



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

HPM 600

Introduction to the U.S. Health System

(Credit Hours: 3)

Department of Health Policy and Management
Gillings School of Global Public Health

Fall 2013 Syllabus
Online Course

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Course Overview

This course is designed to provide you with an overview of the U.S. health system. Through a variety of resources, you will explore the organization, financing, management, resources, and performance of the current U.S. health system. For each of these topics, you will analyze relevant sections of the Affordable Care Act and discuss current events in the health field. At the end of the course, you will have developed your skills in evaluating health policies, comparing health systems, and discussing the causes and effects of current health events. You will also have developed basic financial literacy skills.

Course Learning Objectives and ASPH Competencies

In 2006, the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) identified core competencies for the master of public health degree in graduate schools and programs of public health. The following table describes both the primary learning objectives for HPM 600 and how these learning objectives map to the ASPH competencies in the Health Policy and Management domain.

Course Learning Objective

ASPH Competencies

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| 1 | To understand and describe the current organization of the U.S. health system, including the public health sector and private health sector and delivery system. | Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US.

Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health and health services. |
| 2 | To understand and describe the financing of health services. | Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US. |
| 3 | To understand and describe how the U.S. health system is managed, including legislation, regulation, organizational governance and management, and professional ethics. | Discuss the policy process for improving the health of populations

Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health and health services. |
| 4 | To understand and describe the resources required to deliver health services, including medical technology, pharmaceuticals, health information technology, and the health workforce. | Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US. |
| 5 | To understand how to evaluate and describe the performance of the U.S. health system in terms of cost, quality, and access. | Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US.

Apply quality and performance improvement concepts to address organizational performance issues. |
| 6 | To compare and contrast the U.S. health system with health systems in other wealthy, industrialized countries. | Apply systems thinking for resolving organizational problems. |
| 7 | To analyze, discuss, and debate health issues. | Communicate health policy and management issues using appropriate channels and |

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| | | technologies. |
| 8 | To introduce students to key sources of credible, accurate, and current information in the field of health policy and management. | Communicate health policy and management issues using appropriate channels and technologies. |
| 9 | To understand and apply basic financial concepts in a public health context. | To apply the principles of program planning, development, budgeting, management and evaluation in organizational and community initiatives. |

Resources

Website

In this course we will be using the Sakai course management system. You may access Sakai at <https://sakai.unc.edu>.

If this is your first time taking a course here at UNC-CH, you will need to obtain a login and password, in order to log in to Sakai. Here at UNC-CH we call logins "Onyens" (Only Name You Will Ever Need). Information about obtaining an Onyen can be found at <http://onyen.unc.edu/>.

All course-related communications will be sent to your official UNC e-mail address (as listed in Sakai). It is your responsibility to check your UNC e-mail address regularly. If you do not receive any e-mails from the instructor within the first week of class, please contact the instructor.

Text

The main text for this course is **Jonas & Kovner's Health Care Delivery in the United States, 10th edition. Kovner, Knickman Eds. (2011 Springer Publishing)**. We will use this text in each module of the course. Please note that the 10th edition is substantially revised and updated, meaning that earlier editions of the textbook will not suffice for the course.

Articles, Websites, and Other Resources

In addition to the textbook, HPM 600 uses a broad variety of resources that include journal articles, websites, podcasts, documentary films, and slide presentations. Each of these resources will be linked directly from the module in which it is used. Some of these resources, such as journal articles, will require logging in with an ONYEN.

Requirements and Expectations

Course Structure

This is an online course. There are no *required* in-person or online class sessions. You are expected to work independently through the course material. While you can review the material in your own time, there are specific due dates for course deliverables which you must meet to receive credit for the course.

The course is composed of seven modules and a financial literacy program.

Modules

1. Course introduction
2. Organization of the U.S. health system
3. Financing of the U.S. health system
4. Policy and management in the U.S. health system
5. Resources required to deliver health services
6. Measuring the performance of the U.S. health system: cost, quality and access
7. Comparing health systems

Module 1 occurs during the first week and a half of classes, while Modules 2 to 7 are designed to be approximately two weeks in length each.

All modules are set up in the same way. Each module includes the following:

- A narrative that is designed to introduce each resource, highlight important information, and help make connections between the various resources
- Assignments, including (a) reading check, (b) analysis questions, and (c) discussion. The assignments are explained in detail below.

