

3 CREDITS

TUESDAY | 9:35AM–11:30AM | HPNP–G114

U.S. HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

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OFFICE HOURS

In-person or via Zoom
(Wednesday 1p–3p or by appointment)
To schedule a meeting go to:
<https://calendly.com/richard-tovar/25min>

WEBSITE: lss.at.ufl.edu (Canvas)

DELIVERY: In-Person | HPNP-G114

Canvas message is the preferred method of communication. Emails received on weekdays can expect a response within 24 hrs. Emails received during the weekend or after 5pm on Friday will be answered by 2pm on the following Monday.



PRE-REQUISITES

BSC 2007 or BSC 2005 or BSC 2010 and PSY 2012 and STA 2023. Health Science or Communication Sciences and Disorders or Public Health majors. Also, Health Science or Public Health minors.



TEXTBOOK

This course will not require a traditional textbook. Instead, we will be utilizing Open Educational Resources (OER), which are freely accessible online materials. By using OER, students will have the opportunity to access up-to-date and cost-effective resources that support diverse learning styles and foster greater academic collaboration.



COURSE OVERVIEW

This course introduces essential topics surrounding the delivery of health care in the United States and internationally. The initial focus will be on the evolution of the US health care system and the system's historical foundations. From there, models and concepts about the determinants of health will be introduced. These tools will provide a framework to understand and critically assess the health care delivery system and the challenges faced by the present structure. Finally, the US Government's involvement (i.e., state, and federal) and the role of health care providers will be examined in relation to health care reform and the future of the US health care system.



TECHNOLOGY

Required Equipment: Computer with high-speed internet access and use of a supported browser (Google Chrome recommended). To access this course on Canvas, you will use your Gatorlink ID and password to login to the course. For technical support for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk by:

- Calling (352) 392-HELP (option 2),
- Emailing learning-support@ufl.edu, or
- Going to <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu>

FALL 2025 | TOVAR

GRADING

x10 QUIZZES [10pts each = 100pts]	10%
x5 REFLECTIONS [20pts each = 100pts Group]	10%
x2 EXAMS [200pts each = 400pts]	40%
TEAM WARM-UP [50pts Group]	5%
PART 1 : FOUNDATION [50pts Group]	5%
PART 2 : SYSTEM ANALYSIS [100pts Group]	10%
PART 3 : FINAL DESIGN [100pts Group]	10%
PART 4 : SYSTEM PITCH [100pts Individual]	10%
TOTAL [1000pts]	
EXTRA CREDIT [Professionalism—Max. 10pts]	1%

A	A 930-1000 PTS = 4.00	A- 900-929 PTS = 3.67	
B	B+ 870-899 PTS = 3.33	B 830-869 PTS = 3.00	B- 800-829 PTS = 2.67
C	C+ 770-799 PTS = 2.33	C 700-769 PTS = 2.00	C- NOT GIVEN
D	D+ 670-699 PTS = 1.33	D 630-669 PTS = 1.00	D- 600-629 PTS = 0.67
E	< 600 PTS = 0.00		

*Final grades will be based on the number of points accumulated during the course. **Grades will not be rounded.** There is no C- grade given for this course. For greater detail on letter grades, see the Registrar's Grade Policy: <http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

ASSIGNMENTS

QUIZZES [100pts]

Each week, students will complete a short quiz at the beginning of class to ensure they arrive prepared and have reviewed the assigned materials. These quizzes will cover key concepts from readings, lectures, or media assigned for that week and are designed to reinforce foundational knowledge critical to in-class discussions and activities. A total of **10 quizzes** will be administered throughout the semester, and they will contribute to the overall course grade. Quizzes are intended to encourage consistent engagement with the material and help students identify areas needing further review.

REFLECTIONS [100pts]

Each week, student groups will complete a collaborative class reflection in response to the lecture content and supplemental materials posted on Canvas. These reflections are designed to encourage students to actively engage with the week's themes, critically analyze new information, and discuss how it connects to broader course topics such as nutrition, diet culture, health communication, and scientific misinformation. Reflections should demonstrate thoughtful consideration of the material, incorporate multiple group members' perspectives, and raise relevant questions or insights. This assignment promotes ongoing dialogue, teamwork, and deeper understanding of course content. Reflection guidelines and grading criteria will be provided on Canvas.

