

**HCMG 101 – HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS Fall 2021**  
**T/TH 12:00-1:30, JMHH F85**

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Office hours: by appointment

TAs: Kienan O'Brien ([ksobrien@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:ksobrien@wharton.upenn.edu)), Turner Rapp ([rappturn@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:rappturn@wharton.upenn.edu)).  
Office hours: TBD

**OVERVIEW**

This course introduces and examines the main features of the financing and delivery of health care in the United States. It covers health care spending, the relationship between health and health care, private and public health insurance, providers and services, provider reimbursement, health care reform, and factors affecting health policy. The course pays close attention to the economic incentives facing institutions and individuals and to the economic context of important health policy issues.

**READINGS**

Required: Paul J. Feldstein, *Health Policy Issues: An Economic Perspective*, 7th ed., available at the PENN Bookstore. (The 7<sup>th</sup> edition has two new chapters versus the 6<sup>th</sup> edition. The 6<sup>th</sup> edition does not reflect recent changes in the health care system and has older data.)

Additional readings are posted on Canvas.

**LECTURES**

Outlines/slides for lectures will be posted on Canvas prior to class. For guest speakers – slides may be made available after class.

**EXAMS**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Exam 1 (September 23 <sup>rd</sup> , in class) | 100 points |
| Exam 2 (October 26 <sup>th</sup> , in class)   | 100 points |
| Exam 3 (December 9 <sup>th</sup> , in class)   | 100 points |
| Writing assignment (November 8 <sup>th</sup> ) | 50 points  |

The exams will be non-cumulative and a combination of multiple choice, identification, and short answer questions. *Exams must be taken when scheduled and can only be made up with an excused absence pursuant to University rules.* Exams will be timed and open book.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT

You are required to write a 200-250 word reaction/opinion/analysis of an article or blog post dealing with health care in the form of a “letter to the editor.” Candidate articles/posts will be posted to Canvas during the semester. **Due date: November 7<sup>th</sup>.**

We will grade the assignment based on substance (what you say) and exposition (how you say it). If you request a regrade, both TAs will read your assignment and refer it to me for further review if they feel an adjustment may be warranted. A regrade can result in an increase, decrease, or no change in points.

## GRADING

Your grade will be based on your total number of points:

- A+, A, A- range: 315 and above (315 is 90% of the 350 exam and writing assignment points)
- B+, B, B- range: 280 – 314 (80-89% of 350)
- C+, C, C- range: 245 – 279 (70-79% of 350)
- D+, D, range: 210 – 244 (60-69% of 350)

Plus and minus cutoffs will depend on class performance and be close to endpoints of the relevant range.

Class participation and engagement can provide you with bonus points for your grade. Strong class participation (in any capacity – online discussion, in class) can increase your grade one increment on the grading scale (e.g., A- to A).

## CLASS PROTOCOL

Attendance is important and participation is strongly encouraged. You should join class on time and stay throughout unless there are extenuating circumstances and you have informed me or the TAs prior to class. When there are extenuating circumstances, you should view the recorded and archived class that you missed.

We will follow University guidance regarding COVID mitigation measures. If you are not able to attend class due to needing to quarantine or isolate due to COVID, you need to communicate this to the teaching team (including TAs) as far in advance as possible so we can arrange for a virtual or recorded option for impacted students.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

- **Alon Bergman, PhD**, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Penn Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics
- **Norma Coe, PhD**, Associate Professor of Medical Ethics and Health Policy, Co-Director of the Population Aging Research Center
- **Guy David, PhD**, Professor of Health Care Management, The Wharton School
- **Molly Candon, PhD**, Research Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry, Penn Center for Mental Health

- **Krisda Chaiyachati, MD, MS**, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Medical Director of Penn Medicine OnDemand and Clinical Innovation Manager at the Penn Medicine Center for Health Care Innovation
- **Shreya Kangovi, MD, MS**, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Penn Center for Community Health Workers
- **Margaret Lowenstein, MD, MS**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, PSOM
- **Sean McElligott**, Senior Director, Payer Marketing Value and Access Oncology, Sanofi
- **Matthew McHugh, PhD, JD, MPH, RN, CRNP** Professor of Nursing, Director, Center for Health Outcomes and Policy, School of Nursing
- **Ingrid Nembhard, PhD**, Associate Professor of Health Care Management, The Wharton School

## **SCHEDULE**

### **August 31 and September 2: Course Introduction and History of the U.S. Health Care System**

- Geiger, HJ. An overdose of power and money [Book Review]. New York Times. January 9, 1983.

### **September 7: U.S. health care spending in a global context**

- Feldstein, Chapters 1-2
- Laugesen, M. and S. Glied. Higher fees paid to U.S. physicians drive higher spending for physician services compared to other countries. Health Affairs 30(9): 1647-56. Sept. 2011.

### **September 9: Guest speaker—Molly Candon on health vs. health care**

- Feldstein, Chapter 3
- Health, income, and poverty: where we are and what could help. Health Affairs Policy Brief. October 2018.