Financial Literacy Program

The Gillings School of Global Public Health is committed to ensuring that our public health graduates have a basic level of financial literacy. The Financial Literacy Program includes four units:

1. Financial statement analysis
2. Budgeting
3. Analyzing financial performance
4. Cost benefit analysis

After completing the instruction portion of the module, you will access the corresponding quiz and answer the questions. *Unlike with reading checks, you can only submit your responses to the financial literacy quizzes once.* You will complete the Financial Literacy Program at your own pace, over the course of the semester. Each unit should take between 1 to 2 hours to complete.

Evaluation Methods

Grade Components

Component	% of Grade
Reading Checks	20%
Analysis Questions	50%
Discussions	20%
Financial Literacy Program	10%

Evaluation Criteria

As a student in HPM 600, you will be expected to complete the following course requirements:

Reading Check

The reading check is a multiple choice quiz designed to test your basic knowledge and understanding of the course content delivered in each module. You may take the reading check as many times as you like until the due date; however, please note that you will receive the score from the **last** reading check you completed.

The 10 multiple choice questions asked on the reading check will be generated randomly from a pool of questions for each module. This means that each time you take the reading check, some of the questions will change. After you have submitted the reading check, you will get a score report to let you know how many questions you answered correctly overall. However, you will not know specifically which of the questions (if any) were incorrect. This is to avoid process-of-elimination guessing.

You may reference course materials while taking the reading check; however, you must work independently and answer the questions on your own.

Analysis Questions

Analysis questions are designed to test both your understanding and your ability to apply, analyze and integrate the course content in each module and across modules. There are two types of analysis questions:

- 10-point questions: The 10-point questions focus on the course content within each module and require no additional research. Your response to these questions should be around 100-300 words. We reserve the right to take off points for questions that are significantly under or significantly over this length. There is one 10-point question in Module 1 and two 10-point questions each in modules 2-7.
- 20-point questions: The 20-point questions explore and examine the potential effects of the Affordable Care Act or other major pieces of health policy legislation. These questions

require you to conduct additional research. To help you with your research, we have prepared (and posted on Sakai) a list of helpful health reform resources.

Your response to these questions should be between 500-1000 words and include at least one citation. We reserve the right to take off points for questions that are significantly under or significantly over this length. There is one 20-point question each in modules 2-7.

You may discuss the analysis questions with your classmates; however you must prepare and submit your responses on your own. When submitting your responses, please note the names of any other students with whom you have collaborated at the bottom of your response.

You can upload your answers to the analysis questions in a Word document directly on Sakai in the Assignments tab. If you are unable to upload your assignment to Sakai or are uncertain whether your assignment has been uploaded, you should e-mail your assignment to your TA in time to meet the deadline.

Additional information about grading and expectations for the analysis questions is available in the Course Info tab on Sakai.

Discussions

Discussions are designed to give you an opportunity to analyze, discuss, and debate current events and important topics in the field of health policy and management. For the first discussion (Module 1) you will simply introduce yourself to your discussion group.

For Modules 2-7, you can choose from three different discussion formats:

- 1) Online discussion forums
- 2) Live in-person discussions for residential students
- 3) Live online discussions

All the discussion formats carry the same grade weight, so you can select a format based on interest, convenience, or learning style. Detailed information regarding the three formats is included below:

Online Discussion Forums

The online discussion forums are held in small groups via the Forums tab of Sakai. At the beginning of the semester you will join a group of 6-10 students and a discussion forum will be created on Sakai for each group. The instructor or grader will help moderate the discussions and will also participate.

If you choose the online discussion forums to meet your discussion requirement for the module, you are required to post at least **twice** during the discussion period:

- By the end of the first week of the module (5 p.m. on the first Monday), you must complete your first post. Your first post can include your initial reaction to the discussion topic or be a response to another group member's post.
- By the end of the second week of the module (5 p.m. on the second Monday), you must complete your second post. Your second post should include a response to one or more of your group members' comments. You do not have to wait until the second week to post your second response.

