University of Oregon  
Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management  

PPPM 460/560: Health Policy  
Spring 2015 (CRN 35033/35051)

Professor Nicole Ngo  
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Office hours: M/W 1:30-2:30 and by appointment  

Course Description  
In the United States, we pay almost twice as much per capita for health care as other industrial countries. Yet, there are well documented problems with health care quality and equity. This class is an introduction to the key health policy issues of access, cost, quality and disparities. For each topic, we will examine the existing evidence base, the factors contributing to the problem, the array of current approaches for addressing the issue, and the approaches included in the current health reform legislation.

The course will be taught using a mix of lecture and discussion. We will read and discuss current empirical and review articles from the academic literature. To be mindful of how these health-related issues impact people’s lives, we will also read newspaper articles and other narratives.

Learning outcomes  
At the end of the course, students should be able to:  
• Understand the basics of healthcare policy, including employer-based coverage, public insurance programs, and healthcare reform  
• Assess problems of the healthcare system before healthcare reform and how the Affordable Care Act tries to address them  
• Be up to date on current events regarding healthcare policy  
• Critically discuss and analyze problems within healthcare policy  

Required Reading  
Readings will be from reports or scientific articles.

Assignments and Course Grades  
The course grade will be based on the following components:
PPPM Syllabus (Health Policy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 1: Report/Lit review</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<td>Part 2: Presentation</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini-lectures</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Course Grade

Please be sure to cite, quote and paraphrase where necessary. If you have any questions about writing or references, please consult with the PPPM Writing Coach, Kathi Jaworski (kjaworski@write-to-know.com). The course grade will be based on the following components:

- **Class participation**: This grade will be determined by your attendance to class (an attendance sheet will be passed around each lecture starting week 2) and participation during class. You are allowed to miss up to 2 classes without penalty, but are responsible for the material missed.

- **1 assignment**: The assignment will be an essay (2 pages double-spaced maximum with 1 in. margins) that will require you to apply concepts we learned during class to the given topic. Graduate students will be held to a higher standard than undergraduates in both writing and content. I will deduct 0.5% each day your assignment is late and 0.5% if you are over the page limit (e.g., if your assignment is later by 1 day, the most you can receive is 9.5% out of 10%).

- **Group project**: Students will work in groups of 3 or 4 and sign up on Google Docs to study one of the following healthcare topics not discussed in class: maternity and paternity leave policies, medical ethics, healthcare for the LGBT community, community health centers and Planned Parenthood, the Supplemental nutrition assistance programs (SNAP), potential for universal healthcare in the U.S., emotional and mental health among college students, healthcare for people with disabilities, sex education (abstinence only vs. comprehensive programs), and healthcare for veterans. A sign-up sheet for topics will be posted on Google Docs which I will email to the class Wed. of Week 2 (April 6). It will be based on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you do not sign up by Wed. of week 3 (April 13), I will choose a topic for you. There are 2 parts to this project.
  a. **Part 1** (due Wed. of week 8 (May 18) on Canvas by 11:59pm)
     i. **Report** (undergraduates only): Each student will submit a 2-page double-spaced (max!) summary of their topic using appropriate resources (e.g., reports, peer-reviewed articles) and citations to support their arguments/claims. As a group, you may share resources with each other, but this part must be completed individually.
     ii. **Literature review** (graduate students only): Graduate students will write a literature review on their given topic. A literature review is a critical synthesis of the published body of knowledge in a specific area and requires greater analysis of a subject topic than a summary. This is an opportunity to build your knowledge base in one specific area of health policy and to learn what questions have yet to be answered. You should use material from at least 4 articles from
pppm syllabus (health policy)

peer-reviewed journals or reports. (Be careful about online resources and do not use newspaper articles. If you have any questions about an appropriate source, please contact me or consult with the P P P M writing coach). I encourage students to share drafts and/or outlines with colleagues and/or with me for feedback. 4 pages double spaced maximum with 12 point font and 1 in. margins. As a group, you may share resources with each other, but this part must be completed individually.

b. part 2 (all students): presentation—Each group will give a 15 minute presentation on their given topic in weeks 9 and 10 and, if there’s time, answer questions.

