

**University of Florida**  
**College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus**  
**HSA4154 Health Policy (3 Credit Hours)**

Semester: Spring 2025

Delivery Format: On-Campus

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Instructor Name: Dr. Ashby Walker

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Email Address: [afwalker@ufl.edu](mailto:afwalker@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Thursdays 1 to 3PM

Class meeting times: Mondays 3-4:55 p.m. in G-301

Teaching Assistants: Benjamin Churba, 3189, [chube01@ufl.edu](mailto:chube01@ufl.edu)

Preferred Course Communications: Please use direct email as the primary method of contact ([afwalker@ufl.edu](mailto:afwalker@ufl.edu)).

Emails received on weekdays (Monday-Thursday) can expect a response within 24 to 48 hours. Your message is important to me. If you have not received a response within two days, please reach out to me again.

### **Prerequisites**

HSA3111 US Healthcare (or equivalent)

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## **PURPOSE AND OUTCOME**

### **Course Overview**

This course offers a foundation in health policy, providing the tools for assessing, evaluating, preparing, and implementing health policies. Students will research health issues, formulate effective solutions, and understand the impact of health policy on the physical, mental, social, and economic well-being of the population.

### **Relation to Program Outcomes**

Health policy in the US constitutes a dynamic and vigorously debated landscape, exerting profound influence on healthcare practices across local, state, and federal levels. Healthcare professionals spanning diverse healthcare fields find themselves immersed in this complex environment. Acquiring in-depth knowledge of health policy is imperative for those working and interacting in the healthcare system. This undergraduate course expands student knowledge of the healthcare environment by offering a comprehensive foundation in health policy analysis. Students learn the essential tools for understanding, assessing, and evaluating policies using real-world applications, interactive discussions, and hands-on projects in a dynamic learning environment. The course also equips students with the knowledge required to prepare and implement health policies, effectively research, comprehend and prioritize health issues, and formulate effective solutions. Students will be challenged to create impactful policy briefs addressing multifaceted aspects of health and well-being, through clearly articulating problems, proposing policies, making compelling cases, and discussing the potential impact on advancing population health.

### **Course Objectives and/or Goals**

By the end of this course, students will be able to

***Appraise the importance of healthcare policy in shaping and delivering high-quality healthcare services aimed at achieving national, local, and or regional goals and improving the healthcare delivery system through the following course objectives:***

1. **Understanding Health Policy Dynamics:**
  - Characterize the intricate policymaking process in the United States, delineating the roles of legislators, government agencies, not-for-profit, and for-profit organizations.
2. **Critical Examination of Healthcare Delivery:**

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of health policy issues pertaining to the organization, financing, and delivery of healthcare within the United States.
3. **Economic Evaluation of Healthcare Proposals:**
    - Critically evaluate healthcare policy proposals and reforms, applying an economic lens to anticipate and assess their potential implications.
  4. **Comprehensive Healthcare Policy Analysis:**
    - Participate in the policy analysis process, beginning with problem identification and definition, to develop a holistic understanding of healthcare policy evaluation.
  5. **Health Policy Research Skills:**
    - Develop the ability to identify and critically assess scientific and policy papers from various disciplines that contribute to the formation of health policy.
  6. **Analytical Proficiency in Health Policy:**
    - Demonstrate proficiency in synthesizing complex information both in written and oral formats, offering insightful interpretations, and effectively communicating nuanced health policy analyses to diverse audiences.

### Instructional Methods

This course uses a variety of learning techniques to deliver the course content and facilitate student learning.

1. **Lectures:** Delivered in-person each week
2. **Assigned learning resources:** Online learning resources such as videos and supplementary materials will be posted on the course Canvas page.
3. **Textbook and Supplemental Readings:** Will be assigned on Canvas.
4. **Assessments:** A variety of assessments will be used to facilitate student learning, including real-world application projects, quizzes, assignments, and active participation in class discussions and weekly in-class activities.

## DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT

### Topical Outline/Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading/Material	Assignments
1	Jan 13	<b>Introduction to the Course</b> - Introductions - Review syllabus - General discussion of health policy	Barr Chapter 2: Health, Health Care, and the Market Economy	Syllabus Quiz & "About Me" form due via CANVAS on Jan 17, by 5pm EST
2	Jan 20	<b>MLK Day: No In-Person Session</b> <b>Online Materials Only</b>  <b>Connecting Health Policy to Health Outcomes in the U.S.</b>	Barr Chapter 3: Health Care as a Reflection of Underlying Cultural Values and Institutions  View PBS documentary <i>Blood Sugar Rising</i> on CANVAS	<b>Memo #1 Due</b> on Jan 24 by 5 pm EST (see Memo guidelines on the CANVAS site and Memo prompts)  <b>Video Journal #1 Due</b> on Jan 24 by 5 pm EST

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading/Material	Assignments
3	Jan 27	<b>The Importance of Health Policy to Public Health: The Social Ecological Model</b>	Articles on CANVAS: ~ Pollack Porter KM, Rutkow L, McGinty EE. The Importance of Policy Change for Addressing Public Health Problems. Public Health Rep. 2018;133(1_suppl):9S-14S. ~ Walker AF, Graham S, Maple-Brown L, et al. Interventions to address global inequity in diabetes: international progress. Lancet. 2023;402(10397):250-264.	<b>Quiz 1:</b> in-class (covering two online articles assigned this week)
4	Feb 3	<b>Health Care Reform in Context: U.S. Health Care Policy Compared to Other Nations</b>	Barr Chapter 1: The Affordable Care Act and the Politics of Health Care Reform  CANVAS Article: <a href="https://www.vox.com/health-care/2020/1/29/21075388/medicare-for-all-what-countries-have-universal-health-care">https://www.vox.com/health-care/2020/1/29/21075388/medicare-for-all-what-countries-have-universal-health-care</a>  CANVAS PBS Frontline: Health Care: America versus the World <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BytzrjEfyfA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BytzrjEfyfA</a>	<b>Quiz 2:</b> in-class (covering Barr Chapter 1 and the Vox editorial online)  <b>Video Journal #2 Due</b> on Feb 7 by 5 pm EST
5	Feb 10	<b>Health Policy Reform Continued</b>  <i>Guest Lecture by Dr. Bruggeman (MD, Pediatric Endocrinology UF &amp; ADA Policy Advocacy Committee)</i>	Barr Chapter 5: Health Insurance, HMOs, and the Managed Care Revolution  CANVAS reading: <a href="https://diabetesvoice.org/en/news/urgent-call-for-insulin-affordability/">https://diabetesvoice.org/en/news/urgent-call-for-insulin-affordability/</a> [Bruggeman]  CANVAS Op-Ed from Gainesville Sun: High Medication Costs put Health at Risk <a href="https://www.gainesville.com/story/opinion/columns/more-voices/2018/07/10/brittany-bruggeman-high-medication-costs-put-health-at-risk/11539012007/">https://www.gainesville.com/story/opinion/columns/more-voices/2018/07/10/brittany-bruggeman-high-medication-costs-put-health-at-risk/11539012007/</a> [Bruggeman]	<b>Memo #2 Due</b> on Feb 14 by 5 pm EST  <b>Quiz 3:</b> In-class covering Chapter 5 and Dr. Bruggeman's online Op-Ed)
6	Feb 17	<b>Health disparities and the role of Health Policy: Considerations for Economic Inequity and Pediatric Populations</b>	Barr Chapter on 7: Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program Barr Chapter 8: The Uninsured	<b>Quiz 4:</b> In-class on Dr. Walker's Lecture after she delivers it [open note]
7	Feb 24	<b>Health Disparities and the Role of Health Policy: Considerations for Older Populations</b>	Barr Chapter 6: Medicare Barr Chapter 11: Long-Term Care	<b>Video Journal #3 Due</b> on Feb 28 by 5 pm EST
8	Mar 3	<b>Pharmaceutical Policy</b>	Barr Chapter 10 ~CANVAS reading: Eberly et al. Racial, Ethnic, and SES Inequities in Glucagon-Like Peptide-1. JAMA Health Forum. 2021;2(12):e214182. Published 2021 Dec 17. ~CANVAS Documentary: Big Pharma: Market Failure	<b>Memo #3 Due</b> March 7 by 5 pm EST

