Course Overview

HS 449A/CHS 436A is intended to provide students with a focused examination of the health status of children in the U.S, the factors that determine their health trajectories, the systems of care for children, and strategies for improving the quality and effectiveness of children’s health care. The course will provide an introduction to the major issues affecting the health of children in the United States and will use case studies and policy analysis concepts to guide learning and discussions. We begin with an overview of the ever changing context of children’s lives and a review the history of child health and social welfare programs during the past century. We then use the Life Course Health Development Model as a framework for examining the individual, familial, social, and environmental determinants of children’s health. We then cover the structure, organization and finance of care, including health service delivery systems, the history and role of major public insurance programs, and the health status and health service needs of special populations. We end with a focus selected topics and controversies in child health policy. levels. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) advanced historic changes in national health policy with broad impacts on the financing, delivery and quality of health care for children in the U.S. Even though many of these changes are just beginning to take root, they are likely to be dramatically impacted by the policy changes being proposed by the Trump Administration and by the potential partial repeal and alteration of the ACA. This turn of events is making health care policy, delivery and impact all the more uncertain at this time. Irrespective of the challenges facing our nation and our nation’s children this whipsawing of policy will provide an important and unstable policy environment for many months to come.

Organization of Class Discussions, Mid-Term Exam and Final Projects
**Discussion Questions:** Each session will have 3-4 guiding questions based on the readings that students should be prepared to discuss during class. Discussion questions will be posted to the course website.

**Mid-Term Exam:** There will be a take-home mid-term exam handed out at the end of Session 10 and due at the beginning of Session 11. The mid-term will consist of written responses to 4 of the discussion question from Sessions 1-10. Answers to each question should be no more than 250 words in length.

**Group Policy Project:** The major assignment for the class will be a group health policy project. The project will consist of a written analysis and oral presentation on how to advance a specific child outcome (e.g. healthy births, school readiness, optimal third grade reading, better mental health, fewer preventable hospitalizations, better health for children in foster care) given the current opportunities (passage of the ACA) and challenges (the Trump Administration and Republican Congress with a policy agenda focused on cutting Medicaid and pushing more responsibility and flexibility to the states). Students will be divided into groups focused on each of these outcomes. Each group will assess what is known about producing optimal outcomes, and then assess current federal, state, and local policy efforts are aligned with achieving those outcomes. The group project will be discussed in more detail during sessions 4. In session 4, we will discuss the assignment and assign the groups. Presentations will take place during the last three sessions of this class on May 25th, May 27th, and June 1st. Each student group will present their projects during one of the final class sessions. The written reports will be due on Monday May 24th at 5pm to allow for the instructors to read them before the presentations (see policy project assignment description on course website for more details).

**Grading**

**Group Policy Project:** The final policy paper and presentation will count for 50% of the grade. One grade will be assigned for the group. The grade will be based on both the written paper (80%) and the oral presentation (20%). The written papers should be approximately 15-20 pages in length (double spaced) not including references.

**Class Participation/Short Assignments:** Active participation in class will count for 25% of the grade. The class participation grade will be based in part on students’ responses to a few short assignments described in the syllabus. Your responses to these written assignments will be discussed during the next class period. They do not need to be turned in, but your work on some of them can be directly applied to your final policy projects.

**Midterm Exam:** The mid-term will count for 25% of the grade.

**Extra Credit:** Students will also have the opportunity to get extra credit for reporting on child health policy in the news.

---

**PART 1: HISTORY AND POLITICS OF CHILD HEALTH**
The first three sessions provide students with a historical perspective on the changing context of children’s lives in the US and on how children’s health policy has evolved over the past century. The historical perspective includes some discussion of the impact of recent policy changes and their implications for children’s health now and in the future.

4/4  Session 1  Introduction to Child Health and Policy (Dr. Halfon)

Learning objectives are to understand: 1) Course overview, goals, objectives, and methods; 2) Key concepts and trends in child health, 3) Basic concepts of policy analysis, and 4) early history of child health policy.

Assignment 1 (due on 4/6): Constructing the history of Child Health Policy
Go to the MCHB History Time Line Web Site: http://mchb.hrsa.gov/timeline/
1) Examine the entire time line with reference to the 9 learning objectives described in the learning objectives for next class; 2) choose your decade; consider: What were the most important social and policy changes affecting child health during this decade? What impact did the changes have on child health then and now (i.e. were there lasting impacts from the changes at that time)?

4/6  Session 2  History of Child Health Policy (Dr. Halfon)

Learning objectives are to understand: 1) the social role and developmental expectations for children in society, and how that has changed in the last century; 2) the role and significance of child health in the child-saving movements of the Progressive Era; 3) the role of women’s right to vote and other feminist movements on children; 4) the 1909 White House Conference on Children and resultant passage of the Shepheard-Towner Act; 5) the Depression and Social Security legislation; 6) the Great Society Programs and the passage of Medicaid and EPSDT; 7) the passage of CHIP and its impact on access to health insurance; 8) the impact of the Affordable Care Act on MCH; 9) how patterns of disease and disability in childhood have changed.

