

University of Vermont  
Department of Community Development and Applied Economics



Spring 2011

# Special Topics in Health Care: The History of Health Care Reform

PA 395



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**Classes:** January 24 – May 9, 2011  
  
Mondays 5:10 – 8:10 p.m.  
Lafayette L111

**Office Hours:** The instructors will be available by appointment.

## ***Course description***

Vermont has been a leader in state-level health care reform for over 40 years, from early efforts at planning and coordination to current efforts such as Catamount Health, the Blueprint, Global Commitment, and most recently, the legislature's commissioning of a project to design three options for the total overhaul of health care in the state (the "Hsiao report"). In this class, we will examine each major initiative, attempting to integrate policy decisions into a broader political and socioeconomic context, including federal reform efforts of the past century.

## **Course objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will have developed an in-depth understanding of health care reform efforts both nationally and in Vermont, with special reference to several recurring themes: large-scale change vs. incremental change; the respective roles of the public and private sectors; and federal-state dynamics.

## **Course methods**

This course is a seminar-style graduate course that will entail a variety of teaching methods, including lectures by the instructors, general class discussions, student presentations, and guest presentations as appropriate.

## **Course requirements and evaluations**

Students will be evaluated based on the following:

◆ **Seminar presentation** — 40%

Each student (or pair of students, depending on final class size) will analyze be responsible for researching and presenting a one-hour lecture on the assigned class topic for classes on March 14 through April 25. The presentation should draw on the resources discussed in the early part of the semester, include personal interviews of individuals involved in or knowledgeable about the assigned topic, and demonstrate original analysis and thinking by the student. Details about this assignment will be discussed in class.

◆ **Final Project: Analytical Paper on the Hsiao Report** — 40%

A final project will take the place of a final examination. Each student will prepare and submit a final paper that analyzes one or more of the three options included in the Hsiao report. The paper should demonstrate the student's understanding of how the Hsiao proposals relate to previous reform efforts in Vermont and nationally, include a reasoned analysis of how the Hsiao proposals differ from (or are similar to) those efforts, and discuss the strengths, weaknesses and feasibility of the proposals.

***Papers must be submitted to the instructors by e-mail by no later than 5:00 on May 9. An unexcused failure to meet this deadline may result in a reduction in the final grade for the class.***

◆ **Class Participation** — 20%

## ***Blackboard***

Additional class materials, including assigned readings, will be posted on the class's Blackboard website rather than handed out. The site will also include the class roster and contact information for all students and periodic announcements.

All students are expected to be able to access Blackboard. For more information about how to use Blackboard, go to <https://bb.uvm.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp> or contact [blackboard@uvm.edu](mailto:blackboard@uvm.edu) for assistance.

## ***Required Text***

The class has two required texts:

David Blumenthal and James A. Morone, *The Heart of Power: Health and Politics in the Oval Office* (University of California Press, 2009).

Hamilton Davis, "Health Care," Chapter 16 of *Vermont State Government Since 1965* (University of Vermont, 1999) (posted on Blackboard).

Other required readings, consisting mainly of health care-related articles from health journals and newspapers, will be made available in advance of class via e-mail or through your Blackboard account.

## ***Class Schedule and Assignments***

<b>January 24, 2011:</b>	<b>Introduction and Overview of Class Review of Health Policy</b>
<b>January 31, 2011:</b>	<b>Review of Health Policy (continued) What is “Reform,” Anyway?</b>
<b>February 7, 2011:</b>	<b>Current Reform Activities: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)</b>
<b>February 14, 2011:</b>	<b>Current Reform Activities: Vermont’s Act 128</b>
<b>February 21, 2011:</b>	<b>PRESIDENTS’ DAY (no class)</b>
<b>February 28, 2011:</b>	<b>The Archaeology of Reform – Sources and Readings</b>
<b>March 7, 2011:</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK (no class)</b>
<b>March 14, 2011:</b>	<b>Ancient History – National Reform Efforts Through the 1950s (student presentation)</b>
<b>March 21, 2011:</b>	<b>Ancient History – Vermont Reform Efforts Through the 1950s (student presentation)</b>
<b>March 28, 2011:</b>	<b>The 1960s: Medicare, Medicaid and the Great Society (student presentation)</b>
<b>April 4, 2011:</b>	<b>The 1970s: New Directions – Nixon, Carter and the Beginning of State Health Planning (student presentation)</b>
<b>April 11, 2011:</b>	<b>The 1980s: VHIP, Dr. Dynasaur, and Incrementalism (student presentation)</b>
<b>April 18, 2011:</b>	<b>The 1990s: “HillaryCare” and Act 160 (student presentation)</b>
<b>April 25, 2011:</b>	<b>The 2000s: Catamount Health and the Blueprint for Health (student presentation)</b>
<b>May 2, 2011:</b>	<b>The 2010s: Back to the Future?</b>
<b>May 9, 2011:</b>	<b>Final paper due via e-mail to instructors (deadline: 5:00 p.m.)</b>