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading/Material	Assignments
9	Mar 10	<b>Policy Analysis Versus Policy Evaluation: the Role of Data and Evidence in Influencing Policy</b>	CANVAS Link: CDC Policy Analysis Guidelines <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/polaris/php/cdc-policy-process/policy-analysis.html">https://www.cdc.gov/polaris/php/cdc-policy-process/policy-analysis.html</a>  CANVAS Reading: Chapter 2 from The Politics of Evidence From evidence-based policy to the good governance of evidence by Justin Parkhurst	<b>Quiz #5:</b> In-class activity related to Policy Evaluation  <b>Video Journal #4 Due</b> on March 14 by 5 pm EST
10	Mar 17	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	-----	-----
11	Mar 24	<b>Policy Implementation Planning: Introduction to Policy Briefs</b>	CANVAS Reading: How to Write a Policy Brief (from the UNC Writing Center) <a href="https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/">https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/</a>	<b>Memo #4 Due</b> on March 28 by 5 pm EST
12	Mar 31	<b>Policy Implementation: Post-Implementation Strategies</b>	CANVAS Reading: Walker AF, Haller MJ, Addala A, et al. Project ECHO Diabetes Trial Improves Outcomes for Medically Underserved People. Diabetes Care. Published online December 17, 2024. doi:10.2337/dc24-2100	<b>Quiz #6:</b> In-class (covering the Walker reading assigned this week)  <b>Video Journal #5 Due</b> on April 4 by 5 pm EST
13	Apr 7	<b>Applied Examples of Public Health Policy Research: State-Level Sex Education Policies and Sexual Health Outcomes for Adolescents in the U.S.</b>	CANVAS Article: ZORI et al (2022). County-Level School Sex Education Policy	<b>Quiz #7:</b> Covering the Zori reading assigned this week  <b>Memo #5 Due</b> on April 11 by 5 pm EST
14	Apr 14	<b>Applied Examples of Public Health Policy Research: Tobacco Cessation</b>	Barr Chapter 13: Key Policy Issues Affecting the Direction of Health Care Reform	<b>Quiz #8:</b> In-class Covering Barr Chapter 13
15	Apr 21	<b>PRESENTATIONS OF STUDENT POLICY BRIEFS</b>		<b>Policy Briefs due</b> April 15 by 5 pm EST  <b>MEMO #6 Due</b> on April 25 by 5 pm EST (required for all students)

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading/Material	Assignments
16	Apr 28	Exam Week		

**\* The schedule is subject to change. Students will be notified via email or Canvas Announcement of any changes to the syllabus schedule. For example, other assignments and homework may be modified as needed.**

## Course Materials and Technology

### Required Textbook

Introduction to US Health Policy: The Organization, Financing, and Delivery of Health Care in America fifth edition by Donald A Barr (2023). ISBN-10 :1421446464

### Other Readings

Additional readings are assigned throughout the semester and are noted on the syllabus and on the CANVAS site. Please be sure to refer to the Canvas website for assigned readings. The readings will be discussed in class as time allows but may also be assessed via quizzes and tests.

### Other Video Content

We will use documentaries and other policy-related videos (see Canvas module pages).

For technical support for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>

## Additional Academic Resources

- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)
- On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#)
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

### Assignments

**In-Class Quizzes (20%)**: There will be 8 quizzes to assess students' understanding of the material covered during the week. Quizzes will be conducted at the beginning of class based on readings and materials that week. These quizzes will include short answer questions. Quizzes will encourage consistent engagement with the course content. The three lowest quiz grades will be dropped, so a total of 5 quizzes (20 points each for a total of 100 points) will contribute to the final course grade. Make up quizzes will not be given. If a student misses a class, they will count that quiz as one of their 3 drop options.

**Memos (40%)**: Students will complete 5 memos throughout the course. Memos are 2-3 pages typed, double-spaced (standard margins) and use APA, AMA, or ASA citation style when using outside references (including course readings). Memos provide you a chance to succinctly summarize main findings, reflect on the relevance of weekly topics, and apply core concepts to your everyday world. Memos should include concrete details from the readings/lectures to

demonstrate that you watched/read the materials. There will be 6 memo topics to pick from and you select 5/6 to submit. Each memo is worth 40 points for a total of 200 points. Full memo guidelines, memo topics, and the grading rubric for memos are provided on the course CANVAS site.

