

**UEP 209: Health Policy**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2019**

- Course Title: UEP 209: Health Policy
- Meeting schedule: The course will meet on Fridays from 1:55 to 4:50 PM in Fowler 201.
- Office hours: Office hours will be held before class, from 1 to 1:55 PM. Office hours are also available at other times upon request – just shoot me an email.
- Course Instructor: Corey Davis, JD, MSPH, EMT
- Contact Information: The best way to reach me is via email at [cdavis2@oxy.edu](mailto:cdavis2@oxy.edu). Please put “UEP 209” in the subject line. I’m also on Twitter at [@coreysdavis](https://twitter.com/coreysdavis).

Course Description

Why does the United States spend more on health care per person than other developed countries and still have worse health outcomes? American health care costs (including drug prices) are higher and we have a much greater use of expensive medical technology than in other countries. This course will examine the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to health care delivery and financing, including private, single-payer and universal systems. Students will analyze the impact of these approaches on access, cost, quality, and disparities. They will also examine the historical, economic, social, and political factors that have led the U.S. to adopt its current health system, how care is delivered, analyze its strengths and weaknesses, and examine the different proposals for reforming it.

This course is intended to provide an overview of health planning, health service delivery, health policy, and health ethics, and provide students with a framework for understanding the goals, politics, and barriers to health care improvement. At the conclusion of the course, students will understand the legal and ethical bases for government regulation of health and health care, the current makeup of the American health care system, the history of health reform in the United States, the ways in which American political realities impact health policy, how health care is delivered in other industrialized countries, and potential paths forward for the United States.

Course materials

There are one required book for the course:

- Bradley and Taylor, [The American Healthcare Paradox: Why Spending More is Getting Us Less](#)

Another book is optional:

- Johnson, Stoskopf, and Shi, [Comparative Health Systems: A Global Perspective](#), 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (ISBN 1284111733)

We will also read a number of news articles, journal articles, fact sheets, and cases as noted on this syllabus. They will either be linked from the syllabus or posted on [Moodle](#). We will also utilize the [Constitution of the United States](#). Unless otherwise noted, please use the abridged cases posted on Moodle, not the full text of cases that might be available online (of course, you're welcome to read the full cases as well if you wish). I also recommend that students subscribe to Vox's daily health care newsletter, VoxCare, which you can sign up for [here](#).

### Course Structure and Requirements

This course will utilize lecture, presentations, and in-person discussion.

### Reading

This is a reading-intensive course. Students are expected to read all assigned works prior to the class in which they'll be discussed, and be prepared to engage in informed discussion regarding those texts. Bring all assigned texts to class.

### Student-led activities and class discussion

Discussion is an integral part of the course. Students can be expected to be called on at random, and are expected to be able to provide intelligent discussion regarding the readings, integrating their own knowledge and experience. There will also be several in-class group-based activities in which students are expected to substantially contribute their knowledge and expertise.

Beginning in the second week of class, two students per class will provide a short (~5 minute) summary and informed analysis of a recent publication or event regarding health care or health policy at the beginning of each class. This can be an article in the popular press, a journal article, a blog post, online video, policy statement, etc. of the student's choosing.

This student should email the relevant article, video, etc. to me 36 hours before it will be presented. During class, the student is expected to provide an explanation of how this publication or event relates to health care/health care policy/social determinant of health, with reference to the concepts and ideas we've learned to date, and utilizing outside sources as applicable.

Additionally, there will be a graded group presentation regarding comparative health systems. More detail will be provided on this project, which will be 15% of the course grade.

### Writing

Informed analysis delivered through written work will also be a key component of the course. There will be two writing assignments, and both the midterm and final will contain writing components. Writing assignments are as follows:

1. An important skill for anyone interested in working in the policy field is the ability to summarize complex issues and to articulate concise arguments. To show your competence with this skill, each student will be required to submit a brief (~1,000 word) analysis of a current event or publication with relevance to health policy or health care reform. This analytical document should briefly summarize the current event or publication and discuss its relevance to health

policy, either in the United States or abroad. It should also include recommendations and/or informed perspective on the issue discussed. Outside references are permitted but not required.

This assignment can be turned in any time prior to October 4, but students are encouraged to start and complete it early.

