

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH
DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION HEALTH SCIENCES**

**PHS 879
POLITICS OF HEALTH POLICY**

FALL 2018

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This course is designed to help students understand how and why health policies reflect the political system in which they are developed and implemented.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the current and historical role of government in health policy, primarily focusing on the United States.
2. To introduce important concepts, theories, and literature concerning the impact of politics on public policy and population health.
3. To explain the roles, resources, and strategies of key participants, both inside and outside of government, who influence health policy development and implementation.
4. To compare how political determinants influence different types of health policy issues (e.g., access to insurance and health services, cost containment, disease and injury prevention).
5. To translate knowledge of health politics and the policy process into more effective strategies for public health advocacy.
6. To improve skills in communication, leadership, and systems thinking through formal and informal analysis of key issues in health politics and policy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Blog Posts and Discussions (40 points)

Students will write considered reactions to key contemporary issues in health policy and politics via blog posts and a discussion board.

Strategy Memos (80 points)

Students will write short strategy memos to a key stakeholder on a public health issue of their choice to apply key concepts and analytical frameworks throughout the course.

Case Study Project (80 points)

Students will produce a case study of the politics of health policy development. The case study will apply concepts and analytical frameworks to explain the course of action on a policy issue selected by each student. Students will write an individual 12-15 page paper based on the case study project.

REQUIRED TEXT

James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. 2013. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

All other required course readings are available as PDF files or links on the Canvas course website.

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTAL READING

Weissert, Carol S. and William G. Weissert. 2012. *Governing Health: The Politics of Health Policy*, 4th ed. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Birkland, Thomas A. 2016. *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 4th ed. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Stone, Deborah. 2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, 3d ed. New York: W. W. Norton.

In addition to the required course materials, good sources of information on health politics and policy issues include the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, *Health Affairs*, *Milbank Quarterly*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *BMJ*, and *American Journal of Public Health*.

There are also a number of periodicals that provide insight into the general policy making process and a variety of specific policy areas, including health. Among these are *Kaiser Health News*, *CQ Roll Call*, *National Journal*, *Washington Post* and *New York Times*.

Finally, a large number of governmental agencies, foundations, and health care organizations operate websites with useful information about health policies and programs. A good starting point is THOMAS, operated by the U.S. Library of Congress, as well as the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, Kaiser Family Foundation, and AcademyHealth.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND MATERIALS

Module 1 Politics as a Core Determinant of Health

Materials: Stone, Deborah. 2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapter 1, The Market and the Polis, pp. 19-36.

Kickbusch, Ilona. 2015. The Political Determinants of Health—10 Years On. *BMJ* 350: h81.

Mackenbach, Johan P. 2013. Political Conditions and Life Expectancy in Europe, 1900-2008. *Social Science and Medicine* 82: 134-46.

Navarro, Vicente, et al. 2006. Politics and Health Outcomes. *Lancet* 368: 1033-37.

American Politics and the Role of Government in Health Policy

Birkland, Thomas A. 2016. *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 4th ed. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe. Chapter 3, The Historical and Structural Contexts of Public Policy Making, pp. 65-105.

Morone, James A. 2013. Health Politics and Policy. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. xxi-xliv.

Colgrove, James. 2011. *Epidemic City: The Politics of Public Health in New York*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Conclusion: The Politics of Public Health, pp. 257-65.

Scharfstein, Joshua M. 2016. Rethinking Science and Politics. *Milbank Quarterly* 94(1): 39-42.

Supplemental: Carpenter, Daniel. 2012. Is Health Politics Different? *Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 287-311.

Due 9/10

Blog Post:

Argue why California—along with Mississippi and West Virginia—is right or wrong to eliminate non-medical exemptions to childhood immunizations. Will the new law be effective in increasing immunization rates and improving population health?

