

**Issues in Health Policy and Reform**  
**HPAA 759**  
**Spring 2009**

Stuart H. Altman, Ph.D.  
 Sol Chaikin Professor of National Health Policy  
 The Heller School for Policy and Management  
 Brandeis University  
 Phone: 781-736-3803 (O)  
 Email: [saltman@email.unc.edu](mailto:saltman@email.unc.edu)  
 Course Website: <http://blackboard.unc.edu>

This course will survey and analyze the health care system in the United States, emphasizing the major issues and trends, which have made the subject of intense public concern. The course will cover the financing, delivery and payment of health care by both the public and private sectors. The course will discuss the reasons for the large number of Americans with no or inadequate health insurance, the lack of and disparities in access to care, the high level of health care costs, as well as quality problems. An important aspect of the course will be to discuss past, present and potential solutions to improve the performance of the U.S. health system, including a discussion of the possibility that the US will enact serious healthcare reform in 2009 and what it might look like.

Because the seminar will concentrate mostly on new and emerging issues, it is difficult to construct a reading list which is both up-to-date and comprehensive, and yet, concentrated in a limited number of publications. To overcome this, we will supply copies of selected articles and statistical summaries that are available on blackboard. In addition, I will provide a handout for each class that will be available on blackboard.

**Course Requirements:**

**Two policy analysis papers** will be required. Each will be on a subject you chose from the study areas covered up to the paper deadline. Each paper is to be written as a **Policy Memo** advising an appropriate policy maker (*for the subject selected*) on what changes they should advocate. The memo should include a brief review of the problem, what others have written about the issue (include citations), what you suggest should be done and why. It should also include which groups are likely to support your recommend change and who will be against. Since this is a Policy Memo to a busy person, it should be relatively short (6- 8 double-spaced pages). *Be careful short papers that include all the relevant information are not easy to write.*

**PAPERS DUE:      March 1, 2009 (Classes I—V)**

**May 1, 2009      (Classes VI---X)**

**January 5 I. INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW: The Uninsured**

- “*The Uninsured: A Primer*”, The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured,” Kaiser Foundation, October 2008. <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/7451.cfm>
- The Fraying Link Between Work and Health Insurance: Trends in Employer-Sponsored insurance for Employees 2000-2007, The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, November 2008 <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/7840.cfm>
- “Coverage Matters: Insurance and Health Care”, Institute of Medicine pp. 1-99, 2001. <http://www.iom.edu/Default.aspx?id=4662>

**January 14 II. FINANCING PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE**

- Sherry Glied and Phyllis Bozi: The Current State of Employment-Based Health Coverage. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*
- J. C. Robinson, “The End of Managed Care,” *JAMA*, 285(20):2622-2628, May 23/30, 2001.
- R. Hurley, B. Strunk and J. White, “The Puzzling Popularity of the PPOs” *Health Affairs*, 23(2):56-68, April, 2004.
- J. White, “Markets and Medical Care: The United States, 1993-2005, *The Millbank Quarterly*, 85 (3):395-448.

**January 28 III. MEDICARE AND MEDICARE REFORM**

- Medicare a Primer, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, March 2007,
- M. Moon, Medicare Now and In the Future, Chapters 2, 9
- Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, Report to Congress (MedPac) March 2008: Chapter 3, “Medicare Advantage Plans and Special Needs Plans.
- “Medicare Prescription Drug Law” – March 2004, The Henry Kaiser Family Foundation. <http://www.kff.org/docs/sections.factsheets.htm>
- MedPac Report March 2008, p. 7-22.
- Medicare Reform, The Basics, A Century Foundation Guide to the Issues, pp 1-53, (Century Foundation Press, New York City, 2001).  
(Read free at <http://www.tcf.org>)

**February 11 IV. MEDICAID and SCHIP -- Public Financing for the Poor and Children**

- Medicaid: A Primer 2008, Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) December 2008 <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/7334.cfm>
- Short-Term Options for Medicaid in a Recession, Kaiser Family Foundation, December 2008, <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/7843.cfm>
- Iglehart, John. The American Health Care System: Medicaid. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 1999; 340(5): 403-408.

- Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. SCHIP Turns 10: An Update on Enrollment and the Outlook on Reauthorization from the Program's Directors. May 2007. <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7642.pdf>

## February 18 V. THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM: The Need for Reform

- T. Bodenheimer, K. Grumbach, II, Chapter 7: 97-113.
- IOM, Crossing the Quality Chasm, A New Health System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Chapter 1, "A New Health System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, pp. 23-38.
- J. C. Robinson, L. P. Casalino, "Vertical Integration and Organizational Networks in Health Care," *Health Affairs*, pp. 7-22, (1996).
- A, Mehrotra et al "Do Integrated Medical Groups Provide Higher-Quality Medical Care than IPAs?" *Annals of Internal Medicine*, v. 145 (11)826-833, Dec. 2006.
- E. Fisher, D. Staiger, J. Bynum and D, Gottlieb, "Creating Accountable Care Organizations: The Extended Hospital Medical Staff," *Health Affairs*, 2007, 26, w44-w-57.
- \* L. P. Casalino, H. Pham, G. Bazzoli, "Growth of Single Specialty Medical Groups," *Health Affairs*, 23(2):82-90, Mar/Apr 2004.

## March 4 VI. PAYING FOR HOSPITAL CARE

- M. Moon, Medicare Now and In the Future, Chapter 3, p. 41-62.
- P. Ginsburg, "Can Hospitals And Physicians Shift The Effects Of Cuts In Medicare Reimbursement to Private Payers?" *Health Affairs Web Exclusives*, Oct. 2003, p. W3-472-W3-479.
- L. Casalino, K. Devers and L. Brewster, "Focused Factories? Physician-Owned Specialty Facilities," *Health Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2003, 22(6):56-67.
- C. Tompkins et al, "The Precarious Pricing System for Hospital Services" *Health Affairs*, 25(1):45-56, Jan/Feb, 2006.
- S. Altman, "Could U.S. Hospitals Go The Way of U.S. Airlines? A "Darth Vader" Scenario," *Health Affairs* Jan/Feb. 2006.

## March 18 VII. PHYSICIAN SUPPLY AND PAYMENT

- W. Hsaio et al, "The Resource Based Relative Value Scale: Toward the Development of an Alternative Payment System", *JAMA*, 258 (6):799-802, August 14, 1987.
- R. A. Cooper, "Weighing the Evidence for Expanding Physician Supply," *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 141;705-714, 2004. ([www.annals.org](http://www.annals.org))
- U. Reinhardt, "Dreaming the American Dream: Once More Around On Physician Workforce Policy," *Health Affairs*, 21(5):28-32, Sep/Oct, 2002.
- J. Laditka, et al, "More May Be Better: Evidence of a Negative Relationship between Physician Supply and Hospitalization for Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions, Health Services Research" 40(4):1148-1166, August 2005.

- S. Guterman, “Medicare Physician Payment: Are We Getting What We Pay for? Are We Paying for What We Want”, Testimony to Energy and Commerce Committee, July 25, 2006.

**March 25**

**VIII. TECHNOLOGY AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

- C. Thomas, S. Wallack, et al, “Impact Of Health Plan Design And Management On Retirees’ Prescription Drug Use And Spending, 2001,” *Health Affairs Web Exclusive*, Dec. 4, 2002.
- D. Cutler, G. Long, E. Berndt, J. Royer, A. Fournier, A. Sasser, P. Cremieux, “The Value of Antihyperintensive Drugs: A Perspective on Medical Innovation” *Health Affairs*, 26(1), 97-110, January/February 2007.
- G. Wilensky, “Developing A Center for Comparative Effectiveness Information” *Health Affairs*, 25(6):w572-585, Nov/Dec 2006.
- S. Tunis, “A Clinical Research Strategy to Support Shared Decision Making, *Health Affairs* 24(1):180-184, Jan/Feb 2005.

