



PUBH 320: Healthcare Administration & Policy

Term: Fall 2026

Credits: 3.0

Lecture Times & Location: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m., Calder Health Sciences Building 160

Modality: In-Person

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Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Dr. Alan Berg (Associate Professor of Public Health)
- **Email:** aberg@university.alkimi.ai
- **Office:** Calder Health Sciences Building 310
- **Office Hours:**
 - Monday & Friday: 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (In person, Calder Health Sciences Building 310)
 - Thursday: 10:00–11:00 a.m. (Virtual via Zoom; link posted in Canvas)
 - Also available by appointment.

Course Description

Organization and financing of the U.S. health system, insurance and Medicare and Medicaid, health care quality and workforce, and the health policy process. PUBH 320 analyzes the organization, financing, and delivery of health services within the United States, alongside the political processes governing health policy. Students investigate the historical foundations and operational mechanics of private health insurance, employer-sponsored coverage, Medicare (Parts A–D), Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The course critically evaluates health care cost drivers, reimbursement models—ranging from fee-for-service to value-based alternative payment models—workforce shortages, quality measurement frameworks, and the policy-making lifecycle from agenda-setting to regulatory implementation.

Prerequisites

PUBH 101.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of PUBH 320, students will be able to:

1. **Analyze the Structure of the U.S. Healthcare System:** Examine the organizational relationships, delivery settings, and regulatory oversight connecting hospitals, ambulatory care centers, public health agencies, and post-acute providers.
2. **Evaluate Healthcare Financing and Reimbursement Models:** Differentiate private insurance mechanisms, Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP; evaluate fee-for-service, capitation, prospective payment systems, and accountable care organizations.
3. **Deconstruct the Health Policy Process:** Apply political and policy models (including Kingdon's multiple-streams framework) to analyze how health issues reach the legislative agenda, undergo statutory drafting, and transition to administrative rulemaking.

4. **Assess Quality, Patient Safety, and Health System Performance:** Apply the Donabedian model (structure, process, outcome) and standardized clinical quality metrics (HEDIS, CAHPS) to evaluate patient safety, disparities, and health system efficiency.
5. **Draft Professional Health Policy Memoranda:** Synthesize statutory, economic, and epidemiological evidence to write an authoritative, non-partisan policy memorandum recommending legislative or administrative action to key stakeholders.

Required Course Materials & Approximate Costs

1. Shi, Leiyu, and Douglas A. Singh. *Delivering Health Care in America: A Systems Approach*. 8th ed., Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2022. Approx. \$95 print, \$55 digital rental.
2. Teitelbaum, Joel B., and Sara E. Wilensky. *Essentials of Health Policy and Law*. 4th ed., Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2020. Approx. \$85 print or digital.
3. **Total estimated cost:** \$95 to \$140.

Generative AI Policy (AI Level 2: AI Permitted with Disclosure for Specified Tasks)

In accordance with Alkimi University Academic Policies (Student Handbook §5.8), PUBH 320 operates under **AI Level 2**.

- **What is permitted:** You may use generative AI tools to locate statutory citations, generate preliminary outlines for healthcare administrative memos, explore differing stakeholder viewpoints on pending health legislation, and edit drafted sections for professional clarity.
- **What is prohibited:** You may not use generative AI to write your legislative policy memorandum, formulate strategic administrative solutions for case studies, complete weekly Canvas quizzes, or answer examination questions. All policy syntheses must represent your own analytical reasoning.
- **Disclosure:** All submitted policy memoranda and administrative projects must include an AI disclosure statement identifying the AI tools used, the prompts submitted, and how outputs were revised. If no tools were used, state: 'No generative AI tools were used in preparing this work.'

Grading Components and Weights

- **Midterm Examination 1:** 15% (In class, Thursday, October 1)
- **Midterm Examination 2:** 15% (In class, Thursday, November 12)
- **Health Policy Legislative Memorandum:** 20% (Due Friday, October 23 at 11:59 p.m.)
- **Health Administration Case Study & Strategy Project:** 15% (Due Friday, November 20 at 11:59 p.m.)
- **Weekly Health Policy & Systems Canvas Quizzes:** 15% (Due Mondays at 11:59 p.m. in Canvas; lowest quiz score dropped)
- **Final Examination:** 20% (Wednesday, December 16, 2026, 1:30–3:30 p.m.)