Required Readings:

Web Investigations:
1) http://mchb.hrsa.gov/timeline/
2) http://www.kff.org/childrenstimeline/

4/11  Session 3  Waves of Health Reform, Children’s Health, and Opportunities to Transform the Child Health System (Dr. Halfon)
Learning objectives are to understand: 1) the history of national health reform in relation to children and families; 2) impact of the ACA on child health and health policy; 3) implications of the Trump Administration’s Health and Domestic Policy Agenda for child health; 4) opportunities to advance a transformational agenda for children’s health.

Required Readings:

4) http://ccf.georgetown.edu/ Please thoroughly examine this website. It has the most up to date policy relevant analysis of current national health policy issues; examine each of the major topic areas (Medicaid, CHIP, Marketplace, Vulnerable Populations, and Emerging Issues) and pick one article in each area to review and comment on in class.

Web Investigations:

1) http://healthreform.kff.org
2) http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Health-Reform/Health-Reform-Resource.aspx
3) http://www.urban.org/research-area/childrens-health-and-development

Assignment 2 (due for 4/11) : Challenges and opportunities in child health policy
Examine and assess the child health and health care ecosystem at this moment, identify three challenges and three opportunities for contemporary policy making. Be prepared to turn in 2-3 double-spaced summaries of your positions, and to discuss these in class.

Group Policy Project: We will discuss the group policy project and assign students to their groups. We also develop a set of benchmarks to assure that the projects are moving forward in a reasonable fashion

PART 2: DETERMINANTS AND MEASUREMENT OF CHILDREN’S HEALTH

Over the next five sessions we will consider the individual, family, social, cultural, and
environmental determinants of children’s health. Although we examine the contributions of each of these different categories independently, the goal is to develop a sense of how all these factors relate to an integrated life-course conceptual model of health. We will also discuss resources and issues related to the measurement of child health.

4/13   Session 4   Life Course Perspectives on Health and Development (Dr. Halfon)

Learning objectives are to understand: 1) a life course health development (LCHD) approach to understanding the determinants of health and 2) implications of a LCHD approach on health management, service delivery and policy.

Required Readings:

Optional:

Web Investigations:
http://mchb.hrsa.gov/lifecourseapproach.html
http://www.lcrn.net

4/18   Session 5   Children’s Health and Measurement of Health (Joe Viana)

Learning objectives: 1) to identify the major health problems confronting children and recent trends; 2) to be familiar with national sources of data on children’s health; and 3) to understand policy issues regarding the availability, quality and utilization of child health data.

Required Readings:

Web Investigations:
1) https://mchb.hrsa.gov/chusa14/downloads.html
2) http://www.childhealthdata.org/home
3) http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/children.htm
4) http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/index.asp
5) http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT.asp
7) http://www.childtrends.org/

Handout:
CHILD HEALTH USA 2014
AMERICA’S CHILDREN: KEY NATIONAL INDICATORS OF WELL-BEING, 2014

4/20  Session 6  Individual and Family Influences on Children’s Health: Adverse Childhood Experiences

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Moira Szilagyi MD PhD, Professor of Pediatrics, Chief Child Development

Learning objectives are to understand: 1) the history of child development and the evolution of the “nature-nurture”; 2) the implications of epigenetics for the gene-environment debate; 3) the concept of resilience and its implications for child health policy; 4) the influence of the family context on child health.

Required Readings:

4/25  Session 7  Poverty, Social Status and the Health and Well Being of Children

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Adam Schickedanz  M.D., MPH

Learning objectives: 1) to discuss the definition of childhood poverty, the prevalence of poverty in the United States, and its role as a risk factor for adverse health outcomes in children; 2) to consider how poverty gets under the skin of poor children – the mechanism by which poverty affects lifelong health; 3) to understand the limits of using the income poverty threshold as a social indicator and to consider the potential value of using social gradients and relative deprivation, 4) to present a framework for evaluating child health promotion policies based on their impact on family and community economic position.

Required Pre-Work/Game:
1) Play Spent, the poverty simulator: http://playspent.org/

Required Readings:
3) NCCP Basic Facts about low income children under 3 years, 2015  

Web Investigations:  
http://playspent.org/  
http://www.nccp.org/  

4/27 Session 8   Environmental Effects on Children’s Health and Neurodevelopment  
Guest Lecturer: Efren Aguilar

Learning objectives are to understand: 1) how children’s physical environments affect their neurodevelopment and health; 2) become familiar with current national efforts to study and address environmental influences on children’s health.

