success of the program
- Identification of the most important stakeholder groups that are likely to oppose the program
 - Why you believe they will oppose it
 - How you can overcome their opposition

Format: 12pt font, single spaced with double space between paragraphs. 2-3 pages but citations do not count in the page limit. 1 inch margins, bullets and use of headers are encouraged.

County assignments and the grading rubric are posted on the Sakai assignment page. Better papers will be easy to read and written for a lay person. The CDC has a nice publication on everyday words for public health communications:

http://www.cdc.gov/other/pdf/everydaywordsforpublichealthcommunication_final_11-5-15.pdf.

There is also a document on scientific writing under the “Class resources” tab on Sakai.

Students are expected to meet with the TA and professor after receiving their graded county health funding proposal, to discuss feedback and modifications that should be considered when developing the final presentation. Each group should meet with the professor no later than October 24, 2018 (but ideally earlier).

Presentation of proposal to state legislators (14% of grade)

The county commissioners think your idea is so good that they believe it should be implemented state-wide. One of them is friends with several state legislators and has arranged for you to give a presentation to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services to pitch your idea as a state-wide program. You have ten minutes to make your case, followed by five minutes of Q&A.

Update your proposal, taking into consideration:

- Feedback you received from the instructor and/or TA
- Anything relevant you’ve learned in the semester that changes or modifies what you’d like to propose
- State-wide data on the problem you are addressing, and how NC compares to its closest neighbors and the country as a whole. (Note: if this problem is limited to certain counties—rather than the state as a whole, you should explain why it’s still important for the state to address this issue.)

Teams should have no more than 10-12 slides (including title slide and one slide of resources) for their presentation. As part of your presentation you should address all of the following:

- The health or health care issue you are seeking to address
- The strategy for making improvement. This should be detailed enough for the audience to understand what you are proposing.
- Evidence based justification for why you believe your strategy will work
- Critical stakeholders and what their likely position would be on your recommendation. For those who would be against your proposal, your strategy for getting them on board (or getting around them).
- Any other challenges that would need to be overcome for implementation of your strategy.
- Who will pay (if there is a cost)
- Who has implementation responsibility

Note: You are free to research and use ideas that other experts have identified as potential solutions to the problem that you are trying to address. All sources used should be cited, either at the bottom of each powerpoint or at the end of the presentation.

Your audience for the presentation is state legislators. Refer to the “presentation lessons” documents for some tips on developing and delivering an effective presentation.

All members of the team do not need to speak, as long as everyone on the team contributes their share of work to developing and making the presentation. Because you will be graded on staying within your allocated time frame, I strongly suggest that you practice (if not as a team, at least individually). Some people ramble when they get nervous.

The rubric for the final presentation grade is posted on the assignment page in Sakai.

Your PowerPoint presentation must be submitted by 11:00 pm on November 4th so that all presentations can be loaded on Sakai prior to class.

Peer evaluation (2%):

Each team member will be required to complete a peer evaluation once the projects are completed. The peer evaluations will be factored into your grades as described on Sakai

Quizzes:

There are two quizzes during the class, each worth 25% of your grade. Both are closed book.

They will consist of a mix of short answer, brief essay and/or lengthier case questions. The quizzes require students to demonstrate basic knowledge and comprehension and to apply concepts to specific problems and situations. The quizzes cover material from required readings, lectures, guest speakers, and in-class discussions through the date that the quiz is administered:

- **Monday, October 8, 2018.** Covers the first half of the class, through and including the class on the uninsured.
- **Monday, December 3, 2018.** Covers the second half of the class, although limited questions may rely on cumulative knowledge.

Individual Briefing Paper (18% of grade)

Excellent writing skills are a critical competency for professional success. Students will work individually to write a briefing paper that is due on November 16th, 2018. The scenario is:

You are a legislative aide to a new congresswoman. In the short time since she has been on the job, she has heard from many constituents about problems with a certain topic, and a group of them are scheduled to visit. Your boss knows nothing about the subject and has asked you to write a 3 page briefing paper that she will read prior to the visit. Her attention span is short—you absolutely must stay within the requested page limit, or she will not read it (and not think favorably about you).