EXAMS [400pts]

There will be a total of **two unit exams** administered during the semester to assess students' understanding of key concepts, theories, and applications covered in lectures, readings, and class discussions. Each exam will focus on material from a specific portion of the course and may include a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. The exams are designed to evaluate students' ability to analyze, synthesize, and apply course content, with an emphasis on critical thinking and real-world relevance. These assessments provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of factual knowledge and conceptual understanding.

TEAM WARM-UP [50pts]

This assignment challenges students to compare global healthcare systems with the U.S., analyzing structure, funding, access, quality, and cost efficiency. Teams of five will research an assigned country, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Each group will present a three-minute visual summary, followed by a class discussion on key takeaways and policy implications. The discussion will encourage students to critically evaluate the effectiveness of different healthcare models and consider potential lessons for U.S. healthcare reform. Assessment will focus on research depth, presentation clarity, analytical insight, and participation, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of global health systems.

EXTRA CREDIT [10pts]

Professionalism in this course includes attendance, participation, preparedness, and respectful engagement. ClassDojo will be used to track attendance and participation, which will factor into the final grade. Students are expected to contribute actively in class and work collaboratively in groups. Grading criteria is available on Canvas. Respectful communication is key to maintaining a constructive learning environment. Punctuality and responsibility in completing assignments are also expected. Students should come to class ready to listen, share ideas, and support one another. Professional behavior will be continuously assessed and reflected in overall course performance.

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM DESIGN

Students will collaboratively design their own version of a national or regional healthcare system, demonstrating practical understanding of major components, such as insurance models, Medicare and Medicaid, access and quality, cost structures, and regulation. This process will require students to research historical healthcare reforms, assess the outcomes of existing systems, and engage with policy. Teams are encouraged to apply interdisciplinary approaches, incorporating insights from public health, economics, law, and ethics to strengthen the viability of their proposals. Throughout the semester, students will participate in structured debates and policy simulation exercises to test the resilience of their systems under real-world pressures. By the end of the semester, each team should present a refined, evidence-based healthcare system proposal that could realistically function in the U.S. context.

PART 1: FOUNDATION [50pts]

Students will introduce their vision for a healthcare system by outlining its structure, coverage strategy, target populations, and guiding goals such as affordability, access, and quality. They will conduct targeted research on existing international and domestic healthcare models to inform their proposals and draw relevant comparisons. Analysis should address U.S. healthcare challenges and propose realistic solutions. Students are also encouraged to integrate diverse stakeholder perspectives to enhance the credibility and practicality of their design.

PART 2: SYSTEM ANALYSIS [100pts]

This submission explores the mechanics and feasibility of the proposed healthcare system, encouraging students to move beyond theory into operational detail. They elaborate on key components such as financing models, integration with existing public programs like Medicare and Medicaid, regulatory frameworks, data infrastructure, and modes of care delivery. Students must analyze trade-offs inherent in their system choices—balancing cost, coverage, quality, and administrative burden—and assess implementation barriers including political resistance, funding constraints, and logistical limitations. A thorough examination of stakeholder perspectives is required, including how patients, providers, insurers, and government entities might respond to and interact with the proposed system. In addition, students should model cost projections and health outcome estimations to demonstrate long-term viability. They will also reflect on system adaptability in the face of demographic shifts, technological advances, and public health emergencies.

PART 3: FINAL DESIGN [100pts]

Students must submit a polished proposal that incorporates feedback from the first two submissions, reflecting thoughtful revisions and strengthened analysis. Visual components—such as infographics, policy flowcharts, budget breakdowns, and system maps—must accompany the proposal to convey implementation mechanics and user pathways. Additionally, students should provide an executive summary tailored for policymakers or stakeholders, highlighting the system's unique value and feasibility. Teams are encouraged to reference relevant legislation and demographic data to contextualize their design within the U.S. environment. A short reflection on lessons learned from previous drafts will demonstrate critical engagement with the review process.

PART 4: SYSTEM PITCH [100pts]

Students must deliver a formal presentation of their system design in class, demonstrating both subject mastery and communication skills. The goal is to clearly explain and advocate for their proposed healthcare system, respond thoughtfully to audience questions, and synthesize major learnings from the research and design process. Presentations should incorporate visual aids that clarify system mechanics and anticipated outcomes, reinforcing key arguments with data and comparative analysis.

