



Challenges in Healthcare Law, Policy and Ethics

MANA 7342

Fall 2025

Mon 6:00-9:00 PM

Version 3.0

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Course Objectives

1. Appreciate the extent of health legislation and health policy and the influence they have in shaping the healthcare industry.
2. Apply a basic understanding of health law to scenarios routinely encountered in healthcare.
3. Appreciate how economic and equity arguments shape healthcare policy debates.

Course Description

The healthcare system in the United States is the most heavily regulated industry in the world. Laws and regulations define or shape every healthcare financial exchange, institutional action, professional decision, marketing approach, professional relationship, patient encounter, treatment decision, and drug/medical device.

The United States healthcare industry is the result of a decades-long, intense national debate weighing the benefits of a market economy versus the government's role in ensuring fairness and equity for its citizens. Healthcare policy decisions usually involve a less than perfect compromise between important philosophical positions, political stakeholder power and respect for market economy efficiencies.

This course will evaluate the breadth of the United States healthcare legal system and explore the many policy

issues which will shape the industry in years to come. No prior healthcare knowledge is assumed or required. The course should be of interest to anyone interested in the healthcare industry and to those more broadly interested in the intersection of law, policy, and business in the United States.

Required Textbooks

Contemporary Issues in Healthcare Law & Ethics, 4th Edition, Dean M. Harris.

Health Policy Issues, An Economic Perspective, 8th Edition, Paul J Feldstein.

Course Structure

Our class will meet for fourteen weeks on Monday evenings. Check the Sessions section below to make sure you are prepared for online discussions, and to make sure that all assignments are turned in timely.

Zoom Room for Weekly Meetings

My Zoom room number is 779 642 4334. If you have any difficulty connecting, please text me on my cell at 281-798-7463.

Office Hours

I will be online Mondays at 1900-2000. I can be available weekdays and weekends to meet with you individually. Please just email me to arrange a date and time. I will make best efforts to respond to email within 24 hours.

Grading

The final grade for this class depends on three components.

1. Weekly Applied Law Problem – 50% of Grade

Individual Project. There will be twelve assignments in which you will apply the week's legal topic to a real-world healthcare problem. The assignments will follow the List of Activities in the Harris textbook. These assignments will be due prior to each week's online meeting.

Please complete each law assignment, maximum four pages, double spaced, using Times New Roman 11 font, and submit as a pdf to Canvas. Include the title of the homework, your name, and your student ID number at the top of the page. You do not need to repeat the questions asked.

2. Weekly Healthcare Policy Questions – 50% of Grade

Team Project. Each week, you will be responsible for answering questions based on the healthcare policy readings for the week from the Feldstein textbook. These assignments will be due prior to each week's online meeting.

Please complete each policy assignment, maximum two pages per question (e.g., so if four questions for the week, eight pages), double spaced, using Times New Roman 11 font, and submit as a pdf to Canvas. It is

acceptable for your answers to be in outline/bullet point format. Include the title of the homework, your names, and your student ID numbers at the top of the page. You do not need to repeat the questions asked. Your answers should address the cost, equity and political aspects of the question. Please see Appendix B for the Policy Questions.

3. Class Participation – Bonus

I will use participation during our weekly sessions as a potential curve. Please note that I will frequently call on you for your input or opinions, so be prepared. Webcams must be turned on for all classes. Please review Appendix A for details on class participation.

Syllabus Changes

Please note that I may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible.

Webcams

Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on during all live course meetings to enable our discussions.

Synchronous Online Courses

This course is being offered in the synchronous online format. Synchronous online class meetings will take place according to the class schedule. In between synchronous class meetings, there will be asynchronous written activities to complete.

Professor Evaluation

The C.T. Bauer College of Business has a policy for its instructors to be evaluated by students to provide feedback on how their teaching performance can be improved. I strongly encourage you to participate in the evaluation process. I am available throughout the course to receive any informal input. I rely on your input to improve the class each time I teach it.

Artificial Intelligence and Internet Research

The use of artificial intelligence programs on graded assignments is explicitly permitted. The use of internet research is explicitly permitted.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let's Talk location in-person or virtually. Let's Talk are daily, informal confidential

consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

Academic Honesty Policy

High ethical standards are critical to the integrity of any institution, and bear directly on the ultimate value of conferred degrees. All UH community members are expected to contribute to an atmosphere of the highest possible ethical standards. Maintaining such an atmosphere requires that any instances of academic dishonesty be recognized and addressed. The UH Academic Honesty Policy is designed to handle those instances with fairness to all parties involved: the students, the instructors, and the University itself. All students and faculty of the University of Houston are responsible for being familiar with this policy.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

Excused Absence Policy

Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy and Graduate Excused Absence Policy for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Under these policies, students with excused absences will be provided with an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the course grade or a satisfactory alternative. Please read the full policy for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences. Additional policies address absences related to military service, religious holy days, pregnancy and related conditions, and disability.