Medina, Jennifer. 2015. California Set to Mandate Childhood Vaccines Amid Intense Fight. *New York Times*, 25 June.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/26/us/california-vaccines-religious-and-personal-exemptions.html?action=click&contentCollection=U.S.&module=RelatedCoverage®ion=Marginalia&pgtype=article>

Bruni, Frank. 2015. California, Camelot, and Vaccines. *New York Times*, 4 July. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/05/opinion/sunday/frank-bruni-california-camelot-and-vaccines.html>

Healy, Melissa. 2016. Pediatricians Urge States to Get Tough on Parents Who Don't Want to Vaccinate Their Kids. *Los Angeles Times*, 29 August.

<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-pediatricians-vaccines-exemptions-20160828-snap-story.html>

Due 9/17

Strategy Memo:

Choose a public health issue (other than vaccines) and identify the strongest rationale for government involvement—e.g., police powers, spillover effects, protecting constitutional rights, promoting general welfare. Why is this an issue that cannot or should not be resolved by private parties?

Module 2**Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations**

Materials:

Stone, Deborah. 2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapter 16, Powers, pp. 354-77.

Thompson, Frank J. and Joel C. Cantor. 2013. Federalism and Health Policy. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 94-115.

Shipan, Charles R. and Craig Volden. 2006. Bottom-Up Federalism: The Diffusion of Antismoking Policies from U.S. Cities to States. *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 825-43.

New York Times. 2018. States Show the Way on the Opioid Epidemic. Editorial, 24 August.

Sanger-Katz, Margot. 2015. The Decline of “Big Soda.” *New York Times*, 2 October. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/upshot/soda-industry-struggles-as-consumer-tastes-change.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news>

Grassroots Change: Connecting for Better Health.
<http://grassrootschange.net/preemption-map/>

Due 9/24

Blog Post:

How did intergovernmental relations help produce the contamination of the drinking water in Flint, Michigan and the inadequate response to such a seemingly obvious public health threat?

Markel, Howard. 2016. Remember Flint. *Milbank Quarterly* 94 (2).
<http://www.milbank.org/the-milbank-quarterly/current-issue/article/4097/remember-flint?back=/issue/2016/2>

Barry-Jester, Anna Marie. 2016. What Went Wrong In Flint. *FiveThirtyEight*, 26 January. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-went-wrong-in-flint-water-crisis-michigan/>

Michigan Civil Rights Commission. 2017. *The Flint Water Crisis: Systemic Racism Through the Lens of Flint*. Lansing, MI: Michigan Department of Civil Rights, 17 February.

CNN. 2016. Water Crisis in Flint, Michigan.
<http://www.cnn.com/specials/us/flint-water-crisis>

Ganim, Sara and Linh Tran. 2016. How Tap Water Became Toxic in Flint, Michigan. CNN, 13 January.
<http://www.cnn.com/2016/01/11/health/toxic-tap-water-flint-michigan/index.html>

Simon, Mallory. 2016. The Faces of the Flint Water Crisis. CNN, 4 May.
<http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/04/health/flint-water-crisis-faces/index.html#>

Due 10/1

Strategy Memo:

Analyze a selected public health issue and provide an assessment of whether advocates should pursue a “top-down” or a “bottom-up” strategy for policy change. If state-level action is needed or desired, would state preemption of local policies help or hurt your cause?

Module 3 Political Mobilization and the Policy Agenda

- Materials:
- Schlesinger, Mark. 2013. Public Opinion. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 214-35.
- Haidt, Jonathan. 2008. The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives. TED conference, March.
https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_haidt_on_the_moral_mind?language=en
- Klein, Ezra. 2014. How Politics Makes Us Stupid. *Vox*, 6 April.
<http://www.vox.com/2014/4/6/5556462/brain-dead-how-politics-makes-us-stupid>
- Barry, Colleen L., Emma E. McGinty, Jon S. Vernick, and Daniel W. Webster. 2013. After Newtown—Public Opinion on Gun Policy and Mental Illness. *New England Journal of Medicine* (28 January): DOI: 10.1056/NEJMp1300512.
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. *You Wouldn't Eat 22 Packs of Sugar. Why Are You Drinking Them?* Infographic for Choose Health L.A. campaign.
- Stone, Deborah. 2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W. W. Norton. Chapter 10, Interests, pp. 229-47.
- Kersh, Rogan. 2013. Ten Myths about Health Lobbyists. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 236-53.
- Quadagno, Jill. 2011. Interest-group Influence on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010: Winners and Losers in the Health Care Reform Debate. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 36(June): 449-53.
- Dorfman, Lori, et al. 2014. Cigarettes Become a Dangerous Product: Tobacco in the Rearview Mirror, 1952-1965. *American Journal of Public Health* 104(1): 37-46.
- O'Connor, Anahad. 2016. How the Sugar Industry Shifted Blame to Fat. *New York Times*, 12 September.
- Oliver, J. Eric. 2006. The Politics of Pathology: How Obesity Became an Epidemic Disease. *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 49(4): 611-27.