You will receive full credit for two or more posts, half credit for one post, and zero credit for no posts by the due date. The quality of your posts is important as it has a significant effect on the overall quality of your group's discussion. The teaching team has the option to give half credit or zero credit if the quality of a post is poor (e.g. simply agreeing with another group member, but not adding additional analysis or insight). You must note your sources if you include information or ideas from sources not used in class.

Because the health system touches many parts of our lives and is often highly political, sometimes discussion topics may be sensitive or controversial. All perspectives are welcome in this course, and constructive discussion is encouraged. However, please remember to frame your posts respectfully, to differentiate between personal experience and a researched fact, and to assume good intentions of the person on the other side of the screen. If you are not comfortable with discussing a certain topic, you may wish to substitute a live discussion session for that Module's discussion credit instead.

Live In-Person Discussions for Residential Students

Because a large proportion of HPM 600 students are in the Chapel Hill area, and because many students find face-to-face interaction preferable to online discussions, we will offer 7 in-person sessions on the UNC-CH campus during the semester. In-person discussions will be approximately an hour in length.

There are two kinds of live in-person discussions:

1. ***Special Topic Discussions.*** These in-person discussions include a presentation for the first half, followed by half an hour of questions and discussion among the attendees.
2. ***Roundtable Discussions.*** In this discussion format, students prepare in advance by reading/watching the same resource, submitting questions and comments prior to the discussion, and then discussing the topic with each other. The presenter will provide a short summary of the resource and bring up questions or comments as appropriate, but the majority of the discussion will take place among students.

For either type of discussion, the presenter will take attendance and ensure that you receive credit for your participation. In **special topic discussions**, engaged attendance is all that is required; in **roundtable discussions**, you must read the resource and submit one thoughtful question and one insightful comment to the presenter before the session to get full credit. Participation in one live in-person session is worth 10 points, or the equivalent of two discussion board posts.

Live Online Discussions

If you like live interactive discussion, but your location or responsibilities do not allow you to attend the in-person sessions, we will offer 7 live online discussions during the semester. These sessions will be held through Elluminate Live! software, which combines live presentations with chat capabilities. Live online discussions will be approximately an hour in length.

There are two kinds of live online discussions:

1. **Special Topic Discussions.** These in-person discussions include a presentation for the first half, followed by half an hour of questions and discussion among the attendees.
2. **Roundtable Discussions.** In this discussion format, students prepare in advance by reading/watching the same resource, submitting questions and comments prior to the discussion, and then discussing the topic with each other. The presenter will provide a short summary of the resource and bring up questions or comments as appropriate, but the majority of the discussion will take place among students.

For either type of discussion, the presenter will take attendance and ensure that you receive credit for your participation. In **special topic discussions**, engaged attendance is all that is required; in **roundtable discussions**, you must read the resource and submit one thoughtful question and one insightful comment to the presenter before the session to get full credit. Participation in one live in-person session is worth 10 points, or the equivalent of two discussion board posts.

Course Policies & Procedures

Writing Skills

This class is writing intensive and writing quality is important. Strong written communication skills are critical in both academia and the workplace. Your responses to assignments must be well-organized, clear, concise, free from grammatical errors, original, and correctly cited. Students who have questions about their writing, or who want to improve their writing are encouraged to contact the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/>) which has many excellent resources to help you with your writing.

Procedure for Appealing a Score on an Assignment

If you feel you have received an incorrect score on an assignment, you are welcome to submit a formal appeal to your grader, cc'ing the instructor. Your appeal must be sent in writing (e-mail) within two weeks of receiving the graded assignment, and must include the following information:

- Clearly describe the assignment/question you are appealing.
- Include your response to the assignment/question.
- Include any feedback provided by your TA on the assignment/question.
- Describe why you believe your response deserves more credit.

Late Work Policy

Assignments received within a week after the due date will be graded and given 70% of the grade they would originally have received. Assignments received more than a week after the due date will not be graded and the student will receive no credit.

Students in need of extensions due to unforeseen outside circumstances should contact their TA as soon as possible, preferably in advance of the due date.

Late work is determined by Sakai's internal clock, rather than the clock on the student's computer or any other source. Because Sakai will not accept late submissions, we recommend that you submit your assignments early in order to avoid missing the cutoff. If you miss the Sakai cutoff, you should e-mail your document to your grader as soon as possible.

Extensions are not available for the financial literacy quizzes.

