

**Theories of Public Policy and Health Systems:**

**Israel and the US in Comparative Perspective**

**Prof David Chinitz, PhD**

Fall Semester

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Office Hours: by request

**Short description:**

The world of health policy constitutes a wondrous realm in which both Israel and the US serve as very useful case studies, especially when compared with each other and other health systems around the world. National health systems around the world have gone through various, fairly identifiable, stages of evolution. The latter has been spiral, rather than linear. That is to say that fundamental dilemmas of health policy seem to remain unresolved, despite significant changes brought on by a combination of exogenous factors, population growth, shifting patterns of disease, technological development, ideology and policy learning. These observations beg for theoretical evolution in the field of public policy analysis, in that they highlight the challenge of blending technical and social policy perspectives and skills. In this seminar, discussion will focus on how processes of change in health systems, particularly in Israel and the US, provoke new ideas about public policy analysis.

The course will draw on the instructor's deep involvement in research regarding the Israeli health system and health systems more generally. While much of health policy analysis deals, appropriately, with technical tools regarding the economics of health care and delivery of services, the role of national culture and political structures is less well understood. As a result, debate in the US often refers to the "Swedish Model," or the "Swiss Model", applying a crude macro description that masks complex interactions among sub-systems the understanding of which is indispensable for drawing any kind of policy analytic conclusions.

In this class, students will explore both theoretical and case study material, much of it drawn from the Israeli case, drawing different disciplines – law, management, political science, sociology, economics and epidemiology – into development of innovative modes of public policy analysis.

**Assessment\* :**

**Minor assignments:**

Presentation and discussion in class of one of the articles from the syllabus

**Midterm assignment:**

Students are required to choose any article from the syllabus, or a health policy related article that they identify on their own, that is focused on a country other than Israel or the

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\* Please note that if distance learning is required, the assessment procedure, modes of assessment and weightings may be changed.

US, and, in 3-5 pages summarize the article and discuss its potential lessons for either the US or Israeli health care system. 30%

**Final requirement:**

Students will be required to produce an 8-13 page critique of existing policy analyses of a major issue - one of those listed in the syllabus or an alternative chosen by the student - arising in the context of US health care policy, bringing to bear the policy analytic theories and tools of comparative analysis highlighted in the course. The paper will count for 50% of the final grade.

**Participation:**

This is intended to be a course with lively discussion. Participation, including the above mentioned presentation of an article in class will count for 20% of the final grade.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

**Academic conduct:**

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.