

ECON 177 - The Affordable Care Act - Fall 2017

Professor David Slusky (david.slusky@ku.edu)

Office hours: TR 1-2 in Snow 335 -- Please come talk to me with any questions or concerns!

Department of Economics, University of Kansas

First-year seminar goals:

- Be introduced to intellectual discovery and scholarly inquiry at the university
- Develop and inspire own intellectual curiosity
- Foster critical thinking and learning skills
- Participate in hands-on experiential learning
- Navigate the transition from high school to college

Course goals:

- Understand the policy, economics, history and politics of the ACA
- Use that content as a means to think and talk
- Be inspired to take more math, economic theory, and applied economics
- Gain insight into academic interests toward the objective of selecting of a major

Required textbooks: (You may rent or buy new/used. Please get a physical book not an ebook.)

- Emanuel, Ezekiel J. 2014. *Reinventing American Health Care*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Gruber, Jonathan & N. Schreiber. 2011. *Health Care Reform*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Tentative lecture schedule:

| Week | Date | Topics covered |
|------|-------|---|
| 1 | 8/22 | Overview |
| 2 | 8/29 | The American Health Care System; Visit to Dole Institute |
| 3 | 9/5 | Where We Were in 2010 |
| | 9/7 | Common Book Talk (7 PM) |
| 4 | 9/12 | The Political Context |
| 5 | 9/19 | The Individual Mandate, Medicaid Expansion, & the Supreme Court |
| 6 | 9/26 | Insurance Coverage Details, Subsidies, (Dean Lejuez coming) |
| 7 | 10/3 | Taxes; Library Visit |
| 8 | 10/10 | Technology, Hospital Penalties |
| 9 | 10/17 | (Fall Break) |
| 10 | 10/24 | What Do We Know Now in 2017? (TOPICS DUE) |
| 11 | 10/31 | Attempts at Repeal |
| | 11/6 | First Year Seminar Colloquium (7 PM) |
| 12 | 11/7 | Where Do We Go From Here? (BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE) |
| 13 | 11/14 | EXAM, End of Life Care, (Former HHS Sec. Sebelius coming) |
| 14 | 11/21 | Visit to Watkins Health Center (DRAFT OF PAPER DUE) |
| 15 | 11/28 | Presentation of Student Papers |
| 16 | 12/5 | Presentation of Student Papers |
| | 12/12 | (no class) FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5 PM |

Grading: The course is graded on a standard A-F +/- scale (e.g., A=93%+), though I reserve the right to curve the grade distribution in your favor (e.g., A=91%+). Any grade less than a D- is failing. For credit/no credit, any grade less than a C is considered as no credit.

Grade percentages:

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Attendance | 18% |
| Visit office hours | 5% |
| Weekly reading quizzes | 15% |
| Exam | 20% |
| Assignments for paper | 12% |
| Final paper | 30% |

Attendance: Course attendance is required. If you cannot attend a lecture (for any reason), you can receive credit by emailing me within 24 hours after the class time of the lecture at least 500 original words (typed) answering the discussion questions that were assigned for that lecture.

Office hours: You must come to my office hours (11-12 Tuesdays and Thursdays) at least once by October 1. If you are unavailable during that time please email me to schedule an alternate time. We'll have an informal conversation about your background and interests.

Reading: You are expected to do all of the reading assigned for each lecture. For each item you read, please write down one thing you learned and one thing you found confusing. I will provide you with copies of all reading that is not in either course book. You will also be assigned a podcast, mostly from NPR's Planet Money. The reading is designed to prepare you for a lively class discussion. Without it you will likely be unprepared and unable to participate intelligently.

Quizzes: For each weekly set of readings I will assign several terms. At the beginning of each class you will have a closed book, no notes multiple choice test on five of those terms. This will help you learn the jargon for health insurance / health care public policy, given you the vocabulary necessary to a great class discussion. The terms can be found in the reading or by Googling. There may also be other questions from the reading on the quizzes. If you are absent, then I will drop that quiz and calculate your quiz average from the remaining quizzes.

Piazza: This course has a Piazza forum (search for Econ 177 at <https://piazza.com/ku>). Use is optional but encouraged.

Exam: The exam will be in-person on 11/14, during class, closed book, no electronic devices (including calculators). Please speak to me if you are a varsity athlete who will be traveling and in need of a proctor. If you believe I have made an error in grading your exam send me a detailed email within 48 hours of me returning the exam and then come to my office hours to discuss. I will re-grade your entire exam – your score may increase or decrease.

Make-up exams: A make-up exam for religious holidays will be provided with documentation from a religious official. (If you need to find such an official you can search for campus religious organizations at <https://rockchalkcentral.ku.edu/organizations>.) Please speak to me by

September 5. Last minute make-up exams will only be provided in extreme situations, such as incapacitating illness or a death in the family. Please come speak to me and bring official documentation.

