

Health and Public Policy in Canada

MPA 836

January – April 2024

Wednesdays 9 am - 12 pm

Instructors **Samantha Buttemer MD MSc CCFP FRCPC**

Sherri Dutton BSc CRGS MPH PhD(c)

Supporting Faculty **David M C Walker MD FRCPC**

Hugh Guan MD MSc FRCPC

Design

This is an elective course intended to enhance students' understanding of the policy framework underpinning the functions and interrelationships of the elements of Canada's healthcare "system" and provide the opportunity to explore policy alternatives to the *status quo*.

The course is offered in an interactive learning environment where broad discussion is encouraged.

Texts and references are suggested but, by real-time exploration, students will be guided to understand the complexities of healthcare, the variable determinants of a society's health, the policies, structures and institutions that support a system (with comparative international examples) and the metrics for success and accountabilities to patients, families, funders and government.

Students are expected to participate, identify, analyse and critique issues and policies orally and in writing and to be involved in team-based policy development as they would, and many will be, in the workplace.

Goals

Students will be encouraged to:

- develop as critical thinkers,
- identify health policy issues (at the provincial, federal or global level),
- search for, analyse and critically appraise evidence bearing on those issues, and

- develop, concisely describe and defend, orally and in writing, realistic policy options for healthcare reform and implementation as if to an audience of the Deputy and Minister of Health or equivalent.

Structure

- Twelve 2.5-hour sessions from 9-11:30 am
- Weekly guidance with instructors for the next week's group from 11:30-12 pm
- Teamwork required
- Student presentations required
- Individual class participation expected
- Final policy interview required

Student responsibilities in the course

1. Occasional weekly reading

Sources recommended include:

- The King's Fund
 - <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk>
- Longwoods
 - <https://www.longwoods.com>
- The Commonwealth Fund
 - <https://www.commonwealthfund.org>
- HealthyDebate
 - <https://healthydebate.ca>
- Newspapers with national focus e.g.
 - The Globe and Mail <https://www.theglobeandmail.com>
 - The National Post <https://nationalpost.com>
 - The Toronto Star <https://www.thestar.com>
- QSPS Health Policy Blogs
 - <http://www.queensu.ca/connect/policyblog/>
- Parkhurst - The Politics of Evidence
 - <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/31002/640550.pdf>
- Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy
 - <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/>

Note: there are no required readings for any given week, however students are encouraged to explore these resources at their own pace. If there is a specific area of interest, we are always happy to point you in the direction of other resources.

2. Team Policy Presentations

The class will be formed into teams and each week one team will present a policy proposal. Instructors will be available to teams to guide their policy proposal development after class from 11:30-12 pm the week prior.

The topic area to be developed is described in the weekly course calendar that follows below.

One team will present each session. Each team is required to:

- Address the assigned policy challenge.
- Present the proposed policy, or policy options, which addresses the issue at hand; derive evidence that supports the selected policy; address the various ramifications and implications of the policy option (e.g. financial, political); outline implementation steps and how and over what time line success or failure might be measured. Consideration of public vs private funding/delivery methods should be included.
- The team will present as if to the Deputy and Minister of Health (and any expert retained by the Minister) for 30 minutes maximum following which there will be questions and discussion from the class

A pre-circulated written policy brief shall be distributed electronically before the start of the class (preferably the prior evening). Maximum two pages.

3. Final Policy Interview

For the final interview, students will be given two questions to answer on one of the weekly topics from the term on the second to last class of the semester. The final class of the semester will consist of the interviews. Students will have five to ten minutes to discuss their answers with an interviewer. Students are encouraged to have a page of notes prepared to facilitate the discussion — this can be based off the weekly submitted policy briefs. A rubric will be provided in preparation.

If you are unhappy with your grade on this interview, there will be the opportunity for individual re-examination on a different topic the week after with one of the professors.

4. Participation

The class experience is intended to encourage individual and collective participation in an environment of respect and listening. Weekly reflections are required during the weeks of presentations (weeks 3-12). No minimum or maximum on length. Submissions due by April 13 to receive credit.