Universal Design Policy

The teaching team of HPM 600 is committed to the principles of Universal Design: namely, that the course will be usable to the greatest extent possible by people with and without disabilities. However, if you require additional modifications to the course material or assignments due to a disability and/or special learning needs, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Evaluation

Grading Scale

- H:** Completion of course with a total score of 90% or greater
- P:** Completion of course with a total score of 80% -89.9%
- L:** Completion of course with a total score of 70% -79.9%
- F:** Students who achieve less than 70% in their course work will receive an F grade.

Students who do not submit at least 50% of the course deliverables will receive an F, unless they withdraw from the course before the withdrawal period ends. Please read your program policies for grading and withdrawal policies or speak to your program registrar and be aware of the withdrawal periods. We do not round up grades: an 89.9% is a P.

Each semester a small number of advanced undergraduate students are required or permitted to take this course. For these students final grades will be calculated as follows, without rounding up:

94 or above:	A
90 to 93.9:	A-
87 to 89.9:	B+
83 to 86.9:	B
80 to 82.9:	B-
77 to 79.9:	C+
73 to 76.9:	C

70 to 72.9:	C-
67 to 69.9:	D+
63 to 67.9:	D
60 to 62.9:	D-
Below 60:	F

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).

Please read “The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance” (<http://instrument.unc.edu>) and “Plagiarism and Citing Sources” (<http://guides.lib.unc.edu/content.php?pid=443626&sid=3633283>).

A word about application of the UNC honor code to the assignments in this course:

Among other things, the honor code essentially requires that your work be your own, and that ideas or words that are not yours are acknowledged and appropriately cited. For this course this means:

1. You should work on the reading checks and Financial Literacy Program quizzes independently. Any form of collaboration on these assignments is not allowed.
2. You may discuss the analysis questions with your classmates; however, you must prepare and submit your responses independently. When submitting your responses, you must note the names of any other students with whom you have collaborated at the bottom of your response.
3. You must prepare your discussion posts independently.
4. Extensive verbatim text (e.g. transcripts from a tutorial; multiple sentences of direct excerpt from a reading) should not be submitted as your response to an assignment. With proper citations, this may not be a violation of the honor code; however, you would not be demonstrating your understanding of the material.
5. Submitting an assignment that contains verbatim text without quotation marks or citation is considered plagiarism.

6. If you use non-course materials to help prepare a response, for example when preparing your response to an analysis question or discussion, you must cite your sources.
7. Assignments found to be in violation of the Honor Code, whether in whole or in part, will not receive credit and the instructor will refer the case to the Honor Court.
8. Every Analysis Question submission requires you to check an Honor Code pledge stating that you have neither given nor received aid on the assignment. This text is built into the Sakai coding for the honor pledge - for the purposes of this course, it will be understood to mean “no undisclosed aid.” That is, you are certifying that you have noted in your document the names of any other students with whom you have collaborated.

If you are unclear on any aspect of the Honor Code, citation standards, or how they would apply to this course, please get in touch with the instructor immediately. It is much easier to clear up confusion before a violation occurs, and confusion about the rules is not an excuse for violations.

UNC Online Class Policy

1. By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources. Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy (<http://help.unc.edu/1672>) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette and privacy protection.
2. As part of this course you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC Chapel Hill Information Security Policies (http://its.unc.edu/ITS/about_its/its_policies/index.htm) when participating in online classes.
3. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC Chapel Hill, such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University’s Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC Chapel Hill.
4. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

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.

Course Evaluation

HPM participates in the UNC-CH’s online course evaluation system, enabled at the end of each semester by DigitalMeasures. 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.

The teaching team will also conduct a brief mid-semester evaluation sometime after the third module. Your feedback on the mid-semester evaluation is not required, but is greatly appreciated. Mid-semester feedback helps the teaching team to improve your course experience.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I contact my grader or the instructor?

The best way to contact the graders and the instructor is by e-mail. Contact information is available on the first page of this syllabus and in the Staff Information area of Sakai. If your question needs more in-depth discussion than e-mail permits, members of the teaching team are also available to meet by phone, Skype, or in person if you are a residential student. When contacting your TA or instructor please put "HPM 600" in the subject line of your email. ***Do not attempt to e-mail us by replying to Announcement notifications – these are sent from a no-reply e-mail address and we do not receive anything you send to that address.***

What should I do if I have a question regarding the course content or an assignment?