Grading Scale (Alkimi University Standard)

- **A:** 93–100% | **A-:** 90–92%
- **B+:** 87–89% | **B:** 83–86% | **B-:** 80–82%
- **C+:** 77–79% | **C:** 73–76% | **C-:** 70–72%
- **D+:** 67–69% | **D:** 60–66% | **F:** Below 60%
- **Extra credit:** No extra credit assignments are offered in this course.

Course Schedule (Fall 2026)

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
Week 1	Aug 27	Overview of U.S. Health Care Delivery: Major characteristics of the U.S. health system, market justice versus social justice,	<i>First day of classes: Wed Aug 26.</i>

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
		systems framework, and historical milestones. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 1–2</i>	
Week 2	Sep 1, 3	The Health Policy and Legal Framework: Role of law in public health and healthcare, police powers, individual rights, separation of powers, and the policy-making lifecycle. <i>Reading: Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 1–3</i>	<i>Wed Sep 2: Add/section change deadline.</i>
Week 3	Sep 8, 10	Private Health Insurance and Risk Pooling: Underwriting, moral hazard, adverse selection, cost sharing (premiums, deductibles, copayments), employer-sponsored insurance, and ACA exchanges. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 6; Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 7</i>	<i>Mon Sep 7: Labor Day (no classes). Wed Sep 9: Census date (last day to drop without a W).</i>
Week 4	Sep 15, 17	Public Insurance: Medicare (Parts A, B, C, and D): Eligibility criteria, trust fund solvency, hospital insurance, physician coverage, Medicare Advantage, prescription drug coverage, and payment reforms. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 6; Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 8</i>	—
Week 5	Sep 22, 24	Public Insurance: Medicaid, CHIP, and Safety-Net Systems: Federal-state matching formulas (FMAP), mandatory and optional populations, Medicaid expansion under ACA, waivers (Section 1115), and safety-net hospitals. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 6; Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 8</i>	—
Week 6	Sep 29, Oct 1	Provider Reimbursement and Managed Care: Fee-for-service, capitation, diagnosis-related groups (DRGs), HMOs, PPOs, accountable care organizations (ACOs); Midterm Examination 1 in class. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 9</i>	Midterm Examination 1 (in class).
Week 7	Oct 6, 8	Hospitals and Inpatient Care Administration: Evolution of American hospitals, non-profit tax status, governance, inpatient utilization trends, and emergency department crowding. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 8</i>	—
Week 8	Oct 15	Outpatient and Primary Care Delivery: Ambulatory care services, patient-centered medical homes (PCMH), community health centers (FQHCs), and urgent care clinic growth. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 7</i>	<i>Oct 12–Oct 13: Fall break (no classes).</i>
Week 9	Oct 20, 22	Health Care Workforce: Physicians, Nurses, and Allied Health: Provider maldistribution, scope of practice battles, physician burnout, nursing shortages, and interprofessional collaborative practice models. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 4</i>	Health Policy Legislative Memorandum due Fri Oct 23 at 11:59 p.m.
Week 10	Oct 27, 29	Health Information Technology and Operations: Electronic health records (HITECH Act), interoperability challenges, telehealth expansion, artificial intelligence in billing and clinical triage. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 5</i>	—
Week 11	Nov 3, 5	Quality of Care, Patient Safety, and Accreditation: Donabedian's quality triad, The Joint Commission accreditation, HEDIS measures, hospital-acquired infections, and medical malpractice law. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 12; Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 10</i>	<i>Fri Nov 6: Last day to withdraw (W) or elect Pass/No Pass.</i>
Week 12	Nov 10, 12	Healthcare Costs and Cost Containment Strategies: Medical cost trends, administrative waste, pharmaceutical pricing dynamics, certificate-of-need laws, and global budgets; Midterm Examination 2 in class. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 12</i>	Midterm Examination 2 (in class).
Week 13	Nov 17, 19	Special Populations and Healthcare Disparities: Racial and ethnic disparities, rural healthcare vulnerabilities, mental health parity laws, LGBTQ+ health access, and uncompensated care burdens. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 11</i>	Health Administration Case Study & Strategy Project due Fri Nov 20 at 11:59 p.m.
Week 14	Nov 24	Long-Term Care and Aging Populations: Skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, home and community-based services,	<i>Nov 25–Nov 27: Thanksgiving break (no classes).</i>