Final paper: The final project in this course will be an 800 word health-related policy proposal. There will be multiple intermediate assignments due throughout the semester, including a list of topics, an annotated bibliography, an initial draft, and an in class presentation. Intermediate assignments will not be accepted late. The final project will lose a full letter grade per day late.

Electronic devices: We are all (me included) addicted to our smartphones/laptops/tablets, and using them has a negative effect on test scores (Carter, Susan Payne, et al. 2016. “The Impact of Computer Usage on Academic Performance: Evidence from a Randomized Trial at the United States Military Academy.” SEII Discussion Paper #2016.02). This class will therefore have a “no electronic devices” policy. If I see you using an electronic device in class, I reserve the right to void your attendance for that lecture. If there is an emergency and you need to answer a phone call please leave the classroom first. Video or audio recording of lectures without my prior consent is also prohibited.

Disability Requirements: If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact the Disabilities Resources Office at the University of Kansas (<http://disability.ku.edu>).

Academic Integrity: The rules of academic integrity will be strictly enforced (please refer to the University of Kansas’s guidelines). Breaches will not be tolerated under any circumstances. More information can be found at <https://studentaffairs.ku.edu/academic-integrity>.

Nondiscrimination: The instructor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students experience this classroom as a safe environment.

Inclusiveness: The University of Kansas supports an inclusive learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated. We believe that all students benefit from training and experiences that will help them to learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society.

Civility: Civility and respect for the opinions of others are very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. Courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times. When you disagree with someone, be sure that you make a distinction between criticizing an idea and criticizing the person. Expressions or actions that disparage a person’s or race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity / expression, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or marital, parental, or veteran status are contrary to the mission of this course and will not be tolerated.

Concealed carry: Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with [state and federal laws](#) and [KU](#)

[weapons policy](#). Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber

Disclaimer: I reserve the right to modify this syllabus in the event of an unforeseen situation.

Tentative reading list (required readings are to be completed BEFORE that lecture)

1: 8/22 Overview

No required reading. I will introduce the class and we will read Gruber chapter 1 together. We will also talk about time management strategies for completing the reading.

2: 8/29 The American Health Care System (Meet at the Dole Institute)

Required reading:

Gruber chapter 2 (pg 17-34)

Emanuel chapters 2, 3 (pg 34-94)

Planet Money: Health Insurance Is Like an All-You-Can-Eat Buffet

http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2009/08/podcast_health_insurance_is_li.html

Terms:

Health insurance

Uninsured

Medical Bankruptcy

Premium

Medicare

Medicaid

Veteran's Affairs Health Care

Employer Sponsored Insurance

Deductible

Copayment

Coinsurance

Out of Pocket Maximum

Skin in the Game

Discussion questions:

1. How is my out of pocket spending for health care determined?
2. What are the differences between Medicaid and Medicare?
3. How does employer sponsored health insurance work?
4. What are medical bankruptcies and why are they a problem?
5. How do hospitals, physicians, pharmaceutical companies, device manufacturers, insurance firms, and consumers primarily interact?

3: 9/5 Where We Were in 2010

Required reading:

Gruber chapters 3-4 (pg 35-49)

Emanuel chapter 4 (pg 95-124)

Gawande, Atul. 2009. "The Cost Conundrum: What a Texas town can teach us about health care." The New Yorker
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/06/01/the-cost-conundrum> (pg 1-16)

Planet Money: 439: The Mysterious Power Of a Hospital Bill
<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2013/02/26/172996963/episode-439-the-mysterious-power-of-a-hospital-bill>

Terms:

Rescission
Negotiated Rate
Malpractice
Defensive Medicine
Expenditures Per Capita
Overutilization
Health Maintenance Organization (HMO)
Fee-for-service
Capitated Payment
For-profit Provider (e.g., hospital, physician practice)
Not-for-profit Provider (e.g., hospital, physician practice)
Pre-existing Condition
Lifetime maximum

Discussion questions:

1. How are for-profit providers different from non-profit providers?
2. Before the Affordable Care Act to limit payments, how did health insurers use pre-existing conditions, recession, and lifetime maximums to limit payments?
3. What is the relationship between fee-for-service, defensive medicine, and malpractice lawsuits?
4. Why is there so much variation in expenditures per capita across geographic areas?
5. How do HMOs limit payments?

Also, the **2017 KU Common Book Talk** with Claudia Rankine will take place on **Thursday, September 7 at 7:00 PM** at the Lied Center. Attendance counts for your grade for the course. Please email me a picture of yourself at the event to show you attended.

If you cannot attend, please listen to

Planet Money: 432: The Price of Free Breast Pumps
<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2013/01/29/170583430/episode-432-the-price-of-free-breast-pumps>

and write a 500 word response in which you summarize and critique the podcast.

