

Updated 8/2018

POL 108: Policymaking in the Public Sector – Focus on Health

Fridays 10-12 am, at UCCS

Instructor: Richard Kravitz
Office: UCCS, 1130 K Street, Sacramento
Email: rlkravitz@ucdavis.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday by appointment (email me)

Required Textbooks:

Understanding Health Policy: A Clinical Approach, Thomas Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach, 7th edition

Additional Readings:

Additional readings will be assigned each week of the course. These readings will be available at Canvas, listed by author's last name. Students may download or print the articles. All of the assigned readings for a given week, plus associated discussion questions (see below), should be completed before coming to class.

Course Objectives:

This course is designed specifically for students enrolled in the Health Policy Track at UCCS. The course is broadly divided into two parts. In the first part, we will examine the meaning of health, the ways in which health policy can influence health, the tools available to health policy analysts, and ways in which health services researchers have examined health care access, quality, and costs. We will also examine the fundamental values that drive the health care debate, including health care as a right versus a privilege, the "right" amount of health care spending, and tradeoffs between quality and equity. This part of the course ends with a midterm examination and in class "debate" on the future of Medicaid (MediCal in California). In the second part of the course, we turn our attention to the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the boldest stroke in health policy since the passage of Medicare in 1965 – paying special heed to implementation of the ACA in California. We will also cover recent efforts to repeal and replace Obamacare. We will focus on two specific questions that represent larger issues in policy and politics. In asking, "how did the Congressional Budget Office conclude that repeal and replace legislation would cause 20-30 million Americans to lose health insurance coverage," we examine some key principles of policy analysis. And in asking, "why did California Republican Members of the House support repeal and replace, despite the risk of harm to their constituents," we look at the complex interaction between politics and evidence in shaping public policy.

Course Outline (All classes held at UCCS 10am-12noon unless otherwise specified; dates subject to change):

Session Number	Date	Lead Instructor	Coverage	Readings Due at Beginning of Class*	Assignments Due at Beginning of Class
1	Friday, 9/28	Kravitz	Introduction to Health Policy: What is health? What are the determinants of health? How does policy influence the health of populations?	B&G Chap 1; Pincus et al.	None
2	Friday, 10/5	Kravitz	Case Studies in Health Policy (Select debate teams for session 5)	Baicker et al.; Haeder et al.; Meara et al	Question Set #1
3	Friday, 10/12	Kravitz/ Hoch	Health Care Structure and Payment: How is health care organized and delivered in the US? Why are costs so high?	B&G Chaps 2, 4, 5, 6; Fuchs 2013; Moses et al.	Health Policy Research Proposal Draft
4	Friday, 10/19	Kravitz/ Murray-Garcia	Defining and Measuring Access, Equity, Quality and Costs of Care	B&G Chaps 3, 8, 9, 10; Murray-Garcia	Question Set # 2
5	Friday, 10/26	Perez (Kravitz out)	In-Class Debate	Sommers et al. 2017	Health Policy Research Proposal (Final)
6	Friday, 11/2	Kravitz	Midterm Exam and Office Hours	None	No assignment
7	Friday, 11/9	Romano	Pathways to Universal Coverage: NHS, Single Payer, or Something Else? Lessons from Here and Abroad	Schneider 2017 Fuchs 2018	Speakers Series Summary #1
8	Friday, 11/16	Kravitz	The Affordable Care Act of 2010: What are the major provisions of this landmark act and how has the ACA been challenged?	B&G Chap 15; Obama; Butler; Woolhandler	Draft of Background/Introduction to health policy research paper
HOLIDAY	Friday, 11/23	No Class	Thanksgiving HOLIDAY	No readings	Work on health policy research paper
9	Friday, 11/30	Troidl	ACA Implementation in California. How has California chosen to implement the ACA and how are we doing?	Handouts (to be announced)	Speakers Series Summary #2
SPECIAL	Wednesday, 12/5 (time TBA)	N/A	STUDENT POSTER PRESENTATION AND AWARDS CEREMONY	No readings	Work on health policy research paper
10	Friday, 12/7	Kravitz	Obamacare Repeal and the Challenges of Health Reform (followed by In-Class Quiz)	TBA	Work on health policy research paper
	Wednesday, 12/12	Kravitz	Health Policy Research Paper		Health Policy Research Paper due by noon

*B&G = Bodenheimer & Grumbach; Other readings available on Canvas.

