

## **HEALTH POLICY SEMINAR**

**Yeshiva University**

**Instructor:** Tevi D. Troy, Ph.D.

**Wednesday 6:45-9:15pm**

**Classroom:** Belfer Hall 511

**Email Address:** [tevitroy@gmail.com](mailto:tevitroy@gmail.com)/[tevi.troy@yu.edu](mailto:tevi.troy@yu.edu)

**Cell:** 202-203-9644

**Office Hours:** By appointment, best before class on Wednesdays or on Thursday mornings (note: I live in Maryland and commute to YU)

**Office:** Belfer Hall 501.5

### **Course Description**

This is an introductory course to health policy in the United States. The course will examine how policy is made, implemented, and reformed, and will examine the role government plays in various aspects of health policy, in areas like innovation, protecting the public health, and defense against bioterrorism. Students will engage in the discussion, analysis, and critique of various policy options for addressing challenging health care problems and will gain working experience by completing activities and assignments that mirror real-life situations in the public policy realm.

The course will cover both general health policy areas and more in-depth areas. Classes will consist of discussions on selected readings, discussions with the instructor and guest and various course assignments (see below).

### **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to 1) attend and participate in class; 2) complete required readings prior to class and submit questions for discussion at the beginning of class; and 3) complete all course assignments.

### **Course Assignments**

The following assignments serve to measure students' understanding of key concepts and arguments, and to provide opportunities to apply learning in interactive, realistic ways throughout the duration of the course. Further details for each assignment will be distributed during class.

#### *Out of class*

***Opinion article:*** Students will analyze a current health policy issue relating to the business of healthcare and will write a 700-800 word opinion article on the issue, of sufficiently high quality that it could be published on a newspaper op-ed page. This op-ed should be in the format of a standard op-ed, with your bio line in italics at the bottom of your article. [**Due: October 25<sup>th</sup>**]

***Infographic:*** Students will choose a current health policy issue that is in the news and create an infographic that presents the information to the intended audience in a visual way. The infographic should take up less than one page and clearly display relevant information to the target audience. Students will be graded on both substance and creativity [**Due: December 6<sup>th</sup>**]

**Take home exam:** At the end of the course, students will complete a take home exam that will cover materials discussed in the assigned readings and in class.

**Readings:** The weekly readings will all be relevant to the weekly seminar topic and are all available online. In addition, two books that would be useful to read are:

1. The Heart of Power: Health and Politics in the Oval Office

By David Blumenthal and James Morone

2. The Social Transformation of American Medicine: The rise of a sovereign profession and the making of a vast industry

By Paul Starr

**In class:**

**Policy Defense:** At the beginning of each class, one student will defend a “policy misstep” relevant to that day’s lecture. They should address why some may consider it a misstep and what perspectives are missing that should be included for a fuller understanding of the situation. Students should prepare a thorough response (around 5 minutes) and be prepared to answer questions from both their peers and the instructor.

**Mock FDA Approval:** The class will act as the FDA, debating whether they should approve a new drug to be on the market. Students will have to consider the clinical studies of the drug as well as take into consideration the potential harms that this drug may have. Students must come to a consensus by the end of class.

**In Class Debate:** Students will be placed into groups and given a side of a current bioethical issue that they must defend and refute claims from the other side. They must also be prepared to answer questions from their peers and the instructor.

**Mock Emergency Response Plan:** Students will be placed into groups and given a fact sheet with information regarding a bioterrorism scenario. Students will then develop an emergency response plan, coordinating between different agencies and resources. They will present their plan at the end of class.

**Attendance/Participation:** Students will be expected to come to class on time, and to have read the assignments and be ready to discuss. ***Students need to hand in two written discussion questions based on the reading at the beginning of each class.***

**Grading**

Course Assignment	% of Grade
In Class Activities	15%
Infographic	15%
Opinion article	15%

Attendance/Participation	15%
Policy Defense	10%
Take home exam	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Class Policies**

Class participants should avoid all distracting and/or disrespectful behavior such as using electronic communication devices in class (smartphones, tablets, etc.), chewing gum, arriving late or leaving early, or any other activity that would hinder other students' ability to participate.

All Yeshiva University rules and regulations apply to students enrolled in this class, including policies on [academic integrity](#). Plagiarism can result in a failure of the assignment or the entire class.

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should make an appointment with the [Office of Disability Services \(akelsen@yu.edu\)](#) during the beginning of the semester. The office is located in 500 West 185<sup>th</sup> Street, Furst Hall Suite 412. Once you have been approved for accommodations, please submit your accommodation letter and discuss any specifics with me to ensure the successful implementation of your accommodations.