PURPOSE

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify major historical events affecting the fundamental characteristics of health care in the United States and relate these factors to the current health care system.
2. Articulate health care access barriers unique to the U.S. health care system and propose cost-effective solutions to improve access.
3. Delineate the difference between hospitals, outpatient facilities, long-term care facilities, ambulatory care providers, mental health providers, and the broader public health system regarding services, organizational structure, and financing mechanisms.
4. Describe health care providers' and professionals' roles and responsibilities, including the required education and credentials for each specialty.
5. Assess the impact of medical technology as a cost driver, barrier to access, and overall growth of health care expenditures in the United States.
6. Describe the health insurance mechanism, the roles of the insurance industry, and the local, state, and federal government's involvement in financing health care.
7. Explain the impact of the political process on health care reform, drawing from past and present legislation to illustrate the potential for success or failure of a proposal.
8. Develop a proposal for change that addresses critical issues discussed throughout the course based on your current understanding of the US health care system.
9. Apply systems thinking to public health issues to be aware of the complexity of stakeholders, risk factors and learn to be prepared for unintended consequences.

RELATION TO BACHELOR PROGRAM FOUNDATIONAL DOMAINS

Overview of organization, delivery, and financing of health services in the United States. Topics include health professionals, health care facilities, financing of health services, managed care, and current health policy issues.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU?

You are expected to actively engage in the course throughout the semester. Your participation fosters a rich course experience for you and your peers that facilitates overall mastery of the course objectives. For every 1 credit hour in which you enroll in an undergraduate course, you will spend approximately two to three hours outside of class studying. Students should also check their email and announcements in the course several times a week; and reference the calendar in the course to keep up with weekly deadlines.

PROFESSIONALISM

As students pursuing a path in the health professions or public health, it is crucial to demonstrate professional behaviors that reflect integrity and commitment to the health of patients, fellow health professionals, and to populations we serve. To accomplish this, a strong responsibility for the well-being of others must be evident in our decisions, along with accountability for our actions. Professionalism in the health disciplines requires adherence to high standards of conduct that begin long before graduation.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

- **Lectures** are for general orientation. Students are responsible for all the material presented in the course and assigned readings.
- **Readings and Resources:** In addition to the lectures, supplementary readings and resources will be posted in the course. The reading and resource list may be supplemented during the course.
- Students are expected to participate in groups throughout the duration of this course.
- **Assessments:** A variety of assessments will be used in this course, including but not limited to assignments, quizzes, and projects.

CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is essential to your success in this course and will be taken each class. Students may request their absence be excused and, if applicable, provided a makeup assignment. Excused absences/makeup assignments can be granted for any of the following circumstances:

- (a) Illness
- (b) Serious family emergencies
- (c) Military obligations
- (d) Religious holidays
- (e) Participation in official university activities
- (f) Court-imposed legal obligations
- (g) Graduate/professional school interviews
- (h) Professional development opportunities (e.g., conference presentations)

To request an absence be excused, students must complete the Excused Absence Request Form and upload the relevant documentation through the REDCap portal on the course homepage.

Timing of Submissions:

Excusal requests for (a) and (b) must be submitted within 72 hours of the missed class, failure to do so will result in the inability for the student to request an excused absence.

Excusal requests for (c) – (h) must be submitted at least 48 hours before class, failure to do so will result in the inability for the student to request an excused absence.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Students who submit the Excused Absence Request Form and are approved to complete a makeup assignment will report to the instructor's office at 10:00am on the first available Wednesday after the missed class (alternate day/times area available for students with class conflicts). Students will be allotted 50 minutes to complete the makeup assignment, and no technology may be used (assignment must be hand-written).

PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared. To maintain a respectful and productive learning environment for all, the following guidelines will be enforced:

Arrival After Class Has Started

Any student who enters the classroom after class has begun should quietly take a seat in one of the last two rows to minimize disruption. A three-minute grace period will be allowed after the scheduled start time before a student is considered tardy.

Tardiness and Consequences

Students who arrive more than three minutes late will be marked as *tardy* by the Teaching Assistant (TA). Accumulating two (2) tardies will result in the loss of 2 points from the student's Professionalism grade. Each subsequent tardy will result in an additional 2 point loss. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will be marked as *absent* for that class.

Students who experience extenuating circumstances that impact their ability to arrive on time are encouraged to communicate with the instructor in advance or as soon as possible to discuss potential exceptions.

LATE SUBMISSION POLICY

Assignments submitted within 24 hours after the deadline will be accepted for up to half credit. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the proper assignment has been properly submitted to Canvas on time. Submitting an incorrect assignment will be considered a non-submission. Canvas allows a student to resubmit the correct assignment before the deadline.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Regular The use of any technology, including cell phones, computers, tablets, etc., at any point during class, except exams, is strictly prohibited unless otherwise approved by the instructor. All electronic devices should be stowed away once class begins. Should you need to keep your cell phone on hand due to personal or medical reasons, please inform the instructor prior to class.