2. One of the goals of this course is to gain an understanding of the health care systems in other countries, to understand how and why they differ from the American system, and to examine what lessons they might hold for America. To demonstrate your competence in these areas, the second writing assignment is a 2,000 – 2,500 word essay analyzing whether and how the health care system of another country might be adopted by or inform health care policy change in the United States. This country may be but need not be one of the countries that we discussed in class.

In this paper, each student should briefly a) present an overview of how healthcare is funded and delivered in the chosen country; b) explain the health care system's major actors and institutions; c) explain how well the system is working, being sure to note the perspective of a group in the country that has limited healthcare access. The paper should provide a reasoned opinion as to whether the system of the country you've chosen would work in the United States and/or how it can inform health care policy reform in America, with emphasis on individuals and groups that are currently under-served by the American health care system.

This paper must make reference to the current US health care system as well as the political and historical realities discussed in class. It will be evaluated on the clarity and quality of the writing, the reasoned perspective you bring to the topic, and your recommendations or policy suggestions. Where relevant, you may integrate ideas and concepts from the group work, but the final product must be solely your own work. Outside sources are required. This paper is due Nov. 15.

All written work products should be single spaced in twelve-point font. They are expected to have a clear thesis, contain persuasive evidence, and show independent thought and analysis. No particular citation method is necessary, so long as all sources are appropriately cited and I'm able to clearly determine what source was used.

### Exams

There will be two quizzes, a midterm and a final. The exams will cover the readings as well as class discussions. The examinations will test key concepts learned in the course, your knowledge of the assigned readings, and your ability to summarize the policy relevance of health issues. The midterm may consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. The final exam will comprise a combination of short answer and short paragraph response questions.

### Electronic devices

Unless you have a pressing, articulable need to be immediately available (i.e. you're an on-call medical or public safety professional or are immediately responsible for the well-being of another human) please put all cell phones, pagers, etc. away during class time. Tablets and laptops may be used only for activities directly related to class.

## Grading

Points will be allocated as follows:

- Current events presentation: 5% (Varies)
- Quiz 1: 10% (Sept. 20)
- Quiz 2: 10% (Nov. 1)
- Short analysis of current event or publication paper: 10% (Oct. 4)
- Comparative health systems/health policy reform paper: 15% (Nov. 15)
- Group comparative country presentation: 10% (Nov. 22)
- Midterm: 20% (Oct. 11)
- Final: 20%

## Extra Credit

There are a large number of high-quality popular books on American health care and health policy. If you desire, you are invited to read one or two of the below books and submit a paper summarizing and analyzing the text. This paper should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words in length, and should briefly summarize the key points of the text and then spend the majority of the piece placing the information you learned in the context of our class discussions and your own experiences. I'm not looking for a book report (I've read the books!); I'm interested in your analysis, ideas, etc. The eligible books are:

- Steven Brill, [America's Bitter Pill: Money, Politics, Backroom Deals, and the Fight to Fix our Broken Healthcare System](#)
- Ezekiel Emanuel, [Reinventing American Health Care](#)
- Jill Quadagno, [One Nation, Uninsured: Why the U.S. Has No National Health Insurance](#). Another great overview of how we got where we are, available for a few dollars used.
- T.R. Reid, [The Healing of America](#)
- Elisabeth Rosenthal, [An American Sickness](#)
- Paul Starr, [The Social Transformation of American Medicine](#). While almost 30 years old, this is still the best treatment of why the American health care system is the way it is. You should be able to pick up a used version for less than ten dollars.

The first submitted paper will earn between three and five points added to the midterm exam grade. If you choose to submit two papers, the second will earn between three and five points added to the final exam grade. These papers can be submitted at any time on or before Nov. 19.

## Accommodations

If you require accommodations to complete the course requirements, please contact me and I will make every effort to meet your needs. All discussions will remain confidential. Students can also contact the Office of Disability Services, which is committed to enhancing students' academic development and independence through providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations, assisting students with self-advocacy, providing academic support and counseling, and ensuring adherence to state and federal disability laws. The Office can be reached at [\(323\) 259-2969](tel:323-259-2969) or [accessibility@oxy.edu](mailto:accessibility@oxy.edu). Please don't hesitate to contact me regarding preferred names, pronouns, etc.