### **Class Schedule**

## **Section 1: Introduction**

**August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- Student/instructor introductions
- Overview of course, including assignments and requirements
- What is policy and what is health policy?

Current Health Policy:

Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/02/02/fact-sheet-president-biden-reignites-cancer-moonshot-to-end-cancer-as-we-know-it/>

National Covid-19 Preparedness Plan

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/covidplan/>

Current State of Health Insurance

<https://www.kff.org/private-insurance/poll-finding/kff-survey-of-consumer-experiences-with-health-insurance/>

**9/6 – No Class – DO NOT SHOW UP**

## **Section 2: The Affordable Care Act**

**September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- History and current state of the ACA
- **Policy Defense:** Defend the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court’s decision to both uphold the Preventive Care Mandate while agreeing to not penalize the plaintiffs for their refusal to cover

History of Healthcare and the White house

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/health-care-in-america>

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-record/health-care>

Public Opinion of the Affordable Care Act

<https://www.kff.org/health-reform/poll-finding/5-charts-about-public-opinion-on-the-affordable-care-act-and-the-supreme-court/>

Affordable Care Act: 12 Years Later

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/03/18/fact-sheet-celebrating-affordable-care-act.html>

Current: ACA Preventive Care Mandate

<https://www.axios.com/2023/06/13/appeals-court-aca-preventive-care-access>

## Section 3: COVID-19 and Public Health Crises

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- How has the Covid-19 pandemic changed health policy in America?
- What responsibilities does government have in protecting public health?
- Who are the major players in protecting the public health and how do they work together?
- **Policy Defense:** Defend the decisions by some states to shut down schools during the pandemic or defend one of missteps made in the handling of the 1918 Flu.
- **Guest Speaker** – Joel Zinberg, MD - former White House adviser. Manhattan Institute Fellow

COVID-19 pandemic in the United States

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7451131/>

COVID-19 Timeline

<https://www.defense.gov/Spotlights/Coronavirus-DOD-Response/Timeline/>

Vaccine Tracker

<https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/>

Covid’s deadly trade-offs, by the numbers: How each state has fared in the pandemic

<https://www.politico.com/interactives/2021/covid-by-the-numbers-how-each-state-fared-on-our-pandemic-scorecard/>

COVID in 2023:

Hundreds of Thousands Have Lost Medicaid Coverage Since Pandemic Protections Expired

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/26/us/politics/medicaid-coverage-pandemic-loss.html>

A U.S. Experiment on Single-Payer Care Just Ended

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/15/upshot/covid-tests-experiment-over.html>

CDC on Health Strategy

<https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/strategy/default.htm>

CDC Chronology

<https://www.cdc.gov/museum/timeline/index.html>

What is Public Health? – 1-page primer on public health

<http://www.cdcfoundation.org/content/what-public-health>

The Threat of Pandemic Influenza

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK22148/>

TROY: ‘What World War Z’ can teach us about pandemics

<http://www.politico.com/story/2013/06/what-world-war-z-can-teach-us-about-pandemics-93497.html>

The Kind of Outbreak Our Scientist Knew Would Happen

<https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/news/kind-outbreak-our-scientists-knew-would-happen>

U.S. Mental Health Crisis

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/05/health/cnn-kff-mental-health-poll-wellness/index.html>

Most See Role for Government in Reducing Childhood Obesity: Pew Research

<http://www.people-press.org/2011/03/08/most-see-role-for-government-in-reducing-childhood-obesity/>

New Guidelines Underscore How Complicated Childhood Obesity Is for Patients and Providers

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/20/well/family/childhood-obesity-guidelines.html>

## **October 4<sup>th</sup> – Sukkot- No Class DO NOT SHOW UP**

### **Section 4: FDA and the Beginnings of a Scientific Approach to Policy**

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- The history and mission of FDA
- FDA’s scientific role in policymaking
- **Policy Defense:** Choose one of the policy crises from the Independent Policy Report reading.

FDA's Origin, by John P. Swann, Ph.D. FDA History Office – NOTE: Read all 5 parts

Intro:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/fdas-origin>

Part I:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-i-1906-food-and-drugs-act-and-its-enforcement>

Part II:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-ii-1938-food-drug-cosmetic-act>

Part III:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-iii-drugs-and-foods-under-1938-act-and-its-amendments>

Part IV:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-iv-regulating-cosmetics-devices-and-veterinary-medicine-after-1938>

Part V:

<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-v-consumer-protection-late-20th-century>

The growth of the FDA – A different perspective

[http://www.independent.org/pdf/policy\\_reports/2010-02-10-fda.pdf](http://www.independent.org/pdf/policy_reports/2010-02-10-fda.pdf)

## Section 5: How We Pay for Health Care

October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Overview of the economics of healthcare and the reimbursement system
- Discussion of Medicare (for seniors) and Medicaid (for low income)
- **Policy Defense:** Defend access to healthcare being connection to one's employment.

