Course Description

Examination of the politics of the health policy process, including the effects of political structure and institutions; economic and social factors; interest groups, classes, and social movements; media and public opinion, and other factors. Students will learn about (1) how health policy is developed, adopted, and implemented, and (2) the political, institutional, economic, social, and other factors that influence and shape the process. The emphasis is both on understanding how public policy is made as well as how to influence the process.

The course meets weekly with the first two hours devoted to lecture and discussion and the third hour usually involving a guest speaker relevant to that session’s topic. Students work in group projects and are responsible for fully participating in their group and completing individual assignments as well.

Requirements

1. **Choose an issue and a position that you will work on during quarter.** This quarter students will focus on either health issues in the 2004 Presidential election campaigns or on California’s SB 2, the Health Insurance Act of 2003. (For details, see course requirements.)

   1.1. **Form project group.** By the end of class two on Jan. 15, turn in 1 page that lists whether your group will focus on an issue related to the Presidential election campaigns or on SB2 and names of group members.

   1.2. **Develop workplan for project:** tasks, timeline, who is responsible for each task, and a list of organizations and coalitions relevant to your issue (due Jan. 22).

2. **Individual Project: Key organizational actor analysis,** due Feb. 5 (week 5). (For details, see course requirements.)

3. **Group Project: Advocacy Strategy and Plan,** due on Monday, March 15 by 5 pm (submit to Drs. Brown’s & Wallace’s office at 10911 Weyburn Ave., Suite 300). You must also include a peer evaluation (to be handed out) of all the other group members’ participation separately in a sealed envelope.

4. **Group Presentation of Project:** Each project group must present the results of their work during the last session of the class, which is an extended class for this purpose.

9/13/04
Deadlines and Grading:

Project team topic and participant list (January 15)
Workplan (January 22) – credit/no credit
Organization analysis: individual paper (February 5) – 40%
Presentation (March 11) – 5%
Policy process analysis: group paper (March 15) – 50%
Peer evaluation of group members (March 15) – 5%

Required Books:


All other readings are reprinted in a course reader available at Westwood Copies, 1001 Gayley (next to Coffee Bean). Phone 208-3233. = **

Class Topic/Readings and Guest Speaker (5-6 p.m.)

Jan 8 What is Health Policy? Who Makes It?


Weissert & Weissert: Introduction (pp. 1-11) and Chapter 6, “The Policy Process,” (pp. 245-280).


Jan 15 The Legislative and Executive Branches in Health Policy

Weissert & Weissert, Chapter 1, “Congress,” (pp. 15-71) and Chapter 2, “The Presidency,” (pp. 72-109).


Resources:

Information on California State Government and legislative processes: ca.lwv.org/lwvc/edfund/govtinfo/state.html

Information on how a bill becomes a law: www.leginfo.ca.gov/guide.html#Appendix_A

Information on Federal legislative processes and on legislation: thomas.loc.gov/
Information on 2004 Presidential candidates’ health care reform proposals:
www.cmwf.org/programs/insurance(collins_reformagenda_671.pdf

**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Jan 22**

**Interest Groups**

Weissert & Weissert, Chapter 3, “Interest Groups,” (pp. 110-153).


**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Jan 29**

**Health Policy, the States and Localities**

Weissert & Weissert, Chapter 5, “States and Health Care Reform,” (pp. 192-241).


**Resources:**

Information on California’s SB 2, Health Insurance Act of 2003:
www.chcf.org/sb2/index.cfm

**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Feb 5**

**Setting Policy Agendas**

Kingdon, Chapter 1, “How Does an Idea’s Time Come?” (pp. 1-22), Chapter 4, “Processes: Origins, Rationality, Incrementalism and Garbage Cans” (pp. 71-89) and Chapter 5, “Problems” (117-145).


Shultz, Chapter 10, “Messages and Media,” pp. 132-156.


Resources:

Guest speaker: TBA

Feb 12 Policy Advocacy: Mobilizing Support for Policy Issues and Positions


Resources:
Families USA tips on media advocacy: http://fusa.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=Advocates_Impressives
Information on Coalition Building I: Starting a Coalition: ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/section_1057.htm and Coalition Building II: Maintaining a Coalition ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/section_1058.htm

Guest speaker: TBA

Feb 19 The Politics of Policy Adoption

Kingdon, Chapter 6, “The Policy Primeval Soup,” (pp. 116-144), Chapter 7, “The Political Stream,” (pp. 145-164), and Chapter 8, “The Policy Window, and Joining the Streams,” (pp. 165-195).


**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Feb 26**

**The Politics of Gun Control: A Case Study in Policy Strategizing**


**Resources:** [www.vpcla.org/](http://www.vpcla.org/)

**Guest speaker:** Billie P. Weiss, MPH, Director, Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles (invited)

**Mar 4**

**Implementing and Shaping Policies**

Weissert & Weissert, Chapter 4, “Bureaucracy,” (pp. 154-191) and “Conclusion” (pp. 318-327).

