

**PUBHLT 340**  
**Introduction to Health Policy and Management**  
**Course Meeting Days and Times: Monday/Wednesday 3-4:15pm**  
**Class Location: 157 Benedum Hall**  
**Credit Hours 3**  
**Fall 2024**

**Logistics/Contact Information:**

Instructor: Miranda Yaver, PhD  
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 Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4 or by appointment

**Course Rationale**

This course, PUBHLT 340, Introduction to Health Policy & Management, is the Department of Health Policy & Management's (HPM) contribution to the BSPH Core Curriculum. It is required for all BSPH students.

**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to health policy and management in the United States, which provides a framework for understanding the social, political, legal, and economic dimensions of the U.S. health and public health systems. It introduces the U.S. policymaking and legal system, offers brief comparisons to health policies in certain other countries, provides scaffolding knowledge about the organization and economics of the health care system in the U.S., and highlights historical and contemporary issues in health policy.

**BSPH Competencies**

Pitt Public Health is accredited by [the Council on Education in Public Health \(CEPH\)](#) as a school authorized to offer the Bachelor of Public Health (BSPH) degree. Part of that accreditation requires us to provide instruction in a variety of [core public health competencies](#) to all our students. CEPH has identified a variety of competencies, which it expects all BSPH graduates to demonstrate.

This course most directly addresses and assesses CEPH competency:

Competency	Assessment
D.10 Foundational Domains: basic concepts of legal, ethical, economic, and regulatory dimensions of health care and public health policy and the roles, influences and responsibilities of the different agencies and branches of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams, Policy Analysis and Presentation</li> </ul>

This course partially addresses CEPH competencies:

Competency
D.10 Foundational Domains: the history and philosophy of public health as well as its core values,

concepts, and functions across the globe and in society
D.10 Foundational Domains: the concepts of population health, and the basic processes, approaches and interventions that identify and address the major health-related needs and concerns of populations
D.10 Foundational Domains: the socioeconomic, behavioral, biological, environmental, and other factors that impact human health and contribute to health disparities
D.10 Foundational Domains: the fundamental characteristics and organizational structures of the US health system as well as the differences between systems in other countries
D.10 Foundational Domains: basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing and the use of mass media and electronic technology

### Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe how the US health care system is structured, including access, financing, and quality of care.
2. Describe the policymaking process in the US and the role of law and the legal system when developing and implementing health policy.
3. Identify the basic legal concepts that underlie the health care and public health systems, including the legal rights and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the health care system and the extensive and complex role played by federal and state law in the protection of the public's health.
4. Describe the federal health insurance programs and their connection to access to health care, the uninsured, and health reform.
5. Identify current and historical key policy issues.
6. Evaluate health care policies from various stakeholder views and through various frameworks (legal, economic, political, social).
7. Learn how to write and communicate a concise and effective policy analysis.

### REQUIRED Textbook

In this course, we will be using the textbook, *Essentials of Health Policy and Law, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. **You do not need to purchase the Advantage Access.**

Please see the detailed course schedule required readings, noting that the assigned textbook chapters are not sequential. We will additionally be drawing from the Kaiser Family Foundation's Health Policy 101 free online textbook: <https://www.kff.org/health-policy-101/>  
Additional readings will be available on Canvas. These readings may be supplemented and/or changed as deemed appropriate.

### Canvas Instructions

This course utilizes Canvas. Students are expected to regularly utilize Canvas for readings and information regarding assignments. Canvas announcements will be used to provide any updates to readings and assignments so be sure to set your Canvas settings accordingly. This website provides useful information regarding using Canvas: <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/tkb-p/student>

### Class Expectations/Behavior and Ground Rules

Each student is expected to read the assigned materials and be prepared to discuss them in class. Your active participation in the course is required in the form of in class exercises, group discussions and debates, exams, attendance at lectures, viewing any recorded material in advance, and presentations.

In order to provide an effective learning environment, *please use computers/iPads for class purposes only and turn off cellphones prior to class*. If you cannot turn your phone off, please set it to vibrate rather than ring.