Final letter grading will be based on:

Policy Presentation	40%
Final Policy Interview	40%
Class Participation	20%

Readings to support your learning

The following sources are suggested:

General Health Policy Sources

Canada Health Act R.S.C., 1985, c. C-6
<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/C-6.pdf>

International Health Care System Profiles. The Commonwealth Fund.
<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/international-health-policy-center/system-profiles>

Chapter 5: Health, Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services. Public services for Ontarians: A path to sustainability and excellence.
<https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/reformcommission/chapters/ch5.html>

Unleashing Innovation: Excellent Healthcare for Canada: Report on the Advisory Council on Health Care Innovation
<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/publications/health-system-systeme-sante/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins/alt/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins-eng.pdf>

The People's Health Care Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 5 - Bill 74
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s19005>

Hallway Health Care: A System Under Strain: First Interim Report from the Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/publications/premiers_council/report.aspx

Scott D, Klein E, Golshan T. Everybody Covered: What the US can learn from other countries' health systems.

<https://www.vox.com/2020/1/13/21055327/everybody-covered>

Light reading

Better Now: Six Big Ideas to Improve Health Care for all Canadians Danielle Martin, pub Penguin

Matters of Life and Death: Public Health Issues in Canada Andre Picard, pub Douglas & McIntyre

Being Mortal Atul Gawande, pub. Doubleday

Professors

Dr. Samantha Buttemer, MD MSc CCFP FRCPC is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences, a qualified family physician and public health physician, and current Program Director of the Public Health and Preventive Medicine Residency Program at Queen's as well as the Queen's MPH program. She completed her medical degree at Queen's University and graduated with distinction from the MSc Public Health program of the London UK School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine with a specialization in Health Services Management.

Member of the QSPS Health Policy Council. seb8@queensu.ca

Sherri Dutton, BSc CRGS MPH PhD(c) is a PhD candidate in the Department of Public Health Sciences and an urban-based mixed ancestry Algonquin Anishinaabekwe. Sherri has a BSc from the University of Winnipeg, an MPH from Queen's University, and has worked for over a decade as a diagnostic medical sonographer. Sherri has worked collaboratively with a variety of organizations on multiple community-engaged projects. Her current CIHR-funded dissertation focuses on exploring the role of public health and the environments, experiences, and perspectives related to intentionally pregnant and parenting young women in Canada.

sld10@queensu.ca

Schedule

January 10

Introductions

Identification of teams and topics

Narratives as Policy Drivers

The Canary in The Coal Mine – Dr. Walker

Canada's Health/Healthcare "System"

- Organizational/Governance models
- Structure and operations
- Component parts
- The Providers
- The Costs and the money
- Performance
- Policy Challenges

January 17

Health

Policy analysis models part 1 - Policy Triangle

Weekly Narrative Discussion

Health Systems Q&A

January 24

Process

Policy analysis models part 2 - Kingdon's Three Streams Model

Weekly Narrative Discussion

Health Systems Q&A

January 31

Integration

Policy analysis models part 3 - Carol Bacchi's WPR Approach

Weekly Narrative Discussion

Health Systems Q&A

February 7

Humanity

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

February 14

Colonialism

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

February 28

Education

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

March 6

Geography

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

March 13

Outcomes

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

March 20

End of Life

Team Presentation
Weekly Narrative Discussion

March 27

Innovation

April 3

Final Policy Interviews

Statement of Inclusion

In this class we will work to promote an anti-discriminatory environment where everyone feels respected, valued and welcomed. We work to take an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens to my teaching. It is my intent to produce materials and activities that are respectful of the diversity of students and the experiences each of you brings to this class. Students are encouraged to participate during class. Because the class will represent a diversity of people, beliefs, backgrounds and experiences, every member of our class (including us, of course) must show respect for all other members. If there is concern with regards to safety within teams or the classroom environment, I encourage you to reach out to us at any point.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principles-and-priorities).

Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment or the failure of a course to the rescinding of a degree.

Generative AI

Students are encouraged to explore the use of generative AI in their work. Please note generative AI is subject to the biases of the content it has been informed by, and is not ideal for the generation of entirely new concepts. If you use generative AI in an assignment, please note in an addendum how it was used.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with physical and learning disabilities must contact the instructor as soon as possible in order for accommodations/modifications for course expectations to be made.

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the QSAS website at: <https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services>

Copyright

The link below provides a brief summary of the Copyright Act of Canada (the Act) as it relates to instruction at Queen's University.

<https://library.queensu.ca/help-services/copyright-fair-dealing/copyright-basics-instructors>