• Mini-lectures (Graduate students only) (3 lectures- each worth 3%): Graduate students will give a 8-10 minute presentation on a particular topic for that lecture. Coordination of each graduate student’s particular topic will be discussed in week 1.

• Final and Midterm Exam: You will have an in-class Midterm and Final Exam. The Midterm will cover weeks 1 to 5 and is on Monday of week 6 (May 4). The Final exam is comprehensive and will cover material from weeks 1 to 10. Information from readings and lecture will be on the exam.

Class participation
Students are expected to have obtained, read, and retained the readings for each week and to come to class prepared to discuss their content and implications.

Classroom Environment
In order to create a classroom in which students are comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives, I ask that students please approach the readings and others’ contributions with both an open mind and a willingness to question one’s own assumptions and biases.

Professional Practice
This course is a core course in the PPPM undergraduate pre-professional degree program. As such, students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times.

• Students should treat each other and the instructor with the professional courtesy and respect expected in a workplace.

• All communications relating to this course and all work turned in for this course should reflect professional standards in tone, presentation, formatting, and spelling.

• The classroom is a place of focused learning. This requires that students arrive on time, stay until the end of the class period, do not disrupt the class by leaving the room temporarily, and refrain from non-learning activities. Students who fail to adhere to these guidelines will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session.

• I expect all course assignments to be completed using a word processor.

• Some assignments will require use of a spreadsheet program for data analysis and graphing. Some familiarity with a spreadsheet program (e.g. Excel), as well as basic concepts in mathematics and algebra at the high school level will be used when we cover the analytic components of the material.

• You will also be required to use PowerPoint for a presentation at the end of the term on your final project.

Course Workload
A general rule of thumb for the expected workload for a graduate level class is approximately 3-4 hours/week per credit hour. Thus, a four credit course will require approximately 12-16 hours of effort per week.

Course Website
The course website is located on the University of Oregon’s Canvas system (https://canvas.uoregon.edu). The class syllabus, announcements and other materials will be posted on the Canvas site. Please check the course website frequently for updates. In addition, make sure that the University registrar has your correct email address. I will use this email address to communicate with you.

Writing Lab
This is a writing intensive course. If you struggle with writing, I strongly encourage you to use the services of the Writing Lab: The Writing Lab begins week two of the term and closes at 5:00 pm the Wednesday of finals week. Free tutors are available. Upper-division and graduate student tutors are available on a drop-in basis or by appointment. (You must come to the writing lab to schedule your appointment.) 9:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday, 72 PLC (Prince Lucien Campbell).

Documented Disabilities
Students who have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course should make arrangements to see the instructor as soon as possible. They should also request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying the disability.

Calculators
We will use calculators periodically throughout the term, so please make sure you always bring one to class. A basic calculator (not a fancy graphing calculator) is all that is needed for this course.

Email
I will try to respond to all email within 48 hours of receiving them. It is, however, becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with the quantity of email that I receive, so I ask that you make sure that you have reviewed Canvas and the syllabus prior to sending a note about course logistics. Please do not send me emails if you need to miss a class for a routine matter, like a doctor appointment or job interview.

Late Assignment Policy
If you are unable to make it to class on the day an assignment is due, you may mail, email, or fax your assignment to me prior to the class time and date that assignment is due. Late assignments receive only partial credit. If an answer key is posted to the website, however, no late homework assignments are accepted (no credit).

Missed Class Policy
If you miss a class, please arrange to get class notes from a classmate. Instructor lecture notes are not available.

Incomplete Policy
Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and to turn in all materials at the designated time. In accordance with university regulations, an incomplete will only be given when “the quality of
work is satisfactory but a minor yet essential requirement of the course has not been completed for
reasons acceptable to the instructor.”

**Academic Misconduct**
You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying content from other students and submitting
it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at
conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or
attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should
not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations
without express permission from the instructor.

**Plagiarism**
Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations,
paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any
question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students’ obligation to clarify
the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional
information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at:
[www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students](http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students).

