

**UNITED STATES POLITICS: CURRENT PROBLEMS AND CONTROVERSIES—  
HEALTH CARE POLICY  
POLS 111, Fall 2009**

**Classroom: Behavioral Sciences Building, Room 385  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-4:45**

**Instructor:** Jamie F. Chriqui, Ph.D., M.H.S.

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**Course Description:** Are you interested in learning more about how health care policies are made in the U.S.? How do certain health care issues come to the attention of policy makers while others do not? What percentage of the federal budget is devoted to health care-related issues? Why is health care reform so difficult to enact? What types of policies are adopted by federal and state governments to address issues like childhood obesity, tobacco control, and cancer control and what factors are associated with such policies being adopted or not? What role do advocacy and interest groups play in affecting the health care policy agenda? This course will discuss all of these issues and more. Each week, we will discuss a different aspect of the policy making process in the U.S., drawing from specific examples from health care policy making.

**Prerequisites:** None; just an interest in public policy making, particularly health care policy making.

**GRADING SCALE**

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = <60

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

The five course requirements and their importance for your final grade are as follows:

- |                                       |                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A. Class Participation and Attendance | 10%                                                                                                 |
| B. Mid-Term Exam                      | 25% (Required to post mid-term grades b/w 10/20-10/23 per new UIC policy for level 100/200 courses) |
| C. Application Essay Assignment       | 25%                                                                                                 |
| D. Application Essay Presentation     | 15%                                                                                                 |
| E. Final Exam                         | 25%                                                                                                 |

## Class Participation

Classes are conducted using a combination of lectures and discussions. In-class participation is important to the learning process; accordingly, you will be graded on it. Since the quality of your comments and observations will be evaluated, it is essential that you read the assigned materials prior to class meetings. Regular attendance is expected. Students are responsible for all information presented in class. Your class participation grade will be based on a combination of your attendance and constructive participation in the course.

## Application Essay and Class Presentation

To encourage the learning process and active participation, each student will prepare a typed two to three-page (see written assignment instructions below) application essay that will be **due to the instructor by no later than 3:30 p.m. on October 27, 2009**. **All late submissions will be marked down and will be marked down by one full letter grade for each day that it is late.**

The application essay should follow the format of the application discussions from the course whereby you will briefly review at least one theory/policy approach/aspect of policy making covered during the course and then apply the reading(s) to a current health care policy issue using an article from a major newspaper such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or the *Chicago Tribune*. (**Note: The application essay must be based on readings from the course combined with the article on a health care policy topic that you select from a major newspaper.**) Citation to both the theoretical literature and the source(s) of information on the current policy issue are to be included either as footnotes or endnotes. An example of an application essay might be: *Incremental Decision Making and Health Care Reform*. This example might draw from one or more of the readings related to policy decision making.

In addition, each student will give a brief oral presentation on their application essay to the class on an assigned date ranging from October 27-November 5. The amount of time allotted for the presentation as well as details on the presentation format will be provided by the instructor in early-mid October. In order to be fair to all students, all students not adhering to the required time allotment will be downgraded given the limited amount of time available for the presentations and the size of the student enrollment. The presentation order will be randomly chosen by the instructor. All students will email a copy of the article upon which their application essay was based at least 2 days prior to their scheduled presentation date via the course Blackboard site.

## Exams

The Mid-term will be an in-class exam in essay and term identification/definition format. The final exam will be a written, take-home exam and will include term identification as well as a choice of short readings to which you will be asked to apply readings from the course and to answer a series of questions. Both exams will require you to address and specifically cite to themes, theories, and concepts discussed in the readings, lectures, and class. A list of possible terms will be available on the BlackBoard site before the mid-term and before the final exam.

## Take-Home Written Assignment Guidelines

The Presentation Assignment and the Final Exam are to be written at-home, typed, using 1-inch margins on all sides. (Please be sure to adjust your word processing software so that you are conforming to these margins.) All written submissions should use 11-point Times New Roman or Garamond font and should be double-spaced. The length of each written assignment will vary based on the assignment (see below). Written submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be downgraded.

Because of the import of written communication in this course, the Political Science department, and the public policy field in general, your written assignments will not only be graded for their content, theoretical application, and integration of pertinent public policy topics, but also for their organization, clarity, appropriate citation to the literature/facts, and analytical rigor. Students are required to use the American Psychological Association, MLA, or Chicago Style formats for in-text citations, references, and other formatting matters. Appropriate transitions, headings and sub-headings, and other methods of organizing and presenting your written assignments are expected. I strongly encourage you to consult the UIC Writing Center if you have any concerns or would like assistance with preparing your written assignments: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/engl/writing/>.

### **University of Illinois at Chicago Policy on Academic Integrity**

As an academic community, the University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to providing an environment in which research, learning, and scholarship can flourish and in which all endeavors are guided by academic and professional integrity. All members of the campus community—students, staff, faculty, administrators—share the responsibility of insuring that these standards are upheld so that such an environment exists. Instances of academic misconduct by students, and as defined herein, shall be handled pursuant to the *Student Disciplinary Policy* which is available online [http://www.vcsa.uic.edu/NR/rdonlyres/C10B0B31-31AD-4386-9A7A-17CA7A579C2D/962/Student\\_Discipline\\_Book.pdf](http://www.vcsa.uic.edu/NR/rdonlyres/C10B0B31-31AD-4386-9A7A-17CA7A579C2D/962/Student_Discipline_Book.pdf).

### **At a minimum, the standards for this course include:**

1. Taking the mid-term exam on your own, without assistance of other people, books, class notes, or any other outside help.
2. Taking the mid-term exam on the scheduled day, following the instructions given by your professor, and not using unauthorized notes or receiving assistance from others.
3. Turning in timely, complete, thorough, and factually accurate application essays that provide appropriate citations to the literature/cited sources and using the prescribed format.
4. Turning in your completed final examination on time and preparing your examination completely on your own without assistance from others.
5. Selecting your own topic for your application essay, doing your own research, conducting your analysis, writing up the essay in your own words, proofreading, and properly citing the work of other researchers (e. g. enclosing all direct quotes in quotation marks, indicating the source of all quotes and paraphrases, including a notes section and bibliography for any source used in your papers).
6. Preparing your in-class presentation on your own, and following the prescribed guidelines for the presentation including adhering to the required time allotment.

### **Class Decorum**

Out of respect for your instructor and your classmates, cell phones, pagers, mp3 players and similar electronic devices must be turned off before entering class. While laptop computers may be used for notetaking, students will be asked to discontinue such use if they become disruptive for other students or if the student is found doing something other than taking notes for the course.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS**

1. Anderson, James. 2006. Public Policymaking 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Houghton-Mifflin.
2. Kingdon, John. 2003. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. N.Y.: Longman.

### **Blackboard**

There is an active POLS 111 Blackboard course that will provide most of the course handouts, external links, additional readings and other items noted on the syllabus. Items on the syllabus with a (BB) denote Blackboard items. Check the Course Documents and External Links section regularly. Students are expected

to have read and printed out/downloaded all Blackboard readings prior to the given class session in which they will be discussed. Hard copies of Blackboard readings will not be provided by the instructor.

