

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 4260/5260:
THE POLITICS OF HEALTH CARE**

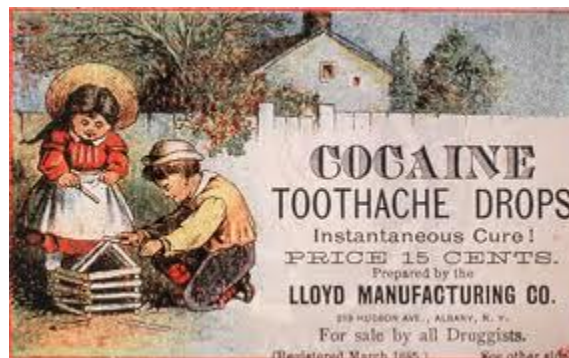


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Fall 2013

Because of its nature both as a public institution and as a political icon, the Canadian health care system is an inherently political institution which cannot be understood without a clear comprehension of both its composition and its relationship to the broader political landscape in Canada. This class will provide a survey of the political and theoretical debates within the area of health care in Canada, including discussions of funding, federalism, and governance. The class will also include a comparative survey of health care systems in other countries.

By the end of this class, students should be able to understand how the Canadian health care system works and to identify the key policy debates and political issues surrounding the provision of health care. Students should be able to describe various policy options and to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each. The final goal is to understand the political context underlying these policy alternatives, and to comprehend how political obstacles can undermine constructive policy objectives.



Texts

1. Primary text: K. Fierlbeck, *Health Care in Canada* (available at the University Bookstore).
2. All secondary readings will be available online. Some journal articles will be available via the 'electronic journals' function on the Killam Library website. Some readings are available as .pdf documents in a folder on your homepage; some have hyperlinks (if hyperlinks fail you may have to google the online source). If you have any problems accessing these sources please let me know.



Assignments

Discussion paper/case study:	20% (use sign-up sheet)
Research paper:	30% (due 2 Dec)
Attendance and participation:	20%
Final exam	30% (final exam period)

Please see the "Assignments" tab on Blackboard for more detailed information regarding assignments. Graduate students should read "additional information for graduate students," also on Blackboard.



POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests, quizzes and exams should make their request to the Office of Student Accessibility & Accommodation (OSAA) prior to or at the outset of each academic term (with the exception of X/Y courses). Please see www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca for more information and to obtain Form A: Request for Accommodation.

A note taker may be required to assist a classmate. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term. If you are interested, please contact OSAA at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

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CLASS OUTLINE

Please note required readings for each week include:

- a. Textbook chapter
- b. At least ONE additional reading, as noted for the week
- c. All student papers submitted online for discussion for the week

Introductory overview to Canadian health care (optional)

- a. Harkness Canadian Health Policy Briefing Tour (.pdf)
- b. Robert G. Evans, "Canada." *Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law*. October 2000.

WEEK ONE (9 September): Conceptual and methodological discussions

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 4*
2. *Additional reading selection:*
 - a. Walt et al., "Doing health policy analysis: methodological and conceptual reflections and challenges," in *Health Policy and Planning*. Sept 2008, 23/5.
 - b. Erasmus and Gilson, "How to start thinking about investigating power in the organizational settings of policy implementation," in *Health Policy and Planning*. Sept 2008, 23/5.
 - c. Huber et al, "How should we define health?" *British Medical Journal (BMJ)* 2011;343:d4163

Questions for discussion:

What are various ways of analyzing health policy?

What ideas have influenced the development of health policy?

What do we want from a health care system?

WEEK TWO (16 September): The debate over funding

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 1*
2. *Additional reading selection:*
 - a. R.G. Evans, "The TRX gives a short course in health economics", in *Healthcare Policy* 6/2 2010.
 - b. Thomson et al, "Can user charges make health care more efficient?" in the *British Medical Journal (BMJ)* 18 August 2010 [BMJ 2010;341:c3759]
 - c. Mythbusters: "A parallel private system would reduce waiting times in the public system" (.pdf)
 - d. Elisabeth Rosenthal, "Paying till it hurts," *New York Times*, 3 August 2013
 - e. Flood, Colleen, Mark Stabile, and Carolyn Hughes Tuohy. 2004. 'How does private finance affect public health care systems?' *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 29/3: 359–96.

f. Skinner, Brett J., and Mark Rovere. 2008. *Paying More, Getting Less*. Fraser Institute. Oct. Available at <http://www.fraserinstitute.org/research-news/display.aspx?id=13276>.

g. I. Dhalla, "Private health insurance: an international overview and considerations for Canada" (.pdf)

Paper:

What is the best way to finance a health care system? Discuss the options and implications.

Policy briefing:

The provincial Minister of Health asks you whether more private financing of the provincial health care system ought to be considered. Where and how might more private financing be utilized (if at all)? What might be some of the (political and policy-oriented) consequences of this?

