
Political Science 306 Health Politics and Policies - *Online*

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Summer 2021

Instructor	Dr. Saemyi Park (spark@uwsp.edu) If you have general questions regarding the course, please use “The Muddiest Point Forum (Q&A)” in Canvas. I will check this page every day to answer your questions. If you have questions regarding a personal matter, the best way for you to reach out to me is through e-mail. I will be checking my e-mail twice a day during each weekday of the course. I will respond to your email within 24 hours. During the weekend, I may not be able to check my e-mail. In this case, you will hear from me on the following Monday. Please see the e-mail communication guideline on page 6.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the U.S. health system, its components, and the players that challenge the health policies. My goal is to present broad perspectives for understanding the U.S. health system within historical, social, political, and economic contexts that shape the health of Americans.

Broadly, we will discuss the five aspects of U.S. health politics and policies throughout the course. First, we begin by discussing the major characteristics and the beliefs and values underpinning the U.S. health politics and policies. Second, we delve into the history of the system, describing the initial development and evolution of the system (**Foundations**). Next, we focus on the structure and process of the U.S. health care system, addressing the types of care and special populations for special care (Process). Third, we learn about each of the components of the system, including human resources and nonhuman resources such as finance and reimbursement (**Resources**). Fourth, we devote some time to discuss the issues and concerns about the U.S. health politics and policies (**Outcomes**). We end the course by discussing the future of our health care system (**Outlook**).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will:

- 1) Explain the components and workings of the U.S. health care system and the U.S. public health infrastructure
- 2) Understand the evolution of the U.S. health system and the influencing factors for the changes

- 3) Analyze the connections and interconnections between the components of the health care system
- 4) Identify the role of many players that have shaped the health politics
- 5) Scrutinize the complex socio-ecological issues that surround health and healthcare in America which create health disparities
- 6) Evaluate the existing health policies and recommend options for policy change.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following book has been ordered at University Bookstore for textbook rental:

- Title: ***“Understanding Health Policy: A Clinical Approach”*** (7th ed.)
- Authors: **Thomas Bodenheimer** and **Kevin Grumbach**
- Publisher: **McGraw Hill**

For the textbook rental, please read the official announcement from the UWSP Bookstore (<https://www.uwsp.edu/centers/store/Documents/Spring2021TextbookRentalReturnsSummer21Checkout.pdf>). You can set up an appointment for self-check-in or the delivery arrangement. Additional learning materials will be shared on the course website.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & REQUIREMENTS

Since this is an online class, there is much more responsibility placed on the students in terms of active involvement and participation. You are highly recommended to log in to the course website in Canvas EVERY DAY during the session (four weeks) and complete the module activities by its deadline.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Broadly speaking, there are four main categories for course assignments: **Quiz, Module Activity, Oral Presentation & Paper**. Please see the table on the next page for more information.

Students MUST complete all the required work to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. You do NOT have the option to “take a zero” on each required work. Not submitting all the required work will result either in a final grade of incomplete until the work is submitted or an F for the course. But, please be aware of the policy that the former option (an Incomplete grade = I) is rarely given to students for extraordinary circumstances.

Requirements	Points
Quiz	50 points total
A Syllabus Quiz	10 points
4 Module Quizzes	40 points (10 points each)
Module Activities	50 points total
Introduce Yourself Forum	10 points
4 Module Activities	40 points (10 points each)
Peer Reviews	50 points total
on Introduce Yourself Form	20 points
On 4 Module Activities	30 points
A 5-minute Presentation	60 points
An Analytical Paper	40 points
Total	250 points

GRADING SCALE

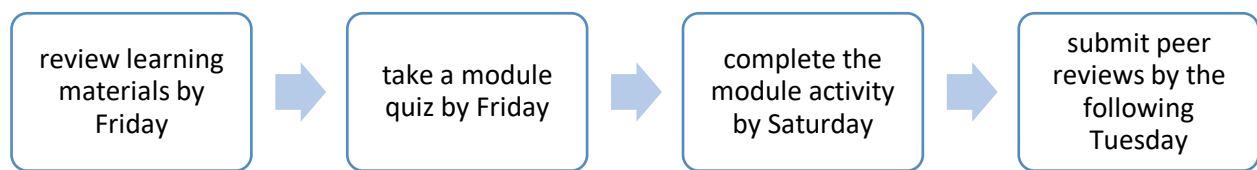
Grades will be determined according to the university's standard scale. If you meet the basic requirements for assignments, you can expect to pass the course. If you want an A or B, you need to go above and beyond the exact requirements for an assignment. There is no curve, so you receive what you earn.

For individual assignments, I will define the A-F grade base in the following way:

Criteria	Letter Grade	Points Range
Outstanding	A	235 to 250 points
	A-	225 to 234 points
Above average	B+	217 to 224 points
	B	207 to 216 points
	B-	200 to 206 points
Average	C+	192 to 199 points
	C	182 to 191 points
	C-	175 to 181 points
Below average	D+	167 to 174 points
	D	157 to 166 points
Unsatisfactory	F	156 points and below

COURSE FORMAT

When you visit the course site, you will see FIVE Modules. For the 4-week semester, we will cover **five modules**. Module 1 is the introduction of the course, and you are invited to say hello to your classmates and to take the syllabus quiz. These activities (“Say Hello” Forum & a Syllabus Quiz) in Module 1 are also a part of graded assignments. For the remaining FOUR MODULES, we will cover the main subjects regarding the U.S. Health Politics and Policies. Each module is supposed to be completed within a week. **Each week will repeat the same format so that you can easily follow the course.**



First, you will review learning materials and take a module quiz by Friday. For a maximum outcome, you should read the chapter BEFORE you begin each module. After reading the chapter, please review learning materials such as PowerPoint slides with my voice lecture, videos, articles, data, and many more. A module quiz is a learning tool to help you see how well you understand the course material. You will have **TWO attempts to take a quiz**, and the highest score will be considered for your final grade.

