

PBPL 26690: The Politics of Health Care

Winter 2020, Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:20, Stuart 101

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:50, Stuart

Teaching Assistants:

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“Now I have to tell you, it’s an unbelievably complex subject. Nobody knew that healthcare could be so complicated.” – Donald Trump, 45th President of the United States.

In this course we will tackle some of the complexity of health care head on, considering how cultural, legal and structural factors shape the delivery of care. Our goal will be to address foundational questions about how we as a society imagine health care, the professionals who work within the field, and the patients. We will draw on evidence from the United States to ask: How have shifts in the institutional context in which medical professionals work altered their task? How do we imagine patients and their choices? How do external and internal pressures shape what issues are prioritized and who receives care?

Grading

- 20% Attendance/participation
- 25% Weekly Responses
- 25% Health Care Controversy Paper
- 30% Final Exam

Attendance/Participation: Students are required to attend all class meetings and to arrive on time. An absence can only be excused if it is brought to the TA’s attention before class. This is an interactive class and I expect you to participate in discussion!

Screen policy: In order to assure that the class remains interactive, I am instituting a ban on laptops, phones, tablets, etc.

Weekly Responses: These are short weekly assignments (2-3 paragraphs) in which you will debate the merits of the readings. You must submit your responses to Canvas by Monday at midnight.

Health Care Controversy Paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced): In this paper, you will examine both (or multiple!) sides of a health care controversy within the medical field. You will be assessed for your ability to both develop an argument and provide a balanced treatment of a complex issue.

Required course book

Otto, Mary. 2017. *Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America.*

The additional readings on the syllabus are required, and will be available on Canvas

SCHEDULE

PART 1: Countervailing Powers

January 7 + 9

Professional Jurisdiction

Light. "Healthcare Professions, Markets & Countervailing Powers."

Timmermans & Oh. "The Continued Social Transformation of the Medical Profession."

Principals and Agents: The Structure of Business (Selection)

Brannon. "Professionalization and Work Intensification: Nursing in the Cost Containment Era."

*** This week's assignment will be due on Thursday at 9AM!**

January 14 + 16

Threats to Professional Autonomy

Hamblin. "Healthcare, Meet Capitalism." *The Atlantic*

Gunderman. "Should Doctors Work for Hospitals?" *The Atlantic*

"Howard v. University of Medicine and Dentistry," *Bioethics and Public Health Law*

Goodrick & Reay. "Constellations of Institutional Logics." *Work & Occupations*.

PART 2: The Politics of Healthcare Delivery

January 21 + 23

Institutional Shifts and their Consequences

Listen to: "Allowing for Chemotherapy in Hospice." *Geripal*

Selection from *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*

Five-State Study of ACA Marketplace Competition

Weber and Miller. "A Hospital Crisis is Killing Rural Communities." Georgia Health News

January 28 + 30

Delivery Models

Listen to: "The Next Steps on Federal Reform." *State of Reform*

Gawande. "Health Care's Price Conundrum." *The New Yorker*

Fischer. "An Unthinkably Modern Miracle." *The Morning News*

"Transforming Healthcare to a Value-Based Payment System." *The Washington Post*

Kenen. "New York Borrows a Health Care Idea from Africa." *Politico*

Class Guest (Jan 28th): Stella Safo, MD, Chief Clinical Transformation Officer, Premier Inc.

PART 3: The Politics of Treatment

February 4 + 6

Medicalization

Barker. "The Social Construction of Illness."

Martin and Montagne. "Nothing Protects Black Women From Dying in Pregnancy and Childbirth." *ProPublica*

Ramey. "The Influence of Early School Punishment and Therapy/Medication on Social Control Experiences During Young Adulthood." *Criminology*

Class Guest (Feb 6th): Erin Kane, MD. Emergency Physician & Assistant Professor, George Washington School of Medicine.

February 11 + 13

The Politics of Attention

King. *Pink Ribbons, Inc.: Breast Cancer and the Politics of Philanthropy*, Introduction
Otto. *Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America*, 93-259

PART 4: Agency and Control in Health Care

February 18 + 20

Personal Agency and Control I

Hunter et al. "Constructions of Patient Agency in Health Care Settings." *Discourse, Context and Media*

Gann. "Fighting for My Son With Cystic Fibrosis." *New York Magazine*

McCoy. "Disabled, Or Just Desperate?" *The Washington Post*

Disability legal case readings, *Bioethics and Public Health Law*

February 25 + 27

Personal Agency and Control II

Engber. "The Strange Case of Anna Stubblefield." *New York Times*

Rosenbaum. "Angel of Death: The Trial of the Suicide Doctor." *Vanity Fair*

March 3 + 5

Death, Dying and the End of Life

Mooallem. "One Man's Quest to Change the Way We Die." *New York Times Magazine*

Aviv. "What Does It Mean to Die?" *The New Yorker*

End of Life legal readings, *Bioethics and Public Health Law*

Class Guest (March 3): Kaija-Leena Romero, MD. Chief Medical Officer, Hospice by the Bay, Emergency Medicine & Palliative Care, Kaiser San Francisco & UCSF

March 5: Last day to submit weekly assignments for partial credit

March 7

Health Care Controversy Paper Due

March 10

REVIEW

March 17

FINAL EXAM