Required Readings:  
3) Amy J. Schulz, David R. Williams, Barbara A. Israel, and Lora Bex Lempert. “Racial and Spatial Relations as Fundamental Determinants of Health in Detroit”  
4) Marni D. Brownell, Okechukwu Ekuma, Nathan C. Nickel, Marriette Chartier, Ina Koseva, Robert G. Santos. A population-based analysis of factors that predict early language and cognitive development  

Web investigations  
http://geohub.lacity.org/  
https://www.communitycommons.org/ 
http://edi.ctdata.org/  
http://www.raisedc.org/ourchildren  
http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/  

PART 3: ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE OF HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN

In the next three sessions we will discuss the current state of the children’s health care system, including how its various delivery mechanisms are organized and how various insurance mechanisms provide coverage for services. We will also consider the major funding sources for
children’s health and developmental care in the US, including Medicaid, EPSDT, CHIP, Title V (Maternal and Child Health Block Grant) and the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Part C.

5/2  Session 9 Public and Private Insurance Coverage for Children (Dr. Halfon)

Learning Objectives: Students should be able to discuss: 1) history of public and private health insurance for children in US and recent changes; 2) which children are insured and how are they insured; 3) What are the gaps in health insurance coverage (who, what, and why are things not covered); 4) Understand the difference between eligibility, benefits, actuarial value and medical necessity in the context of children’s health care 5) What difference health insurance make on access, quality and utilization of health care; 6) The Historical and potential future role of Medicaid, EPSDT and CHIP in covering children; 7) What a per capita cap or block granting of Medicaid would mean for children’s coverage, access and health.

Required Readings:

Web Investigations:
1) http://ccf.georgetown.edu/all/gao-irs-the-family-penalty
2) http://www.hrsa.gov/epsdt/
3) http://www.mchlibrary.info/knowledgePaths/kp_EPSDT.html

Assignment: What are the challenges and opportunities for providing health insurance for children? Where is child health insurance inadequate? Is health insurance enough to finance and cover what children need to be healthy? What other forms of financing do we need to achieve other forms of child health and well-being?

5/4  Session 10   Title V and IDEA Part C

Guest Lecturer: Kathryn Smith, RN, MN

Learning objectives: 1) to understand the history and components of Title V of the Social Security Act and the IDEA 2) to describe the organizational structure of the Federal and State agencies responsible for administration of Title V and IDEA funds, 3) discuss the impact of Title V and IDEA on children’s health and healthcare and on the delivery of services for children with special healthcare needs, 4) describe ways in which Title V agencies are coordination with Medicaid and CHIP to improve services for children, 5) discuss provisions of the ACA that can be leveraged to enhance the impact of Title V.

Required Readings:
2) The ACA and Children with Special Health Care Needs: An Analysis and Steps for State

Web Investigations:
1) http://nichcy.org/laws/idea/partc
2) http://idea.ed.gov/part-c/search/new

5/9 Session 11 Structure and Organization of Children’s Health Services: Impacts on Access and Utilization (Dr. Halfon)

Learning objectives: 1) to understand the structure and organization of the child health system and how they influence children’s access to care; 2) to understand how services are optimally organized and delivered to children with a variety of health conditions and risk factors, 3) to describe the role of wrap-around services; 4) to understand how access and utilization are measured for children; and 5) to understand what factors influence children’s access to health care services.

Required Readings:

PART 4: Important Topics in Child Health and Health Care

For the next four sessions we will take a closer look at specific topics in child health. Each of these topic represent a particularly vulnerable population, or an area of concern and care that is particularly complex and demands new thinking and new approaches.

5/11 Session 12 Children with Special Health Care Needs
Guest Lecturer: Paul Chung MD MS

Required Readings:
1. The Medical Home at 50: Are Children with Medical Complexity the Key to Proving its Value

MIDTERM EXAM to be distributed: Due at beginning of next class period.

5/16 Session 13 Transforming Early Childhood Community Systems (Dr. Halfon)

Guest Lecturer: Lisa Stanley Dr PH.

Learning Objectives are: 1) to understand the special developmental vulnerability of young children; 2) to understand how the complex ecosystems that children live influence their development; 3) to understand how communities are organizing themselves to improve early childhood development and school readiness; 4) to understand how the Early Development Index can provide population data on early childhood outcomes that is actionable at a community/population level

Required Readings:
1. A Snapshot of Young Children’s Development in Washington D.C. UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities
2. Transforming Early Childhood Community Systems. UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities

MIDTERM EXAM due in class

5/18 Session 14 Place Based Interventions to improve child outcomes: Magnolia Community Initiative

Guest Lecturer: Laila Espinoza

5/23 Session 15 Health of Children in Schools and School Health Centers

Guest Lecturers: Kim Uyeda MD MPH, Mary Jane Puffer BSN MPA

Learning objectives are: 1) to understand the health issues affecting children in school setting 2) to understand how school health services are provide, organized and financed 3) to understand current innovations in the delivery of school health services 4) to understand how schools used the Medicaid program to finance services
Required Readings:

Web Investigations:
http://thelatrust.org/
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/
http://www.sbh4all.org/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>