

**INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE**  
**HSMP 202 – FALL 02**  
September 3, 2002

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

**Objectives**

This course introduces students to the U.S. health care system with a focus on the major components of the system, the interaction of the elements of the system, and the history of the development of today's system.

It initiates students in the analysis and presentation of information on health services issues.

Students will develop a familiarity with and begin to work with sources of information on health services including organizations and experts in the Washington region.

Individual classes will cover the national context and history of health services, the epidemiology of health services, international health systems, the role of government in health care, health insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, managed care, hospitals and facilities, health workforce, long-term care, prescription drugs and new medical technology, quality of care, and the future of the health services system.

Specific course objectives for students include the development of:

1. A basic knowledge of:
  - The broad elements and overall principles of the US health care system;
  - Key details of the health care system; and
  - The terms used by health services professionals.
  
2. An broad understanding of:
  - The dynamics of the health system involving the interaction of patients, health care providers including hospitals and professionals, and the sources of health care financing including private health insurers, Medicaid, Medicare, and managed care organizations.
  - The key external forces that influence health services including social, economic, political, demographic, and epidemiological factors.

- The continuing evolution of the U.S. health system including its past history, current trends, and projected future developments.
3. The ability to conduct analysis of health services issues including the acquisition of information from reputable written, Internet and organizational sources.
  4. The ability to present information and analysis of health services issues in a coherent fashion in both written and oral presentations.

At the end of the course, students should be able to describe significant components of the U.S. health care system, discuss the interaction among elements of the health system, review the ongoing development of health care services and systems, and relate health services to major social and other external forces. Students should be able to define and apply health services terms. Students should be familiar with major sources of information on health services and have begun to present analysis in written and oral presentations.

### **Course Methods**

The course will be presented through class lectures and invited presentations in order to cover the extensive range of subjects addressed by this introduction course. Class sessions will focus on knowledge and understanding of the key elements of the health system. Students, working with colleagues, will prepare and present panel discussions of major health services issues.

### **Student Evaluation**

Student evaluation will be based on performance on three examinations, two papers, and a panel presentation.

The final grade will be calculated on basis of each of the three examinations, the two papers and the panel presentation counting one-sixth of the final grade. Students with active participation in class may receive additional credit.

Papers. The two papers should be drafted as an options memo for a decision-maker.

1. The first paper will provide analysis and discuss options for increasing health insurance coverage in a selected State. Background materials on this paper will be distributed on September 10 and the paper will be due on October 15.
2. A second paper will provide analysis and discuss options for selecting a Medicare managed care plan in a selected city. Background materials will be distributed on October 29 and the paper will be due on Friday, December 6.

The papers should not be longer than five pages, 12-point type, double-spaced, and have all four margins set at one inch.

Panel presentations. Groups of approximately four students will develop and present panel presentations on major aspects of a health services topic. The discussions will be held during classes between October 8 and November 19. The six topics for presentations will include Medicaid and the uninsured, Medicare, managed care, physicians and workforce, Rx drugs and new technology, and long-term care. The panel discussions will consist of eight-minute presentations by each panel member followed by a question and answer session with class members.

Students will be assigned to groups with topics on September 10. Approximately 20 minutes will be allocated to the development of panel presentations during class sessions from September 10 through November 5.

Examinations. Three examinations will test students' progress toward developing an in-depth understanding of the key patterns and trends in the highly technical care system. Exams will be 100 points and will take approximately one hour. Exams are scheduled for October 1, October 29, and November 26.

Class participation. The class discussion will seek to increase understanding of the key elements and broad relationships of the health care system. Students will be expected to carefully read the assigned materials prior to class each week.

### **Reading Materials**

Reading materials for the course include:

1. Introduction to Health Services, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Steven Williams and Paul Torrens, Delmar, Albany, New York. 2002.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast, the Challenge, The Institute for the Future, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco. 2000.
3. Health Care Terms, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Virgil Slee, Debora Slee, and Joachim Schmidt, Tringa Press, St Paul, Minnesota. 2001.