QUIZ & EXAM POLICY

This course will be using Lockdown Browser to ensure exam integrity. Instances of cheating or inappropriate behavior will be considered violations of the Student Honor Code and will result in disciplinary action, a zero on the quiz/exam and reduction of the student's class grade by 100 pts.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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. Cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Unless otherwise stated by written instructions, the preparation of all coursework should be done individually. If you are unsure about what level of collaboration is appropriate, ask the instructor before beginning an assignment.

Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated and 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: www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/. Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

Any work written, developed, created, or inspired by artificial intelligence (AI) is considered plagiarism and will not be tolerated. While the ever-changing (and exciting!) new developments with AI will find their place in our workforces and personal lives, in the realm of education and learning, this kind of technology does not belong. This is because the use of AI robs us all the opportunity to learn from our experiences and from each other, to play with our creative freedoms, to problem-solve, and to contribute our ideas in authentic ways. This is a place for learning, and this class is specifically a space for learning how to improve our writing and professional development skills. AI simply cannot do that learning and skill development for us.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

University policies and information related to the Disability Resource Center, the Counseling and Wellness Center, University Honesty Policy, GatorEvals, In-Class Recording, and general Academic Resources such as the UF Computing Help Desk, the Career Connection Center, and Writing Studio can be found at: [UF Syllabus Policy Links](#)

COURSE SCHEDULE

MODULE 1

	WEEKLY TOPIC	MATERIALS	TASKS
W 01	AUG 21—AUG 23 COURSE INTRODUCTION	Syllabus	Syllabus Quiz [Sat 8/23]
M 1.1	AUG 25—AUG 30 HEALTH SYSTEM OVERVIEW	Anatomy of Healthcare U.S. Healthcare System Profile	Quiz 1.1 [Tue 8/26] Class Reflection #1 [Tue 8/26]
M 1.2	SEP 2—SEP 6 GOALS OF HEALTHCARE	The Economics of Healthcare The Healthcare “Iron Triangle”	Quiz 1.2 [Tue 9/2] Team Warm-Up [Tue 9/2]
M 1.3	SEP 8—SEP 13 HEALTH POLICY	How Laws Affect Your Health Obamacare Turns 10	Quiz 1.3 [Tue 9/9] Class Reflection #2 [Tue 9/9]
M 1.4	SEP 15—SEP 20 POPULATION HEALTH	Population Health Basics Disparities in Health and Health Care	Quiz 1.4 [Tue 9/16] Class Reflection #3 [Tue 9/16]
M 1.5	SEP 22—SEP 27 HEALTH & TECHNOLOGY	The Future of Rural Healthcare The Technology of Healthcare	Quiz 1.5 & Debate [Tue 9/23] Part 1: Foundation [Sat 9/27]

W 07 SEP 30
EXAM I [IN-CLASS]

MODULE 2

M 2.1	OCT 6—OCT 11 HEALTH INSURANCE	Health Reform Hits Main Street Health Insurance Premiums	Quiz 2.1 [Tue 10/7] Reflection #4 [Tue 10/7]
M 2.2	OCT 13—OCT 16 MEDICARE & MEDICAID	Medicare and Medicaid 101 An Overview of Medicare	Quiz 2.2 [Tue 10/14] Reflection #5 [Tue 10/14]
M 2.3	OCT 20—OCT 25 HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS	Types of Patient Care Types of PCPs	Quiz 2.3 & Debate [Tue 10/21] Part 2: Analysis [Sat 10/25]
M 2.4	OCT 27—NOV 1 AMBULATORY CARE	Ambulatory Healthcare The Role of Ambulatory Care	Quiz 2.4 [Tue 10/28] Part 3: Final Design [Sat 11/1]
M 2.5	NOV 3—NOV 8 INPATIENT FACILITIES	Types of Hospitals in the USA Types of Hospitals: Overview and FAQ	Quiz 2.5 [Tue 11/4] Part 4: System Pitch [Sat 11/8]

W 13 NOV 11
VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY

W 14 NOV 18
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

W 15 NOV 24—NOV 29
THANKSGIVING DAY HOLIDAY

W 16 DEC 2
EXAM 2 [IN-CLASS]

***This course schedule is subject to revision, always check Canvas for updates. Schedule is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. Any changes will be announced, and the student is personally responsible for obtaining updated information regarding those changes.