4: 9/12 The Political Context

Required reading:

Gruber chapters 5-6 (pg 50-66)

Emanuel chapters 5-6 (pg 127-187)

Planet Money: Should Government Run Our Health Insurance?

http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2009/09/podcast_should_government_run.html

Terms:

Clinton Health Care Reform Effort (i.e., Hillarycare)

Universal Coverage

Federal Budget Deficit

National Debt

Romneycare

Death Panel

Congressional Budget Office (CBO)

Tax Exclusion for Health Insurance Premiums

Cornhusker Kickback

Three Legged Stool

American Medical Association (AMA)

Discussion questions:

1. What are the pieces of the three-legged-stool and how were they essential to Romneycare?
2. What was the role of the CBO in the passage of the ACA?
3. What were the main positions and arguments of the AMA during the passage of the ACA?
4. What policy proposal was labeled “death panels” and what problem was it trying to solve?
5. What was the Cornhusker Kickback and how was it related to passing the ACA?

5: 9/19 The Individual Mandate, Medicaid Expansion, and the Supreme Court

Required reading:

Emanuel chapters 7-8 (pg 188-258)

---- 2015. “Medicaid Primary Care Parity.” Health Affairs

http://healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs/brief_pdfs/healthpolicybrief_137.pdf (pg 1-6)

Planet Money: 379: Does Medicaid Actually Help People?

<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2012/06/15/155135781/episode-379-does-medicaid-actually-help-people>

Terms:

Individual Mandate
Medicaid Expansion
Medicaid Eligibility
Spending Clause
Commerce Clause
Necessary and Proper Clause
National Federation of Independent Business Et Al. v. Sebelius
Medicaid Primary Care Parity (i.e., Medicaid Fee Bump)

Discussion questions:

1. What was the original purpose of the Medicaid expansion?
2. How would the Medicaid expansion change Medicaid eligibility?
3. What is the individual mandate and what role does it play in the success of the ACA?
4. What was the result of the Supreme Court's decision in 2012 with regard to the individual mandate and Medicaid expansion?
5. What was the purpose of the Medicaid Fee Bump?

6: 9/26

Insurance Coverage Details, Subsidies (Dean Lejuez is coming)

Required reading:

Gruber chapter 7 (pg 67-80)

Emanuel chapter 9 (pg 250-278)

Fisman, Ray. 2012. "The Wisdom of the Ailing: The real reason health insurers won't cover people with pre-existing conditions." slate.com,

http://www.slate.com/articles/business/the_dismal_science/2012/03/pre_existing_conditions_the_real_reason_insurers_won_t_cover_people_who_are_already_sick_.html (pg 1-5)

----- 2009. "A Public Insurance Plan." Health Affairs.

http://www.healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs/brief_pdfs/healthpolicybrief_4.pdf (pg 1-5)

Pollack, Harold. 2015 "Medicare for All— If It Were Politically Possible— Would Necessarily Replicate the Defects of Our Current System." Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law 40(4) 921-929.

<http://jhppl.dukejournals.org/content/early/2015/06/09/03616878-3150172.full.pdf>

----- 2010. "Health Reform: Overview of the Affordable Care Act: What Are the Implications for Behavioral Health?" Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 18(3): 1-2

http://media.samhsa.gov/samhsaNewsletter/Volume_18_Number_3/AffordableHealthCareAct.aspx

- Gruber, Jonathan, and Ian Perry. 2011. "Will the Affordable Care Act Make Health Insurance Affordable?" The Commonwealth Fund.
http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/files/publications/issue-brief/2011/apr/1493_gruber_will_affordable_care_act_make_hlt_ins_affordable_reform_brief_compressed.pdf (pg 1-14).
- 2014. "Explaining Health Care Reform: Questions about Health Insurance Subsidies." Kaiser Family Foundation. <http://kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/explaining-health-care-reform-questions-about-health/> (pg 1-8)

Planet Money: Father of the 'Public Option' Defends His Big Idea
http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2009/09/podcast_father_of_the_public_o.html

Terms:

Public Option
Single payer
Substance Abuse
Mental Health
Preventive Screening
Minimum Essential Coverage
Catastrophic Coverage
Health Insurance Exchanges
Parental Mandate
Accountable Care Organization (ACO)
Medicare bundled-payment model
Medical Savings Accounts (aka Health Savings Account – HSA)
High Deductible Insurance Plan
Community Rating
Internal Revenue Service
Premium Subsidy (i.e., Premium Tax Credit)
Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)
Gold/Silver/Bronze Plans
Federal Poverty Line
Advanced Tax Credit Repayment (i.e., Clawback)
Donut Hole

Discussion questions:

1. What are examples of minimum essential coverage and why did the ACA include this provision?
2. What is a community rating and what is its role in the health insurance exchanges?
3. What was the public option and why was it not included in the ACA?
4. What is single payer and why is it not included in the ACA?
5. How is a premium subsidy calculated?