**Make up Exams: Final Exam**
Students must take the final exam to receive a grade in the course. The date and time for the final exam
will not be changed to accommodate scheduling conflicts. Final exams will not be given early under any
circumstances. A make up final exam will be scheduled for students who miss the regularly scheduled
final exam due to serious illness or family emergency.

**Inclusion Statement**
The School of Architecture and Allied Arts is a community that values inclusion. We are a
committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually,
professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation,
ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an
environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If
you feel excluded or threatened, please contact your instructor and/or department head. The
University Bias Response Team is also a resource that can assist you. Find more information at
[their website](http://bias.uoregon.edu/index.html) or by phoning 541-346-2037.
Tentative Course Schedule
Below is a tentative outline of the course sessions with assigned readings. Dates for some topics will inevitably change. Please rely on the class Canvas account for knowing what reading should be done for what class. It will be up to date. All the readings will be available for download on Canvas.

Week #1: The current US system
March 28: Employer-based coverage system
Optional

March 30: Public coverage: Medicaid
Optional
- KFF. Medicaid and the uninsured: The cost of coverage implications of the ACA Medicaid Expansion: National and State-by-State Analysis, Executive Summary

Week #2
April 4: Public coverage: Medicare
Optional

April 6: The uninsured (Graduate students)**
Graduate students will each make a presentation on how their health reform approaches ensuring access to care.
Optional— Look up on the Internet:
- Go to Cover Oregon, apply for coverage here, and see what plans will work for you: https://www.coveroregon.com/get-coverage/online

Assignments and reminders
PPPM Syllabus (Health Policy)

- Sign-up for topics will be emailed to the class today. It is on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you do not sign up by next Wed. (April 13), I will choose a topic for you.

**Week #3 Healthcare reform**
**April 11: History of ACA**
- KFF. A guide to the Supreme Court’s ACA decision

Optional
- KFF. Summary of ACA

Assignments and reminders
- Assignment 1 will be posted and is due **Friday April 22, 2015** on Canvas by 11:59pm.

**April 13: Guest lecture by Dr. Rick Kincade of 100% Health Community Coalition**

**Week #4 Cost of care**
**April 18: Introduction to Cost of Care, Part 1**

Optional
- White C. Health care spending growth: how different is the United States from the rest of the OECD. *Health Affairs* 2007; 26(1) 154-161.

**April 20: Causes of health expenditures**

Optional

**Week #5**
**April 25: Current policy approaches to address cost containment: managed care, comparative effectiveness, and consumer directed care**
- Altman, D.E., and Levitt, L. “The sad history of health care cost containment as told in 1 chart.”
- Blumenthal, D. Employer-sponsored health insurance in the United States- Riding the Health Care

April 27: How Health Reform Addresses Cost Containment (Graduate students)**
Graduate students will each make a presentation on how their health reform approaches containing cost of care.

Midterm review—come with questions!

Week #6
May 2: Midterm (weeks 1-5)

May 4: Quality of care Introduction
• Gawande, A. The Bell Curve: What happens when patients find out how good their doctors really are? The New Yorker. 2004.
• Schuster MA, McGlynn E, Brook RH. How good is the quality of health care in the United States? The Milbank Quarterly 1998; 76 (4).
  • Note- you do not need to read the grid pages that summarize each study reviewed, but it is a good model for how to approach a literature synthesis.

Week #7
May 9: Changing Care Systems: Don Berwick
• Kurie, J. Where’s David? 22(1), Health Affairs.
• Lawrence, DM. My Mother And The Medical Care Ad-Hoc-Racy,” 22(2), Health Affairs. 2003. Optional

May 11: Current Policy Approaches: Public Reporting of Quality & Pay for Performance (Graduate students)**
Graduate students will each make a presentation on how their health reform approaches ensure quality of care.
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Optional

Review these quality of care "report cards" and be prepared to discuss how useful and easy they are to interpret.
1) [http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/search.html](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/search.html)

**Week #8**
**May 16: Cause of disparities**

Optional
- Go to the following website and complete 1 or more of the IAT tests: [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/takeatest.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/takeatest.html)