Supplemental: Smith, Robert. 2013. How to Sell Coke to People Who Have Never Had a Sip. National Public Radio, 7 June.
<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2013/06/07/189184092/how-to-sell-coke-to-people-who-have-never-had-a-sip>

Rosenthal, Elisabeth. 2016. Ask Your Doctor if This Ad Is Right for You. *New York Times*, 27 February.

Merchants of Doubt. 2014. Documentary film based on the book by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway.
https://genvideos.org/watch?v=Merchants_of_Doubt_2014#video=7F7erBsp2hDjFy_igFOYNWmoDGaD0LGrXyQZ3THz-Xk

Due 10/8

Blog Post:

How does the current opioid epidemic differ from drug addiction and abuse in recent history, in terms of social construction of the target population and notions of personal responsibility? How do differences in framing the problem affect agenda setting—both the likelihood of government action to address the problem and the nature of likely solutions (from prevention to treatment to law enforcement)?

Seelye, Katherine Q. 2015. In Heroin Crisis, White Families Seek Gentler War on Drugs. *New York Times*, 30 October.

Yankah, Ekow. 2016. When Addiction Has a White Face. *New York Times*, 9 February.

Due 10/15

Strategy Memo:

Choose a public health issue that, in your judgment, has not been adequately addressed—or alternatively, how it has been addressed poses a threat to public health. Compare it to an issue that has received considerable attention and action. Examine how the two issues have been defined or framed, what organized interests are actively involved, and any other factors that might explain the disparity in political mobilization and agenda setting. Based on your analysis, recommend steps that advocates could take to boost the prospects for constructive policy change by reframing the issue or altering the “scope of conflict” to create a more favorable mix of supporters and opponents.

Module 4

Legislative and Executive Roles in Health Policy

Materials:

Peterson, Mark A. 2013. Congress. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 30-55.

Morone, James A. 2013. The Presidency. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 56-75.

Meyers, Roy T. 2014. Budgeting and Health Care Policy (1970s-Present). In Thomas R. Oliver, ed., *Guide to U.S. Health and Healthcare Policy*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 111-25.

Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Theda Skocpol. 2012. *Health Care Reform and American Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2, The Year of Pitched Battles: Who Fought for What, Why, and How, pp. 50-100; Chapter 3, How the Scott Brown Upset Strengthened Health Reform, pp. 101-120.

Oliver, Thomas R., Philip R. Lee, and Helene L. Lipton. 2004. A Political History of Medicare and Prescription Drug Coverage. *Milbank Quarterly* 82(June): 283-354. (Read pages 283-323 for Module 4)

McDonough, John E. 2016. Behind the Bipartisan Kumbaya on Opioids and Drug Abuse. *Milbank Quarterly* 94(2): 242-5.
<http://www.milbank.org/the-milbank-quarterly/current-issue/article/4095/behind-the-bipartisan-kumbaya-on-opioids-and-drug-abuse?back=/issue/2016/2>

Due 10/22

Blog Post:

Comment on the surprising twists and turns of the legislative process leading to adoption of the Affordable Care Act and its companion legislation in 2010. In your judgment, what are the chief institutional obstacles to producing effective health policy?

Due 10/29

Strategy Memo:

For an issue of your choice, recommend important steps to creating the smoothest path possible through the legislative process. Would you begin with the president, or in Congress? Which house of Congress, and which committee(s), would have jurisdiction over your proposal? Which house would be most receptive to your proposal? Which potential sponsors would be most effective, and why? Is your proposal something that would likely require the support of party leaders, or is it unlikely to generate partisan conflict?