- 1) Check in the Course Information tab on Sakai to see if there is an answer to your question in one of the documents contained there.
- 2) E-mail your grader. You may be able to resolve your questions via e-mail or set up a time to meet.
- 3) E-mail the instructor.

What should I do if something is wrong with my computer or Sakai?

- If the problem is with Sakai and/or the course site itself:

1. E-mail the Instructor as soon as possible with as much detailed information as possible.
- If you are experiencing a general computer problem:
 1. Call 919-962-HELP 24 hours 7 days a week for help.
 2. Be sure to also let your instructor or TA know you are having technical issues.

Where can I look to find out my course grade?

At the end of each semester, you may check your grades on <http://connectcarolina.unc.edu/> Login to the site using your Onyen and password. Then, click the "Go" button next to grades for the semester you want to view. It may take up to three weeks after you have completed the course before grades will appear in Student Central. You can always e-mail the instructor to find out your unofficial grade.

How do I drop this course?

From time to time, students find it necessary to drop this course. There are students from many different programs enrolled in this course. I recommend that if you want to drop the course, you contact the person who registered you for the course to learn about the proper procedures for dropping the course within your program. Depending on when you choose to drop the course, you may or may not receive a full or partial refund of your tuition. For more information on the specific date regarding the drop process, see the registration calendar at <http://regweb.unc.edu/calendars/>.

What if it's too late to drop the course?

Check in with the instructor and your registrar if you think you will not be able to finish the course on time. Because HPM 600 is offered in Fall, Spring, and Summer 1 semesters, you may be able to take an incomplete.

What if I am having a problem with my grader?

If you have any concerns with the performance of your TA, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Do I have to attend the live discussions?

No. You have to participate in seven discussions, but they can be any combination of online discussion forums, live in-person discussions, and live online discussions that you like.

For example, here are some fictional students who would all receive full credit for their discussion grade:

1. Wayne is a busy stay-at-home dad and does not want to get a babysitter just so he can drive into Chapel Hill. However, Wayne likes live discussions better than posting in online forums. Wayne posts his introduction for Module 1 and then joins a live online discussions for each of the six remaining modules. 1 online discussion forum + 6 live online discussions = 7 discussions.

2. Lynnette is a residential master's student at UNC-CH. She likes live sessions better than posting in forums. Lynnette posts her introduction for Module 1, attends three live online discussions, and attends three live in-person discussions. 1 online discussion forum + 3 live online discussions + 3 live in-person discussions = 7 discussions.
3. Melanie is a full-time CEO in Kentucky who completes all her HPM 600 coursework on the weekends. She does not have a full hour to put aside for a live discussion, but she can spend 15 minutes here and there writing discussion posts. She posts her introduction for Module 1 and then posts twice in each online discussion forum for Modules 2-7. 7 online discussion forums = 7 discussions.

When can I take the Financial Literacy Program?

The Financial Literacy Program is not linked to any particular module in HPM 600 and can be taken at any time before it is due. We recommend that you complete it sooner rather than later. *Extensions are not available for the financial literacy quizzes.*

Words to the Wise

- The discussion forums on Sakai are somewhat finicky and will sometimes eat posts or respond strangely to formatting. We recommend that you compose your posts in a minimally-formatted text editor (such as Notepad) and paste them into Sakai, rather than risk losing your work. If you compose your posts in Word, remember to use the Paste from Word tool or your post will have a lot of excess formatting notation in it. If you forget to use the Paste from Word tool, or if you remember and this happens anyway (sometimes a problem with newer versions of Word), you can edit your post and clean up the formatting.
- If you need help, please do not hesitate to ask your grader or the instructor for assistance. Campus librarians are also available to help you locate information for this course. The following links from the UNC libraries help distance learning students utilize the resources provided by UNC libraries [Main Library Distance Education Help](#) and [Health Science Library Distance Education site](#)
- Please don't wait until the very end of a module to complete the reading check and analysis questions. These assignments will take some time to complete and you will not be able to submit them through Sakai after the deadline.
- Should unforeseen events or life/work commitments occur during the semester which will impact your coursework, please let your TA know as soon as possible.