Because your boss knows nothing about the issue, you must provide her with:

- Who the stakeholders coming to the meeting are and what their concern is
- Background on the subject to quickly bring her up to speed, including (if information is available) whether the literature suggests the stakeholders' concern is valid
- Who other major stakeholders are, their position on the subject, and whether they have a differing view from the group your boss is meeting with
- Whether solutions are something within Congress' purview, or need to be handled at the state/local/private level
- If relevant, federal programs that are already in place that address the stakeholders' concern.

You can choose one of the topics listed in the assignment on Sakai. You can also identify your own topic and stakeholder group, as long as the topic is something we have covered in class and you receive approval from the professor.

Your brief should incorporate information covered in class and the required readings. Some additional research will likely be necessary, and *all* sources used should be cited (including readings for class and web pages including url and date accessed).

Format of the paper:

3 pages maximum, single spaced with double space between paragraphs. Citations should be in APA style at the end of the paper (numbered, within the text) and do not count in the page limit. Pages numbered, 12 point font, Times New Roman, 1” margins. No executive summary is needed. Bullets can be used when appropriate. Please use headers, and subheaders where appropriate. Bold italics can be used to call out particularly important sentences or phrases. Better papers will be easy to read, concise, and written for a lay person. They should be grammatically correct, free of typos and other errors, and logically constructed.

A grading rubric for the briefing paper will be posted on Sakai. The quality of the writing will be an important component of the grade. In addition to the documents identified above, the UNC Writing Center is available to help students. They have information on their website at <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/>.

Evaluation/Grading

Grade Components: The grade for this course will be assigned on the basis of the following:

| Component | % of Grade |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Midterm quiz (Individual) | 25% |
| Team contract submitted on time | 2% |
| County funding proposal [Team] | 14% |
| Briefing Paper (Individual) | 18% |
| Final Group Presentation (Team) | 14% |
| Final quiz (Individual) | 25% |
| Peer evaluation | 2% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Grading Scale

Students will earn their final course grades based on the following grading scale (see <http://handbook.unc.edu/grading.html> for more information about UNC Graduate School grading):

| | | |
|-------------|---|----------------------------------------------|
| 92 or above | H | (High Pass – Clear Excellence) |
| 75 to 91.9 | P | (Pass – Entirely Satisfactory Graduate Work) |

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|------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 60 to 74.9 | L | (Low Pass – Inadequate Graduate Work) |
| Below 60 | F | (Fail) |

PLEASE NOTE:

1. In order to receive a P or H in the course, your grades on your individual work must average at least 75%. In other words, your team cannot pull you up from a grade of L or F. You must demonstrate sufficient mastery of the material yourself.
2. No questions regarding any grades will be addressed more than one week after the graded assignments have been returned.
3. Your individual peer evaluation grade will be based on the average of the evaluations you receive on your performance from other members of your team. However, if you fail to turn in a peer evaluation of yourself and your team members, your grade for the peer evaluation will be a zero. Your colleagues deserve feedback from you, just as you deserve feedback from them.
4. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in discussions. **The course is designed to encourage interaction and debate by students.** The quality (not quantity) of a student's in-class comments and questions can move the student's final grade up one notch on the above scale (from, say, a P to an H). Quality is assessed by the relevance, thoughtfulness, and understanding displayed
5. **Final grades earned by students are not rounded up (e.g., a 91.9 is a P).**

Note: The graduate school does not record plusses or minuses.

Late Activity Policy

Assignments and quizzes received after the due date and time will have 10% of the grade deducted for each day (or portion thereof) that the assignment is late. After three days, the grade will be zero. Students in need of extensions due to a true emergency should contact the instructor as soon as possible, ideally before the due date.

Please be aware that Sakai will not allow you to upload deliverables after the due date and time noted on the assignment. The submission time for all assessments and activities is determined by Sakai's internal clock rather than the clock on the student's computer. For this reason, it is highly recommended that students submit all materials early to avoid missing the cutoff. Also, at times Sakai can be slow, so please do not wait until the very last minute to upload assignments. If you are having problems uploading an assignment before the due date and time, email both instructors immediately, and attach the assignment.