### Major Newspapers

Given that this is a course in **current health care policy topics and issues**, all students are **highly encouraged** to regularly read the on-line editions of major newspapers such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal* or weekly publications that keeps abreast of Capitol Hill (e.g. <http://nationaljournal.com/> and *Congressional Quarterly* ([www.cq.com/](http://www.cq.com/))). These sources will form the basis for identifying an article for your application essay. Furthermore, I will routinely supplement the syllabus readings with current articles from these sources. I encourage you to subscribe to the daily content alerts for either the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>Course Overview and Introductions</b>	
August 25, 2009:	Instructor/student introductions; Introduction to the Course; Review Syllabus Discussion of what is public policy making—examples
August 27, 2009:	What is public policymaking and levels of policymaking in the U.S. <b>BB-Course Documents 1: What is public policy?</b>
<b>The Public Policy Making Context</b>	
September 1, 2009:	Anderson, Chapter 1
September 3, 2009:	Stages of the Policy Process: Case study on tobacco control policy making in the U.S. <b>BB-External Link 1-Federal Regulation of Tobacco (Fact Sheet 1 Overview in both the Federal Regulation and Impact on State/Local sections)</b>
<b>The Policy Makers and their Environment</b>	
September 8, 2009:	<i>Policy Environment and Official Policy Makers (Government officials)</i> Anderson, Chapter 2, pp. 46-57; Kingdon, Chapter 2
September 10, 2009:	Case studies from obesity policy and health care reform <b>BB-External Link 2-Public Policy That Makes Test Subjects of Us All</b> <b>BB-External Link 3-The Politics of Obesity</b> <b>BB-External Link 4-Taking the Hill</b>
September 15, 2009:	<i>Nongovernmental Participants (interest groups, political parties, others)</i> Anderson, Chapter 2, pp. 57-73; Kingdon, Chapter 3
September 17, 2009:	Case studies from role of nongovernmental participants in cancer control, health care reform, and obesity policy making <b>BB-Course Documents 2: Advocates—Forging a Path to 2015</b> <b>BB-Course Documents 3: Industry Beverage Tax Ad</b> <b>BB-External Link 5: Alliances in Health Care Debate Splinter</b>
<b>Policy Formation</b>	
September 22, 2009:	<i>Problem Definition</i> Anderson, Chapter 3, pp. 80-86; Kingdon, Chapter 5 (pp. 90-104, 109-115)
September 25, 2009:	Problem Definition continued Case studies from health care reform and obesity policy <b>BB-Course Documents 4: The Cost of Failure (Executive Summary ONLY required)</b> <b>BB-External Links 6: New York City’s War on Fat</b>
September 29, 2009:	<i>Agenda Setting and Politics</i> Anderson, Chapter 3, pp. 86-103; Kingdon, Chapter 7, (pp. 145-164) <b>BB-Course Documents 5: Derivation of the Public Policy Agenda</b>

October 1, 2009:	<i>Policy Formulation</i> Anderson, Chapter 3, pp. 103-116; Kingdon, Chapter 6, (pp. 116-144)
October 6, 2009:	No class or BSB office hours—class presentation preparation
October 8, 2009:	Case Studies on science and politics and obesity policy making <b>BB External Links 7 and 8: Obama Aims.... and Political Science</b> <b>BB External Link 9: Local Wellness Policies Executive Summary</b> <b>BB External Link 10: Ky. Schools Healthy Example</b>
October 13, 2009	<b>In-class Mid-Term Examination</b>
<b>Policy Adoption and Decision Making Theories</b>	
October 15, 2009	Anderson, Chapter 4, pp. 121-150; Kingdon, Chapter 4, pp. 83-89
October 20, 2009:	Policy decision making application—health care reform examples <b>BB External Link 10: The Surprising Optimist</b> <b>BB External Link 11: Reform, Regulation, and Research</b>
<b>Budgeting and Public Policy</b>	
October 22, 2009:	Anderson, Chapter 5, pp. 162-194, Kingdon, Chapter 5, pp. 105-109 <b>BB External Link 12: Budget 101</b>
<b>Class Presentations</b>	
October 27, 2009:	<b>Class presentation assignment turned in at the start of class (due by 3:30 p.m. today; anything turned in after this time will be considered late)</b> Student Presentations -1
October 29, 2009:	Student Presentations -2
November 3, 2009:	Student Presentations -3
November 5, 2009:	Student Presentations -4
November 10, 2009:	No class or BSB office hours
<b>Policy Implementation and the Executive Branch of Government</b>	
November 12, 2009:	Anderson, Chapter 6, pp. 200-227
November 17, 2009:	Federal health care agencies and obesity policy—USDA example  Federal rule making—tobacco example from the Food & Drug Administration <b>BB-External Link: 1-Federal Regulation of Tobacco (Fact Sheet 1 Overview in the Federal Regulation section)</b>
<b>Policy Impact, Evaluation, and Termination</b>	
November 19, 2009:	Anderson, Chapter 7, pp. 255-265, 270-279, 294-286
November 24, 2009:	GAO: The Audit Arm of Congress <b>BB External Link 13: General Accounting Office Overview (also briefly review reports re: Department of Health &amp; Human Services under Reports by Agency: <a href="http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/agency.php">http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/agency.php</a>)</b>  Terminating Public Programs: <b>BB External Link 14: Terminating Public Programs</b>
November 26, 2009:	No class Thanksgiving Holiday
<b>Final Examination</b>	
December 1, 2009:	<b>Take-Home Final Examination distributed in class</b>
December 3, 2009:	At home work on Final Examination
December 8, 2009:	<b>Take-Home Final Examination E-mailed by 3:30 pm today</b> <b>(<a href="mailto:jchriqui@uic.edu">jchriqui@uic.edu</a>)</b>