Recording of Class

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Resources for Online Learning

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, Blackboard, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

UH Email

Please check and use your CougarNet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the CougarNet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your CougarNet email, login to your Microsoft 365 account with your CougarNet credentials. Visit University Information Technology (UIT) for instructions on how to connect your CougarNet e-mail on a mobile device.

Security Escorts and Cougar Ride

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety, please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called "Cougar Ride" that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

SESSIONS

WEEK ONE

LAW, ETHICS AND POLICY INTRODUCTION

Readings	Harris
	1 Using the Law to Promote Our Policy Goals and Ethical Principles 2 The American Legal System 3 How to Conduct Legal Research
	Feldstein
	1 The Rise of Medical Expenditures 2 How Much Should We Spend on Medical Care? 3 Do More Medical Expenditures Produce Better Health?
Assignments	None
Class	Introduction to Course Lecture
	Discussion of Readings

WEEK TWO

GOVERNMENT REGULATION

Readings	Harris
	5 Government Regulation of Public Health and Healthcare Services
	Feldstein
	4 In Whose Interest Does the Physician Act? 5 Rationing Medical Services
Assignments	Individual: Harris 5.1 CON for Open-Heart Surgery
	Team: Feldstein Questions 4, 5
Class	Lecture
	Discussion of Readings

WEEK THREE
TORT LIABILITY

Readings

Harris 10 The Law of Tort Liability

Feldstein

6 How Much Health Insurance Should Everyone Have?

7 Why are Those Who Most Need Health Insurance Least Able to Buy it?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 10.1 John Parker

Team: Feldstein Questions 6, 7

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK FOUR
OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE CARE

Readings

Harris

11 Legal and Ethical Obligations to Provide Care

Feldstein

8 Medicare

9 Medicaid

10 How Does Medicare Pay Physicians?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 11.1 Joan Grant

Team: Feldstein Questions 8, 9, 10

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK FIVE
STRUCTURE OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

Readings

Harris

4 The Legal Structure and Governance of Healthcare Organizations

Feldstein

11 The Shortage of Physicians and Emerging Solutions

12 Why Is Getting into Medical School so Difficult?

13 The Changing Practice of Medicine

Assignments

Individual: Harris 4.1 Alternatives for Developing a Hospital

Team: Feldstein Questions 11, 12, 13

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK SIX
PHYSICIAN AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Readings

Harris

7 Medical Staff Membership and Clinical Privileges

Feldstein

14 The Economic Outlook for Registered Nurses

15 Do Nonprofit Hospitals Behave Differently from For-Profit Hospitals?

16 Competition Among Hospitals: Does It Raise or Lower Costs?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 7.1 Dr. Michael Henry

Team: Feldstein Questions Chap 14, 15, 16

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK SEVEN
ANTITRUST

Readings

Harris

9 Antitrust Law in Healthcare

Feldstein

17 The Future Role of Hospitals

18 Cost Shifting

19 Can Price Controls Limit Medical Expenditure Increases?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 9.1 North Florida Women's Center

Team: Feldstein Questions 17, 18, 19

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK EIGHT
MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Readings

Harris

8 The Law of Government Payment Programs: Medicare, Medicaid and Fraud and Abuse

Feldstein

20 The Evolution of Managed Care

21 Has Competition Been Tried and Has it Failed to Improve the US Healthcare System?

Assignments

Individual: None

Team: Feldstein Questions 20, 21

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK NINE FRAUD AND ABUSE

Readings

Harris

8 The Law of Government Payment Programs: Medicare, Medicaid and Fraud and Abuse

Feldstein

22 Comparative Effectiveness Research

23 Who Bears the Cost of Employee Health Benefits?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 8.1 The Fraud and Abuse Waiver for ACO Patient Incentives

Team: Feldstein Questions Chap 22, 23

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK TEN COST CONTAINMENT

Readings

Harris

14 Legal Issues in Health Cost Containmentment

Feldstein

24 The High Price of Prescription Drugs

25 Ensuring Safety and Efficacy of New Drugs: Too Much of a Good Thing?

26 Why are Prescription Drugs Less Expensive Overseas?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 14.1 Albert Crenshaw

Team: Feldstein Questions 24, 25, 26

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK ELEVEN HEALTH REFORM

Readings

Harris

15 Legal Issues in Health Insurance and Health Reform

Feldstein

27 The Pharmaceutical Industry: A Public Policy Dilemma

28 Should Kidneys and Other Organs Be Bought and Sold?

29 Should Profits in Healthcare be Prohibited?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 15.1 Waivers for State Innovation

