Graduate Seminar in Health Politics and Policy

Spring 2011
Professor Daniel Sledge
The University of Texas at Arlington

Meeting Time: Thursday, 2pm-4.50pm

Location: University Hall 121

Professor: Daniel Sledge

Email: dsledge@uta.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3pm-4.45pm and by appointment, University Hall 408

Description of Course Content: Debates over the role of government in providing access to health care have been a prominent and divisive feature of American politics for the past century. Over the decades, various political groups have portrayed national health insurance as anything from a basic human right to an irreversible step towards totalitarianism. This course will survey the political terrain of the health care debate in the United States as well as major features of federal health policy. President Obama’s recent health care initiative will be considered within the context of American political institutions and previous attempts to pass health care legislation.

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials: Starr, The Social Transformation of American Medicine; Hacker, The Divided Welfare State; Olson, The Politics of Medicaid; Oberlander, The Political Life of Medicare; Washington Post Staff, Landmark; Blumenthal and Morone, The Heart of Power; The remainder of the course materials will be available on-line or through electronic reserve.

Descriptions of major assignments and examinations with due dates: The grade for this course has three components. 1) Each student choose one week in which she or he will give a brief presentation of the week’s material. Presentations should include a summary of important arguments, some thoughts on the evidence used, and questions to be used as a starting point for class discussion. 2) Students are expected to participate in class discussions. 3) A twenty-page research paper, dealing with a topic vetted by me and emerging from the course content, is due (in hard copy) by 4.00pm on Tuesday, May 10th.

Grading Policy:
F: Below 60%
D: 60-70
C-: 70-72, C: 73-76, C+: 77-79
B-: 80-82, B: 83-86, B+: 87-89
A-: 90-92, A: 93-98, A+: 99-100%
**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to attend every meeting of the course. Exceptions will be made for illnesses, deaths, etc…

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Academic Integrity:** I take cheating extremely seriously. Cheating will result, without exception, in an automatic “F” in the course. It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. According to the UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

**Student Support Services Available:** The University of Texas at Arlington has established a variety of programs to help students meet the challenges of college life. Support to students includes advising, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and writing assistance. For a complete list of academic support services, visit the Academic Assistance resource page of the Office of Student Success Programs,
www.uta.edu/uac/studentsuccess/academic-assistance. To help students address personal, academic and career concerns, individual counseling is also available. For more information, students are encouraged to contact Counseling Services www.counseling.uta.edu at (817) 272-3671 or visit a counselor in 216 Davis Hall.

Electronic Communication Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University “MavMail” address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

Week 1: (January 20): Introduction, no required reading.

Week 2: (Jan. 27) Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance in Context

Week 3: (Feb. 3) The Problem of Cost

Week 4: (Feb. 10) American Exceptionalism?
Week 5: (Feb. 17) Progressivism, The New Deal Coalition, and the Outlines of Health Politics in the United States

Week 6: (Feb. 24) Presidential Power

Week 7: (March 3) The Divided Welfare State

Week 8: (March 10) Medicare

Week 9: (March 17) SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS

Week 10: (March 24) Republicans and Medicare

Week 11: (March 31) NO CLASS (due to Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meting)

Week 12: (April 7) Medicaid
Olson, *Politics of Medicaid*, pg. 1-102, 223-234

Week 13: (April 14) Imagining Reform

**Week 14: (April 21) Barack Obama and Congress**


**Week 16: (April 28) The Obama Health Care Legislation**


**Week 17: (May 5) Interpretations of “ObamaCare”**