



**HPM 762.001, Fall 2017**  
**Quality of Care (3 Credit Hours)**  
**Syllabus**

McGavran-Greenberg Hall, Room 2308

Wednesday, 4:40-7:40

**Note:** Per UNC policy, all classes must be scheduled during specified blocks. Thus, although my preference is to begin at 5:00, that is not allowable. Thus, from 4:40-5:00, Natalie and I will be in the classroom and be available to meet with individual students about their term papers. Class will begin at 5:00.

	Instructor: Morris Weinberger	TA: Natalie Ernecoff
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Email:	mweinber@email.unc.edu	
Phone:	919-966-7385	
Office hours:	Monday: 2:00-3:00 Thursday: 2:00 – 3:00 By appointment	

**Office Hours and Email Policies**

It is expected that if students have questions or concerns, they will attend office hours. However, if you have an urgent concern, please also feel free to email Natalie. Questions about paper topics and grades on brief exercises should be directed to Natalie first. If you email Natalie with a question, please include “HPM 762” in the subject line. It our goal to respond to your email as soon as possible, but 48 hours is the expectation for turnaround time for email communications.

**Course Overview**

The quality of health care in the U.S. has garnered significant attention among health care professionals and the public. This course will be organized around three general topics: (1) defining and measuring quality of care in the United States; (2) strategies that have been implemented or proposed to improve the quality of health care; and (3) incentivizing quality of care.

## Learning Objectives and CEPH Competencies

	<i>Course Learning Objective</i>
1.	Identify key issues related to the quality of health care in the United States
2.	Understand conceptual and operational definitions of quality of care from the perspectives of health care systems, providers and patients
3.	Assess feasibility of strategies and/or policies that have been implemented or proposed to improve the quality of health care in the United States
4.	Develop a project to design and evaluate a strategy to improve the quality of health care

This course helps students achieve CEPH competency 9 (Design a policy, program, project or intervention). It also seeks to develop HPM competencies in analytical thinking and innovative thinking.

### Resources

**Required Readings:** Assigned readings can be found on the course schedule document. Virtually all the readings can be obtained through on-line journals and/or Health Sciences Library subscriptions; PDFs of the readings will also be posted on the Sakai site. If you have any trouble, please email either Natalie or me.

**Optional Readings:** Optional readings cover topics or specific articles that I may mention in class. They are there in case you want more detail about something of interest to you. Optional readings are not uploaded to Sakai.

**Sakai:** I will use Sakai to post all course assignments, documents and information. I reserve the right to add or substitute readings. If I make any changes, I will email the class and post the updated schedule on Sakai.

### Requirements and Expectations

This class will combine lecture/discussion of materials with active learning that engages students. All students are expected to participate in class. This includes attendance, discussion during class and group activities. Class sessions will be organized into two parts:

- The first ~90 minutes will involve lecture and discussion on the assigned topic. Thus, before each class, students are expected to complete assigned readings so they may participate in class discussions.
- After a short break, students will meet in small groups to discuss the week's brief exercise question (described in Evaluation/Grading section below). After 20 minutes, one person per group should be prepared to present a summary of their group's discussion. The student who summarizes the materials should rotate from week to week such that each student will fulfill that role at least twice during the semester. To facilitate fully-engaged group discussions, students will be assigned to

groups on the first day of class. The composition of groups may change during the semester. Should that occur, the entire class will be notified. Each group will have its own folder to post materials on Sakai. Students must post their written responses to brief exercise questions to their groups' site by 9:00 PM on the day before class.

To further stimulate active learning, we will use a system called "Poll Everywhere" (<http://www.polleverywhere.com/>). Poll Everywhere is a web-based polling system that allows you to respond to classroom polls via text message or using an internet browser (on your smart phone or computer). If you have a current account (set up in the Fall of 2012 or later), then you are all set to use the system. If not, please register for an account to use this system for class. Instructions on how to create your account can be found here: <http://help.unc.edu/help/poll-everywhere-faq/>

All written assignments must be submitted through Sakai. Assignments that are submitted through other mechanisms **will not be accepted**, unless Sakai is down. Late assignments **will not be accepted** unless permission is granted in advance or there is some extraordinary circumstance.

## Evaluation/Grading

There are three components to your grade: (1) Term paper; (2) Brief Exercises; and (3) Class Participation. Expectations for each will be described below, and the table below shows how each will be weighted in your final grade.