### Academic Integrity

Students are expected to strictly adhere to the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and to maintain the highest levels of academic integrity. Students are responsible for knowing and using the correct procedures for acknowledging and identifying sources of borrowed material. Failure to properly credit sources in all or part of work presented in draft or final form to anyone is plagiarism, regardless of whether it occurs as a result of dishonest intent or carelessness and regardless of the course credit attached to it.

Unless explicitly noted otherwise, all course assignments must be completed individually. Any unsanctioned collaboration constitutes academic misconduct.

### Wellness

Emmons Wellness Center is committed to providing the students of Occidental College with accessible, culturally sensitive, and high quality medical care, psychological counseling services, and student-driven wellness education. 24/7 Confidential Hotline: [\(323\) 341-4141](tel:323-341-4141); Appointments: [\(323\) 259-2657](tel:323-259-2657); Email: [emmons@oxy.edu](mailto:emmons@oxy.edu)

### Late work and Missed Exams / Assignments

All work is due when assigned. Any work not submitted on the date and time assigned will receive a reduction of a minimum of one letter grade unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Class	Topic	Reading assignment	Assignments/Activities
<p><b>Class 1</b> Aug. 30</p>	<p>Course overview, introduction to American health care system</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This syllabus</li> <li>• Kaiser Family Foundation, <a href="#">Health of the Healthcare System: An Overview</a></li> <li>• Anderson et al., <a href="#">Measuring the U.S. health care system: A cross-national comparison</a></li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCHS, <a href="#">Health insurance and access to care</a></li> <li>• Commonwealth Fund, <a href="#">Mirror, Mirror 2017: International comparison reflects flaws and opportunities for better US health care</a></li> <li>• Rubin, <a href="#">US dead last among developed countries when it comes to paid maternity leave</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Class 2</b> Sept. 6</p>	<p>Health care financing, cost and quality</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eli Saslow, Washington Post, <a href="#">The Follow-Up Appointment</a></li> <li>• Don Berwick, <a href="#">The Triple Aim: Care, Health, and Cost</a></li> <li>• Carroll, <a href="#">The “Iron Triangle” of health care: Access, cost, and quality</a></li> <li>• Atul Gawande, <a href="#">The cost conundrum: What a Texas town can teach us about health care</a></li> <li>• Bodenheimer, <a href="#">Low-Cost lessons from Grand Junction, Colorado</a></li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frakt, Hidden from view: <a href="#">The astonishingly high administrative costs of U.S. health care</a></li> <li>• Institute of Medicine, <a href="#">Crossing the Quality Chasm (Summary)</a></li> <li>• Mehrotra, <a href="#">I’m the perfect person to price shop for an operation. But the process went terribly</a></li> <li>• Vox, <a href="#">Giving birth costs a lot. Hospitals won’t tell you how much. (video)</a></li> </ul>	<p>Presenters:</p> <p>Marcus Blumenfeld &amp; Reed Canavan</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oberlander, <a href="#">Throwing darts: Americans' elusive search for health care cost control</a></li> <li>• Melnick, <a href="#">Blame Emergency Rooms for the Out-of-Control Cost of Health Care</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Class 3</b> Sept. 13	Healthcare delivery: Medicare and Medicaid	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradley &amp; Taylor, Chapter 1</li> <li>• HHS, <a href="#">What is the difference between Medicare and Medicaid?</a></li> <li>• CBO, <a href="#">An overview of the Medicaid program</a></li> <li>• Baicker et al, <a href="#">The effects of Medicaid coverage – learning from the Oregon experiment</a></li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS, <a href="#">Brief summaries of Medicare and Medicaid</a> (skim pp. 8-34)</li> <li>• Vox, <a href="#">Medicaid, explained</a></li> <li>• Dubay &amp; Kenney, <a href="#">Expanding public health insurance to parents: Effect on children's coverage under Medicaid</a></li> <li>• Kaiser Family Foundation: <a href="#">Medicaid, a primer</a></li> <li>• Kodjak, <a href="#">From Birth to Death, Medicaid Affects the Lives of Millions</a></li> <li>• Kaiser Family Foundation, <a href="#">A primer on Medicare</a></li> <li>• Kaiser Family Foundation, <a href="#">Medicare and Medicaid at 50</a> (video)</li> </ul>	Presenters: Paul Charbonneau & Tessa Davis
<b>Class 4</b> Sept. 20	<p>Part 1: Healthcare delivery: Private insurance, managed care plans</p> <p>Part 2: Illicit drug policy and the health of people who use drugs</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rosenthal, <a href="#">Apprehensive, many doctors shift to jobs with salaries</a></li> <li>• Goldsmith, Mosley, &amp; Davis: <a href="#">Medicaid Managed Care: Lots of Unanswered Questions</a></li> </ul> <p>Guest speaker: Peter Davidson, PhD, University of California San Diego School of Medicine</p>	<p>Presenters: Matthew De Koch &amp; Jonah Domsky</p> <p>Quiz 1</p>
<b>Class 5</b> Sept. 27	Health care reform	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradley &amp; Taylor, Chapter 2</li> </ul>	Presenters: Riki Eijima & Isabella Funes