7: 10/3

Taxes (meet at KU Library)

Required reading:

Gruber chapter 9 (pg 91-98)

Mulligan, Casey B. 2015. "The ACA's Unintended Consequences." City Journal,

<http://www.city-journal.org/html/aca%E2%80%99s-unintended-consequences-11577.html> (pg 1-8)

http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/cadillac_tax_letter.pdf (pg 1-3)

Emanuel, Ezekiel J. and Bob Kocher. 2015. "Don't Repeal the Cadillac Tax,"

New York Times http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/02/opinion/dont-repeal-the-cadillac-tax.html?_r=0 (pg 1-3)

Kliff, Sarah. 2015. "2 experts make the case against Obamacare's controversial 'Cadillac tax.'" vox.com.

<http://www.vox.com/2015/10/20/9570781/cadillac-tax-economic-case-against> (pg 1-6)

Planet Money: Taxing Health Care

http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2010/01/podcast_taxing_health_care.html

Terms:

Cadillac Tax

Implicit Labor Tax

Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments

Individual Penalties

Employer Penalties

Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

Medical Device Excise Tax (i.e., Medical Device Manufacturer Tax)

Medicare Payroll Tax Increase

Discussion questions:

1. What are the arguments for and against the Cadillac Tax?
2. What implicit taxes do the premium subsidies create?
3. What does the ACA do to DSH payments and why?
4. Why does the ACA include a tax on medical devices?
5. What is the purpose of the Medicare payroll tax increase?

We will spend the second half of today working with the data librarians at KU.

8: 10/10

Technology, Hospital Penalties

Required reading:

Emanuel chapter 10 (pg 279-294)

Meyer, Robinson. 2015. "The Secret Startup That Saved the Worst Website in America." The Atlantic.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/07/the-secret-startup-saved-healthcare-gov-the-worst-website-in-america/397784/> (pg 1-14)

- Caldwell, Patrick. 2015. "We've Spent Billions to Fix Our Medical Records, and They're Still a Mess. Here's Why." Mother Jones.
<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/10/epic-systems-judith-faulkner-hitech-ehr-interoperability> (pg 1-6)
- Gawande, Atul. 2007. "The Checklist." The New Yorker.
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/12/10/the-checklist> (pg 1-21)
- Wachter, Robert. 2015. "The Overdose: Harm in a Wired Hospital." Backchannel.
<https://backchannel.com/how-technology-led-a-hospital-to-give-a-patient-38-times-his-dosage-ded7b3688558#.2x8cfluk2> (5 parts: pg 1-11, 1-15, 1-13, 1-10, and 1-11).
- 2013. "Medicare Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program." Health Affairs.
http://www.healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs/brief.php?brief_id=102
 (pg 1-5).
- 2015. "Medicare's Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program." Health Affairs.
http://www.healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs/brief.php?brief_id=142
 (pg 1-5)

Planet Money: 504: Can Hospitals Save Money By Making Doctors Squirm?
<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2013/12/18/255259894/episode-504-can-hospitals-save-money-by-making-doctors-squirm>

Terms:

Marketplace
 State Run Exchange
 Healthcare.gov
 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
 Electronic Health Records (EHR)
 Interoperability
 Epic Systems
 Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act.
 Cerner
 Readmission
 Hospital Acquired Complication (HAC)
 Computerized Alert
 Medical Error
 Malpractice

Discussion questions:

1. Why was the healthcare.gov rollout such a disaster?
2. Why don't we have interoperable EHR?
3. How do checklists reduce medical errors?
4. What are the costs and benefits of computerized alerts?
5. "Can hospitals save money by making doctors squirm?"

We will also spend a significant amount of time today reviewing how to search for popular and academic articles, including

<https://lib.ku.edu/databases/econlit>

<http://www.nber.org/papers.html>

<https://scholar.google.com/>

9: 10/17 (Fall Break – No Class)

10: 10/24 What Do We Know Now in 2017? TOPICS DUE

Required reading:

Gawande, Atul. 2015. “Overkill,” *The New Yorker*.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/11/overkill-atul-gawande>

(pg 1-25)

Kliff, Sarah. 2015. “This study is forcing economists to rethink high-deductible health insurance,” *vox.com*.

[http://www.vox.com/2015/10/14/9528441/high-deductible-insurance-](http://www.vox.com/2015/10/14/9528441/high-deductible-insurance-kolstad)

[kolstad](http://www.vox.com/2015/10/14/9528441/high-deductible-insurance-kolstad) (pg 1-11)

----- 2017. “Continuing Progress On The Opioid Epidemic: The Role of the Affordable Care Act,” HHS.

https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/255456/ACA_Opioid.pdf. (pg 1-14)

Creswell, Julie, Reed Abelson and Margot Sanger-Katz. 2017. “The Company Behind Many Surprise Emergency Room Bills,” *The New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/24/upshot/the-company-behind-many-surprise-emergency-room-bills.html?mcubz=0> (pg 1-6)

Sojourner, Aaron and Ezra Golberstein. 2017. “Medicaid Expansion Reduced Unpaid Medical Debt And Increased Financial Satisfaction,” *Health Affairs Blog*.