Component	% of Grade	Due Date
Brief description of term paper topic	0%	9/29
Term papers	50%	12/8*
Brief exercises	40%	Weekly
Class participation	10%	Weekly

\* For Undergraduates Only: According to UNC policy, "undergraduate courses taught on campus must include a final assessment (i.e. final examination) unless the Provost grants an exception. A traditional final examination is written, is administered at a predetermined time as specified in the final examination schedule, and takes place at a designated location." Therefore, undergraduates must come to the scheduled time and location of the final exam, which will be on Friday, December 14 at 8:00 AM. The only way the time of this exam can be changed is if there are conflicts with another course. So, please check to see whether you anticipate a conflict as soon as possible. This is the deadline for their final examination (that is, the term paper), which must be submitted through Sakai.

All written assignments and final grades will be evaluated using the standards below.

- 94-100: Honors indicates exceptional graduate-level work. The assignment: (a) is thorough with respect to all required elements; (b) shows a comprehensive understanding of the issues related to the identified problem; and (c) is well-written (including grammar and spelling) and logically organized.
- 75-93: Pass indicates that the assignment is acceptable with regard to both content and presentation, but has one or more deficiencies that are not present at the exceptional level.
- 65-74: Low pass indicates marginally acceptable graduate-level work. The assignment has a major deficiency with respect to fundamental concepts or presentation of the proposal.
- < 65: Fail indicates that the assignment does not meet an acceptable level for graduate-level work.

For Undergraduates Only: Grades will be evaluated using the standards below.

A:	94-100	B <sup>+</sup> :	88-89	C <sup>+</sup> :	78-79	D:	65-69
A <sup>-</sup> :	90-93	B:	83-87	C:	73-77	F:	< 65
		B <sup>-</sup> :	80-82	C <sup>-</sup> :	70-72		

## Term Paper

The overall goals of the term paper are for students to learn to: (1) identify a specific problem related to the quality of health care that is of interest to them; (2) develop a strategy that they believe would address this problem; and (3) formulate a plan through which they can evaluate the success of their proposed strategy. Identifying/analyzing a problem, developing potential solutions, and designing a plan to evaluate the strategy are essential to most careers in health policy and/or health care management. On Sakai, I have posted: (1) a recorded lecture about the paper; (2) slides from that lecture; and (3) the grading rubric for the paper. There are two components to this assignment: (1) Brief Description of the Topic and (2) Final Paper. Each is described below. In addition, I previously recorded a presentation about the term paper that you may find useful (<http://uncsph.mediasite.mcnc.org/mcnc/Play/1c36304519b44f0fb43268086f0280fd1d>); the slides for the presentation are posted on Sakai (runs best in a non-Chrome browser). One note: the grading rubric that I refer to in my presentation has been expanded to include additional detail that will be useful to you. The updated rubric has also been posted. Several examples of papers have been posted on Sakai. **It is due by 5:00 PM on Friday, December 8.**

**Brief Description of the Topic:** Students often identify a problem that is beyond the scope of this assignment, for example, trying to improve all aspects of quality within a health care system. Not only will you get frustrated, but this approach will not be useful to you in your careers. While you will not receive a grade on this assignment, it is designed to ensure that you are on the right track early in the semester. You should simply state the quality problem you wish to address, why you believe it is important, and how you propose to

improve it. This can use bullets to outline your thoughts, if that is easier for you. Regardless, this assignment should be approximately 1 page. **It is due by 5:00 PM on Friday, September 29** (although I strongly encourage you to get started and turn this in as soon as possible to give you time to develop an alternative or narrower topic).

**Structure and Format:** The paper should have two major sections: Background and Approach. Please refer to the rubric for additional information.

**Background Section:**

- Identify a problem related to the quality of care in any type of health care organization (e.g., emergency department, outpatient clinic, hospital, nursing home) and provide the rationale for why the problem you have identified is important (e.g., cost, prevalence, morbidity). (approximately 1 page)
- Review the peer-reviewed literature for strategies that have been evaluated to address this problem. In general, peer-reviewed literature has more credibility than publications that are not peer-reviewed that contain unsupported opinions or facts that cannot be verified. If you use internet sources, the onus is on you to ensure the integrity of your sources. Helpful advice can be found at <http://www.hsl.unc.edu/lm/eval/nuts.htm>. (approximately 3-4 pages)
- Based on what has been tried, describe a strategy that you believe may be effective in solving the problem you have identified. At this point, the strategy may be in general terms (e.g., disease management), as details should be in the approach section below. However, you should justify why your strategy represents an important extension of current knowledge. (approximately 1 page)