		<p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IOM, <a href="#">Unequal treatment: Confronting racial and ethnic disparities in health care (Summary, pp. 1-23)</a></li> <li>• Pazzaneze, <a href="#">The costs of inequality: Increasingly, it's the rich and the rest of us</a></li> <li>• Harris, <a href="#">How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime (TEDMED)</a></li> <li>• Pletcher, <a href="#">Trends in opioid prescribing by race/ethnicity for patients seeking care in US emergency departments</a></li> <li>• Chatterjee, <a href="#">Kids who suffer hunger in first years lag behind their peers in school</a></li> <li>• Seirawan, <a href="#">The impact of oral health on the academic performance of disadvantaged children</a></li> <li>• McGinley, <a href="#">Childhood cancer survivors face 'financial toxicity'</a></li> <li>• Dred Scott v. Sandford, 60 U.S. 393 (1857) (redacted version on Moodle)</li> <li>• Hip Hughes, <a href="#">The Dred Scott Decision Explained</a> (video)</li> <li>• Csete et al., <a href="#">Public health and international drug policy</a> (read executive summary and review graphics)</li> <li>• Williams, <a href="#">For native American women, scourge of rape, rare justice</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Class 7</b> Oct. 11</p>	<p>Part 1: Midterm</p> <p>Part 2: Course review, check-in (maybe movie time?)</p>	<p>Comprehensive midterm</p>	<p>Presenters: Mia Jones &amp; Emma-Marie Kollmorgen</p> <p>Midterm</p>
<p><b>Class 8</b> Oct. 18</p>	<p>Constitutional basis for health policy; mechanisms of policy creation</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradley &amp; Taylor, Chapter 3</li> <li>• United States v. Lopez, 514 U.S. 549 (1995)</li> <li>• Gonzales v. Raich, 545 U.S. 1 (2005)</li> <li>• South Dakota v. Dole, 483 U.S. 203 (1987)</li> </ul>	<p>Presenters: Lauren Long &amp; Justin Martinez</p>