[http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/07/24/medicaid-expansion-reduced-unpaid-medical-debt-and-increased-financial-](http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/07/24/medicaid-expansion-reduced-unpaid-medical-debt-and-increased-financial-satisfaction/)

[satisfaction/](http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/07/24/medicaid-expansion-reduced-unpaid-medical-debt-and-increased-financial-satisfaction/) (pg 1-6)

Antonisse, Larisa, Rachel Garfield, Robin Rudowitz. 2017. “The Effects of Medicaid Expansion under the ACA: Updated Findings from a Literature Review,” Kaiser Family Foundation.

[http://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/the-effects-of-medicaid-expansion-under-the-aca-updated-findings-](http://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/the-effects-of-medicaid-expansion-under-the-aca-updated-findings-from-a-literature-review/)

[from-a-literature-review/](http://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/the-effects-of-medicaid-expansion-under-the-aca-updated-findings-from-a-literature-review/) (pg 1-5)

Podcast: The Weeds: Why insurers are quitting Obamacare, explained

<https://www.vox.com/2017/5/30/15690832/why-insurers-quitting-obamacare-tennessee-humana-explained>

Terms:

Opioid Epidemic

Surprise Emergency Room Bills

Medical Debt

Financial Satisfaction
Uncompensated Care
Self-Reported Health
Coverage Gains

Discussion questions:

1. What has happen to health care in McAllen, TX over the past several years?
2. What did a new research paper find about high deductible insurance plans?
3. What have been some of the effects of the ACA Medicaid expansion?
4. What are surprise emergency room bills and why do they exist?
5. What effect has the ACA had on the opioid epidemic?

We will also spend time today preparing for the **First-Year Seminar Colloquium**

11: 10/31 Attempts at Repeal

Required reading:

- Eibner, Christine. 2017. "Here Are 4 Better Options Than the GOP Health Care Bills," Fortune. <http://fortune.com/2017/07/10/senate-health-care-republican-bill-trumpcare-obamacare-vote/> (pg 1-4)
- Soffen, Kim and Darla Cameron. 2017. "What the Senate bill changes about Obamacare," Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/politics/obamacare-senate-bill-compare/?utm_term=.a7d200176505.(pg 1-8)
- Yglesias, Matthew. 2017. "What do conservatives want American health care to look like?" vox.com/ <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/28/15874636/conservative-health-vision> (pg 1-5)
- Garthwaite, Craig. 2017. "Why replacing Obamacare is so hard: It's fundamentally conservative." Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-replacing-obamacare-is-so-hard-its-fundamentally-conservative/2017/07/10/c5d64634-6351-11e7-84a1-a26b75ad39fe_story.html (pg 1-2)
- Kliff, Sarah. 2017. "About last night," vox.com. <https://www.vox.com/health-care/2017/7/28/16059336/voxcare-about-last-night-skinny-repeal-vote> (pg 1-4)
- 2017. 2017. "Health Care Freedom Act," Senate Budget Committee. <https://www.budget.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/HealthCareFreedomAct.pdf> (pg 1-8).
- 2017. "Estimate of Direct Spending and Revenue Effects of H.R. 1628, the Healthcare Freedom Act of 2017, an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute," CBO. <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/115th-congress-2017-2018/costestimate/s.a.667.pdf> (pg 1-4).

Podcast: The Weeds: The Republican stealth care plan
<https://www.vox.com/2017/6/16/15817738/the-weeds-republican-stealth-care>

Terms:

Skinny repeal
Planned Parenthood
Singaporean HealthCare System
Premium Surcharge
Cruz Amendment
Community Health Center Fund

Discussion questions:

1. Why do conservatives have a hard time repealing the Affordable Care Act?
2. What ultimately happened on July 27, 2017 in the United States Senate?
3. What were the common elements in all of the different repeal plans?
4. How were the repeal plans different from each other?
5. What were the key takeaways from the CBO's score of the Healthcare Freedom Act of 2017?

Also, the **2017 First-Year Seminar Colloquium** will take place on **Monday, November 6th, 7:00-8:30 PM** in the Kansas Ballroom in the Kansas Union. Attendance counts for your grade for the course. Please email me a picture of yourself at the event to show you attended.

If you cannot attend, please read:

Schoen, Cathy. 2016. "The Affordable Care Act and the U.S. Economy: A Five Year Perspective," The Commonwealth Fund
http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/files/publications/fund-report/2016/feb/1860_schoen_aca_and_us_economy_v2.pdf (pg 1-24)

and write a 500 word response in which you summarize and critique the article.

