PSCI 221: Health Policy and Politics in Comparative Perspective
Fall semester 2018
Thursdays 1:30-4:30pm, PCPE 202

Professor:
Dr. Julia Lynch
Ronald O. Perelman Center for Political Science and Economics, Room 424
133 S. 36th St. Philadelphia, PA 19104-6215
jflynch@sas.upenn.edu*
Office Hours: Fridays 1:30-3:30pm

*Professor Lynch wants to talk to you in person! Apart from emergencies, please use Professor Lynch’s email only to schedule appointments if you are unable to attend regular office hours. For questions that do not rise to the level of needing an appointment, please consult the syllabus first and then email your TA if you still need help.

Teaching Assistants:
Santiago Cunial
Dept of Political Science
Email: scunial@sas.upenn.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays. 4-6pm, or by appointment

Kaitlyn Leahey
Dept of Medical Ethics and Health Policy
Email: kaitlynle@pcom.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10am-12pm, or by appointment

Course description
This course examines the relationship between politics and the health of populations in the world’s rich democracies, including the Unites States. The key questions the course addresses are how and why the health of populations differs in these countries. The course is divided into three main segments. The first focuses on health care systems, the second on social and political determinants of population health, and the third on the production of health policy strategies. There are no prerequisites, but prior coursework in comparative politics at the 100 or 200 level will be helpful.

After taking PSCI 221, you will
• Be familiar with the range of variation across the rich industrialized democracies in health policies.
• Understand the implications of different policy choices for equity, efficiency, and population health.
• Be able to articulate an informed set of health policy preferences that would promote your own goals.
Course requirements

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation*</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First midterm exam – September 27, in class</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Second midterm exam – November 8, in class</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam – December 14, 12-2pm [tentative]</td>
<td>25%</td>
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*Class participation grades are based on (a) attendance, (b) informed participation in activities and discussions, and (c) personal conduct. Conduct expectations include: arriving to class on time; treating classmates, guests, and instructors with respect; and ensuring that all communication, including electronic, is appropriate and courteous.

Makeup exams will not be scheduled except in the case of a documented medical emergency or a death in the family. Please check your schedules NOW to ensure that you have no conflicts, including on-campus recruiting or athletic events.

Reading and watching assignments
There are two books available for purchase:


Both are available from the Penn bookstore. You will need access to the Gallagher, Laver and Mair book to prepare for Week 2; it will also serve as a useful resource throughout the semester.

All other reading and viewing assignments are available on Canvas and must be completed before coming to class. Please note that the files posted to Canvas sometimes contain more pages than are required for a specific module. Keep your syllabus handy and be sure to check which pages you need to read.

There will be a short quiz covering main concepts from the readings at the start of class each week.
This class is a SAIL class: it makes extensive use of STRUCTURED, ACTIVE, IN-CLASS LEARNING. The required readings and audiovisual assignments, done outside of class, provide an introduction to basic facts and concepts. Time in class is devoted to instructor-led discussions and structured activities such as debates, case studies, field observation, and writing policy briefs, supplemented by occasional mini-lectures. This in-class work will allow you to learn by doing, apply theoretical principles to real-world situations, and receive real-time feedback.

How to prepare for class

- **Read.** The required readings and viewings for each topic by the date listed on the syllabus. There will be a brief quiz on the readings at the start of class. The quizzes will test major concepts covered in the readings.

- **Take notes.** What is each reading about? What kind of argument is it making? What kinds of evidence, examples do the authors use? Are you convinced? Why or why not? What surprised you? What bothered you? If you take only one note on a reading, it should be *your reaction* to it, as this has been shown to be the best aid to recalling the content of a reading.

- **Print out the readings.** We suggest that you print out the syllabus and all readings and keep them in a binder that you bring to class with you each week. You will need to refer to all of the readings and cross-references them during class, and this is much more difficult to do on an electronic device.

- **Do background research.** This is a 200-level class in comparative politics. If you come across terms or ideas that are unfamiliar to you, do a little digging before you come to class so that we can start on the same page.

- **Be prepared to be participate** and engage as an individual scholar and in small group activities. This is a SAIL class; hence, it requires *active* in-class learning.

Use of electronic devices in class

The best available research shows that indiscriminate use of laptops in the classroom, including for note-taking, detracts from learning for most students (see [http://tinyurl.com/m6jl7xv](http://tinyurl.com/m6jl7xv) and [http://tinyurl.com/lg88gys](http://tinyurl.com/lg88gys)). Hence, I recommend that unless you absolutely must use a laptop or tablet for regular notetaking, you take them out only during specified activities that require the use of a computer. The use of mobile communication devices is prohibited during class time.

Please bring paper/a notebook and a pen/pencil to class each week.
**Grading policy**
We take great care in grading assignments and exams fairly and accurately. We do, however, occasionally goof. If you believe that you received a grade that does not accurately reflect your work:
1. Within 48 hours of receiving the grade, write a detailed memo (one page, single-spaced) describing the reasons that you believe the grade was in error.
2. Schedule a meeting with your TA to discuss your memo.
After meeting with me, the TA and I will re-grade the assignment with fresh eyes considering the points noted in your memo. This new grade will be final. There is no guarantee that your grade will improve with re-grading.

**Policy on incompletes**
A grade of incomplete “I” shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., documented illness or hospitalization, death in family, etc.), the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an “I” requires that a contract be initiated and completed by the student before the last official day of class, and signed by both the student and instructor. The contract will specify the time and manner in which the student will complete course requirements, which must in any case occur before the end of the next academic semester.

**Students with disabilities**
TAs and I are available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Except under unusual circumstances, requests for academic accommodations should be made to me and/or to your TA during the first two weeks of the semester, so that we can have time to arrange reasonable accommodations for exams and in-class work. We will work with you and with the Student Disabilities Services (SDS) office to determine reasonable academic accommodations.

**Academic integrity**
Students are required to follow Penn’s code of academic integrity, which is published here: [http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html](http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html).

Students who violate the code will receive a failing grade for the course. Please be sure that you understand how Penn defines plagiarism and cheating, which are defined on this website. If you have any questions, ASK.
Schedule of topics:

Week 1 (8/30)
INTRODUCTION

Week 2 (9/6)
Crash course -- Comparative politics of rich welfare states


Week 3 (9/13)
Comparative health care systems


Week 4 (9/20)
Access to health care


**Week 5 (9/27)**

**FIRST MIDTERM EXAM**

**Clinical bioethics and equity** — reading TBA

**FALL BREAK (10/4)**

**Week 6 (10/11)**

**Health behaviors**


Alexandra Wright, Katherine E. Smith and Mark Hellowell. “Policy lessons from health taxes: a systematic review of empirical studies.” *BMC Public Health* 17 (2017): 583-


**Week 7 (10/18)**

**The Social Determinants of Health model**

**Watch**: *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* San Francisco: California Newsreel, c2008. Episode 1, In Sickness and In Wealth. [Accessible via Canvas Course Reserve]


Week 8 (10/25)
Labor market policy and health


Week 9 (11/1)
Neighborhoods and health

Watch: Health Inequalities - Social Determinants of Health Film (Glasgow). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS3-MZZyVN.


Week 10 (11/8)
SECOND MIDTERM EXAM
Stigma, health care access, and chronic disease management - Reading TBA
Week 11 (11/15)
Race, ethnicity and health


Week 12 (TUESDAY 11/20)
Is inequality making us sick?


**Week 13 (11/29)**

**Health politics, revisited**


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**Week 14 (12/6)**

**POLICY SIMULATION**

Readings TBA