		<p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rutkow and Vernick, <a href="#">The U.S. Constitution’s Commerce Clause, the Supreme Court, and Public Health</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Gonzales v. Raich Summary (5 min video)</a></li> <li>• TED-Ed, <a href="#">How is Power Divided in the United States Government? (4 min video)</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Class 9</b> Oct. 25</p>	<p>Rights, duties and restrictions on gov’t to protect &amp; improve health</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradley &amp; Taylor, Chapter 5</li> <li>• O. Kerr, <a href="#">How to read a legal opinion</a></li> <li>• Jacobson v. Massachusetts, 197 U.S. 11 (1905)</li> <li>• Jew Ho v. Williamson, 103 F. 10 (1900)</li> <li>• Andrew Busch, <a href="#">Is health care a right?</a></li> <li>• Jones and Mayer, <a href="#">Paternalism and its Discontents: Motorcycle Helmet Laws, Libertarian Values, and Public Health</a></li> <li>• Sullum, <a href="#">The tyranny of public health</a></li> <li>• Deshaney v. Winnebago County, 489 U.S. 189 (1979)</li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prince v. Massachusetts, 321 U.S. 158 (1944)</li> <li>• CDC, <a href="#">VaxView</a></li> <li>• Greenberg, <a href="#">In jail, pads and tampons as bargaining chips</a></li> <li>• Gruskin et al., <a href="#">History, principles, and practice of health and human rights</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CT court rules against teen who doesn’t want chemo</a> (video)</li> <li>• Parmet et al., <a href="#">Individual rights versus the public’s health – 100 Years after Jacobson v. Massachusetts.</a></li> <li>• Greenhouse, <a href="#">The Supreme Court and a Life Barely Lived</a> (about <i>Deshaney</i> and its effects)</li> </ul>	<p>Presenters: Andrea Mateo &amp; Ashley Rodarte</p>
<p><b>Class 10</b> Nov. 1</p>	<p>Corporate power v. health policy</p>	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parmet, et al.</i> <a href="#">The Curious Case of the Docs vs. the Glocks</a></li> </ul>	<p>Presenters: Alex Smith &amp; Hayley Sumida</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Wollschlaeger I)</li> <li>• Volokh, E. <a href="#">Eleventh Circuit en bank strikes down restriction on doctors' speech to patients about guns.</a> (Wollschlaeger II)</li> <li>• Liptak, <a href="#">Corporations find a friend in the Supreme Court</a></li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hodge, J. <a href="#">Doctors, Patients, Guns, and the Public Health: Wollschlaeger II</a></li> <li>• Bayer et al: <a href="#">The FDA and Graphic Cigarette-Pack Warnings – Thwarted by the Courts</a></li> </ul>	Quiz 2
<b>Class 11</b> Nov. 8	California healthcare access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest speaker: Cori Racela, Senior Attorney, Western Center on Law &amp; Poverty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Access to care for underserved individuals in California</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Time for group work on comparative health systems presentations</li> </ul>	
<b>Class 12</b> Nov. 15	Part 1: The future of American health care  Part 2: Introduction to Global Health and Comparative health systems	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradley &amp; Taylor, Chapters 4 and 6</li> <li>• Squires, <a href="#">The U.S. health system in perspective: A comparison of twelve industrialized nations</a></li> <li>• Reid, <a href="#">Five myths about health care in the rest of the world</a></li> <li>• Commonwealth Fund, <a href="#">Taking the pulse of health care systems</a></li> <li>• Coghlan, <a href="#">US ranked worst healthcare system, while NHS is the best</a></li> </ul> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frontline, <a href="#">Sick around the world</a> (video)</li> <li>• Andrews, <a href="#">Getting up close and personal with emergency care, Canadian style</a></li> <li>• UNHRC, <a href="#">Fact Sheet 31: Right to Health</a></li> <li>• Kelley Lee, <a href="#">How do we move forward on the social determinants of health: the global governance challenges</a></li> </ul>	Presenters: Leah Sweeney, Eylan Tangonan & Edward Valdez  Second paper due

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welch, <a href="#">Why I prefer French health care</a></li> <li>• Rodwin, <a href="#">The health care system under French national health insurance: Lessons for health reform in the United States</a></li> <li>• Harden, <a href="#">Japan's health care system has many advantages, but may not be sustainable</a></li> <li>• Ikegami, <a href="#">In Japan, all-payer rate setting under tight government control has proved to be an effective approach to containing costs</a></li> <li>• Sick around the world: <a href="#">United Kingdom</a></li> <li>• Commonwealth Fund, <a href="#">International profiles of health care systems: England</a> (pp. 49-59)</li> <li>• Commonwealth Fund, <a href="#">International profiles of health care systems: France</a> (pp. 59-69)</li> <li>• PubMed Health, <a href="#">Health care in Germany: The German health care system</a></li> <li>• Tatara et al., <a href="#">Japan health system review</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Class 13</b> Nov. 22	Global Health & Comparative health systems: Student presentations		Presenters: Dylan Wensley, Nikita Wolf & Alexandria Yawata  Student presentations
<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	Comprehensive exam		Final exam

Because important events related to health care and health policy are likely to occur during the semester, this syllabus is likely to change. Any modifications will be communicated to students as soon as possible.

This syllabus was last modified September 1, 2019.