Health Care in the U.S.

<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/international-health-policy-center/countries/united-states>

Medicaid and State Budgets: Looking at the Facts

<http://ccf.georgetown.edu/ccf-resources/medicaid-and-state-budgets-looking-at-the-facts/>

Interactive Map of State Medicaid Expansion Decisions

<https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/status-of-state-medicaid-expansion-decisions-interactive-map/>

Drug Prices and Insurance

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/drug-prices-reach-new-high-in-the-millions-11671990099?page=2>

American Challenges with Health Care Costs

<https://www.kff.org/health-costs/issue-brief/americans-challenges-with-health-care-costs/>

Paying for mental health care leaves families in debt and isolated

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/10/19/1125446666/debt-mental-health-care-u-s-families>

## Section 6: The Business of Health Care

October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- **Policy Defense:** The article “Why are Americans paying more for healthcare?” outlines three possible reasons why healthcare prices are so high, defend one of these reasons.
- **Guest Speaker: Eric Wise, Alston Firm**

How does health spending in the U.S. compare to other countries?

[https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/health-spending-u-s-compare-countries/?\\_sft\\_category=spending#item-since-1980-gap-widened-u-s-health-spending-countries](https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/health-spending-u-s-compare-countries/?_sft_category=spending#item-since-1980-gap-widened-u-s-health-spending-countries)

Why are Americans paying more for healthcare?

<https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2023/01/why-are-americans-paying-more-for-healthcare>

Trends in health care spending

<https://www.ama-assn.org/about/research/trends-health-care-spending>

How Can We Reduce The Cost Of An Increasingly Expensive Healthcare System?

<https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2022/10/how-can-we-reduce-the-cost-of-an-increasingly-expensive-healthcare-system>

## Section 7: Importance of Healthcare Innovation and the Government's Role

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

- Overview of healthcare innovation: the process, its impact, and the players involved
- Review of the history of governmental involvement in healthcare innovation
- How does government promote or stifle innovation?
- What is the future of healthcare innovation?
- **Mock FDA approval**
- **Guest Speaker: Bob Goldberg, PhD. Center for Medicine in the Public Interest**
- **Policy Defense:** Defend why the U.S. should continue to support medical innovations despite the costs.

The End of Medical Miracles?

<http://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/the-end-of-medical-miracles/>

Can the U.S. Repair Its Health Care While Keeping Its Innovation Edge?

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/09/upshot/can-the-us-repair-its-health-care-while-keeping-its-innovation-edge.html>

John Lechleiter, The Biomedical Century

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203611404577042813309766648.html>

Biosimilars and BPCIA

<https://phrma.org/-/media/Project/PhRMA/PhRMA-Org/PhRMA-Refresh/Report-PDFs/A-C/Biosimilar-Market-Overview-Report-June-2023.pdf>

Medical Innovation: How the U.S. Can Retain Its Lead:

The FDA should approve drugs based on safety and leave efficacy testing for post-market studies

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203646004577215403399350874.html>

Alzheimer's drug Leqembi backed by FDA advisers for full approval

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/06/09/alzheimers-drug-leqembi-fda/>

## Section 8: Different roles different branches play in health policy

November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- How do the different branches of government affect health policy
- **Policy Defense:** Defend against the argument that the structure of the U.S. government causes inefficiency in implanting policy.

Congress' Role in Health Care

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40846.pdf>

Obama Urges Congressional Action on Health Care

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/09/AR2009090901771.html>

Supreme Court Rejects ACA Challenge; Law Remains Fully Intact

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/supreme-court-rejects-aca-challenge-law-remains-fully-intact>

Procompetitive health care reform options for a divided Congress

<https://www.brookings.edu/essay/procompetitive-health-care-reform-options-for-a-divided-congress/>

How abortion access has shifted in 11 months since Roe v. Wade was overturned

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/map-abortion-access-shifted-11-months-roe-wade/story?id=99566023>

FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Makes Progress in the Whole-of-Government Response to Long COVID

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/04/05/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-makes-progress-whole-government-response-long-covid.html>

## Section 9: Ethical Issues

November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- The impact policies have on ethical issues
- Discussion of key current ethical issues in health policy
- **Policy Defense:** Defend the ethics of the U.S.'s vaccine allocation policy.
- **In Class Debate**
- **Guest Speaker: Jay Lefkowitz, partner, Kirkland and Ellis; former senior White House adviser.**