**Student Performance Evaluation**

Grades for the course will follow the letter format:

93 – 100%	A	73 – 76%	C
90 – 92%	A-	70 – 72%	C-
87 – 89%	B+	68 – 69%	D+
83 – 86%	B	63 – 67%	D
80 – 82%	B-	60 – 62%	D-
77 – 79%	C+	< 60%	F

**Assignments and Descriptions**

Course grades are determined as follows, based on a maximum possible 100 points:

- 1. Two exams** – midterm worth 15 points, final exam worth 20 points. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and a limited number of short answer questions drawn from course readings and lectures. *Please see the course schedule for exam dates. The second exam will occur during the final exam period.*
- 2. Discussion Boards** (10 points possible, 2 for each) – Discussion boards will be based on materials presented both in class and through readings/videos. For discussion board assignments, students are expected to post by 11:59pm on the Friday corresponding to the week the discussion is listed. Students are then to respond to at least 2 peer’s posts by 11:59pm on the following Sunday. *Initial posts must be a minimum of 250 words. Peer responses must be a minimum of 100 words. Please see the course schedule for dates.*
- 3. Short Paper** (10 points possible) – Write a 4-page paper analyzing a health law or policy problem that you believe a 2024 campaign (presidential, House, Senate, or state) should be aware of.
- 4. Health Policy Analysis and Group Presentation** (35 points possible) – Students will be divided into small groups (approximately 4 per group) to collectively write a health policy analysis and present their analysis to the class. An attempt will be made to assign groups with students with similar interests. Each group will select a health policy topic of their choice that must be approved by the professor. *There will be no overlap of topics. Potential topics include but are not limited to: health reform, health care costs and reimbursement, administrative burden in health, access to health care/the uninsured, safety and quality of health care services, health equity, mental and behavioral health, preparedness and infectious disease, global health, injury prevention, reproductive health, and chronic disease. See instructions and grading rubrics on Canvas.*

Each group will be assigned a presentation date later in the semester. Please see the course schedule for the presentation dates. The written policy analysis will be due on the date of your presentation. Chapter 14 of the textbook provides information about how to write a policy analysis, and we will spend time in class discussing how to write one and communicate your findings. For additional information on writing a policy analysis, see *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving* by Eugene Bardach and Eric Patashnik. Point breakdown for this assignment is below. *Please see the course schedule for due dates.*

5 points: topic
10 points: outline and annotated bibliography
10 points: presentation
10 points: written policy analysis

**4. Attendance and Participation** (10 points possible) – This grade is based on a student’s behavior in the classroom, including attendance, class participation, and the appropriate use of technology.

Students are expected to arrive on time and attend every class. Absences may be excused at the professor’s discretion with advance notice. Students who are absent without providing advance notice may have points deducted from their professionalism grade. In addition to attending class and using technology appropriately, students should actively participate in class discussions, debates, polls, and group exercises in a respectful and constructive manner.

**Assignment Submission/Late Work Policy**

All students are expected to complete all assignments and exams on time. Late assignments may be accepted at the instructor’s sole discretion due to extenuating circumstances such as unexpected health or personal emergencies. The student must request an extension prior to the due date. Extensions requested after the deadline will not be granted. For late assignments that were not granted an extension by the instructor, a one-third letter grade reduction will be applied per day late.

**Statement on Classroom Recording**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term.

**Academic Integrity Statement**

All students are expected to adhere to the school’s standards of academic honesty. Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Pitt Public Health’s policy on academic integrity, which is based on the University policy, is available online in the Pitt Public Health Academic Handbook [www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements). The policy includes obligations for faculty and students, procedures for adjudicating violations, and other critical information. Please take the time to read this policy.

**Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting and Title IX Statement**

If you are experiencing sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and stalking, please report it to me and I will connect you to University resources to support you.

University faculty and staff members are required to report all instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. When a report is made, individuals can expect to be contacted by the Title IX Office with information about support resources and options related to safety, accommodations, process, and policy. I encourage you to use the services and resources that may be most helpful to you.

As your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me. You can also report directly to Office of Civil Rights and Title IX: 412-648-7860 (M-F; 8:30am-5:00pm) or via the Pitt Concern Connection at: [Make A Report](#)

An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as a relevant part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University's Title IX office.

If you wish to make a confidential report, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

- The University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 (8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (community resource): 1-866-363-7273 (24/7)

If you have an immediate safety concern, please contact Pitt Police, 412-624-2121

Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated at the University of Pittsburgh.

