HSMP 6670: Comparative Health Systems

Instructor: Meredith Fort, PhD, MPH
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Department of Health Systems Management and Policy
University of Colorado Denver

Room Number: Ed 2 North 1304

E-mail: meredith.fort@ucdenver.edu

Time: Tuesdays, 10:00-11:50 AM

Credits: 2

Course Overview:
The purpose of the course is to provide a framework for students to analyze the different ways that health care is organized and delivered in settings around the world, including low-, middle- and high-income countries. The course will also engage students in a comparative analysis of health indicators in different countries. Through the exploration of health systems, students will reflect on how a country’s history, geography, government and economy influence the way that health care is provided and its relationship with population health; and students will also undertake a detailed analysis of health care financing, workforce, quality, and access.

Competencies:
The following competencies from the School of Public Health will be addressed in the course:

CR-HSMP 7: Analyze health policy issues, including the health, fiscal/economic, administrative, legal, social, ethical and political implications. Include in the analysis an awareness of issues that transcend national boundaries and/or have global implications.

CR-HSMP 8: Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of public health to the health care delivery system and the economic factors influencing components of the delivery system.
The specific educational objectives and competencies for the course are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Objectives</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify key components in a framework for analyzing health care delivery and organization and contrast systems in different settings.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of key components of a health care system and the diversity of systems in different settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Critically and systematically analyze health care system delivery and organization, and population health, through the use of country case studies.</td>
<td>Analyze the historical development, organization, financing and delivery of public and private health services in a health care system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of public health to the health care delivery system and the economic factors influencing components of the delivery system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Present an analysis of health care delivery and organization - focusing on financing, workforce, quality, access - and populations health in a group project on a country’s health system and in a final research paper</td>
<td>Identify, retrieve, and synthesize current scientific evidence in order to conduct an analysis of a health system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively communicate both in writing and orally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Readings:**

In addition, journal articles and/or book chapters from other texts will be assigned and available on the course website or online.

**Assignments and Grading:**
1) **Research paper** [45% of course grade]
   - **Country identification:** Tuesday February 3rd
   - **Research paper part one:** Tuesday March 3rd
   - **Final research paper due in class on Tuesday April 7th**

   You will prepare a 2500 word research paper on the health system of a country of your choice. In this paper, you will be expected to do the following: a) present an overview of how healthcare is funded and delivered in the country, b) map out the health care
system's major actors and institutions, c) describe two of the key health problems facing
the country, d) present the perspective of a group in the country that has limited
healthcare access and what the primary barriers are to care, and e) provide an overview
of some of the policy actions or proposals that are underway in the country.

A detailed description of the assignment will be handed out in class and posted on the
Canvas site. Your grade for the research paper will be based on your completion of the
country identification, part one of the research paper, and incorporation of peer and
instructor feedback into the final research paper.

2) **Group presentation** [35% of course grade]
   - **Group outline due: Tuesday March 31st**
   - **Presentation dates: April 28th and May 5th**

   This project will consist of analysis and presentation of a health topic led by student
groups and presented at the end of the semester. Details of this assignment will be
provided on the course Canvas site and discussed in class. Your grade for the group
presentation will be based on your completion of the outline, the presentation, and a self
and peer evaluation.

3) **Reading discussion** [20% of course grade]

   For two of the sessions in this course, you are responsible for writing a
summary/reflection of the assigned readings. On these days, we will spend the first part
of class convening in “reading seminar” – which is a chance to discuss your reflection
and open up the readings together in order to address some larger question(s). Your
grade for reading seminars will be based on your completion of the short written
assignments and on participation in the class discussion.

### Schedule and readings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>1/20</th>
<th><strong>Course Overview: Health System Building Blocks and a Framework for Comparing Health Systems</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>1/27</th>
<th><strong>Financing and Organization of Healthcare Systems</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Week 3
2/3

**Global Health Policy: Primary Health Care and the Social Determinants of Health**
(Guest Speaker, Susan Rifkin)

**Readings:**

WHO. *Report of the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health* (Executive Summary) 2008 WHO: Geneva (online: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)) (executive summary)


### Week 4
2/10

**France and the United Kingdom**

**Readings:**


### Week 5
2/17

**Japan and Germany**

**Readings:**


**Recommended video:** *Frontline - Sick Around the World*: Can the US learn anything from the rest of the world about how to run a healthcare system?. Available online at: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/sickaroundtheworld/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/sickaroundtheworld/)

### Week 6
2/24

**Canada and Reflection on Comparisons of High-Income Country Systems**

**Readings:**


### Week 7
3/3

**Emphases in the Comparative Analysis of Medium, and Low-Income Countries: Health Systems Strengthening, Human Resources for Health**

**Readings:**

Chapter 5, Health Systems Strengthening in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, in World Health Systems, pp. 91-121.

Recommended


Week 8
3/10 Guatemala, Costa Rica and Cuba

Readings:


Week 9
3/17 Spring Recess

Week 10
3/24 An example of healthcare in post-Soviet systems, the example of Armenia (Guest Speaker: Varduhi Petrosyan)

Readings:


Week 11
3/31 Group outline due 3/31 in class

The healthcare system in China (Guest speaker: Blair Gifford)

Readings:

Week 12  
4/7  India and Thailand  

Readings:  

Week 13  
4/14  Nigeria and Mozambique  

Readings:  

Week 14  
4/21  Universal Health Coverage and Making Care Accessible and Affordable  

Readings:  

Week 15  
4/28  GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Week 16  
5/5  GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Week 17

5/12 Broadening the Scope of Healthcare Systems and Integration and Application of Lessons Learned from Different Systems

Readings: