

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

School of Public Health and Health Services

Introduction to the US Health System, Spring 2004

PUBH 207.10 CRN 26255

CREDITS: 2

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CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This two-credit course provides an introduction to the multiple systems that define, describe, and shape the delivery of health care in the United States. Using case studies and presentations of major issues, this course will give the learner an appreciation of the dilemma confronting policy makers, providers, and patients: how to balance cost, quality, and access. We will examine specific health care issues such as access and disparity, health care professions, facilities, managed care organizations, and government health care programs. We will also discuss policy changes impacting on American health care in the past century.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to create an environment so all learners might engage in learning and discussion of the US health care system and the approaches of various public health professions and disciplines in coming to understand the processes and values driving the delivery of health care services.

To achieve this purpose, the course is structured around the central use of:

- **A systems model for understanding the multidisciplinary drivers in US health care**

The course will use multiple approaches, including readings, case study analysis and discussion, lectures, teamwork, and problem-solving exercises. The faculty and learners each share responsibility for the presentation and discussion of ideas. Faculty has primary responsibility for the structure and delivery of basic course content. Learners have the primary responsibility for setting personal learning goals and enhancing individual, group and class understanding of the US health care system by identifying system and policy issues and presenting real-time cases and topics.

Learners are expected to have completed the readings for each class meeting. At the beginning of each class meeting, questions about the readings can be raised. Discussion and case analysis require the learners to have a grasp of the readings and to apply the concepts and terms. To support the learner, power point presentations highlighting the chapters will be posted on the internet site for the course. (Power points were developed by the authors of the text).

USING CASE STUDIES:

In each class, we will examine an issue facing the health care system in the United States. A book of case studies will be provided to you in the first class.

You are encouraged to work together to understand and explore cases and are expected to follow their development from the point of distribution.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for learners to systematically think about your own discipline in relation to the issues presented in the cases and the readings. Make notes in the case study book, think out loud about what your view of the problem or issue is, debate with others, learn with others, and learn about others' perspectives. Originality, creativity, and individual/collaborative thinking are critical to case study. Please note the book of case studies is for you and future learners and will be collected at the end of the semester.

CASE STUDY ASSUMPTIONS:

When learners are presented with a case, they place themselves in the roles of the people in the situation. As you read through the situation, identify the problem with which people are faced. The next step is to perform the necessary analysis—examining the causes, considering alternative courses of actions—to come to a set of recommendations.

To get the most out of cases, learners read and reflect on the case and then often meet in small study groups before class to "warm up" and discuss their findings with other classmates. In class—under the questioning and guidance of the professor—learners probe underlying issues, compare different alternatives, and finally, suggest courses of action in light of the necessary objectives.

As you watch a case study unfold in class, you'll see learners doing 85% of the talking, as the faculty steers the conversation by making occasional observations and asking questions. Your colleagues from diverse industries, countries, and experiences enrich this classroom interaction. At the end of the class, you'll find the day's lesson lay in the exchange of ideas amongst the learners—and not in a lecture or textbook.

In many cases, convinced they have the right answers, learners are surprised at the variety of points of view emerging from their classmates during the course of the classroom discussion. Having to listen carefully to others' arguments and define their analysis, learners learn from one another.

OUTCOMES:

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

The Council on Linkages between Academia and Public Health Practice adopted the final list of Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals on April 11, 2001 for a three-year period. The list will be reviewed for potential revision by April 2004, taking into consideration its use by the practice and academic communities and the changing nature of public health practice. Many of the competencies will be covered in the course and can be found at:

http://trainingfinder.org/competencies/list_levels.htm

SPECIFIC COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course learners will be able to:

