PSCI 221: Health Policy and Politics in Comparative Perspective
Fall semester 2015, Thursdays 1:30-4:30pm, DRL Room 3N1H

Professor:
Dr. Julia Lynch
3440 Market Street, Suite 300
jflynch@sas.upenn.edu*
Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-3pm or by appointment

*Apart from emergencies, please use Professor Lynch’s email only to schedule appointments. She really wants to see you in person! For questions that do not rise to the level of an office appointment, please consult the syllabus first and then email a TA if you still need help.

Teaching Assistants:

Dr. Nick Evans
Postdoctoral Fellow,
Dept. of Medical Ethics and Health Policy
3401 Market Street, Suite 320
Room 341
Office phone: 215-573-0246
evann@mail.med.upenn.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11-1pm, or by appointment

Connie Dudley, Esq.
Manager, Technology Transactions and Policy
Office of the VP for Research
University of MD, Baltimore County
Cell phone: 240-566-2781
dudleyco@mail.med.upenn.edu
Office Hours: Fridays via phone, email, Skype etc.

Course description
This course examines the relationship between politics and the health of populations in the world’s rich democracies, including the United States. The key questions the course addresses are how and why the health of populations differs in these countries. The course is divided into three main segments. The first focuses on health care systems, the second on social and political determinants of population health, and the third on the production of health policy strategies for the post-financial crisis political economies. There are no prerequisites, but prior coursework in comparative politics at the 100 or 200 level will be helpful.

After taking PSCI 221, you will
- Be familiar with the range of variation across the rich industrialized democracies in health policies.
- Understand the political genesis of this policy variation.
- Understand the implications of different policy choices for equity, efficiency, and population health.
- Be able to articulate an informed set of health policy preferences that would promote your own goals.
Course requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>In-class participation and homework assignments</td>
<td>25% of final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes</td>
<td>10% of final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>First midterm exam (Oct 8)</td>
<td>20% of final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second midterm exam (Nov 12)</td>
<td>25% of final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
<td>20% of final grade</td>
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Class and section participation grades are based on (a) attendance, (b) participation in activities and discussions, (c) completion of small assignments other than the final project, and (d) personal conduct. Conduct expectations include: arriving to class on time; treating classmates, guests, and instructors with respect; and ensuring that all communication, including electronic, is appropriate and courteous.

Makeup exams will not be scheduled except in the case of documented medical emergency or a death in the family. Please check your schedules NOW to ensure that you have no conflicts.

Reading and watching assignments

There is one book available for purchase: Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair, eds., *Representative Government in Modern Europe* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2006), 5th ed. It is available at Penn Book Center, 130 S 34th St. You will need access to this book to prepare for Week 2; it will also serve as a useful resource throughout the semester.

All other reading and viewing assignments are available on Canvas and must be completed before coming to class. Please note that the files posted to Canvas sometimes contain more pages than are required for a specific module. Keep your syllabus handy and be sure to check which pages you need to read.

There will be a short quiz covering main concepts from the readings at the start of class each week.

This class is a SAIL class: it makes extensive use of STRUCTURED, ACTIVE, IN-CLASS LEARNING. The required readings and audiovisual assignments, done outside of class, provide an introduction to basic facts and concepts. Time in class is devoted to instructor-led discussions and structured activities such as debates, case studies, field observation, and writing policy briefs, supplemented by occasional mini-lectures. This in-class work will allow you to learn by doing, apply theoretical principles to real-world situations, and receive real-time feedback.
How to prepare for class

• **Read.** The required readings and viewings for each topic by the date listed on the syllabus. There will be a brief quiz on the readings at the start of class. The quizzes will test major concepts covered in the readings.

• **Take notes.** What is each reading about? What kind of argument is it making? What kinds of evidence, examples do the authors use? Are you convinced? Why or why not? What surprised you? What bothered you? If you take only one note on a reading, it should be your reaction to it, as this has been shown to be the best aid to recalling the content of a reading.

• **Print out the readings.** You will need to have access to printouts of the readings to refer to during class time. We suggest that you print out the syllabus and all readings and keep them in a binder that you bring to class with you each week.

• **Do background research.** This is a 200-level class in comparative politics. If you come across terms or ideas that are unfamiliar to you, do a little digging before you come to class so that we can start on the same page.

• **Be prepared to be participate** and engage as an individual scholar and in small group activities. This is a SAIL class; hence, it requires active in-class learning.

Use of electronic devices in class
The best available research shows that indiscriminate use of laptops in the classroom, including for note-taking, detracts from learning (see [http://tinyurl.com/m6jl7xv](http://tinyurl.com/m6jl7xv) and [http://tinyurl.com/lg88gys](http://tinyurl.com/lg88gys)). Hence, laptops and tablets will be used only during specified activities. Please prepare for class in advance by printing any readings or class materials before coming to class. The use of mobile communication devices is prohibited during class time.

Final project
Your final project is a group project to be completed with 2-3 other students who will be assigned to you. Your group will prepare a policy brief and participate in a policy simulation in the final week of class. The policy simulation exercise and policy brief will target a health problem occurring in a European country in the context of the post-2008 recession and austerity programs. More detailed instructions will be made available after the second midterm, and a grading rubric will be handed out at the start of the assignment.

Final written policy briefs are due on Friday, December 4. Papers are due by 8:00pm via email and in hard copy in your TA’s mailbox on Monday morning, December 7. Papers received via email after 8:00pm on December 4 will be graded down 1/3 of a day per day of lateness.
Grading policy
We take great care in grading assignments and exams fairly and accurately. We do, however, occasionally goof. If you believe that you received a grade that does not accurately reflect your work:
1. Within 48 hours of receiving the grade, write a detailed memo (one page, single-spaced) describing the reasons that you believe the grade was in error.
2. Schedule a meeting during office hours to discuss your memo. After meeting, we will then re-grade the assignment with fresh eyes considering the points noted in your memo. This new grade will be final. There is no guarantee that your grade will improve with re-grading.

Policy on incompletes
A grade of incomplete “I” shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., documented illness or hospitalization, death in family, etc.), the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an “I” requires that a contract be initiated and completed by the student before the last official day of class, and signed by both the student and instructor. The contract will specify the time and manner in which the student will complete course requirements, which must in any case occur before the end of the next academic semester.

Students with disabilities
In compliance with Penn policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except under unusual circumstances, to arrange reasonable accommodations. Students must register with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Academic integrity
Students are required to follow Penn’s code of academic integrity, which is published here: http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html. Students who violate the code will receive a failing grade for the course. Please be sure that you understand how Penn defines plagiarism and cheating, which are defined on this website. If you have any questions, ASK.
Schedule of topics:

**Week 1: Introduction (8/27)**
*Reading to be completed before start of class on 9/3*


**Week 2: Crash course -- Comparative politics of rich democracies (9/3)**

**Week 3: Comparative health care systems (9/10)**


**Week 4: Access to health care (9/17)**


**Week 5: Health behaviors (9/24)**


**Week 6: The Social Determinants of Health model (10/1)**


**FALL BREAK**

**Week 7: FIRST MIDTERM EXAM (10/15)**
**Week 8: Income, employment and health (10/22)**


**Week 9: Race, ethnicity and health (10/29)**


**Week 10: Neighborhoods and health (11/5)**

Watch: *Health Inequalities - Social Determinants of Health* Film (Glasgow). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS3-MZZyVN>.


Week 11: SECOND MIDTERM EXAM and Global health security (11/12)
Readings for Global health security TBA

Week 12: Health politics, revisited (11/19)


THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 13: Health in the Post-Financial Crisis World and POLICY SIMULATION (12/3)