**Approach Section**, you should consider:

- **Research design:** Briefly describe your overall research design and justify your choice (approximately 1/2 page).
- **Setting and Subjects:** Who will be the target of the intervention? Why did you choose this group (approximately 1/2 page)?
- **Procedures:** You should describe how the project will be carried out, including how subjects will be identified and recruited. You should also provide details on your intervention including include exactly what will be done, by whom, how long the intervention will last, etc. (approximately 2-3 pages).
- **Outcomes:** What specific measures will you use to evaluate your strategy and why (should be based on literature)? Your measure(s) should follow from the purpose of your intervention. Measure(s) should also be pragmatic (can be collected feasibly), valid, and something that you would expect to see change as a result of your strategy (approximately 1 page).

**Format and Clarity of Writing:** The final paper should be approximately 10 double-spaced pages with 1" margins all around. Please use a 12-point font (either Times New Roman or Arial) and include page numbers. You may use any citation style, as long as references are at the end of the paper (rather than footnotes on the bottom of each page).

**General advice about the term paper:**

- **I encourage you in the strongest possible terms to begin this project early. I cannot stress this enough.**
- I recognize that students' experience regarding research methods is highly variable. And the grading will reflect that. If you have any questions, please ask Natalie or me as early as possible.
- In developing your paper, you should think about your answers to the following questions:
  - Is the quality problem I want to address important (and how do I know it's important)?
  - What has previously been done to address the problem I have identified?
  - What do I propose to do that is innovative?
  - How will I know whether it worked?
- Clarity is essential and, therefore, an important component of your grade. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the **Writing Center** (962-7710) to help with your paper. This is an excellent resource that is available to you at no cost.
- The course syllabus discusses plagiarism and the honor code. I reserve the right to submit papers to turnitin.com. If you have any questions about this procedure, please feel free to talk to me about it.

## **Brief Exercises**

Students are required to post written responses to brief exercise questions on Sakai every week. Questions will focus on assigned readings and/or webcasts, and responses should demonstrate that you have read the materials and given some thought to the question. Your response should be brief, typically no more than one single-spaced page; it can also be formatted as bullet points. Your group members' responses that they have posted will be available to you on Sakai once you submit your response. You should review them, as they will form the basis of your group discussions in class. The timetable for the brief exercise (including an example) is as follows:

- Brief exercise questions will be released on the Friday before class. Natalie will email the class to let them know when the question has been released on Sakai.
- Students should respond to the brief exercise question by 9PM on the Tuesday before class.

- You should review your group members' responses to the brief exercise question before class.
- We will grade your responses by the following Monday using a scale of 0-5. To guide students in responding to questions, each week, brief exercise questions will contain a points distribution within the question.

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<b>Example Timeline for 8/30 Class</b>	
Friday 8/25	Brief exercise question released Friday 8/25 (Natalie will email the class when the question is released on Sakai)
Tuesday 8/19	Student responses to brief exercise due on Sakai NLT 9PM on Tuesday 8/29
Wednesday 8/30	Before class: Review responses of your group members. In class: students will discuss brief exercise in small groups during class and present summary of group findings
Monday 9/4	Individual graded responses returned to students via Sakai

### **Class Participation**

In addition to attendance, students are expected to participate in class discussions and group activities. The quality of participation through providing insights or examples germane to the discussion is critical.

### **Norm of Professionalism**

All students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to contribute to both class and team discussions. All students should respect other's ideas and encourage their classmates to contribute their ideas as well. Finally, when differences in opinion occur, students are expected to be respectful.

### **Guidelines on Use of Laptops and Other Electronics in Classroom**

Please restrict your use of electronic devices to class-relevant activities. I encourage using these devices for taking notes and finding information relevant to class discussion. Additionally, we will use Poll Everywhere to facilitate classroom discussion. Note, the use of electronic devices (including cell phones) for other purposes, including multi-tasking, checking email, sending instant messages, looking at Facebook, playing games, etc. is not appropriate. Continued inappropriate use of electronic devices will be noted and can affect the course final grade.

### **Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

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, email [accessibility@unc.edu](mailto:accessibility@unc.edu). Students must document/register their need for accommodations with ARS before accommodations can be implemented.



## **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, 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.

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 (966-4084) or the Office of the Dean of Students (966-4042).

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

## **Course Evaluation**

HPM participates in the UNC-CH’s online course evaluation system, enabled at the end of the semester by Scantron Class Climate. 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. I will announce when the system will be open for students to complete evaluations. In addition, there will be informal opportunities throughout the semester for you to provide feedback about the course using Poll Everywhere.