WEEK THREE (23 September): Health Care Federalism

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 2*
2. *Additional reading selection:*
 - a. Fierlbeck and Lahey, eds. *Health Care Federalism in Canada*: Preface (Lewis), Chapters 1 and 3 (Fierlbeck), 8 (Boessenkoel), and 9 (Marchildon)
 - b. Michael Orsini, "Jurisdictional ambiguity or lack of political will?" available at <http://www.queensu.ca/iigr/working/PublicHealthSeries/MichaelOrsinipublichealth.pdf>

Papers:

- a. *If constitutional responsibility over health care rests legally with the provinces, what responsibility (if any) should Ottawa have regarding health care in Canada?*
- b. *Should provinces be less dependent upon Ottawa for health care funding?*
- c. *Would the fragmentation of the Canadian health care system into 13 quite separate provincial and territorial health care systems be a bad thing?*

Policy briefings:

- a. *The provincial Minister of Health wants to know whether the province should ignore the Canada Health Act and follow its own health care priorities. What do you advise?*
- b. *The federal Minister of Health wants to know whether the government should overhaul the Canada Health Act. What is your recommendation?*

WEEK FOUR (30 September): Health Care and the Courts

Readings:

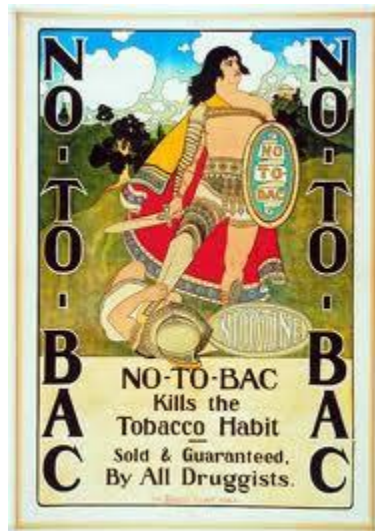
1. *Text, chapter 4*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Martha Jackman, “The Last Line of Defence for [Which] Citizens: Accountability, Equality, and the Right to Health in *Chaoulli*.” 44 *Osgoode Hall L.J.* 349 (2006)
 - b. Antonia Maioni and Christopher Manfredi, “When the Charter Trumps Health Care — A Collision of Canadian Icons.” *Policy Options*, September 2005
 - c. G. Boychuk, “Provincial approaches to funding health services in the post-*Chaoulli* era” (.pdf)

Papers:

- a. *Are the implications of the Chaoulli decision generally positive or generally negative?*
- b. *Ought health care to be governed by Charter rights?*

Policy briefing:

In 2009 a writ was filed with the British Columbia Supreme Court by a number of private clinics (most of whom had already been given intervenor status in the 2005 Chaoulli case). Their position is that the 2005 judgment should be applicable in British Columbia, and that the province’s Medicare Protection Act violates the Section 7 rights of those who wish to purchase private health insurance where health care is not provided in a timely manner. You represent the plaintiffs (or the province). Present your case to the BC Supreme Court.



WEEK FIVE (7 October): Public Health and Health Promotion

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 5*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Robert Evans, “Thomas McKeown, meet Fidel Castro: Physicians, population health and the Cuban paradox,” *Healthcare Policy* 3(4) 2008.
 - b. Moises Velasquez-Manoff, “Status and stress,” in the *New York Times* 27 July 2013.
 - c. McMillan & Nagpal, “The public health system in Canada: not meeting the needs of Canadians,” *HealthcarePapers* 7(3), 2007
 - d. Christopher McDougall, “Still waiting for a comprehensive national epidemic surveillance system: a case study of how collaborative federalism has become a risk to public health,” available at http://www.queensu.ca/iigr/working/PublicHealthSeries/McDougall_Still.pdf
 - e. Robert Evans, “Fat zombies, Pleistocene tastes, autophilia and the “obesity epidemic”, in *Healthcare Policy* 2/2, 2006

Papers:

- a. *If the social determinants of health are so important, why is there so little policy progress in this area?*
- b. *What ought to be done for vulnerable populations?*
- c. *Evaluate the attempt to coordinate public health policy in Canada.*

Policy briefing:

The province wants to tackle the problem of diabetes. You have been asked to address this issue using non-medical determinants of health. Explain how you would design this project. Include obstacles that you would encounter, and strategies for dealing with these obstacles.