12: 11/7 Where Do We Go From Here? (ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE)

Required reading:

Dranove, David, and Craig Carthwaite. 2017. "Can President Trump Reduce Drug Prices? Should He?" Code Red. <https://coderedblog.com/2017/01/19/can-president-trump-reduce-drug-prices-should-he/> (pg 1-3).
Barry-Jester, Anna. 2017. "The Obamacare Marketplaces Aren't In A Death Spiral," FiveThirtyEight. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-obamacare-marketplaces-arent-in-a-death-spiral/> (pg 1-7).

- Sanger-Katz, Margot. 2017. “Obamacare’s Future Now Depends on an Unhappy White House,” The New York Times.
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/18/upshot/obamacares-future-now-depends-on-an-unhappy-white-house.html?_r=0 (pg 1-3).
- Kliff, Sarah. 2017. “Exclusive: House Democrats introduce new plan to fix Obamacare,” vox.com. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/12/15955982/democrats-fix-obamacare> (pg 1-7).
- Stein, Jeff. 2017. “The new bipartisan House proposal to fix Obamacare, explained,” vox.com. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/31/16068130/problem-solver-house-proposal> (pg 1-5).
- Cassidy, Bill. 2017. “The next step on health care: Let the states decide,” Washington Post.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/amhtml/opinions/the-next-step-on-health-care-let-the-states-decide/2017/07/14/d9333c34-68c7-11e7-a1d7-9a32c91c6f40_story.html (pg 1-2).
- Sparer, Michael S. 2017. “‘Medicare for all’ is Democrats’ new rallying cry. ‘Medicaid for more’ would be even better,” vox.com
<https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2017/8/11/16119292/medicare-for-all-medicaid-health-care-expansion> (pg 1-10)

Podcast <https://player.fm/series/voxs-the-weeds/aca-repeal-is-finally-dead-maybe>

Terms:

Profit-innovation tradeoff
 Death spiral
 Medicare for all
 Medicare buy-in
 Medicaid for more
 Dedicated stability fund

Discussion questions:

1. Can President Trump reduce drug prices?
2. What is the current state of the Affordable Care Act insurance markets?
3. What are the similarities and differences between the House Democrats’ plan and the bipartisan House plan?
4. What is “Medicaid for more” and why might it be better than “Medicare for all”?

13: 11/14 EXAM, End of Life Care

No required reading or podcasts – study for the exam.

The second half of the class will be listening to and discussing Planet Money Episode 521: The Town That Loves Death.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2016/10/05/496751771/episode-521-the-town-that-loves-death>

Discussion questions:

1. What is a medical advanced directive?
2. Why are possible reasons why La Crosse, Wisconsin has the lowest Medicare spending per capita?
3. How does this all relate to “death panels”?

We will also spend time today talking about how to write your presentation.

14: 11/21 Visit to Watkins Health Center (DRAFT OF PAPER DUE)

No required reading – work on you papers. You are also encourage to bring a draft to the Writing Center (<http://writing.ku.edu/>)

Discussion questions:

1. What is Watkins Health Center?
2. What are possible ways that the ACA has affected Watkins Health Center?

15: 11/28 Presentation of Student Papers (Former HHS Secretary Sebelius Coming)

Required:

First half of student papers. (Will be in my mailbox in Snow)

For each paper, please make notes as to what was:

- 1) Excellent
- 2) Unclear / confusing
- 3) Contradictory
- 4) Surprising

Discussion questions:

Please summarize each paper.

16: 12/5 Presentation of Student Papers

Required:

Second half of student papers. (Will be in my mailbox in Snow)

For each paper, please make notes as to what was:

- 1) Excellent
- 2) Unclear / confusing
- 3) Contradictory
- 4) Surprising

Discussion questions:
Please summarize each paper.

17: 12/12 (no class) FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5 PM

Assignment 1: Two Possible Paper Topics (Due 10/24)

Pick a topic. E.g.:

Medicare
Medicaid
Individual mandate
Subsidies
Exchanges
Pre-existing conditions discrimination ban
Public option
Cadillac Tax
Healthcare.gov
Electronic Medical Records
Hospitals cuts
Physician reimbursements
Drug payments
End of life care
Parental mandate
Essential benefits

Pick an economic concept it doesn't meet (i.e., the problem):

Distortionary (creates incentives that reduce other desired behavior)
Inefficient (prevents resources from being allocated to where marginal benefit equals marginal cost)
Too expensive (costs so much that no plausible benefit would justify it)
Ineffective (doesn't do what it is supposed to)
Implausible (won't or can't work)
Inequitable (provides gains for only very few while the costs are borne more broadly)

For each topic, please write a paragraph where you answer the following questions:

- 1) What do we know about this topic from the course?
- 2) Why do you in particular care about this topic?
- 3) Why do you think your hypothesis (i.e., that the topic doesn't meet the concept) is true?

Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography (11/7)

Please tell me your topic, hypothesis, and proposed fix.

Please include at least five articles on your idea, including

At least one academic economic research article (e.g., search <https://lib.ku.edu/databases/econlit>, <http://www.nber.org/papers.html> or <https://scholar.google.com/>)

At least two popular articles that are not in the syllabus or the additional readings below, from websites such as:

vox.com
fivethirtyeight.com
nyt.com
slate.com
nationalreview.com
city-journal.org
nationalaffairs.com
Kaiser Foundation
Commonwealth Fund
Health Affairs

The rest can be from the required or additional readings.

Please include a paragraph about each source that answers the following questions:

- 1) Who is the author? What is his or her training, background, prior writing, etc.?
- 2) What is the mission of magazine/website/foundation/etc publishing this piece? It is more left-leaning or right-leaning?
- 3) What does the source say? Does it support your hypothesis? Does it agree with or contradict other sources?

Please indicate which source satisfies which requirement.

Use the American Economic Association's References Style:

Journal Articles:

Author Last name, First name. Year. "Article Title." Journal Title, Volume (Issue number if applicable): Page numbers.

Examples:

Acemoglu, Daron. 2002. "Technical Change, Inequality, and the Labor Market." Journal of Economic Literature, 40(1): 7–72.

Baker, George, Robert Gibbons, and Kevin J. Murphy. 2002. "Relational Contracts and the Theory of the Firm." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 117(1): 39–84.

Online Magazine Articles:

Author Last name, First name. Year. "Title." Magazine, date. URL

Example:

Becker, Gary S. 1993. "The Evidence against Blacks Doesn't Prove Bias." Business Week, April 19. <http://bwarchive.businessweek.com/index.jsp>.

Additional readings:

1: Overview

<https://medium.com/@yonatanzungler/how-to-ask-good-questions-about-health-reform-725887002c03#.efqttfrz4>

2: The American Health Care System

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/15/business/dealbook/a-whistle-blower-tells-of-health-insurers-bilking-medicare.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>

3: Where We Were in 2010

Brill, Steven. 2013 "Bitter Pill: Why Medical Bills Are Killing Us." Time Magazine. Available through KU Library.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/29/magazine/those-indecipherable-medical-bills-theyre-one-reason-health-care-costs-so-much.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>

5: The Individual Mandate, Medicaid Expansion, and the Supreme Court

<http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/11pdf/11-393c3a2.pdf>

6: Insurance Coverage Details, Subsidies

On Single Payer:

<http://www.vox.com/2016/1/16/10779270/pollack-single-payer-in-america>

<http://www.vox.com/2016/5/9/11640292/sanders-single-payer-urban-institute>

On the Public Option:

http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2016/02/23/hillary_clinton_once_again_backs_the_public_option_what_took_so_long.html

<http://www.vox.com/2016/5/11/11652900/hillary-clinton-medicare-buy-in>

On Subsidies:

[Http://Www.Supremecourt.Gov/Opinions/14pdf/14-114_Qo11.Pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/14-114_Qo11.Pdf)

<http://blogs.wsj.com/experts/2014/11/12/heres-the-math-for-calculating-aca-subsidies/>

<https://thefinancebuff.com/irs-guidance-on-circular-reference-in-obamacare-premium-subsidy-and-deduction.html>

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/27/66-pct-obamacare-customers-paid-back-subsidies-irs/#>

http://www.healthaffairs.org/healthpolicybriefs/brief.php?brief_id=97

<http://whatifpost.com/how-your-obamacare-insurance-subsidy-is-calculated-an-advanced-lesson.htm>

<http://www.governing.com/blogs/fedwatch/gov-obamacare-mistake.html>

<http://kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/explaining-health-care-reform-risk-adjustment-reinsurance-and-risk-corridors/>

7: Taxes

Mulligan, Casey B. 2015. *Side Effects and Complications: The Economic Consequences of Health Care Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (especially chapters 2, 7, and 11)

8: Technology, Hospital Penalties

On Technology:

Brill, Steven. 2014. "Code Red," Time Magazine

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/its-2015-why-havent-our-medical-records-entered-the-digital-age/>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3068773/innovation-agents/ipads-in-every-hospital-apples-plan-to-crack-the-3-trillion-health-care-se>

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/03/ai-versus-md>

On Hospital Penalties

<http://www.vox.com/2015/7/9/8905959/medical-harm-infection-prevention>

<http://khn.org/news/half-of-nations-hospitals-fail-again-to-escape-medicare-readmission-penalties/>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/obamacare-hospital-readmissions_us_55f732e1e4b0c2077efbb909

<https://www.propublica.org/article/when-evidence-says-no-but-doctors-say-yes>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/12/-god-help-you-youre-on-dialysis/308308/>

10: What Do We Know Now in 2017?