For additional information, please visit the [full syllabus statement](#) on the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage.

*From the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

### **Diversity Statement**

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. Pitt Public Health is committed to creating and fostering inclusive learning environments that value human dignity and equity and promote social justice. Every member of our community is expected to be respectful of the individual perspectives, experiences, behaviors, worldviews, and backgrounds of others. While intellectual disagreement may be constructive, no derogatory statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will be permitted.

If you feel uncomfortable or would like to discuss a situation, please contact any of the following:

- the course director or course instructor;
- the [Pitt Public Health Associate Dean responsible for diversity and inclusion](#);
- the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 412-648-7860 or <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/report-form> (anonymous reporting form)

### **Gender Inclusive Language Statement**

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students,

faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

### **Content Warning and Class Climate Statement**

Our course readings and classroom discussions may focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach me ahead of time if you would like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with me and/or seek help from the counseling center.

### **Statement on Scholarly Discourse**

In this course we will be discussing very complex issues of which all of us have strong feelings and, in most cases, unfounded attitudes. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of ad hominem arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the university, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

### **Campus Resources**

The University Counseling Center is here for you: call 412-648-7930 and visit their website.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, call someone immediately, day or night:

- University Counseling Center (UCC): 412 648-7930
- University Counseling Center Mental Health Crisis Response: 412-648-7930 x1
- Resolve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226 (888-7-YOU-CAN)

If the situation is life threatening, call the Police:

- On-campus: Pitt Police: 412-624 -2121
- Off-campus: 911

**Voter Registration Resource:** This is an election year. The last day to register before the November election is October 21. Register to vote here:

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>

Or go to <https://iwillvote.com/>

## SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

*I reserve the right to change the syllabus as needed to improve your learning experience. If I change the syllabus, I will explain the rationale and the changes at least one week in advance.*

Date	Topic	Required Readings	In Class Activity and Assignments Due
August 26	Course Overview Introduction to US Health Policy	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 1  The Politics of Health Care and the 2024 Election: <a href="https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-the-politics-of-health-care-and-the-2024-election.pdf">https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-the-politics-of-health-care-and-the-2024-election.pdf</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> </ul>
August 28	Policy and the Policymaking Process	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit top 5 health policy topics for group project</li> </ul>
September 2	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY		
September 4	Law and the Legal System	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 3  “ <i>Loper Bright</i> ” and the Death of Deference in the Administration of Health Policy,” by Wendy Parmet, <i>Health Affairs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board #1</li> </ul>
September 9	Characteristics and Structure of the US Health Care System: Financing and Spending	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 4 (pp. 49-54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of health policy analysis and group presentation assignment</li> <li>• Health policy analysis project groups assigned</li> </ul>
September 11	Characteristics and Structure of the US Healthcare System: Access to Care and Healthcare Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Essentials</i>, chapter 4 (p. 54-72)</li> <li>• “Mirror Mirror 2024: A Portrait of the Failing U.S. Health System.” Commonwealth Fund Report.</li> </ul>	
September 16	Health Communications and Policy Analysis, part 1	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In class meeting with health policy analysis group</li> </ul>
September 18	Characteristics and Structure of the US Healthcare System: Comparing the US	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 4 (pp. 72-79)  “The Best Health Care System in the World: Which One Would You Pick?” by Aaron Carroll and Austin Frakt, <i>New</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Frontline documentary <i>Health Care: America vs. the</i></li> </ul>