Module 5

The Policy Process and Politics of Reform

Materials:

Oliver, Thomas R. 2006. The Politics of Public Health Policy. *Annual Review of Public Health* 27: 195-233.

Bergman, Abraham B. 1995. The Practice of Political Medicine. *Pediatric Annals* 24(8): 405-8.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2008. Speaking Truth to Power—The Need for, and Perils of, Health Policy Expertise in the White House. *New England Journal of Medicine* 359(11): 1085-7.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2013. Why Health Reform Happened. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 116-22.

Skocpol, Theda. 1995. The Rise and Resounding Demise of the Clinton Health Plan. *Health Affairs* 14(Spring): 66-85.

Mongan, James J. 1995. Anatomy and Physiology of Health Reform's Failure. *Health Affairs* 14(Spring): 99-101.

Oliver, Thomas R., Philip R. Lee, and Helene L. Lipton. 2004. A Political History of Medicare and Prescription Drug Coverage. *Milbank Quarterly* 82(June): 283-354. (Read pages 324-43 for Module 5)

Oberlander, Jonathan. 2017. The Art of Repeal—Republicans' Health Care Reform Muddle. *New England Journal of Medicine* 376(20 April): 1497-99.

Congressional Budget Office. 2017. Cost Estimate, H.R. 1628, American Health Care Act of 2017. 24 May.

Pear, Robert. 2017. Senators Search for Compromise Over House's Drastic Medicaid Changes. *New York Times*, 15 May.

Slavitt, Andy. 2017. The Senate's Three Tools on Health Care: Sabotage, Speed, and Secrecy. *Washington Post*, 10 June.

Due 11/5
Blog Post:

Using James Q. Wilson's typology for analyzing the connection between policy design and political feasibility, comment on the most important factors that distinguished the "success" of the Affordable Care Act and Medicare Modernization Act from the "failure" of the Clinton-era Health Security Act. How did the initial design and key modifications along the way improve the chances of success for ACA and MMA? What are the implications of this type of analysis for current Republican proposals for rolling back or modifying the ACA?

Due 11/12

Strategy Memo: For a selected public health issue, identify the most probable factors that could create a “window of opportunity” for policy change. Would that window most likely open in the “problem stream” or the “politics stream”? In the event a window indeed opened, what steps could advocates take to “couple” their preferred alternative with the problem and politics streams and advance it on the policy agenda?

Due 11/15

Case Study: Case study paper outline with timeline of key events and basic line of analysis is due via submission to Canvas.

Module 6 The Role of Courts in Health Policy

Materials:

Vernick, Jon S., Julie Samia Mair, Stephen P. Teret, and Jason W. Sapsin. 2003. Role of Litigation in Preventing Product-related Injuries. *Epidemiologic Reviews* 25: 90-98.

Jost, Timothy. 2013. The Courts. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 76-93.

Jost, Timothy S. 2012. The Affordable Care Act Largely Survives the Supreme Court’s Scrutiny—But Barely. *Health Affairs* 31(8): 1659-62.

Rohlinger, Deana A. 2016. Turning the Anti-Abortion Tide. *The American Prospect*, 5 July. <http://prospect.org/article/turning-anti-abortion-tide>

Suh, Rhea. 2017. A Major Step Forward in the Flint Water Crisis. National Resources Defense Council blog post, 28 March. <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/rhea-suh/major-step-forward-flint-water-crisis>

Due 11/19

Blog Post: What are the long-term consequences of the 1999 Supreme Court decision *Olmstead v. L.C.*? How has that interpretation of the rights of individuals with disabilities affected states and the health care industry?

Apuzzo, Matt. 2016. South Dakota Wrongly Puts Thousands in Nursing Homes. *New York Times*, 2 May.

Due 11/27

Strategy Memo: For a selected public health issue, assess the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing policy changes through legislation and litigation. Which would likely be the most effective strategy, at least in the short term?

Module 7 Policy Implementation

Materials: Birkland, Thomas A. 2016. *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 4th ed. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe. Chapter 10, Policy Implementation, Failure, and Learning, pp. 331-59.