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/10/04-thp-papers-on-health-care/six_economic_facts_about_health_care_and_insurance_after_the_affordable_care_act.pdf

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/insurance-options-dwindle-in-some-rural-regions-1463356031>

<http://www.vox.com/2016/5/17/11690370/obamacare-uninsured-2015>

<http://ldi.upenn.edu/healthpolycysense/how-does-having-health-insurance-impact-preventive-care-and-health-behaviors>

<http://www.vox.com/2016/6/21/11981610/health-spending-slowdown-obamacare>
<http://www.vox.com/2016/5/16/11673558/obamacare-marketplace-competition>
<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/the-effects-of-medicaid-expansion-under-the-aca-updated-findings-from-a-literature-review/>
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2533697>
<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1605913>
http://www.slate.com/articles/business/moneybox/2016/08/is_obamacare_doomed_all_your_questions_answered.html
<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/3/15/14908524/obamacare-lessons-ahca-gop>
<http://www.consumerreports.org/personal-bankruptcy/how-the-aca-drove-down-personal-bankruptcy/>
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2533698>
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/07/19/obamacares-surcharge-for-smokers-may-have-backfired/>
<http://ashecon.org/2017/04/newsletter/v2017n1i2/>
<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/4/13/15262614/obamacare-alaska-reinsurance>
<http://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/individual-insurance-market-performance-in-early-2017/>
http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/07/18/537696772/pushing-hospitals-to-reduce-readmissions-hasnt-increased-deaths?utm_content=bufferd88e6&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

11: Attempts at Repeal

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1616577>
<https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2017/3/20/14982528/geography-ahca-adjustment-political-premiums-aca>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/16/15810524/senate-ahca-explain-please>
<http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/05/04/house-passes-ahca-how-it-happened-what-it-would-do-and-its-uncertain-senate-future/>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/22/15846728/senate-plan-better-care-reconciliation-act>
<https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2017/6/28/15881720/deaths-senate-health-care-bcra>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/20/16005960/voxcare-4-draft-senate-health-care-bills-explained>
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-republicans-have-three-health-care-bills-and-no-clear-paths-forward/>
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2017/06/23/republican-senate-healthcare-bill-creates-scary-marginal-tax-rates/#4c8509161a9f>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/22/15856114/senate-health-bill-death-spiral>
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/26/opinion/senate-bipartisan-health-bill.html?_r=0
<http://theincidentaleconomist.com/wordpress/waivers-are-dead-long-live-waivers/>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/27/16049892/obamacare-medical-device-tax>

12: Where Do We Go From Here?

http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2012/rwjf401409
<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/4/20/15306068/trump-obamacare-hostage-threat-cost-sharing-explained>
<http://kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/the-effects-of-ending-the-affordable-care-acts-cost-sharing-reduction-payments/>
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/trump-is-about-to-make-a-key-obamacare-decision/>
<http://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/an-early-look-at-2018-premium-changes-and-insurer-participation-on-aca-exchanges/>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/8/4/16089732/obamacare-california-marketplace>
<https://www.axios.com/what-could-be-in-a-bipartisan-health-care-package-2468027741.html>
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/6/15731622/nevada-medicaid-for-all>
<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/1/11/14223470/progressive-obamacare-alternative-public-option>
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-the-gop-could-nudge-the-uninsured-toward-coverage-1492555423>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/29/health/aca-obamacare-repeal-how-to-fix-health-care.html>

Assignment 3: Draft of Paper (11/21)

~1000 words

State the problem

Suggest a solution

Explain how the solution will fix the problem

This will be read by the entire class

Please use in text citations for references. No need to quote verbatim - paraphrasing is fine. Examples: The Clinton Healthcare Plan was never brought up for a vote in Congress (Emanuel 2014). McAllen, Texas has one of the highest rates of Medicare spending per capita in the country (Gawande 2009).

Please include your bibliography at the end of the paper, and indicate which source satisfies which requirement. You will still need to satisfy the requirements for the minimum number of sources in each category.

Assignment 4: Presentation (11/28 or 12/5)

A 7 minute talk with slides, followed by a brief class discussion. I recommend structuring the talk like your paper. Use as few words as possible on each slides. Please also practice it aloud several times to ensure you are under 7 minutes.

Assignment 5: Final Paper (12/12)

~ 800 words (part of the exercise is cutting down your rough draft to make it more concise)

Incorporate suggestions and corrections from comments from your classmates.

I will evaluate the final draft of the policy recommendation based on the following criteria:

- Is the problem described substantial?
- Is the recommendation plausible and internally consistent?
- Does the recommendation fix the problem?
- Are there at least five sources cited, with at least two popular articles and one academic article all of which are not on the reading list?