Date	Topic	Required Readings	In Class Activity and Assignments Due
	System to Other Countries	<i>York Times</i>	<i>World</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class debate</li> </ul>
September 23	Public Health Institutions and Systems	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 5 “The Reagan Administration’s unbelievable response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic,” by German Lopez, <i>Vox</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board #2</li> </ul>
September 25	Individual Rights in Health Care and Public Health	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health policy analysis group project topic due</li> </ul>
September 30	Administrative Burden in Health Care	“States Can Reduce Medicaid’s Administrative Burdens to Advance Racial and Health Equity.” CBPP Report. “How Administrative Burdens Can Harm Health.” <a href="https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20200904.405159/full/">https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20200904.405159/full/</a>	
October 2	Structural and Social Drivers of Health and the Role of Law and Policy in Optimizing Health	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board #3</li> </ul>
October 7	Structural Racism in the US Health Care System	Race, Inequality, and Health: <a href="https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-race-inequality-and-health.pdf">https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-race-inequality-and-health.pdf</a>	Class Debate: Black Maternal Mortality: Racism or Race?
October 9	Midterm Exam		
October 14	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK		
October 16	Understanding Health Insurance	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 8 The Regulation of Private Health Insurance: <a href="https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-the-regulation-of-private-health-insurance.pdf">https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-the-regulation-of-private-health-insurance.pdf</a>	
October 21	Public Health Emergency Preparedness	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 13 “Why the End of the Public Health Emergency Really Matters.” <a href="https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/why-end-public-health-emergency-really-matters">https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/why-end-public-health-emergency-really-matters</a>	
October 23	Reproductive Health Policy	Health Policy Issues in Women’s Health: <a href="https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-health-policy-issues-in-womens-health.pdf">https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-health-policy-issues-in-womens-health.pdf</a> “Despite Bans, Number of Abortions in the United States Increased in 2023.” Guttmacher Institute Report. <a href="https://www.guttmacher.org/2024/03/despite-bans-number-">https://www.guttmacher.org/2024/03/despite-bans-number-</a>	Discussion Board #4



Date	Topic	Required Readings	In Class Activity and Assignments Due
		<a href="#">abortions-united-states-increased-2023</a>	
October 28	Health Economics in the Health Policy Context	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 9	
October 30	Government Health Insurance Programs: Medicaid and CHIP	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 10 (p. 191-215) “Is Medicaid Too Big To... Block Grant?” <a href="https://www.kff.org/from-drew-altman/is-medicaid-too-big-to-block-grant/">https://www.kff.org/from-drew-altman/is-medicaid-too-big-to-block-grant/</a>	Health policy analysis project outline and annotated bibliography due
November 4	Government Health Insurance Programs: Medicare	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 10 (p. 216-236) Medicare Advantage: Enrollment Update and Key Trends: <a href="https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-in-2024-enrollment-update-and-key-trends/">https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-in-2024-enrollment-update-and-key-trends/</a>	
November 6	Election debrief		
November 11	Pharmaceutical Policy	“Prescription Drug Spending in the U.S. Health Care System: An Actuarial Perspective.” American Academy of Actuaries Issue Brief. “The Absurdly High Cost of Insulin, Explained.” <a href="https://www.vox.com/2019/4/3/18293950/why-is-insulin-so-expensive">https://www.vox.com/2019/4/3/18293950/why-is-insulin-so-expensive</a> “Explaining the Prescription Drug Provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act.” Kaiser Family Foundation <a href="https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/explaining-the-prescription-drug-provisions-in-the-inflation-reduction-act/">https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/explaining-the-prescription-drug-provisions-in-the-inflation-reduction-act/</a>	• Discussion Board #5
November 13	Mental Health	“The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Abuse.” <a href="https://www.kff.org/mental-health/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/">https://www.kff.org/mental-health/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/</a> “Therapy Is Health Care. So Why Won’t Your Insurance Pay for It?” <a href="https://www.vox.com/2023/8/4/23815827/mental-health-therapy-services-health-insurance">https://www.vox.com/2023/8/4/23815827/mental-health-therapy-services-health-insurance</a> “State Mental Health Parity Reports.” <a href="https://www.paritytrack.org/reports/">https://www.paritytrack.org/reports/</a>	
November 18	The History and Future of Health Reform in the United States	<i>Essentials</i> , chapter 11 <a href="https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-congress-and-the-executive-branch-and-health-policy.pdf">https://files.kff.org/attachment/health-policy-101-congress-and-the-executive-branch-and-health-policy.pdf</a> “What the Election Means for Federal Health Care Legislation.” <a href="https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/election-">https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/election-</a>	

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Required Readings</b>	<b>In Class Activity and Assignments Due</b>
		<a href="#">means-federal-health-care-legislation</a>	
November 20	Student Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written policy analysis due</li> </ul>
November 25/27	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK		
December 2	Student Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written policy analysis due</li> </ul>
December 4	Student Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written policy analysis due</li> </ul>
December 9	Student Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written policy analysis due</li> </ul>