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
		dual-eligible beneficiaries, and the financing of long-term care. <i>Reading: Shi & Singh, Ch. 10</i>	
Week 15	Dec 1, 3	The Politics of Healthcare Reform in America: Interest group politics, lobbying, public opinion, constitutional court challenges to health reforms, and proposals for universal coverage. <i>Reading: Teitelbaum & Wilensky, Ch. 12–14</i>	—
Week 16	Dec 8	Health System Transformation and Review: Value-based purchasing, social determinants in clinical contracts, career pathways in healthcare management, and final exam synthesis. <i>Reading: Course review packet</i>	<i>Wed Dec 9: Last day of classes. Thu Dec 10: Reading Day.</i>
Finals	Dec 16	Final Examination: Wednesday, December 16, 2026, 1:30–3:30 p.m., Calder Health Sciences Building 160.	Comprehensive examination on health systems organization, financing, Medicare/Medicaid, quality measurement, and policy analysis.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance and vocal engagement in policy debates and administrative case analyses are mandatory. Our seminar environment depends on active dialogue, mock stakeholder hearings, and group policy evaluations. If you must be absent for documented illness or academic conference participation, email Dr. Berg in advance. More than two unexcused absences will lower your final course grade. Students who miss the first two class meetings without notifying the instructor may be dropped. Students may miss class for religious observance without penalty if they notify the instructor in writing within the first two weeks of the semester (by Wednesday, September 9, 2026). Absences for university-sponsored activities (athletics, performances, conferences) are excused with a letter from the sponsoring office at least one week in advance.

Late Work Policy

Written policy briefs and case projects submitted after the deadline will lose 10% per calendar day for up to three days. Submissions after 72 hours will receive no credit. Quizzes close on Canvas on Mondays at 11:59 p.m. and cannot be taken after the deadline.

Public Health Major Progression Requirement

Students must achieve a grade of C or higher in PUBH 320 to satisfy degree requirements for the Public Health BS. Pass/No Pass grading is not permitted for major coursework.

Final Exam Policy

The final examination (Wednesday, December 16, 2026, 1:30–3:30 p.m.) is scheduled by the University Registrar and can't be moved without the Dean's written approval (Faculty Handbook §5.5). A student with three or more final exams on the same calendar day may reschedule one of them. Requests go to the instructor of the middle exam by the last day of classes. For this term, send the request by Wednesday, December 9, 2026 (Student Handbook §6.4).

Academic Integrity

Alkimi University is an academic community devoted to rigorous scholarship, open intellectual inquiry, and uncompromising ethical conduct. All students are subject to the regulations of the Alkimi University Academic Integrity Policy. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication of empirical data, and unauthorized submission of academic work generated by artificial intelligence—undermines the integrity of the university and carries severe

disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions range from a failing grade on an assignment or exam to an administrative course failure recorded as an 'XF' on the official transcript, academic suspension, or expulsion. Suspected violations are formally investigated and resolved through the Office of Academic Integrity in accordance with Faculty Handbook §6. For detailed information, consult the Office of Academic Integrity, Lovell Hall 315, (555) 555-0163, integrity@university.alkimi.ai.

Accessibility Services

Alkimi University is committed to providing equitable educational access and reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities, including physical, sensory, psychological, learning, and chronic health conditions. Students requesting academic accommodations must formally register with the Office of Accessibility Services, Harlan Hall 204, (555) 555-0155, access@university.alkimi.ai. Once approved, students will receive an official Faculty Accommodation Letter detailing approved accommodations. Students should present this letter to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, and at least one week prior to any exam or assignment requiring accommodation. Accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

Student Wellness and Mental Health

Your physical health, psychological well-being, and mental health are essential to your academic success. If you experience heightened stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, personal trauma, or academic burnout, free, confidential counseling and medical care are available through the Hollis Health & Counseling Center, located in the Hollis Center. Routine appointments are available Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. during the semester by calling (555) 555-0190 or emailing health@university.alkimi.ai. Urgent, 24/7 crisis psychological counseling is accessible immediately at (555) 555-0199.

Campus Student Support Services

- **Academic Advising Center:** Lovell Hall 101 | (555) 555-0158 | advising@university.alkimi.ai
- **Writing Center:** Whitcombe Library 3rd Floor | Free consultations on papers, reports, and research projects at any stage.
- **Whitcombe Library:** Whitcombe Library, Main Floor | (555) 555-0170 | askalibrarian@university.alkimi.ai
- **Hollis Health & Counseling Center:** Hollis Center | (555) 555-0190 | 24/7 Counseling Line: (555) 555-0199 | health@university.alkimi.ai
- **Health Policy & Administration Mentorship:** Calder Health Sciences Building 310 | Consultation on legislative memo drafting, healthcare administration internships, and career planning with Dr. Berg.