**Video Journals (10%):** Students will upload 5 video journal recording to the CANVAS site to demonstrate course engagement and to reflect on their learning journey in the course. Each video journal is worth 10 points for a total of 50 points.

**Final Projects (30%):** Students will create a policy brief for their final project. The final project will include a PowerPoint presentation of the Policy Brief as well as the actual policy brief (2-3 pages). Full guidelines on the PowerPoint presentation as well as the written policy brief (and grading rubric for each) are provided on the CANVAS site. The PowerPoint presentation is worth 50 points and the policy brief document is worth 100 points – for a total of 150 points for the final project.

### Grading

Requirement	Due date	% of final grade
<b>Quizzes</b>	Ongoing, Due Weekly (in-class)	20%
<b>Memos</b>	Due Jan 24, Feb 14, March 7, March 28, April 11, and April 25 by 5 pm EST via CANVAS	40%
<b>Video Journals</b>	Times and dates posted in Canvas	10%
<b>Final Project</b>	PowerPoint presentation on April 21 and policy brief on April 25 by 5 pm EST via CANVAS	30%
<b>Total Percentage</b>		<b>100%</b>

Point system used

Points earned	93-100	90-92.99	87-89.99	83-86.99	80-82.99	77-79.99	70-76.99	67-69.99	63-66.99	60-62.99	Below 60
<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D+	D	D-	E

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	NG	S-U
<b>Grade Points</b>	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

### Policy Related to Make Up Exams or Other Work

Students are responsible for all course material, including reading and watching the required course materials. Students should read your email and announcements in the course several times a week. Please note that announcements and emails sent out from the course site will go to your UFL email address (versus your Google, Yahoo, etc.); please check this email at <https://www.mail.ufl.edu/>. Students should also reference the calendar in the course to keep up with weekly requirements and deadlines.

**Make-Ups:** If you are unable to meet a deadline in this course for [approved reasons](#), you will be given adequate time to make up any coursework missed.

**Quiz Policy:** In-class quizzes are designed to promptly assess your understanding of the material covered in the class. These quizzes serve as a valuable tool to reinforce learning, gauge your progress, and provide real-time feedback to both you and the instructor. Communication among students is prohibited during the quiz, and individual effort is essential.

Please note: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **MUST** e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

### **Policy Related to Required Class Attendance**

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is required. Per the University of Florida, students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Acceptable reasons for absence include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official University activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Remember that, when possible (i.e., extracurricular activities, official University activities, and religious holidays), prior notification of absence is required if the student plans to be given an extension on assignments.

Please note all faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For information regarding the UF Attendance Policy see the Registrar website for additional details:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT**

### **Expectations Regarding Course Behavior**

It is important to attend all classes, take detailed notes, and actively participate in class and group discussions in order to succeed in the course. It is also critical for students to work together effectively in a team. The course will go over common behaviors that make individuals good team members. Finally, students are expected to be engaged and respectful of the instructor and guest speakers.

### **Communications Guidelines**

The preferred methods of communication for the course are messages in Canvas (see Course Materials above) or e-mail.

For more information regarding the UF Netiquette Guidelines, see the website for additional details:

<https://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.docx>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

**“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”**

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

**“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”**

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated.

Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Handbook for additional details:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>  
<https://graduateschool.ufl.edu/work/handbook/>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

### **Recording Within the Course**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### **Policy Related to Guests Attending Class:**

Only registered students are permitted to attend class. However, we recognize that students who are caretakers may face occasional unexpected challenges creating attendance barriers. Therefore, by exception, a department chair or his or her designee (e.g., instructors) may grant a student permission to bring a guest(s) for a total of two class sessions per semester. This is two sessions total across all courses. No further extensions will be granted. Please note that guests are **not** permitted to attend either cadaver or wet labs. Students are responsible for course material regardless of attendance. For additional information, please review the Classroom Guests of Students policy in its entirety. Link to full policy: <https://phhp.ufl.edu/policy-classroom-guests-of-students/>

### **Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.



### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, it is strongly recommended you register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu> within the first week of class or as soon as you believe you might be eligible for accommodations. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you must then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please do this as soon as possible after you receive the letter. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

### Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: Visit [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-2734450.

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

### Inclusive Learning Environment

Public health and health professions are based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act."