- understand the concepts of health and sickness
- examine the determinants of health
- explore the beliefs and values governing the delivery of care
- develop one's own position regarding the distribution of health services
- understand some of the basic measures of health status and health services utilization
- identify historical development that have shaped the nature of the US health care delivery system
- understand the resistance to national health insurance reform
- explore some of the key forces shaping the delivery of health services in the future
- understand the definition, scope, and role of health policy
- recognize the principle features of US health policy
- understand the framework of the legislative process
- appreciate the dynamic tensions between federal, state and local government
- recognize the various types of health services professionals with an emphasis on their training, practice requirements, and practice settings
- understand the difference between primary care and specialty care and to recognize the cause of imbalance between the two.
- understand the extent of mal-distribution in the health care labor force
- understand the meaning and role of medical technology
- survey the factors influencing the dissemination and utilization of technology
- understand the role of government's role in regulating technology
- examine the impact of technology on the quality of care and costs
- study the various facets of technology assessment
- appreciate the role of health care finance and its impact on the delivery of health care
- understand the basic concept of insurance
- differentiate between group insurance, self insurance, individual insurance, and managed care
- understand the Medicare and Medicaid programs
- understand various methods of reimbursement
- review and differentiate between and among various health reform proposals
- understand the meanings of outpatient, ambulatory, and primary care
- explain the dramatic growth in outpatient services
- develop an understanding of the varieties of outpatient care
- understand the evolution of hospitals in the US
- use key measures in the evaluation of quality
- understand the difference between for profit and not for profit facilities
- gain perspective on some of the ethical challenges related to the future of in patient facilities
- explain the development of managed care in the US
- use basic concepts of managed care and how cost savings are realized
- understand and use the concept of integration
- understand the concept of managed competition
- distinguish between and among the different models of managed care
- comprehend the continuum of services in long term care
- understand the demographics of disability
- appreciate the challenges of long term care in the current health environment and to explore emerging issues
- appreciate issues of racial disparity in health services access and deliver
- understand recent developments in children's health
- consider solutions to the unique challenges of rural health service delivery
- understand the complexity of the mental health system
- understand the term "health care costs"
- identify factors contributing to cost escalation
- use access indicators
- understand the nature, scope, and dimensions of quality
- differentiate between quality assurance and quality improvement

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Delivering Health Care in America: A Systems Approach, Third Edition

Leiyu Shi, DrPH, MBA, MPA, Douglas Singh, PhD, MBA, Jones and Bartlett, 2004, ISBN: 0763731994

Case Study Book (Distributed in class)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Kate Turabian, University of Chicago Press, 6th Edition, 1996, ISBN: 0226816273

The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition, by William Strunk Jr., E.B. White, Pearson Allyn & Bacon, 2000. ISBN: 020530902X

EVALUATION:

Grading is **not** competitive. You will be graded on the quality of your work individually and as a member of your Presidential Candidate team. You will be asked to suggest a point value for your individual and group projects as well as your class participation. You will be asked to assign points and provide constructive criticism to your colleagues with a goal to improving their skills of service as managers and leaders in the field of public health.

Although points are not awarded for class attendance, the success of courses with adult learners, such as this one, is dependent on the active participation of the entire class. Taking an active part in class translates to your future in active roles as leaders and managers in the public health system, where considered thought is essential to the design, development and delivery of high-quality services to the public, and to your effective functioning as a member of a team, a manager and/or a leader in such a system. Expectations for your participation are:

- Read, assimilate, discuss and critique all materials assigned for class
- Read at least one paper each day or subscribe to the Kaiser Network @ <http://profile.kff.org/profile/>
- Participate reliably in class, pair, and team activities
- Participate actively in case/candidate presentation and analysis
- Uphold the expectations of your team by completing class and team responsibilities and assignments on time
- Be creative, active, analytical and thoughtful in raising issues for discussion
- Have fun

The course itself will have an on-going evaluation process including a formal mid-course evaluation.

ASSIGNMENTS:

(1) **Presidential Platforms:** The class will be divided into six teams with each team representing one of six current presidential candidates. Each week, three of the six teams will spend a portion of the class presenting their candidate's position on two pre-assigned issues facing the US health care system. Team members are responsible for researching their candidate's stance on the two bi-weekly issues from any source they choose prior to class, as well as briefly presenting orally their position to the entire class. Team members are responsible for equally dividing the research and presentation work among themselves. **This**

activity will be worth 25 points based on your participation as a member of the team and on the basis of how up-to date you are with current issues.