Team: Feldstein Questions 27, 28, 29

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK TWELVE HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

Readings

Harris

6 Protecting the Privacy of Medical Information

Feldstein

30 The Role of Government in Medical Care

31 Health Associations and the Political Marketplace

32 Med Research, Med Education, Alcohol Consumption, and Pollution: Who Should Pay?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 6.1 Hilltop Memorial Hospital

Team: Feldstein Questions 30, 31, 32

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK THIRTEEN BIRTH

Readings

Harris

13 Reproductive Health

Feldstein

33 The Canadian Healthcare System

34 Employer-Mandated National Health Insurance

35 National Health Insurance: Which Approach and Why?

Assignments

Individual: Harris 13.1 State Abortion Statute

Team: Feldstein Questions 33, 34, 35

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

WEEK FOURTEEN DEATH

Readings

Harris

10 Legal and Ethical Issues in Termination or Refusal of Care and Physician Assisted Suicide

Feldstein

36 Financing Long-Term Care

37 The Affordable Care Act: Did it Achieve its Goals?

38 Comparative Health Systems

Assignments

Individual: Harris 12.1 Cases on Termination of Treatment

Team: Feldstein Questions 36, 37, 38

Class

Lecture

Discussion of Readings

Appendix A

Live Session Expectations

PLEASE BE PREPARED TO BE CALLED ON DURING CLASS – IT IS EXPECTED THAT YOU HAVE READ AND ARE FAMILIAR WITH ASSIGNED READINGS AND CASES

High/Above-Average Contributions Assessment Criteria:

1. Contributions reflect thorough or exceptional preparation.
2. Ideas offered are usually or always substantive, provide one or more significant insights and provide above average or highly productive direction for discussion among classmates.
3. Challenges to the ideas of others, including authors of assigned readings, are well-substantiated and often or always presented persuasively.
4. If this person were not present in our class sessions, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly.

Medium/Average Contributions Assessment Criteria:

1. Contributions reflect satisfactory preparation.
2. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer new and substantive direction for discussion among fellow classmates.
3. Challenges to the ideas of others, including authors of assigned readings, are sometimes well-substantiated and sometimes presented persuasively.
4. If this person were not present in our class sessions, the quality of discussion would be diminished.

Low/Below-Ave Contributions Assessment Criteria:

1. Contributions reflect inadequate preparation.
2. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few, if any, insights and, at times, take the classroom discussion in an unproductive, insightful direction.
3. Integrative comments and effective challenges are rare or absent.
4. If this person were not present in our class sessions, the quality of discussion would not be changed or might improve.

Appendix B

Feldstein Policy Questions

1. Is the rise of health costs in the US justifiable?
2. Are we spending too much or too little on healthcare?
3. How would you decide the right amount to spend on a person's healthcare?
4. How would you eliminate physician conflicts of interest?
5. How would you ration medical services?
6. How would you redesign the US system of financing health care?
7. How would you address healthcare for people without sufficient financial resources?
8. How would you improve Medicare?
9. How would you improve Medicaid?
10. How would you improve the way Medicare pays physicians?
11. How would you address the physician shortage?
12. How would you change the education of physicians?
13. Is the change in how physicians are practicing a good thing?
14. Propose a solution to the nursing shortage.
15. How would you address concerns that not-for-profit hospitals are not providing sufficient community benefit to account for their highly beneficial tax status?
16. How would you address concerns that hospital competition is not working to benefit consumers.
17. If you were the CEO of a hospital system, how would you prepare your hospital for the next ten years of changes in healthcare?
18. Is healthcare cost shifting justified?
19. Do you agree or disagree that price controls in healthcare are beneficial?
20. Describe an optimal managed care system.
21. Has competition in healthcare been tried and failed?
22. Do you agree or disagree that comparative effectiveness research is a good thing?
23. Who should pay for employee's (including retirees) healthcare costs?
24. How would you address concerns that prescription drugs are too expensive?
25. How would you improve the system of safely approving drugs?
26. How would you address concerns that prescription drugs are less expensive in other countries?
27. How would you address calls for increased regulation of pharmaceutical companies?

28. Should kidneys and other organs be available on the free market?
29. Is there an excessive amount of profit that healthcare companies (hospitals, physicians, pharmaceutical companies, insurers) should be allowed to make?
30. Are you in favor of more or less governmental regulation of healthcare and why?
31. Should healthcare associations be massive political lobbyists and donors?
32. Who should pay for healthcare costs associated with alcohol abuse, pollution, medical education and medical research?
33. Does Canada have a better healthcare system than the United States?
34. Is employer mandated national health insurance a good idea?
35. Design a brand-new national health insurance system for the US.
36. How should long-term care be financed?
37. Did the Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare) achieve its goals?
38. Which country has the best healthcare system?