Diana Schaub – Bioethics and the Constitution

<http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/bioethics-and-the-constitution-the-public-interest>

Biden administration removes Trump-era restrictions on fetal tissue research

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/biden-administration-removes-trump-era-restrictions-on-fetal-tissue-research/2021/04/16/71719006-9ed2-11eb-8005-bffc3a39f6d3\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/biden-administration-removes-trump-era-restrictions-on-fetal-tissue-research/2021/04/16/71719006-9ed2-11eb-8005-bffc3a39f6d3_story.html)

Errors in Converting Principles to Protocols: Where the Bioethics of U.S. Covid-19 Vaccine Allocation Went Wrong

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/hast.1416>

A Bioethics View of Brain Organoids

<https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2023/07/bioethics-brain-organoids>

Who can die? Canada Wrestles with euthanasia for the mentally ill.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64004329>

November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 – No Class, Thanksgiving **DO NOT SHOW UP**

## Section 10: International Health Diplomacy

November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- The role health plays in international diplomacy
- Review of main international health programs the US is involved in
- **Policy Defense:** Defend the CIA's actions in their effort to find Bin Laden against claims that it damaged U.S. health diplomacy.
- **Guest Speaker:** Stewart Simonson, World Health Organization; former senior HHS official

AIDS and the President – An Inside Account, by Jay Lefkowitz

<http://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/aids-and-the-president-an-inside-account/>

Covid and Health Diplomacy

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/politics/covid-pills-global-aids-hiv.html>

Global health diplomacy: the need for new perspectives, strategic approaches and skills in global health

<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/269857>

How the C.I.A. Hurt U.S. Health Diplomacy

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/27/opinion/27iht-edchow27.html>

Strengthening the COVID-19 pandemic response, global leadership, and international cooperation through global health diplomacy

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7723006/>

Health attaches are the missing link in global diplomacy

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/health-attaches-are-the-missing-link-in-global-diplomacy/>

## Section 11: The Role of Journalists in Health Policy

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- Discussion of key concepts in health policy
- Overview of health policymaking in the US
- What does health policy look like today?
- **Infographic Due**
- **Policy Defense:** Defend why many websites and newspapers have stopped tracking and publishing data on Covid-19.
- **Guest Speaker: Noam Neusner, former White House speechwriter and communications adviser**

History of Healthcare

<https://www.griffinbenefits.com/blog/history-of-healthcare>

A Short History of Health Care: Timothy Noah's review of Jonathan Cohn's book

[http://www.slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/chatterbox/2007/03/a\\_short\\_history\\_of\\_health\\_care.single.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/chatterbox/2007/03/a_short_history_of_health_care.single.html)

New York Times Covid Tracker

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/covid-cases.html>

John Hopkins Covid Tracker

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

## Section 12: Tobacco Harm Reduction

December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- **Policy Defense:** Defend tobacco companies' decision to create flavored tobacco products and the difference between their harm reduction for current smokers and the potential for harm for current non-smokers.
- **Guest Speaker: John Tierney**

Tobacco harm reduction

<https://tobaccotactics.org/article/harm-reduction/>

Tobacco harm reduction in the 21st century

<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/DAT-02-2020-0007/full/html>

Regulating Vaping — Policies, Possibilities, and Perils

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1917065>

## **Section 13: Bioterrorism and Distribution of Take Home Exam**

**December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

- What is bioterrorism and what is the government doing to stop it?
- **In Class: Develop a mock emergency response plan for a bioterrorism scenario**
- **Pick up take home exam**
- **Guest Lecturer – William Karesh, DVM** - Executive Vice President for Health and Policy at EcoHealth Alliance.

Anthrax Attacks – Biopreparedness 10 Years Later, Daschle

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1011/66037.html>

Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)

<http://www.cdc.gov/phpr/stockpile/stockpile.htm>

Monkeypox Antiviral Originated as Post-9/11 Bioterrorism Defense

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/monkeypox-antiviral-originated-as-post-9-11-bioterrorism-defense-11661400471>

Bill Gates says the next big threat facing humanity is bioterrorism

<https://www.euronews.com/next/2023/02/14/bill-gates-says-the-next-big-threat-facing-humanity-is-bioterrorism-interpol-agrees>

FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Releases Strategy to Strengthen Health Security and Prepare for Biothreats

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/10/18/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-releases-strategy-to-strengthen-health-security-and-prepare-for-biothreats/>

## **FINAL EXAM**

**December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

- **Take home exam due**