(2) Multidisciplinary Paper: Choosing a narrowly focused current health systems issue/case from public sources, the learner will apply his/her understanding and skills in a thoughtful multidisciplinary paper in accordance with the following:

- You may write your paper alone (15 pages double-spaced) - **OR** - you may write your paper in a team of two with a partner of your choosing (20 pages double-spaced).
- This paper's style must conform to the footnote style of Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers* or American Psychological Association style. Style guides are available in the bookstore and the library.
- You **MUST integrate** two or more different disciplines in the paper. In other words, the issue/case you choose as your topic must be analyzed through the lens of at least two different disciplines, as described below. **This multidisciplinary approach is required whether you are writing alone or with a partner.**

"To integrate" is defined as:

Main Entry: **in·te·grate**
Pronunciation: 'in-t&-"grAt
Function: *verb*
Inflected Form(s): **-grat·ed; -grat·ing**
Etymology: Latin *integratus*, past participle of *integrare*, from *integr-*, *integer*
Date: 1638
transitive senses
1 : to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole : **UNITE**
2 : to find the **integral** of (as a function or equation)
3 a : to unite with something else **b** : to incorporate into a larger unit

- Your paper must also include specific recommendations/ideas/suggestions to address the public health issue focus of your paper. In other words, in addition to the required multidisciplinary analysis of your chosen topic, you must also provide relevant and succinct recommendations for "fixing" the problem.
- Your first draft of the multidisciplinary paper will be reviewed and edited by your peers.
- **Schedule of Deadlines:**

- (1) January 20, 2004: Topical "Grid" due.
- (2) February 3, 2004: Paper Outline due.
- (3) February 10, 2004: 1st Draft due.
- (4) February 17, 2004: Peer review of 1st Draft returned to authors.
- (5) March 2, 2004: 2nd Draft due.
- (6) April 20, 2004: Final draft due in class.

- **This activity is worth 75 points and is due in its final form at the beginning of the class on April 20, 2004.**

Engaging in interdisciplinary thought and analysis in public health means not only using concepts, tools, and perspectives from multiple disciplines to understand some phenomenon, but also integrating them to achieve greater understanding than is possible using the two approaches "side by side." Some of the disciplines others have incorporated in their analyses include:

Environmental Health	Maternal and Child Health	Long Term Care	Health Services Management	Community Oriented Primary Care
Occupational Health	Health Communication	Health Information	Exercise Science	Health Policy
Health Promotion	Psychology	Philosophy	Gender Studies	Engineering
Cultural Studies	Anthropology	Medicine	Law	Biology
Geography	Agriculture	Education	International Relations	Sociology
Media Studies	Business	Religion	History	Public Administration

To promote interdisciplinary thought and analysis, each paper must address several Outcome Statements. Those outcome statements are given below and are linked to expectations.

"Upon completion learners will have demonstrated:"

1. *"intersections or tensions between two or more disciplines with respect to applied methods or tools of inquiry..."*
 - You will write a paper summarizing the concepts, methods, and tools used by two or more different disciplines to define and describe the US health system issue you select. You will be expected to compare and contrast the perspectives to enrich your understanding.
2. *"investigation of ways in which a given topic or concept may be understood and questioned by two or more different disciplines within a larger civic, cultural, political, or professional context..."*
 - We will investigate how the issue can be constructed or understood, depending upon what part of the system one chooses to focus upon.
3. *"consideration of a problem in the learner's 'home' or major public health discipline via the lens of another discipline's perspectives..."*
 - Your cumulative project may involve taking concepts, methods, or subject matter from your home discipline or major and integrate them with other perspectives or methods to examine some specific aspect of the issue selected.

