Objectives. The goals of the course are: 1) to understand and analyze the March 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and alternative reforms to health policy in the U.S.; 2) to develop skills that enable you to determine what types of information, data, and analyses are needed to implement health reform measures successfully, and 3) to complete a research project on one challenge for health reform.

Requirements and course format. You are expected to read all assigned readings before coming to class and to participate in class discussions. You should prepare at least one discussion question based on what you have read. I will ask each student to lead one class discussion of readings. You will also be asked to take on an assigned role during in-class simulations/debates. To help you with the skills you will need for using data in your research projects, you will complete three graded data lab assignments. I also give frequent short quizzes on all material covered up to that point. There is no final exam for this course.

   The most important requirement in this class is an individual research project and presentation. Over the course of the term, you will choose from a list of topics, compile a reading list, write a literature review, gather data, analyze your data, write a rough draft, and submit a final draft. Because I don't want anyone to get too far behind, you will be required to turn in each of these steps by specified due dates. I will give detailed descriptions of what is expected, as well as due dates, for each step. An alternative topic may be selected with permission.

Evaluation. Course grades are based on:
Class Participation: 20%
In class quizzes: 10%
Data lab assignments: 20%
Final Project: 50%

Honor Principle. The Honor Principle applies to all work done for this course. Though group work is permitted and encouraged, the work you submit for labs, quizzes, and papers must be prepared and written by you and reflect your ideas and conclusions. Remember to appropriately cite all your sources (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/). You "require citational references for any source from which you take a direct quotation, paraphrase, or otherwise make use of its facts and/or ideas."

Resources for Data Analysis. In practice, students have found it useful to use Stata to manipulate data used for even simple tabulations and graphs. Thus, to teach/review some basics, we will have 3 Stata data labs in class, and you must turn in work from the lab for
credit. Information on installing and using Stata can be found at 

COURSE SCHEDULE

1 - Introduction
Tuesday 1/8 Intro – How did we get in this mess? Challenges for Health Reform
*Wednesday 1/9 Health Economics in 50 minutes

2 - Coverage
Thursday 1/10 Mandates on individuals & employers
Tuesday 1/15 Expanding public insurance programs (QUIZ 1)
*Wednesday 1/16 Insurance exchanges & other insurance reforms [A]
Thursday 1/17 BRING LAPTOPS Lab #1 – Using data to study coverage...
Tuesday 1/22 Debate – should your state expand Medicaid?

3 - Costs
*Wednesday 1/23 Changing payments to providers I [B]
Thursday 1/24 Changing payments to providers II [C] (QUIZ 2)
Friday 1/25 PAPER TOPICS DUE (no class)
Tuesday 1/29 Changing how patients pay [D]
*Wednesday 1/30 BRING LAPTOPS Lab #2 using data to study spending
Thursday 1/31 Alternatives to PPACA for cost control [E]

4 - Quality
Tuesday 2/5 Reforming health care delivery (QUIZ 3) [F]
*Wednesday 2/6 Prevention & wellness [G]
Thursday 2/7 BRING LAPTOPS – Lab #3 prevention (LIT REVIEW DUE)

Tuesday 2/12 Check-in on papers, share common problems
*Wednesday 2/13 Optional X-hour for questions on papers (DATA SET DUE)
Thursday 2/14 Current events in Health Policy – see BB site for readings

Tuesday 2/19 No class
Thursday 2/21 (QUIZ 4) Often overlooked health reforms
Tuesday 2/26 No class (PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS DUE)

5 - Putting it all together
Thursday 2/28 Student Presentations (OPTIONAL DRAFT DUE)
Tuesday 3/5 Student Presentations
Thursday 3/7 Student presentations & wrap up
Friday 3/8 FINAL PAPER DUE

Please note the X-hours on 1/9, 1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, and 2/13.

Links to all other required readings are available on Blackboard.

Readings by class - * denotes recommended, but optional reading

INTRODUCTION
1/8 – Intro – How Did We Get in This Mess? Challenges for Health Reform
Landmark - read the Part II Preface, pp.64-71;

*Landmark, pp. 11-62, or part I, is optional, but an interesting and quick read about the political process behind the scenes.


1/9 – Health Economics


COVERAGE
1/10 – Mandates on Individuals and Employers


1/15 – Expanding public insurance programs (QUIZ 1)
Landmark chapters 1 pp. 22-28, and 12, pp. 163-168

1/16 – Insurance Exchanges & other Insurance Reforms
Landmark Chapters 3-5, pp. 93-111

1/17 – Data Lab #1 – Using Data to Study Coverage - see Blackboard for instructions.
BRING LAPTOPS

1/22 - Debate – Should Your State Expand Medicaid? see Blackboard for instructions
COSTS

1/23 – Changing payment to health care providers I
Landmark chapter 8, pp. 129-134

1/24 – Changing payment to health care providers II (QUIZ 2)


1/25 – PAPER TOPICS DUE

1/29 – Changing how patients pay for health care
Landmark chapter 13, pp. 169-178


1/30 – Data Lab #2 – Using Data to Study Spending – see Blackboard for instructions
BRING LAPTOPS

1/31 – Alternatives to the Affordable Care Act for cost control


**QUALITY**

2/5 – Reforming Health Care Delivery (QUIZ 3)


2/6 – Prevention & Wellness


*Landmark* chapter 10, pp. 145-152


2/7 – Data Lab #3 – Using Data to Study Prevention – see Blackboard for instructions

BRING LAPTOPS (LIT REVIEW DUE)

2/12 – Discussion of student projects

2/13 – Optional X-hour for paper questions (DATA SET DUE)

2/14 – Valentine’s Debate… Current events in health policy – see Blackboard for details
2/19 – No Class

2/21 - Often overlooked reforms: Comparative Effectiveness, workforce, & mental health (QUIZ 4)


2/26 – No Class (PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS DUE)

2/28 – Student presentations, [G, F & E] (OPTIONAL DRAFT DUE)

3/5 – Student presentations [B, C, & D]

3/7 – Final student presentations & wrap-up [A] (QUIZ 5)