Political Science POLI 417
HEALTH CARE IN CANADA
WINTER 2020

Professor: Antonia Maioni
E-mail: antonia.maioni@mcgill.ca
Office hours: Mondays, 1pm-2pm, Dawson 207

Calendar Description

How has health care developed and changed over time in Canada? This course will analyze the theory and politics of health policy and institutions, comparing provincial models and contextualizing Canadian systems with international perspectives from the U.S. and Europe. Current health reform debates, particularly those involving federal-provincial relations, sustainable financing and the role of the state, will be explored.

Course Objectives and Requirements

This course is designed as an interdisciplinary exploration into the politics of health care in Canada. Students are expected to be familiar with basic issues in Canadian politics but need not have extensive health policy backgrounds. By the end of the semester, you should be familiar with the health care system and health reform issues in Canada and in comparative perspectives. Four main themes will be addressed in this course: political actors and environments influencing health care in Canada; delivery and financing of health care; comparative perspectives on health care; and issues in health care reform.

Course evaluation

- First take-home test (course material): 30%
- Second take-home test (course material): 30%
- Provincial or international policy brief: 30%
- Participation: 10%

Ce cours est donné en anglais, mais vous êtes permis de remettre vos travaux en français.

Books & E-books

- Katherine Fierlbeck, Health Care in Canada: A Citizen's Guide to Policy and Politics (University of Toronto Press, 2011). (McGill University Bookstore)
• Antonia Maioni, *Health Care in Canada* (Oxford University Press, 2015). (McGill University Bookstore)


---

**WEEKLY COURSE OUTLINE**

**January 6th**

*Why study health care? Introduction, course syllabus, requirements*

- Maioni, 2015: Introduction: “Why Health Care is so Important to Canadians”

**January 13th**

*Development of health care in Canada*

- Maioni, ch. 1: “The History of Health Care in Canada”

**January 20th**

*Health care, federalism, and the provinces*

- Fierlbeck, ch. 2: “Intergovernmental relations”
- Maioni, ch. 6: “ Provincial Snapshots”

**January 27th**

*The governance of health care: organization*

- Maioni, ch 2: “A Portrait of Health Care in Canada.”
- Fierlbeck, ch. 3: “Health care administration and governance”
- Marchildon, ch. 2: “Organization and Governance”

**February 3rd**

**The governance of health care: financing**
- Maioni, ch 3: The Facts about Health Care Spending
- Fierlbeck, ch. 1: Funding
- Marchildon, ch. 3: Financing
- Marchildon & Di Matteo, ch. 4: Livio Di Matteo and Herb Emery, “Common Provincial Determinants and Cost Drivers.”

**February 10th**

**Challenges in Canadian health care provision**
- Fierlbeck, ch. 6: Health Human Resources
- Fierlbeck, ch. 5, Public health and population health
- Marchildon, ch. 4: Physical and Human Resources
- Marchildon, ch. 3: Provision of services

*Friday, February 14th:* First take-home exam due

**February 17th**

**Comparative Health Care: European challenges**
- Fierlbeck, ch. 9: Beveridge systems
- Fierlbeck, ch. 10: Bismarck systems
- Maioni ch 5. Comparing Canada and Europe

Screening of *PBS Frontline: Sick Around the World*

**February 24th**

**Comparative Health Care: Why the US matters**
- Fierlbeck, ch. 11: “Mandated Private Insurance”

Screening of *PBS Frontline: Sick Around America*
March 2\textsuperscript{nd}: Study Break

March 9\textsuperscript{th}

**Constitutional & Legal Issues in Health Reform**
- Fierlbeck, ch.4 “Health care and the courts”

March 16\textsuperscript{th}

**The Politics of Pharmaceutical Policy**
- Fierlbeck, ch. 7: “Drugs and Drug Policy”

March 23\textsuperscript{rd}

**Indigenous health issues in Canada**

Friday, March 27\textsuperscript{th}: Second take-home exam due

March 30\textsuperscript{th}

**Provincial presentations (in-class)**

April 6\textsuperscript{th}

**International Presentations (in-class)**

Friday, April 8\textsuperscript{th}: Policy Briefs due
Provincial or international policy brief:
Due: Friday, April 8th

Length: 3000 words (approx. 10 double-spaced pages)

The purpose of this assignment is to identify and analyze a health policy issue that can be compared across two different countries or Canadian provinces. You can either a) identify a problem for which one of the comparative cases has implemented a solution, and evaluate that as a potential solution for the other case, or b) you can compare two different solutions across the two cases, and evaluate them against one another. You are asked to present the paper in the form a policy brief, using the sections below as a guideline:

Part I: Introduction and Definition of Problem

Why is the issue you have chosen a problem? How did it emerge on the political agenda in the two cases?

Part II: Policy Alternatives

What policy alternatives are/were available to address this problem? How have the comparative cases you have chosen done so? Who supports them or opposes them?

Part III: Policy Analysis

Compare and analyze the policy proposals. How would each of these alternatives constitute a viable solution for the problem? What are the goals and how would the goals be achieved? What would be the potential impact on the health care system?

Part IV: Analysis

From the above discussion, draw a conclusion as to (depending on your choice above) a) whether the comparative case offers a potential solution, or not; or b) which comparative case has been more successful in addressing the problem. You should offer a defense of your position as well. You may also suggest other avenues in the quest for policy alternatives.