"and will have demonstrated:"

1. *"knowledge of, and reflection on, how advanced-level content from two or more disciplines interacts..."*
 - In your analytical paper examining the US health systems issue, you will draw together these perspectives and attempt to integrate two or more disciplinary approaches.
2. *"integrated analysis and reflection informed by approaches or methods from two or more disciplines..."*
 - In your cumulative project, you will draw on concepts, methods, and tools from two or more disciplines to examine an issue of contemporary or historical relevance to the US health care system. This project will involve integration of

these perspectives to create new knowledge or a more complete understanding of the issue.

LEARNING ASSUMPTIONS

Learners see themselves as self-directing and want others to view them in the same way, so...

- ... experiences need to be structured carefully to stimulate open dialogue, exchange of ideas, and respect for the heterogeneity of the group and its individuals.
- ... "teachers" need to be facilitators or resources to learners.
- ... content should be based on the real world, telling it as it is not how it should be.
- ... whenever possible, representatives from the target audience should be included in planning learning experiences.
- ... self-evaluation components need to be incorporated into the experience.
- ... presenters must avoid "talking down" to their audience

Learners bring a wealth of accumulated life-experience by which they define themselves, so...

- ... techniques relating information in relevant settings are more effective.
- ... understand previous experiences of learners in a corporate environment relative to desired outcomes.
- ... mistakes are real opportunities for learning (high risk).
- ... validation of previous experience is crucial to incorporating new knowledge.
- ... new information must be connected to the "known" if learning is to take place.
- ... special consideration needs to be given to structuring learning in situations where new information directly contradicts what is already "known" to be true.

Learners learn best when the information is useful in their social and occupational roles, so...

- ... clearly identify areas of need.
- ... learner validation of the need to know the information relative to their ability to achieve or avoid negative consequences in their job, family, or other roles is the cornerstone upon which learning can take place.
- ... when adults recognize the "need to know," learning will peak.
- ... adult learners are the best persons to identify their own readiness to learn

Learning is not subject oriented, it is issue or problem-focused, so...

- ... information of a theoretical nature must be closely tied to what adults need to know to make decisions in their life and kept to a minimum.
- ... remember the adage "if you don't use it, you lose it"
- ... performance consultants spend a significant amount of time doing a front-end assessment to understand what learners need to know to assist them to perform activities required to meet business needs.
- ... experiences need to provide participants with the opportunity to apply the information.
- ... it is only after adults use the information and perceive it to have helped them they incorporate and learn it.

TOPIC SCHEDULE

(Please note the presidential exercise assumes
some of the candidates may withdraw during the first week of class)

1. INTRODUCTION (1/13/04)

- LO: To answer any questions about the structure and agenda for the course
To practice using the case method
To understand the framework of the course and the concept of interdisciplinary study

TOOL: Learning Style Inventory

READING: Syllabus and LSI

CASE: Case Study One (Will be distributed in class)

2. A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING US HEALTH CARE (1/20/04)

- LO: To understand the concept of a systems approach
To understand the concepts of health and sickness
To examine the determinants of health
To explore the beliefs and values governing the delivery of care
To develop one's own position regarding the distribution of health services
To understand some of the basic measures of health status and health services utilization
Use case analysis

READING: Shi Chapters 1& 2 (1-80)

CASE: Case Study Two

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Merits of a single-payer health insurance system;
(2) Medicare prescription drug benefit.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF THE US "SYSTEM" (1/27/04)

- LO: To identify historical developments shaping the nature of the US health care delivery system
To understand the resistance to national health insurance reform
To explore some of the key forces shaping the delivery of health services in the future

READING: Shi Chapter 3 (81-114)

CASES: Case Study Three

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Merits of a single-payer health insurance system;
(2) Medicare prescription drug benefit.

4. HEALTH POLICY (2/03/04)

- LO: To understand the definition, scope, and role of health policy
To recognize the principle features of US health policy
To understand the framework of the legislative process

To appreciate the dynamic tensions between federal, state and local government

READING: Shi Chapter 13 (533-560)
CASE: Case Study Four

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: In lieu of presentations, please attend the National Health Reform Series "Assessing the Politics: Why Health? Why Reform?" 6-7:30 p.m., GW Hospital Room 6116.