**April 8**

**IX. INTERNATIONAL HEALTH**

- G. F. Anderson, U. Reinhardt, P. Hussey & V. Petrosyan, “It’s The Prices, Stupid: Why The U.S. Is So Different From Other Countries,” *Health Affairs*, 22(3):89-105, May/June 2003.
- G. F. Anderson, et al, “Health Spending in the United States and the Rest of the Industrialized World,” *Health Affairs*, 24(4):903-914, Jul/Aug 2005.
- European Observatory on Health Care Systems: Health Care Systems in Transition: United Kingdom and Germany.
- D. Chinitz, Israel’s Health Policy Breakthrough; The Politics of Reform and The Reform of Politics, *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 1995: 909-932
- Yip, “The Health Care Systems of China and India: System Performance and Future Challenges,” *Health Affairs*, 27(4):921-932, Jul/Aug 2008.

**April 22**

**X. THE QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE**

**What is Quality**

- D. Blumenthal, "Part 1: Quality of Care - What is it?" *New England Journal of Medicine*, 335(12):891-893, Sep 19, 1996.
- R. Brook, E. McGlynn, and P. Cleary, "Part 2: Measuring Quality of Care," *New England Journal of Medicine*, 335(13):966-970, Sep 26, 1996.
- M. Chassin, "Part 3: Improving the Quality of Care," *New England Journal of Medicine*, 335(14):1060-1063, Oct 3, 1996.
- E. McGlynn, “The Quality of Health Care Delivered to Adults in the U.S., *New England Journal of Medicine*. 348(26):2635, Jun 26, 2003.

### Improving the Quality of Care

- S. Wallack and C. Tompkins, “Realigning Incentives in Fee-For-Service Medicine,” *Health Affairs*, 22(4), Jul/Aug 2003.
- Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Institute of Medicine, pp. 1-38, 2001.
- Rewarding Provider Performance: Aligning Incentives in Medicare (Pathways to Quality Health Care Series) Executive Summary: National Academy of Sciences, 2007.
- M. Rosenthal, Landon B., K. Howitt, H. Song, and A. Epstein, “Climbing Up: The Pay-for-Performance Learning Curve; Where are the Early Adopters Now?” *Health Affairs*, 26(6):1674-82, November/December 2007.
- \* J. Wennberg, E. Fisher, J. Skinner, K. Bronner, Extending the P4P Agenda, Part 2: “How Medicare Can Reduce Waste and Improve Care for the Chronically Ill,” *Health Affairs*, 26(6):1575-85, November 2007.

May

## VII. HEALTH REFORM: Current and Past Battles

### Controlling Healthcare Costs

- Altman, Stuart, Christopher Tompkins, Efrat Eliat and Mitchell Glavin. “Escalating Health Care Spending: Is it Desirable or Inevitable,” *Health Affairs*, January 8, 2003.
- Aaron, Henry and Mark V. Pauly. “Should Public Policy Seek to Control the Growth of Health Care Spending,?,” *Health Affairs*, Jan 2003 pp.W3-28.
- L. Baker, H. Birnbaum, et al, “The Relationship Between Technology Availability and Health Care Spending,” *Health Affairs, Web Exclusives*, Jul/Dec 2003, pp.W3-352.

### Coverage Reform

- Health Reform 2009: Report of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus.
- J. Oberlander, 2003 The Politics of Health Reform: Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good Plans? *Health Affairs* W3 391-403.

**Web Sites Relating to Course  
HPAA 759**

MEDICARE Fact Sheets, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation:  
(Read free at <http://kff.org/medicare/upload/1066-10.pdf>)

MEDICAID Fact Sheets, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation:  
(Read free at <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7235-02.pdf>)

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Employer Health Benefits, 2007 Annual Summary*  
(Read free at <http://www.kff.org>)

The Commonwealth Fund, A private foundation working toward a high performance health system. <http://www.cmwf.org>

Institute of Medicine, *America's Health Care Safety Net: Intact but Endangered*. (Read free at <http://www.iom.edu>)

Rand Health | Research Highlights, *State Efforts to Insure the Uninsured: An Unfinished Story*, 2003. (Read free at <http://www.rand.org>)