WEEK SIX (21 October): Health Human Resources

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 6*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Evans & McGrail, “Richard III, Barer-Stoddart , and the daughter of time,” in *Healthcare Policy* 3(3) 2008.
 - b. Grant and Hurley, “Unhealthy pressure: how physician pay demands put the squeeze on provincial health-care budgets.” University of Calgary School of Public Policy Research Papers. Available at <http://policyschool.ucalgary.ca/?q=content/unhealthy-pressure-how-physician-pay-demands-put-squeeze-provincial-health-care-budgets>
 - c. Nathan Klassen, Tom McIntosh, Renée Torgerson, “The Ethical Recruitment of Internationally Educated Health Professionals: Lessons from Abroad

Papers:

- a. *Are doctors more or less politically powerful than they were 20 years ago?*
- b. *What are the obstacles to collaborative health care?*

Policy briefing:

You are the CEO of a district that includes a region that has not been able to attract a doctor for over a year. Your finances are strictly constrained. How can you meet the health needs of your population?

WEEK SEVEN (28 October): Mental Health Care

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 8*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Marcia Angell, “The epidemic of mental health: why?” and “The illusions of psychiatry”, *The New York Review of Books*, 23 June and 14 July 2011; also read Peter Kramer’s response “in defense of antidepressants” in *The New York Times* (.pdf)
 - b. Allan Horwitz, “How an age of anxiety became an age of depression,” *The Milbank Quarterly* 88/1 (2010)
 - c. Fingard and Rutherford, “Deinstitutionalization and vocational rehabilitation for mental health consumers in Nova Scotia since the 1950s.” *Social History* 2011 44/88
 - d. Mulvale, Abelson and Goering, “Mental health service delivery in Ontario, Canada: how do policy legacies shape prospects for reform?” *Health Economics, Policy, and Law*, v2 (2007), 363-389.
 - e. M. Wiktorowicz, “Restructuring mental health policy in Ontario: the evolving welfare state,” *Canadian Public Administration* 48:3 (2005)

Papers:

- a. *What are the greatest political (as opposed to social) obstacles and challenges to mental health care reform?*
- b. *How do the politics of mental health care reform differ from the politics of general health care reform?*

Policy briefing:

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has asked you to advise them on the best way address the “crisis of invisibility” that has arisen due to decades of deinstitutionalization of those with mental illness. Present your report.

WEEK EIGHT (4 November): Drug Policy and the Politics of the Pharmaceutical Industry

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 7*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. CMAJ, "Can Health Canada protect Canadians from unsafe drugs?" 12 July 2011 (pdf)
 - b. Joe Collier and Ike Iheanacho, "The pharmaceutical industry as an informant", *The Lancet*, (2 Nov 2002), .pdf
 - c. John Abraham, "The pharmaceutical industry as a political player," *The Lancet* (9 Nov 2002), pdf
 - d. David Henry and Joel Lexchin, "The pharmaceutical industry as a medicines provider," *The Lancet* (16 Nov 2002), pdf
 - e. Joel Lexchin, "Bigger and better: how Pfizer redefined erectile dysfunction," *PLoS Medicine*, (11 April 2006) pdf
 - f. Joseph Ross, et al. "Guest authorship and ghostwriting in publications related to Rofecoxib," *Journal of the American Medical Association* (16 April 2008), pdf
 - g. Marc-Andre-Gagnon and Joel Lexchin, "The cost of pushing pills: a new estimate of pharmaceutical promotion expenditures in the United States," *PloS Medicine* (3 January 2008)
 - h. Kalant & Shner, "Research output of the Canadian pharmaceutical industry: where has all the R&D gone?" *Healthcare Policy* 1:4 (2006) (see also commentaries in 2:3 (2007).
 - i. Moffatt & Elliott, "Ghostmarketing," in *Perspectives in Biology & Medicine* 50:1 (2007)
 - j. Garattini & Bertele, "How can we regulate medicines better?" *BMJ* 20 October 2007.
 - k. R. Epstein, "Influences of pharmaceutical funding on the conclusions of meta-analyses" *BMJ* 8 Dec 2007
 - l. Toop & Mangin, "Direct to consumer advertising", *BMJ* 6 Oct 2007

Papers:

- a. *Do we have enough control over Big Pharma?*
- b. *Do drug companies have too much influence on doctors?*
- c. *Should we facilitate more generic production of drugs?*

Policy briefings:

- a. *Design an information session for medical students explaining what they should know about pharmaceutical companies.*
- b. *Propose to Health Canada the shape a new regulatory system for pharmaceuticals could take.*