**May 18: Approaches to address disparities**

Assignments and reminders
- Reports/Literature Reviews are due today by 11:59pm on Canvas!
- Please email me your presentations the day before you present (1 per group)

**Week #9**
**May 23** Memorial day—no class!

**May 25**
Group presentations

**Week #10**
**May 30**
Group presentations

**June 1**
Final exam review

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, June 8 at 10:15am
Grading Rubric Example (will vary by specific assignment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Unacceptable professional quality</th>
<th>Minimally acceptable professional quality</th>
<th>Adequate professional quality</th>
<th>Very good professional quality</th>
<th>Highest professional quality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EVALUATION</strong></td>
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<td>Addressing each portion of assignment</td>
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<td>• Will vary</td>
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<td>Providing adequate justification</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of literature to present issues and arguments</td>
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<td>• Development of a coherent argument or reasoned position</td>
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<td>• Exhibition of higher-level thinking, synthesis and argumentation</td>
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<td>Writing (see below)</td>
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<td>• Clearly structured and organized</td>
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<td>• Professional tone</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Grammar, referencing &amp; presentation</td>
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**WRITING: Detailed Feedback**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logical structure: Can your reader follow presentation of information?</th>
<th>Weaknesses or Deficiencies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Introductory section to orient the reader to the purpose of the document</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clear sequence of sections: logical order for writing task</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clear structure to sections</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Uses subheadings effectively—reader can easily find key information</td>
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<td>• Uses paragraphs to support structure</td>
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<td>• Clear topic sentences</td>
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<td>• Links between paragraphs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Links within sections</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional approach: May not apply for each assignment.</th>
<th>Weaknesses or Deficiencies</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Objective paper avoids bias and prejudice</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Assertions supported by evidence (references, clear information, citations) and not just opinion</td>
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<td>• Uses a range of high quality sources</td>
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<td>• Appropriate use of active and passive voice</td>
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### PPPM Syllabus (Health Policy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of audience: avoids slang, jargon and informal language</th>
<th>Coherence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar:</strong> Errors can raise questions about sloppiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Noun verb agreement</td>
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<td>• Correct use of tense</td>
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<td>• Complete sentences</td>
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<td>• Appropriate punctuation</td>
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<td>• No run on sentences</td>
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<td>• No spelling errors or typos</td>
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<td>• Other grammar issues</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Referencing:</strong> Provide support for assertions in accepted referencing style.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• In text references (author date, page) or footnotes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reference list (or footnotes) using proper citation format</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Presentation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Don’t overuse bullets</td>
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<td>• Professional format (page #s, clear print + graphics)</td>
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<td>• Free of handwritten edits</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use graphics to support text, but not replace it</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Proofreading</td>
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</table>
Explanation of Grading System

• C+ and Lower (below 80)
  o **Unacceptable work for professionals or undergraduate/graduate courses**
  o Factual errors or calculation errors
  o Poorly written (misspellings, typos, poor grammar, poor sentence structure)
  o Graphics poor (inaccurate tables, poor titles, no data sources)

• B- (81-83)
  o **Below acceptable standards for professionals**
  o Minor errors of fact or calculation
  o Poorly constructed text, unclear graphics
  o Rushed or lack of attention to overall product

• B (84-86)
  o **Meets minimal professional standards**
  o Factually and technically correct
  o Clear message to readers
  o May lack precision in language and presentation of data

• B+ (87-90)
  o **Solid professional work**
  o Factually and technically correct
  o Excellent tables and graphics
  o Falls short in some areas

• A- (91-94)
  o **High quality professional work**
  o Technically, methodologically, and factually 100% accurate
  o Fall short of highest quality work in organization, flow of text or presentation
  o Clearly conveys conclusions to audience

• A (95-99)
  o **Highest quality work**
  o Technically, methodologically, and factually 100% accurate
  o Efficient language and graphics presented with emphasis
  o Easy to navigate and follow
  o Clear about main points and evidence provided to support these points
  o All graphics are clear and titled, sources, labeled