These books are available for purchase in the GWU bookstore located in the Marvin Center.

Copies of additional materials on the topics of specific classes will be distributed during the semester.

**Course Faculty**

The instructor for the course is Brian Biles, MD, MPH. Staff assistance for the course will be provided by Lauren Hirsch Nicholas and Yolanda Kwok.

Dr. Biles will be available for meetings with students in his offices from 1 to 4 pm on Tuesdays, by appointment at other times, and immediately before and after class.

Dr. Biles' email is [bbiles@gwu.edu](mailto:bbiles@gwu.edu) and his phone is (202) 416-0066. His office is at 2021 K St. NW, #800. Appointments may be made through Ms. Nicholas at [lhni@gwu.edu](mailto:lhni@gwu.edu) or 530-2364 or Ms. Kwok at [ykwok@gwu.edu](mailto:ykwok@gwu.edu).

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**HSMP 202 – SPRING 02**  
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**SESSION TOPICS AND READINGS**

**Session 1: Context of health services in the US**

**September 3**

Objectives

Students should be able to discuss the historical evolution of health and health services in the United States. They should be able to describe the key elements of the health services system today. They should be able to present the most important facts related to the major trends in the health system including costs, coverage and access, and quality of care.

Students should be able to enumerate course objectives and requirements.

**Session 2: Epidemiology and demography of health services**

**September 10**

Objectives

Based on epidemiology and demography, students should be able to describe the health services needs and patterns of utilization of diverse populations and to identify the major medical and social determinants of health.

Students should be able to identify and use major health services Internet sites to conduct research on health services topics.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 1, 2 and 4.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapters 1 – 3.

**Session 3: International health systems****September 17**Objectives

Students should understand the major features of national health care systems in economically developed nations as a background for analysis of services in the US. They should be able to describe the systems in nations with different models including the United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany. Students should understand the relative ranking of the US and other nations in the areas of costs and utilization of health services and overall health status of national populations.

Students should understand the key elements of preparing and delivering an effective oral presentation using Power Point slides.

Required Readings

1. Readings on international health systems will be distributed on September 10.

**Session 4: Role of government in US health system****September 24**Objectives

Students should understand the major aspects of the role of government in the US health care system at the national and state level. Students should be able to describe processes for forming and implementing governmental health policy. They should be able to discuss and evaluate current policy issues at the federal and state levels. They should be able to describe the principal activities of health services organizations related to the development of government policy.

Students should understand the key features of an effective written presentation of the analysis of health services issues.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapter 15.

**Session 5: Financing health services: Employment based coverage****October 1**Objectives

Students should be able to describe sources of insurance coverage for the US population. Students should understand key elements of employment based health insurance coverage. They should be able to discuss beneficiaries, benefits, sources of care, and payments for health insurance coverage by employment-based insurance.

They should also be able to discuss current issues in employment-based health insurance.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 5 and 7.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapter 4.
3. Additional readings on employment coverage will be distributed on September 24.

Examinations and assignments

1. First examination covering topics through session 4.

**Session 6: Financing health services: Medicaid and the uninsured****October 8**Objectives

Students should be able to describe sources of insurance coverage for the low-income US population. Students should understand key elements of the Federal-State Medicaid program. They should be able to discuss beneficiaries, benefits, sources of care, and payments for health insurance coverage by Medicaid.

Students should be able to describe reasons for the lack of insurance coverage for the US population. They should be familiar with patterns and trends in the uninsured population.

They should also be able to discuss current issues in Medicaid and the uninsured.

Required readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapter 5.
2. Additional readings on Medicaid and the uninsured will be distributed on October 1.

Examinations and assignments

1. Panel presentations by groups 1 & 2.

**Session 7: Financing health services – Medicare****October 15**Objectives

Students should understand key elements of health insurance coverage provided by Medicare. They should be able to discuss beneficiaries, benefits, sources of care, and payments for health insurance coverage by Medicare.

Students should also be able to discuss current issues and major proposals regarding health insurance coverage by Medicare.

Required readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapter 5.
2. Additional readings on Medicare will be distributed on October 1.

Examinations and assignments

1. First paper due.
2. Panel presentations by groups 3 & 4.

**Session 8: Managed care: Organization and financing****October 22**Objectives

Students should be able to define and describe key elements of managed care. They should be able to compare different approaches to managed care including HMOs with group practice and IPA networks, point-of-service plans, preferred provider organizations, and providers sponsored organizations. Students should be able to describe basic concepts of managed care, including utilization review, pre-authorization, and capitation payments.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapter 6
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapter 5

Examinations and assignments

1. Panel presentations by groups 5 & 6.

**Session 9: Hospitals and health care facilities****October 29**Objectives

Students should be able to identify the historical, social, and economic factors in the role of hospitals in the community. They should be able to characterize the range of hospitals in the US. They should also be able to describe the important features of payments to hospitals including fee-for-service care and the Medicare DRG prospective payment system.

Students should be able to discuss the key management and policy issues for hospital leaders today.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapter 10
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Pages 62 – 69.

Examinations and assignments

1. Second examination covering topics and readings on sessions 5 through 8.

**Session 10: Physicians and workforce****November 5**Objectives

Students should be able to discuss health care workforce issues with an emphasis the educational, scientific, epidemiological, and financial forces, which are driving the system. They should also be able to summarize the patterns of medical education and practice patterns that influence the characteristics, expectations, and behaviors of physicians and other providers.

Students should be able to describe the important features of payments to physicians including fee-for-service and managed care approaches. They should be familiar with the Medicare RB RVS payment system as well as charge and capitation based methods of physician payment.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 9 and 14.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapter 6.

Examinations and assignments

1. Panel presentations by groups 7 & 8.

**Session 11: Rx drugs and the impact of new technology****November 12**Objectives

Students should also be able to discuss the role of the prescription drugs and the pharmaceutical industry in health care delivery. They should be able to identify trends in technology development with implications for the health care delivery system – its organization and costs.

Students should be able to discuss the key policy issues regarding Rx drugs and new technology today.

Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 13 and 3.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapter 7.
3. Additional readings on Rx drugs will be distributed on March 12.

Examinations and assignments

1. Panel presentations by groups 9 & 10.

**Session 12: Long-term care and mental health services****November 19**Objectives

Students should be able to summarize major trends in the fields of long-term care, including nursing home and home health care, and mental health services. They should be able to describe how delivery of long-term care and mental health services relate to other components of the health care delivery system.

Students should be able to describe the important features of payments to long-term care providers including cost and prospective based approaches. They should be familiar with the role that Medicaid and Medicare play in the payment for long-term care services.

Students should be able to discuss the key policy issues regarding long-term care today.

### Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 11 – 12.

### Examinations and assignments

1. Panel presentations by groups 11 & 12.

## **Session 13: Quality of care**

**November 26**

### Objectives

Students should be able to identify and summarize the approaches used by current quality assessment and quality management procedures. They should be able to discuss measurement tools, licensure and accreditation organizations and tools, utilization review, and various organizations' and groups' perspectives on the effectiveness of these approaches.

Students should be able to identify key issues of concern to patients and consumers. They should describe their role in effecting decisions in the health care delivery system at the governmental, managed care plan, provider, and personal level.

### Required Readings

1. Introduction to Health Services: Chapters 16 and 17.
2. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapters 8 and 9.

### Examinations and assignments

1. Third examination covering topics from sessions 9 through 12.

**Session 14: Future of health services****December 3**Objectives

Students should be able to discuss major factors that will influence the evolution of the health care system over the next decade and longer. These factors include changes in epidemiology and demography, managed care and health insurance, providers including hospitals and physicians, medical and information technology, and public health. They should be able to compare and contrast the impact of major alternative scenarios on health services in the nation.

Required Readings

1. Health and Health Care 2010: The Forecast and the Challenge: Chapters 1 and 12.

Examinations and assignments

1. Second paper due on Friday, December 6.