Kingdon, Chapter 2, “Participants on the Inside of Government,” (pp.21-44)


**Guest speaker:** TBA

**Mar 11**

**Student Presentations of Term Projects** (3-7 pm)
THE POLITICS OF HEALTH POLICY
CHS/HS M287
Winter 2004

Course Requirements

1. **Choose an issue and a position that you will work on during quarter.** This quarter students will focus on either health issues in the 2004 Presidential election campaigns or on California’s SB 2, the Health Insurance Act of 2003.

   1.1. **Form project group.** By the end of class two on **Jan. 15**, turn in 1 page that lists whether your group will focus on an issue related to the Presidential election campaigns or on SB 2 and names of group members. For Presidential election campaigns, each group will choose an issue (e.g., expanding health insurance coverage, Medicare prescription drug coverage, environmental health, abortion, firearms) and organizations or a coalition that works nationally on that issue. For California’s SB 2, you will participate in a group that will focus on its repeal, legal challenges, and implementation issues.

   1.2. **Develop workplan for project:** tasks, timeline, who is responsible for each task, and a list of organizations and coalitions relevant to your issue (due **Jan. 22**). For Presidential election campaigns, your group will either seek to get Democratic candidate(s) and President Bush to adopt your position or try to neutralize their opposition. For California’s SB 2, your group will either seek to block the law and its implementation or to defend the law and get it implemented.

2. **Individual Project: Key organizational actor analysis,** 5-8 pages, 1” margin, due **Feb. 5** (week 5). For one of the key organizations in your group’s policy area (e.g., an advocacy group, provider group, industry/trade group, etc. on any side of the issue – note that it is not a good idea to use a government agency for your group for this assignment), obtain information on the organization and interview at least one key actor in the policy process. From both the interview and other information you gather, provide an analysis of the group’s involvement in the issue area. Be sure to include references to appropriate readings from class and cite the name and phone number of your organizational respondent. In your paper you must discuss (i.e., more than list or describe):
   (a) The group’s mission and membership, why it is interested in the issue, and the governmental level(s) where it is most active in the policy process;
   (b) An analysis of the group’s assets;
   (c) The major activities (strategy/tactics) it conducts in defining issues, promoting solutions, advocating legislation, and influencing implementation;
   (d) How the organization uses data in their advocacy work, and
   (e) An evaluation of the group’s strengths and weaknesses in the policy process.

3. **Group Project: Advocacy Strategy and Plan,** due on Monday, **March 15** by 5 pm (submit to Drs. Brown’s & Wallace’s office at 10911 Weyburn Ave., Suite 300). Each group will develop a 20- to 25-page (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12-point font) strategy and plan to influence the politics and policy your group has chosen. Assume for the assignment that you
are the advocacy director of a new **coalition** that includes the organizations that group members contacted plus additional organizations as coalition members or opponents (you should include about twice as many organizations as you have group members). This plan should incorporate tools from both the class readings and lectures. Your plan should include at least the following issues:

- Brief description of problem area (e.g. why is it an important health issue? who does it affect? etc.), brief summary of policy (legislation, regulation, etc.) involved;
- Key policy actors (organizations, leaders, policy makers) involved in this policy issue and their stakes in the issue, including members of your coalition and opponents;
- Your coalition’s policy goals and overall strategy for achieving them;
- Analysis of your coalition’s assets and how they can be mobilized, and your opponents’ assets and how they can be countered;
- Ways in which the issue can be framed, the framing that is most conducive to your policy goals, and how you plan to establish your framing as the most common basis for discussion of the issue in the public dialogue or debate; and
- A discussion of the tactics and actions proposed to move your issue to resolution; justify your key tactics with reference to their success in other campaigns.

You must cite required readings from class when appropriate. Additional citations, especially to materials such as policy papers, press releases, newspaper articles, etc. produced by participants in the process are also appropriate.

You must also include a peer evaluation (to be handed out) of all of the other group members’ participation separately in a sealed envelope.
Presidential election campaigns

Each work group will choose an issue (e.g., expanding health insurance coverage, Medicare prescription drug coverage, environmental health, abortion, firearms) and a side in the debate (e.g., for or against something).

Your coalition’s goals are to get your position adopted by Presidential candidate(s) to the extent that is feasible or, insofar as it is not feasible, to neutralize Presidential candidates’ opposition. Note that goal will vary greatly across the different issues, with some issues being highly polarized from the beginning and others less so, with candidates seeking to co-opt some issues and positions, etc.

Identify organizations and coalitions that work nationally on that issue.

Each work group member will choose an organization for first assignment (organizational analysis).

Apply assignment instructions to your organization and your coalition

For information on 2004 Presidential candidates’ health care reform proposals, visit: http://www.cmwf.org/programs/insurance/collins_reformagenda_671.pdf

California’s SB 2: repeal, legal challenges, and implementation issues

Your work group will either seek to block SB 2 (Health Insurance Act of 2003) and its implementation, or to defend the law and get it implemented.

Your work group will identify organizations and coalitions that are working on that issue.

Each work group member will choose an organization for first assignment (organizational analysis).

Apply assignment instructions to your organization and your coalition.

For information on SB 2, visit: http://www.chcf.org/sb2/index.cfm