Recognizing, Valuing and Encouraging Diversity

The importance of diversity is recognized in the mission statement of HPM. In the classroom, diversity *strengthens* the products, *enriches* the learning, and *broadens* the perspectives of all in the class. Diversity requires an atmosphere of inclusion and tolerance, which oftentimes challenges our own closely-held ideas, as well as our personal comfort zones. The results, however, create a sense of community and promote excellence in the learning environment. This class will follow principles of inclusion, respect, tolerance, and acceptance that support the values of diversity.

Diversity includes consideration of: (1) life experiences, including type, variety, uniqueness, duration, personal values, political viewpoints, and intensity; and (2) factors related to “diversity of presence,” including, among others, age, economic circumstances, ethnic identification, family educational attainment, disability, gender identity, gender expression, geographic origin, maturity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social position, and veteran status.

UNC Honor Code

The principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship govern the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University as they have during the long life of this institution. Your acceptance of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in the Code of Student Conduct and a respect for this most significant Carolina tradition. Your reward is in the practice of these principles.

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work.

Each student will be expected to review the materials on plagiarism from the UNC Library: <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/c.php?g=9028&p=45251>. Make sure to review all the information contained in all the tabs on the website. It is an honor code violation to plagiarize materials, which includes (but is not limited to), taking direct quotations from other documents without properly citing it. (For example, it is plagiarism if you include a direct quotation and include the reference, but do not include quotation marks. Anything taken verbatim must include quotation marks—and you should use direct quotations sparingly).

If you have any questions about your responsibility or the responsibility of faculty members under the Honor Code, please consult with someone in either the Office of the Student Attorney General (919-966-4084) or the Office of the Dean of Students (919-966-4042).

Read “The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance” (<http://instrument.unc.edu>).

Accommodations for People with Disabilities or Certain Medical Conditions

UNC-CH supports all reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or a pregnancy complication resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities.

All accommodations are coordinated through the UNC Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (ARS), <http://accessibility.unc.edu>; phone 919-962-8300. Students must document/register their need for accommodations with ARS before accommodations can be implemented.”

Counseling and Psychological Services

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Course Evaluation

HPM participates in the UNC-CH's online course evaluation system, enabled at the end of each semester. Your responses will be anonymous, with feedback provided in the aggregate. Open-ended comments will be shared with instructors, but not identified with individual students. Your participation in course evaluation is an expectation, since providing constructive feedback is a professional obligation. Feedback is critical, moreover, to improving the quality of our courses, as well as for instructor assessment.

Resources

Textbook: None required

Website: HPM 754 has its own website on Sakai. This syllabus is on the website.

Articles: All articles can be accessed via links available on the course web site or will be posted on Sakai.

Web Sources:

Among the many useful websites are (Review of websites is not required):

- The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (www.kff.org)
- Kaiser Foundation State Health Facts (www.statehealthfacts.org)
- Health Affairs "Health Policy Briefs" (www.healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs) and the Health Affairs Blogs (<http://healthaffairs.org/blog/>)
- The Congressional Budget Office (www.cbo.gov)
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov)
- The National Center for Health Statistics (www.cdc.gov/nchs/)
- The Commonwealth Fund (www.cmwf.org)
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (<http://www.rwjf.org/>)
- The National Conference of State Legislatures (www.ncls.org) (*This may be particularly helpful in the policy analyses*)
- The American Legislative Exchange Council (www.alec.org) (*This may be particularly helpful in the policy analyses*)
- The National Academy of State Health Policy (<http://www.nashp.org>) (*This may be particularly helpful in the policy analyses*)
- Washington State Institute for Public Policy (look at their cost-benefit analysis of different policy topics)(<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>) (*This may be particularly helpful in the policy analyses*)
- Congressional Research Services (<http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/>)

- Congressional Web Guides <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/congress/congress-external.html>
- Congressional News Guides <http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/extgovd.html>