Aging and Health Policy  
HSTD 35301 / PPHA 42401 / SSAD 49022  
Spring Quarter 2007 – Tuesdays 3:00-5:50 BSLC 305  

Faculty  
R. Tamara Konetzka  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Health Studies  
5841 South Maryland Avenue, W249  
konetzka@uchicago.edu  
773-834-2202  
Office Hours: By appointment  

Course Website  
Chalk.uchicago.edu: HSTD 353.  

Overview  
This course is a seminar in aging and health policy and the relationships between policy, financing, access to care, and quality of care for the elderly. The focus is on health care systems and policy as opposed to demography and biological aspects of aging. Specific topics include Medicaid and Medicare policy; long-term care insurance and financing; workforce issues; dementia and end-of-life care; the culture change movement; work and retirement as it relates to health policy; and cross-national comparisons of health policy toward the elderly. Students will engage in an ongoing discussion of policy options and learn to evaluate their potential to improve quality and ensure access for the elderly to health care and long-term care.  

Required Texts:  
There are no required texts. All reading materials will be posted on the course website.  

Course Requirements  
All readings must be completed prior to class. The quality of class discussions will largely determine the success of the course; therefore it is essential for students to come to each session well-prepared. Each student is expected to lead the discussion for one or more sessions. Discussion leaders will prepare a list of discussion questions to guide the conversation.  

Two short papers are required, and each will be presented to the class. The first paper will be a short policy brief (approximately 5 pages) suggesting an approach to financing long-term care in the US. Economic, political, philosophical, and clinical obstacles and ramifications should be considered. The second paper (approximately 10-15 pages) will be a review of the literature or an empirical investigation on a topic of the student’s choice related to aging and health policy, preferably a topic not covered in depth in class. It may be part of a larger ongoing research project, but must be an original contribution to that larger project. A one-page proposal for the paper will be due halfway through the course.  

Evaluation  
Class participation and preparedness  35%  
Session leadership  10%  
Policy brief  20%  
Paper presentations  10%  
Final Paper  25%
Mar 27  Session I:  Introduction
No readings

Session II:  The Challenges of Aging and Health Policy


April 3  Session I:  An Overview of Medicare
Guest Speaker:  Katie Merrell, Senior Research Scientist at NORC


Session II:  Current Issue in Medicare: Prescription Drug Benefit
Guest Speaker:  Katie Merrell, Senior Research Scientist at NORC


April 10  Session I: Medicaid and Long-Term Care

- Grabowski DC, Feng Z, Intrator O, Mor V. Recent Trends In State Nursing Home Payment Policies. Health Aff (Millwood). 2004 Jun 16;

Session II:  Quality of Care

- Mor, V. Improving the quality of long-term care with better information. Milbank Q. 2005;83(3):333-64.

April 17  Session I:  Elderly Mental Health Policy


Session II: Home- and Community-Based Care


- Dale SB, Brown RS. How does cash and counseling affect costs? Health Serv Res. 2007 Feb;42(1 Pt 2):488-509.


April 24 Session I: Long-Term Care Insurance

- Norton EC. Long-Term Care in Handbook of Health Economics.


Session II: International Perspectives


May 1 Session I: Culture Change

- Video: “Almost Home”

Session II: Culture Change
- Fagan RM
- Thomas WH
- Kehoe MA and Van Heesch B
- Barkan B
- Boyd CK
- Rader J and Semradek J
- Reynolds WE

May 8 Session I: Presentation/Discussion of Student Policy Briefs

Session II: Workforce Issues


May 15 Session I: The Role of Race
Guest Moderator: Kate Cagney, PhD, Department of Health Studies


Session II: The Role of Geography
Guest Moderator, Emily Cook, University of Chicago Law School


May 22 Session I: Work, Retirement, and Social Security

- Spillman BC, Murtaugh CM, Warshawsky MJ. Policy implications of an annuity

Session II: End of Life Care


May 29  Session I: Student Paper Presentations

Session II: Student Paper Presentations and Final Thoughts