Grading

POL 108 course grades are based on the following components totaling 300 points. **All assignments should be turned in via Canvas as Adobe .pdf files.** This allows the instructor(s) to seamlessly edit and comment online.

Assignment	Points	Number	Total Points
Attendance and Participation	3	9	27+3 bonus =30
Speakers Series Summary Reports	5	2	10
Question Sets	25	2	50
Midterm Examination	50	1	50
In-class Debate (based on participation only)	10	1	10
In-class Quiz	25	1	25
Policy Research Proposal	25	1	25
Policy Research Paper	100	1	100
Total Points			300

Attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend all class sessions (Fridays, 10 am-12 noon), special sessions with invited faculty speakers (Wednesdays, 11-12 am), and Speakers Series talks (Wednesdays, 12-1pm). **Students should come to class having read the assigned readings and with all assignments completed.** Written work should be turned in via Canvas by 8am the morning of class, *with students retaining a hard copy for their own in-class notes and reflections.* Students should come to the special faculty speakers' sessions with questions for the invited speaker. Realizing that illness, family issues, and internship responsibilities may occasionally necessitate your absence from class, each student is permitted TWO absences from class without penalty or need for excuse. With rare exceptions reserved for dire emergencies, any absences beyond two will result in a deduction of attendance/participation points (3 per missed session). As a matter of courtesy to the instructor and to your classmates, please be in your seats by 10 am sharp each Friday. Students who are more than 10 minutes late will be counted as absent.

Electronic devices. Considerable research suggests that multi-tasking is a misnomer and that use of electronic devices in the classroom is distracting and can inhibit learning. Therefore, please do not use laptops or mobile devices during class except as follows: during each class session, one student will be designated as *Class Informatician*. A second student will be designated as *Notetaker*. The Informatician will be responsible for running down facts needed to advance discussion. The Notetaker will take copious class notes for the purpose of sharing with the Informatician (who may miss parts of the lecture and discussion while running down facts on the Internet). Of course, all students are encouraged to share notes, comments, and readings (outside of Question Sets, Examinations, and Quizzes) with the entire class, either informally or through the Discussions section on Canvas. Very little work of significance is accomplished anymore by individuals. Learning to work in teams is an unwritten meta-objective of this course.

Speakers Series summary reports: During the quarter students will complete two summary reports (approximately 1 page double-spaced) based on the Wednesday noon Speakers Series presentations. The summary reports will encourage attendance at the Speakers Series and will also give students a chance to develop their analytical skills as they write about the main points of each speaker. Summary reports are due at 8am before class the Friday following the presentation. Late summary reports will be penalized 1 point for each day they are late, including weekends. Attendance is required at all of the Wednesday Speakers Series events (including both the special sessions with the invited faculty and the public talks).

Question sets: Most class sessions will require some reading in advance. Because these readings are essential to understanding the course material, you will be asked to complete a brief question set in advance of several class sessions. Students will be asked to upload the assignments before the beginning of class (i.e. by 8am) and to retain a hard copy to use for class discussion. Questions sets are designed to consolidate your understanding of the readings and prepare you for the class discussion. Answers should be succinct and to the point; long essays are neither required nor desired.

Policy research proposal and research paper: Like the parallel course (Special Studies in American Politics, POL 195), this course requires a policy research project in two parts: a 3-5 page double spaced policy research *proposal* and a 12-15 page double-spaced *policy research paper* including Background, Methods, Results, and Discussion/Implications. This assignment is designed to provide students with a critical learning experience as well as an opportunity to engage in active public health policy research. **The policy research project will require students to gather, analyze, and report on an important public health policy issue relevant to California.** For more detailed guidance, see the Course **Assignments** section of Canvas.