Second, you need to complete the module activity by Saturday. The module activity could be the discussion forum where you are invited to express your opinion or a brief analysis of the given data or something else that is related to the topic of the module. Whatever the activity it is, clear instruction will be provided in the module. Reviewing the textbook chapter and learning materials is sufficient to complete a module activity.

Third, you will read and respond to TWO other students for the Module Activity by the following Tuesday. If you submit the module activity by its deadline, you will be *automatically assigned* to two students. You will read these students’ posts and offer constructive and respectful feedback. Peer reviews are designed to foster active discussion among students, so completing peer reviews is a critical part of the required course work. The simple expressions and compliments such as “you did a good job!” and “I agree with you.” are not count for peer reviews. You should comment on the contents of your classmate’s activity by sharing what you newly learn from it and whether you agree with your peer’s analysis and arguments. For more information, please read the page “The Information about Peer Review Requirements” on the course site.

ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the weekly module activities, there are two assignment that must be submitted by its relevant deadline.

#1 Health Plan Evaluation Paper

Health plans vary in terms of what they cover, how much they cost, and a number of other factors. You are invited to evaluate your own health insurance plan according to the criteria provided by the instructor. It is worth **40 points** and should be submitted **by August 8 (Sunday)**. **This assignment requires that you have access to your health plan documentation.** Please locate this document as soon as possible. If it is impossible for you to access your health plan, please email me by 11:59 PM, July 31 (Saturday) so that I can assign you a randomly selected plan widely used in Wisconsin. But, try to find your own health insurance plan first. My sample plan should be the last solution. Please check the course site in Canvas for the complete paper guideline.

#2 A 5-Minute Video Presentation

Four main modules are organized by the broad framework, and each module covers a variety of topics within it. You are invited to present an informative briefing about what's happening in U.S. health politics and policies. Specifically speaking, you will read a few news articles featuring the topic(s) discussed in the module and analytically review the issue by applying learning materials. It is worth **60 points** and should be submitted **by August 22 (Sunday)**. This presentation will be delivered in a form of **a video recording that your presence must be captured too**. You can do a PowerPoint presentation with your voice/video over it. Or, you can just do a recording of yourself. The part of this assignment asks you to review TWO other students' presentations for constructive comments. The detailed instruction will be provided on the course site under the title "Instruction about A 5-min. Presentation (Video-Recording)."

ONLINE ETIQUETTE

Because we do not meet in person, we may encounter a situation when our thoughts may not deliver in the way we intend. To prevent this problem in online communication, it is extremely important for all of us to follow the common netiquette rules below:

1. Be respectful of your classmates.
2. Use appropriate language and grammar when you complete a daily activity. We are not texting here. We are engaging in an academic conversation.
3. Always be constructive and encouraging when responding to classmates.
4. Do not use the discussion forum to criticize another student in a personal way.

5. Keep in mind that everything you write is recorded. There is no take back on the Internet.

GENERAL RULES

Virtual Office Hours: if you need help on the course assignments or if you want to discuss your progress or if you want to talk to me about personal matters, feel free to set up an appointment for a virtual meeting. Feel free to contact me to set up a virtual meeting. More details about virtual office hours are shared under the module titled “Important Information (Must-Read)”.

The Muddiest Point Forum: please post any general questions to the Muddiest Point Forum. This is a Q&A page where you can post questions about the course assignments, syllabus, and anything about the course. I will answer your general questions here so that other students can also read the questions and my answers. Feel free to answer other students’ questions if you know the answer! But, keep in mind that this forum is public. Don’t post your questions if they contain any personal or confidential information. In this case, email me with your questions.

Honesty: any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Don’t wait till the final week of class. Please email me as soon as possible if you are having a problem, so I can try to help you work out a solution. In addition, there is a great resource for your study in the campus. The Tutoring-Learning Center provides a variety of services *ONLINE* to support your needs such as Writing Lab and One-On-One Assistance for Study Skills. Please contact Learning Resource Center (715-346-3568 & tlctutor@uwsp.edu & www.uwsp.edu/tlc) for more information.

Late Work Policy: any unexcused late submission (e.g. practice quiz, module activities & a 5-min. presentation) will be downgraded - 2 points for each day it is late. Once the new module begins, late assignments from the past module will not be accepted. Late paper will be downgraded - 5 points for each day it is late. No late paper will be accepted after June 24.

Excused Late Submission: if you miss the deadline of any activities for the unforeseen reasons, please contact me as soon as possible. I understand that students may encounter unplanned and unfortunate circumstances especially during this unusual crisis due to COVID-19. If it is the case, please don’t hesitate to contact me and explain your circumstance so that I can give you an extension. Extension decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Module Plan

Readings and plans subject to change by the instructor.
If so, clear communication about the change will be offered to students.

Module	Subtopics	Readings
I. Foundations	Characteristics History	Ch. 1 & Ch. 16
II. Process	Structure Access to Healthcare	Ch. 5 & Ch. 6 Ch. 3
III. Resources	Healthcare Finance Cost Controlling Human Resources	Ch. 2 & Ch. 4 Ch. 8 & Ch. 9 Ch. 7 & Ch. 13
IV. Outcomes & Outlook	Quality Different Needs Healthcare in other countries Reform & Change	Ch. 10 Ch. 11 & Ch. 12 Ch. 14 Ch. 15

Note: although several chapters are assigned to each module, each chapter is relatively very short and easy to read. Each chapter also includes many figures and tables. Therefore, you can easily manage to complete these readings.