5. HEALTH PROFESSIONS IN THE US (2/10/04)

LO: To recognize the various types of health services professionals with an emphasis on their training, practice requirements, and practice settings
To understand the difference between primary care and specialty care and recognize the cause of imbalance between the two.
To understand the extent of maldistribution in the health care labor force

READING: Shi Chapter 4 (117-154)
CASE: Case Study Five

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Reduction in the EPA's clean air standards; (2) Mental health

6. HEALTH SERVICES FINANCING (2/17/04)

LO: To appreciate the role of health care finance and its impact on the delivery of health care
To understand the basic concept of insurance
To differentiate between group insurance, self insurance, individual insurance and managed care
To understand the Medicare and Medicaid programs
To understand various methods of reimbursement
To review and differentiate between and among various health reform proposals

READING: Shi Chapter 6 (187-234)
CASE: Case Study Six

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Reduction in the EPA's clean air standards; (2) Mental health.

7. OUTPATIENT AND PRIMARY CARE SERVICES (2/24/04)

LO: To understand the meanings of outpatient, ambulatory, and primary care
To explain the dramatic growth in outpatient services
To develop an understanding of the varieties of outpatient care

READING: Shi Chapter 7 (235-280)
CASE: Case Study Seven

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Medical malpractice litigation reform; (2) Stem-cell research.

8. INPATIENT FACILITIES AND SERVICES (3/02/04)

LO: To understand the evolution of hospitals in the US
To use key measures in the evaluation of quality
To understand the difference between for profit and not for profit facilities
To gain perspective on some of the ethical challenges related to the future of in patient facilities

READING: Shi Chapter 8 (281-322)

CASE: Case Study Eight

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Medical malpractice litigation reform; (2) Stem-cell research.

9. MANAGED CARE AND INTEGRATED ORGANIZATIONS (3/09/04)

LO: To explain the development of managed care in the US
To use basic concepts of managed care and how cost savings are realized
To understand and use the concept of integration
To understand the concept of managed competition
To distinguish between and among the different models of managed care

READING: Shi Chapter 9 (323-370)

CASE: Case Study Nine

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Nursing shortage; (2) HIV/AIDS coverage and research.

10. LONG TERM CARE (3/23/04)

LO: To comprehend the continuum of services in long term care
To understand the demographics of disability
To appreciate the challenges of long term care in the current health environment and to explore emerging issues

READING: Shi Chapter 10 (371-422)

CASE: Case Study Ten

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) Nursing shortage; (2) HIV/AIDS coverage and research.

11. SPECIAL POPULATIONS ACCESS AND DISPARITY (3/30/04)

- LO: To appreciate issues of racial disparity in health services access and delivery
To understand recent developments in children's health
To consider solutions to the unique challenges of rural health service delivery
To understand the complexity of the mental health system

READING: Shi Chapter 11 (423-480)

CASE: Case Study Eleven

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) SCHIP programs; (2) Human subject research.

12. QUALITY, COST AND ACCESS (4/06/04)

- LO: To understand the term "health care costs"
To identify factors contributing to cost escalation
To use access indicators
To understand the nature, scope, and dimensions of quality
To differentiate between quality assurance and quality improvement

READING: Shi Chapter 12 (481-532)

CASE: Case Study Twelve

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPICS: (1) SCHIP programs; (2) Human subject research.

13. TECHNOLOGY (4/13/04)

- LO: To survey the factors influencing the dissemination and utilization of technology
To understand the role of government's role in regulating technology
To examine the impact of technology on the quality of care and costs
To study the various facets of technology assessment

READING: Shi Chapter 5 (155-186)

CASE: Case Study Thirteen

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Bush, Kerry, Gephardt

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPIC: Closing Statements

14. WRAP-UP AND CONCLUSIONS (4/20/04)

- LO: To discuss the big picture and major themes substantially affecting the health care system
To understand where we are in the health care system and where we are going

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: Dean, Lieberman, Clark

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM TOPIC: Closing Statements