The **research proposal** [3-5 double-spaced pages] will cover EACH of the following: 1) the nature of the health policy problem, 2) the problem's relevance to California, 3) background information needed to understand the problem, 4) the policy research question(s) to be addressed, 5) the proposed research approach (i.e. plan of attack), and 6) implications of anticipated results for policy (including the implications if the results of your literature review or empirical study do not come out as planned). A draft of the proposal is due at the beginning of the *third* class session. Ideally, the topic will not only be relevant to some aspect of health policy but be of interest both to the student and to the student's internship host. When such alignment can be achieved, students may be permitted to use internship hours to work on their policy project. When this is not possible, it is perfectly acceptable for students to work on health policy topics unrelated to their internships outside of the 20-required internship hours per week. A final version of the proposal is due at the beginning of the *fifth* class session.

The **health policy research paper** [12-15 double-spaced pages] is meant to summarize the results of a health policy research project undertaken by the student during the term. The project can either be in the form of a *systematic literature review* or an *empirical study*. If you chose to do a literature review, the review should identify an important health policy question, specify a strategy for combing the literature (including both published, peer-reviewed sources and the "gray literature"), enumerate the

results of the literature in a table, and summarize the results in the text. Your literature review should conclude with a summary of results and implications for policy. If you choose to do an empirical study, you should specify the research question(s); describe the empirical methods (e.g., how you developed survey questions and conducted a poll using Qualtrics; or how you examined the association between state abortion laws and teen age pregnancy using Stata to analyze publicly available data); present the results in tables, figures, and text; and end with conclusions and implications for public policy.

Note: Whether your policy research paper is based on a systematic literature review or empirical analysis, you should also plan to present the results as part of a poster, in satisfaction of requirements for POL 195E.

Midterm exam and end-of-term quiz: To help you consolidate key health policy concepts before you begin work in earnest on your final project, there will be a midterm examination during Week 5. The exam will cover lecture material and readings from Weeks 1-4, will include both multiple choice questions and a short essay, and will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. There will also be a short quiz at the end of Class Session 9. The Quiz will cover material discussed during Class Sessions 6-8, as well as any accompanying readings.

All work must be in line with the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct.

Course Policies

Attendance, participation, and weekly readings: Class attendance and participation is mandatory and counts as 10% of the final grade. All students should come to class prepared to participate in class discussions as well as in the special sessions with Wednesday faculty speakers. As noted above, all students are allowed up to 2 absences without penalty. Points will be deducted for subsequent absences except in the most extreme cases (and when cleared with the instructor in advance).

Late policy and make-up exams: Make up exams and quizzes as well as extensions will be allowed only in the event of a medical or family emergency. The emergency must be documented (e.g. note from licensed health care provider on office letterhead). If documentation is provided, then a decision will be made regarding whether you will be granted a make-up opportunity or receive an extension. Any requests for an Incomplete grade must be accompanied by a written medical report from a licensed medical provider.

Grade appeals: Students will have one week from when grades are posted to appeal their grade. All appeals must include a typed, double spaced statement explaining why you are requesting a grade appeal, and you must justify with evidence from your exam, research paper, critical appraisal, question sets, or summaries. If you choose to appeal your grade, the instructor reserves the right to increase or decrease the existing grade.

Academic Integrity

As a student enrolled at the University of California, Davis, you have agreed to abide by the University's Code of Academic Conduct (see <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>) A version of this code of conduct applies at every UC campus. Cheating and other violations of academic honesty are serious offenses. Students are expected to work independently on all graded assignments except the group debate scheduled for Session 5.

Plagiarism deserves special attention in the age of the internet and the ease with which content can be "cut and pasted." Specifically, passing off another's words or ideas as one's own, or using those words or ideas without proper acknowledgement or citation, is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct. Students interested in learning more should consult references such as this: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02602930301677>

Students who engage in cheating will receive a grade of "F" for the course and may be subject to proceedings of the UC Davis Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs.

Students with Disabilities

Any student who, because of a disability, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to request accommodation for individual learning needs. UCCS (under the auspices of UC Davis) will make every attempt to accommodate all qualifying disabilities.