Campbell, Andrea Louise and Kimberly J. Morgan. 2013. The Delegated Warfare State. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 164-74.

Smith, David Barton. 2016. Stealth Capture: The Civil Rights Movement and the Implementation of Medicare. *Poverty and Race*, Volume 25, Number 2, April-June. Washington, D.C.: Poverty and Race Research Action Council.

Kersh, Rogan. 2011. Health Reform: The Politics of Implementation. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 36(June): 613-23.

Goldstein, Amy and Juliet Eilperin. 2013. Healthcare.gov: How political fear was pitted against technical needs. *Washington Post*, 2 November. http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story.html

Frieden, Thomas R. 2014. Six Components Necessary for Effective Public Health Program Implementation. *American Journal of Public Health* 104 (January): 17-22.

Due 12/3

Blog Post: What features and challenges of the international Ebola outbreak in 2014-15 presented an extraordinarily difficult scenario for policy implementation?

Sack, Kevin, Sheri Fink, Pam Belluck, and Adam Nossiter. 2014. How Ebola Roared Back. *New York Times*, 29 December. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/health/how-ebola-roared-back.html>

Searcey, Dionne. 2015. The Last Place on Earth with Ebola: Getting to Zero. *New York Times*, 6 November.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/07/world/africa/the-last-place-on-earth-with-ebola-guineas-fight-to-get-to-zero.html?emc=eta1>

Due 12/6

Strategy Memo:

Based on real experience or a hypothetical scenario of what might follow “successful” policy change for a selected public health issue, identify the “weak links” in moving from policy to actual population health improvement.

Module 8

The Challenges of Public Administration and Health Policy

Materials:

Weissert, William G. and Carol S. Weissert. 2012. *Governing Health: The Politics of Health Policy*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. Chapter 4, Bureaucracy, pp. 184-229.

Oliver, Thomas R. 2014. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. In Thomas R. Oliver, ed., *Guide to U.S. Health and Healthcare Policy*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 79-88.

Dell’Aera, Anthony D. 2013. Prescription Drugs: How a Pill Becomes the Law. In James A. Morone and Daniel C. Ehlke, eds. *Health Politics and Policy*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, pp. 328-48.

Colgrove, James. 2011. *Epidemic City: The Politics of Public Health in New York*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 4, A Plague of Politics, pp. 107-41.

Allen, Arthur. 2016. Why Congress’ Zika Impasse Could Awaken Ebola. *Politico*, 9 July. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/07/congress-zika-ebola-225317>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2016. Transcript: CDC Director Tom Frieden Addresses National Press Club. Transcript from 26 May 2016 Address to National Press Club, Washington, D.C. <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/t0526-npc.html>

Kickbusch, Ilona and David Gleicher. 2012. *Governance for Health in the 21st Century*. Copenhagen, Denmark: WHO Regional Office for Europe. Chapter 5, Smart Governance for Health and Well-Being, pp. 50-80 and Chapter 6, New Governance for Health, pp. 81-89.

Due 12/10

Blog Post:

How do cultural attitudes and the political environment affect the ability of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to enforce current policies restricting the sale of unpasteurized ("raw") milk?

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. 2011. *Report of the Raw Milk Policy Working Group*.

Barrett, Rick. 2015. State Punishes Durand Farm Responsible for Large Raw Milk Outbreak. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 19 February.

<http://www.jsonline.com/business/state-punishes-durand-farm-responsible-for-large-raw-milk-outbreak-b99448498z1-292762901.html>

Also: <http://www.jsonline.com/business/state-identifies-farms-tied-to-two-raw-milk-illness-outbreaks-b99408042z1-285655971.html>

NOTE: COPY URLs ABOVE AND PASTE INTO WEB BROWSER

Due 12/13

Strategy Memo:

Select a public health issue and identify the most important challenges facing the principal governmental agency responsible for policy implementation and administration in that issue area. How could the agency do a better job, and what are the steps that could be taken to help it do so?

Due 12/20

Case Study:

Final case study paper with abstract, timeline of key events, and list of references is due via submission to Canvas.