### **September 14 and 15: Key concepts in health insurance**

- Feldstein, Chapters 5-7
- Tradeoffs podcast – “The Good Stuff” – listen at tradeoffs.org (<https://tradeoffs.org/2019/12/11/season-1-ep-5/>)

### **September 21: The Uninsured, the ACA and the Future of Health Reform**

- Feldstein, Chapters 35-36
- Rovner, J. A guide to following the health debate in the 2020 elections. Kaiser Health News. January 20, 2020. <https://khn.org/news/a-guide-to-following-the-health-debate-in-the-2020-elections/>
- Emanuel, EJ. The near-term future of health reform. JAMA. 2021; 325(14): 1394-1397. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2778508>

### **September 23: Exam 1**

### **September 28: Medicare**

- Feldstein, Chapter 8
- An overview of Medicare. Kaiser Family Foundation Issue Brief. February 2019.
- The facts on Medicare spending and financing. Kaiser Family Foundation Issue Brief. June 2018.

#### **September 30: Medicaid**

- Feldstein, Chapter 9
- 10 things about Medicaid: setting the facts straight. Kaiser Family Foundation Issue Brief. April 2018.

#### **October 5: Physicians and reimbursement**

- Feldstein, Chapters 10-11, 13
- Gawande, A. The cost conundrum. The New Yorker. May 25, 2009. (optional but excellent article)

#### **October 7: Hospitals and reimbursement and competition**

- Feldstein, Chapters 16 and 17
- Tradeoffs podcast – “The Train has Left the Station” – listen at [tradeoffs.org](https://tradeoffs.org/2019/10/30/season-1-ep-2/) (<https://tradeoffs.org/2019/10/30/season-1-ep-2/>)

#### **October 12: Guest speaker – Guy David on Non-profit hospitals**

- Feldstein, Chapter 15

#### **October 14: FALL BREAK**

#### **October 19: Guest speaker – Krisda Chaiyachati on telehealth and virtual care**

- Shachar, C., Engel, J., Elwyn, G. Implications for telehealth in a postpandemic future: regulatory and privacy issues. JAMA. May 18, 2020. 323(23):2375-2376.

#### **October 21: Quality of care and medical liability**

- Feldstein, Chapter 14
- Mello, M., et al. National costs of the medical liability system. Health Affairs 29(9): 1569-1176. September 2010.

#### **October 26: Exam 2**

#### **October 29: Guest speaker – Sean McElligott on pharmaceuticals and biotech**

- Feldstein, Chapters 25-28
- Tradeoffs podcast – “The Price of Innovation” – listen at [tradeoffs.org](https://tradeoffs.org/2020/01/22/season-1-ep-8/) (<https://tradeoffs.org/2020/01/22/season-1-ep-8/>)

### **November 3: Guest speaker – Sean McElligott on vaccines**

- Lurie, N., Sharfstein, J., Goodman, J. The development of COVID-19 vaccines: Safeguards needed. JAMA. 2020; July 6. Available at: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2768156>
- Zuger, Abigail. Preventing a pandemic's toll – we've been here before. JAMA. 2021. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2783500?resultClick=1>

### **November 4: Guest speaker – Norma Coe on long-term care**

- Feldstein, Chapter 37
- Coe, NB. "We need comprehensive long term care reform, and we need it now." *The Hill*. February 3, 2021. <https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/536316-we-need-comprehensive-long-term-care-reform-and-we-need-it-now>

\*\*\*Letter to the Editor assignment due 11:59PM on November 7<sup>th</sup>\*\*\*

### **November 9: Letter to the Editor Discussion**

### **November 11: Guest speaker – Alon Bergman on medical devices**

- Maisel WH. "Medical device regulation: an introduction for the practicing physician." *Ann Intern Med*. 2004;140(4):296-302.
- Skinner, Jonathan S., Douglas O. Staiger, and Elliott S. Fisher. "Is Technological Change In Medicine Always Worth It? The Case Of Acute Myocardial Infarction: Waste and inefficiency are not inevitable by-products of technological growth." *Health affairs* 25, no. Suppl1 (2006): W34-W47.

Suggested:

- Cutler, David M., and Mark McClellan. Is technological change in medicine worth it? *Health affairs* 20, no. 5 (2001): 11-29.

### **November 16: Guest speaker – Shreya Kangovi on social determinants of health**

- Kangovi, S, Mitra, N, Grande, D., Long, JA, Asch, DA. Evidence-based community health worker program addresses unmet social needs and generates positive return on investment. *Health Affairs*. February 2020. 39(2): 207-213.
- Deaton A. On Death and Money: History, Facts, and Explanations. *JAMA*. 2016;315(16):1703–1705. doi:10.1001/jama.2016.4072

### **November 18: Guest speaker – Margaret Lowenstein on substance abuse and the opioid epidemic**

- Dasgupta, N, Beletsky, L, Ciccarone, D. Opioid crisis: no easy fix to its social and economic determinants. *AJPH*. 2018; 108(2) 182-186.
- Saloner et al., A public health strategy for the opioid crisis. *Public Health Reports*. 2018; 113(Suppl 1): 24S-34S.

- Barnett, BS. Easter Kentucky's Lost Generation and the echoes that remain – the aftermath of the opioid epidemic. JAMA Intern Med. 2021; 181(2): 158-159.

**November 23: Guest speaker – Ingrid Nembhard on patient experience**

**November 25: Happy Thanksgiving!**

**November 30: Guest speaker – Anish Agarwal on Digital Tools in Health Care**

- Sim, I. Mobile devices and health. NEJM. 2019. 381(10): 956-968.

**December 2: Guest speaker – Matthew McHugh, PhD on the nursing workforce**

- Feldstein, Chapter 24

**December 7: TBD**

**December 9: Exam 3**