



HPM 762, Spring 2019
Quality of Care (3 Credit Hours)
Syllabus
McGavran-Greenberg Hall, Room 1304
Wednesday, 5:00-8:00

Instructor	Morris Weinberger
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Office hours:	Tuesday: 11:00 –12:00 By appointment

Office Hours and Email Policies

It is expected that if students have questions or concerns, they will attend office hours. However, I will be happy to answer your questions by email. My goal is to respond 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 Assignments: Assignments (articles, videos, podcasts) can be found on the course schedule document posted on Sakai. Virtually all the articles can be obtained through on-line journals and/or the Health Sciences Library. If you have any trouble, please email me.

Optional Materials: Optional materials 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.

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 attending and actively participating in class discussions and group activities. 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) Written Assignments; 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%	2/8
Term papers	50%	4/26
Weekly written assignments	40%	Weekly
Class participation	10%	Weekly

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 deficiency that is 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: Grades will be evaluated using the standards below.

A:	94-100	B ⁺ :	88-89	C ⁺ :	78-79	D:	65-69
A ⁻ :	90-93	B:	83-87	C:	73-77	F:	< 65
		B ⁻ :	80-82	C ⁻ :	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. There are two deliverables for 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). In that presentation, I refer to a grading rubric for the term paper. The grading rubric that I posted on Sakai has been updated since I recorded that presentation to include additional detail that will be useful to you. Several examples of papers have been posted on Sakai. **It is due by 5:00 PM on Friday, April 26.**

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 (approximately 1 page). This can use bullets to outline your thoughts, if that is easier for you. **It is due by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 8** (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 10-12 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.

Weekly Written Assignments

Students are required write responses to questions every week; responses should be posted to Sakai. 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. The timetable for the brief exercise (including an example) is as follows:

- Questions will be released by the Monday before class.
- Students should submit written response to the question by 8:00 AM on the day of class.
- I will grade your assignments on a 0-5 scale.

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. I will provide feedback to students who are not participating at an adequate level.

Recognizing, Valuing, and Encouraging Inclusion and Diversity in the Classroom

We share the School's [commitment to diversity](#). We are committed to ensuring that the School is a diverse, inclusive, civil and welcoming community. Diversity and inclusion are central to our

mission — to improve public health, promote individual well-being and eliminate health inequities across North Carolina and around the world. Diversity and inclusion are assets that contribute to our strength, excellence and individual and institutional success. We welcome, value and learn from individual differences and perspectives. These include but are not limited to: cultural and racial/ethnic background; country of origin; gender; age; socioeconomic status; physical and learning abilities; physical appearance; religion; political perspective; sexual identity and veteran status. Diversity, inclusiveness and civility are core values we hold, as well as characteristics of the School that we intend to strengthen.

We are committed to expanding diversity and inclusiveness across the School—among faculty, staff, students, on advisory groups, and in our curricula, leadership, policies and practices. We measure diversity and inclusion not only in numbers, but also by the extent to which students, alumni, faculty and staff members perceive the School’s environment as welcoming, valuing all individuals and supporting their development.”

In this class, we practice these commitments in the following ways:

- Develop classroom participation approaches that acknowledge the diversity of ways of contributing in the classroom and foster participation and engagement of *all* students.
- Structure assessment approaches that acknowledge different methods for acquiring knowledge and demonstrating proficiency.
- Encourage and solicit feedback from students to continually improve inclusive practices.

As a student in the class, you are also expected to understand and uphold the following UNC policies:

- **Diversity and Inclusion at the Gillings School of Global Public Health:**
<http://sph.unc.edu/resource-pages/diversity/>
- **UNC Non-Discrimination Policies:**
<http://policy.sites.unc.edu/files/2013/04/nondiscrim.pdf>
- **Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct at UNC:**
<https://deanofstudents.unc.edu/incident-reporting/prohibited-harassmentsexual-misconduct>

Accessibility Services

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), <https://ars.unc.edu/>; phone 919-962-8300; email ars@unc.edu. 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.

UNC Honor Code

As a student at UNC-Chapel Hill, you are bound by the university's [Honor Code](#), through which UNC maintains standards of academic excellence and community values. It is your responsibility to learn about and abide by the code. All written assignments or presentations (including team projects) should be completed in a manner that demonstrates academic integrity and excellence. Work should be completed in your own words, but your ideas should be supported with well-cited evidence and theory. To ensure effective functioning of the [Honor System](#) at UNC, students are expected to:

- a. Conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in all academic processes.
- b. Learn the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in written work; and to identify allowable resource materials or aids to be used during completion of any graded work.
- c. **Sign a pledge on all graded academic work certifying that no unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of the work.**
- d. Report any instance in which reasonable grounds exist to believe that a fellow student has violated the Honor Code.

Instructors are required to report suspected violations of the Honor Code, including inappropriate collaborative work or problematic use of secondary materials, to the Honor Court. Honor Court sanctions can include receiving a zero for the assignment, failing the course and/or suspension from the university. If you have any questions about [your rights and responsibilities](#), please consult the Office of Student Conduct at <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>, or consult these other resources:

- Honor system [module](#).
- UNC library's [plagiarism tutorial](#).
- UNC Writing Center [handout on plagiarism](#).

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. 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.

Course Evaluations

HPM participates in the UNC-CH's online course evaluation system, enabled at the end of the 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 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 opportunities throughout the semester for you to provide feedback about the course.