WEEK NINE (18 November): Health Care in the US

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 11*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Shapiro and Jacobs, "Simulating representation: elite mobilization and political power in health care reform"(2010), pdf
 - b. Paul Krugman, "Insurance and freedom," *New York Times* 7 April 2013
 - c. Fred Abelson, "Health insurers making record profits as many postpone care," *New York Times* 13 May 2011 (pdf) and International Federation of Health Plans, 2009 Comparative Price Report (pdf)
 - d. Thomas Miller, "Health reform: only a cease-fire in a political hundred years' war." *Health Affairs* 29/6, June 2010
 - e. Robert Kuttner, "Market-based failure: a second opinion on US health care costs," *New England Journal of Medicine* 7 February 2008, 358(6)
 - f. Atul Gawande, "The cost conundrum," *The New Yorker* 1 June 2009
 - g. Rochefort and Donnelly, "The changing influence of the Canadian single-payer model in America's national health care debate," *Harvard Health Policy Review* 9/1 2008, available via Killam as ejournal or via hyperlink at http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~hhpr/currentissue/132-148%20International_Rochefort_edited.pdf
 - h. Gopnik and Gladwell, "Health care forum: Canada v. US", *Washington Monthly* (March 2003)
 - i. Aaron and Ginsburg, "Is health spending excessive? If so, what can we do about it?" *Health Affairs* (Sept/Oct 2009), pdf
 - j. Woolhandler and Himmelstein, "Competition in a publicly funded healthcare system" (pdf)
 - k. Jonathan Oberlander, "Systemwide cost control - the missing link in health care reform," *New England Journal of Medicine* (2 September 2009)
 - l. Matt Kapp, "The sick business of health-care profiteering," *Vanity Fair* 24 September 2009

Papers:

- a. *Is the American system, overall, a superior or inferior health care system compared to Canada's?*
- b. *What explains the sui generis character of the American health care system?*

Policy briefing:

The Minister of Health wants to know whether the province can, and should, introduce a more robust private health insurance option. Examine the discussions over different health insurance strategies in the US, and determine what may be useful for the province.

WEEK TEN (25 November): European Healthcare Models I: Britain, Sweden, and the “internal market”

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 9*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. Ham, Dixon and Brooke: *Transforming the Delivery of Health and Social Care*. King’s Fund, 2012
 - b. An alternative guide to NHS reforms (animation) at <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/nhs-65/alternative-guide-new-nhs-england> and timeline prezi at <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/topics/nhs-reform/health-and-social-care-act-2012-timeline>
 - c. Kieran Walshe and Chris Ham, “Can the government’s proposals for NHS reform be made to work?” *BMJ* 31 March 2011 (BMJ 2011;342:d2038)
 - d. The King’s Fund, *Liberating the NHS: The right prescription in a cold climate?*; and Briefing on the Health and Social Care Bill (and Amendments) at http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/current_projects/the_health_and_social_care_bill/
 - e. Stevens and Mays, “Is there evidence that competition is a good thing?” in *BMJ*, v 343 (9 July 2011)
 - f. Rudolf Klein, “The troubled transformation of Britain’s National Health Service,” *New England Journal of Medicine*, 27 July 2006.
 - g. “Renovating the Commons: Swedish Health Care Reforms in Perspective.” By: Saltman, Richard B.; Bergman, Sven-Eric. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy & Law*, Feb-Apr 2005, Vol. 30 Issue 1/2, p253-275.
 - h. Bengt Ahgren, “Competition and integration in Swedish health care.” *Health Policy* July 2010 96/2

Papers:

- a. *Evaluate the proposed NHS reforms.*
- b. *What are the political obstacles faced by the NHS?*
- c. *What are the lessons Canada can learn from either/both England’s and/or Sweden’s health care systems?*

Policy briefing:

The Minister wishes to know whether Canada should introduce an internal market for its health care system. Prepare a report, based on the experiences of Britain and Sweden.

WEEK ELEVEN (2 December): European Healthcare Models II; France, Germany, and “insurance funds”

Readings:

1. *Text, chapter 10*
2. *Additional reading selection*
 - a. “State Autonomy, Policy Paralysis: Paradoxes of Institutions and Culture in the French Health Care System”. By: Rochaix, Lise; Wilsford, David. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy & Law*, Feb-Apr2005, Vol. 30 Issue 1/2, p97-119, 23 p 11
 - b. M. Steffen, "The French Health Care System: Liberal Universalism," *Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law* 35/3, 2010
 - c. Health Care Reform in Germany: Patchwork Change within Established Governance Structures”. By: Altenstetter, Christa; Busse, Reinhard. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy & Law*, Feb-Apr2005, Vol. 30 Issue 1/2, p121-142
 - d. Lisac et al., "Access and choice - competition under the roof of solidarity in German health care: an analysis of health policy reforms since 2004." *Journal of Health Economics, Policy & Law* 5/1 2010
 - e. Kaiser Foundation 2009, “Cost sharing for health care: France, Germany and Switzerland”
 - f. Stefan Gress, “Private health insurance in Germany: Consequences of a dual health system” *Healthcare Policy* 3:2 (2007)

Paper:

What are the advantages/disadvantages of the French (or German) health care system? Can any of these advantages be applied to Canada?

Policy briefing:

The First Ministers’ Conference will be discussing whether Canada should introduce a system of health insurance based upon the concept of “social insurance.”

Prepare a briefing document, based on the experiences of France and Germany.





STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.