



University of North Texas
College of Health and Public Service
Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services
PUBH 4050 Public Health and Health Policy

Welcome to the PUBH 4050 Public Health and Health Policy Fall 2026 course. My name is Dr. Shyamkumar Sriram. I will be your instructor for this course. I look forward to working with you this semester as we examine health policy, the policymaking process, and the vital role the legal system plays in the development and implementation of policy.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number and Title: PUBH 4050 Public Health and Health Policy

Meets: Wednesday 2:25 pm – 5:15 pm

In-Person Location: Wh 116

3 Credit Hours

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Shyamkumar Sriram MD, MPH, MS, MHS, MBA, PhD

Office Location: Chilton Hall 218K

Email: Shyamkumar.Sriram@unt.edu

Email will be the best way to communicate with me this semester. In most cases, I will reply to messages left at the department and emails within 48 hours.

Office hours:

By appointment

In-person: Friday 3:00 – 5:00 pm (Chilton Hall 218K)

Teaching Assistant

Mercy Agbona

Email: Mercy.Agbona@unt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to social, ideological, economic, and political forces that influence health policymaking. The course will involve an examination of the US health care system and the role of key players in health policymaking. Students will become familiar with the policymaking process and ways to impact the process. The course will familiarize students with the legal system and the vital role it plays in the debate, creation, and implementation of health policy. The course will also focus on essential factors in health policy including inequality in health, access to healthcare, the economics of health policy, healthcare reform in the United States, and public health preparedness.

PRE-REQUISITES

Recommended prerequisite(s): PUBH 1010, PUBH 2010, PUBH 2015 (ONLY for Public Health Majors)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the concepts of health policy and policymaking
2. Describe the legal system and legal concepts that impact health policy
3. Discuss the ethical dimensions of healthcare and public health policy
4. Analyze the impact health policy has on disparities in health, access to care, and healthcare costs
5. Understand the responsibilities of different agencies and branches of government
6. Discuss federal health insurance programs and their impact on health
7. Detail the differences between public and private health insurance
8. Understand health care economics and its relationship to health policymaking
9. Discuss the main perspectives and methods used to examine healthcare policy
10. Understand the relationship between politics, research, and health policy

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Required Textbook

Wilensky, S. E., & Teitelbaum, J. B. (2023). Essentials of health policy and law. 5th edition. Jones and Bartlett Learning.

ISBN: 978-1-284-24745-9

Any additional required readings will be posted in Canvas each week and will be available electronically.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Sage Hall, Room 130 | (940) 565-2324

Walk-in availability: 8 am – 9 pm

Telephone availability: Monday–Thursday 8 am – midnight; Friday 8 am – 8 pm; Saturday 9 am – 5 pm; Sunday noon – midnight

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

We will be using Canvas as our main platform for interaction this semester. You will need regular access to the internet, Canvas, and Zoom (including a webcam and microphone). We will be using programs in the Microsoft Office Suite including Word and PowerPoint. You will also have to access Adobe Acrobat Reader for PDF files. Finally, you will need to have the ability to upload and download files, send and receive emails with and without attachments, and communicate with fellow students in various electronic formats such as videoconferencing. Check the electronic resources available to students through the College of Health and Public Service as well as the library to see if they offer laptops and webcams for students to check out.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are five ways I assess a student's performance in this course. Students must participate in group work each class. Students must also participate in weekly discussions. Students will complete three assignments — a policy fact sheet, a policy brief, and a policy analysis paper. See Canvas for more details.

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Participation Group Work	15 @ 20 points each Total 300 points	30%
Discussions	15 @ 10 points each Total 150 points	15%
Policy Fact Sheet	100 points	10%
Policy Brief	200 points	20%
Policy Analysis	250 points	25%
Total Points Possible	1000 points	100%

Participation Group Work

Students are required to complete group work during each class session (every Wednesday) in the second half of class, and one designated group member must submit the group's deliverable on Canvas before the class ends. Group exercises are worth 20 points each week (totaling 300 points for the semester), and any student who is absent and does not participate in the in-class activity will not earn points for that session.

Discussions

Students are required to participate in weekly discussions in Canvas worth 10 points each. Discussions will become available by Thursday of each week. Students are required to complete the following weekly:

Each Friday by 11:59 pm – post your response to the discussion question/s (7 points each week)

Each Sunday by 11:59 pm – comment on a fellow student's post (3 points each week)

Policy Fact Sheet

Students will complete a 1 to 2-page policy fact sheet worth 100 points. See Canvas for more details.

Policy Brief

Students will complete a three to four-page policy brief. The policy brief is worth 200 points. Due dates are listed in the calendar. See the Policy Brief Guidelines and Rubric for more details.

Policy Analysis

Students will complete a six to seven-page policy analysis. The Policy Analysis is worth 250 points. See the Policy Analysis Guidelines and Rubric on Canvas for more details.

LATE WORK POLICY

Any work submitted after the deadline will lose 10 points. All assignments are set to close in Canvas 24 hours after the deadline. Once an assignment or exam is closed you may not submit work.

GRADING

All of the components of a student's grade will have a point value system, based on an A being equivalent to a 4.0. Points will be given based on a student's performance, such as the quality of information posted in the

weekly discussions, writing skills, research skills, and ability to illustrate comprehension of all course topics. Each assignment will include a rubric for specific details on grading criteria.

Total Points Possible for Semester / Grading Scale = 1,000

1000 – 900 = A

899 – 800 = B

799 – 700 = C

699 – 600 = D

599 – 500 = F

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

As the instructor in this course, I am responsible for:

1. Providing course materials that will assist and enhance your achievement of the stated course goals
2. Providing timely and helpful feedback within the stated guidelines
3. Assisting in maintaining a positive learning environment for everyone

As a student in this course, you are responsible for:

1. Reading and completing all requirements of the course in a timely manner
2. Working to remain attentive and engaged in the course and interact with your fellow students
3. Assisting in maintaining a positive learning environment for everyone

USE OF AI (FOR EXAMPLE, CHATGPT)

You may use AI to find information for the assignment, but you must trace the information generated by the AI system back to the original source. If you cannot trace it back to an existing source, I do not consider it a reliable resource. Do not use Grammarly, MS paraphrasing, or any other writing enhancing software. Turnitin will flag this work as AI and you will lose a minimum of 20 points for this.

Please remember that some AI systems can perpetuate biases present in their training data. When using AI, be conscious of potential biases and strive for equity and inclusivity. Please use AI with caution. I want you to become familiar with gathering correct information from reliable sources using AI and using AI to craft the information you include in your assignments and your work once you graduate. If you have any questions, please let me know.

I will use Turnitin software to screen for plagiarism and the use of AI-generated information. You will lose most of the points for the assignment if your paper contains a large amount of plagiarized or AI-generated material. Work on tracing your information back to the original source.

Suggestions: Keep your notes, outlines, and drafts of your work to show your research process in the event your Turnitin score is high. Practice tracing any information you find using AI back to its original source. If you have questions about your work, feel free to contact me.

UNT POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty

may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Work submitted may be analyzed by software for academic integrity.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. I aim to make success in this course attainable for all students. Please reach out to me about accommodation options. Students seeking accommodation should register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification and Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Access to Information — Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the

Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off-campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565-2759.

Copyright Notice

Some or all of the materials on the course website may be protected by copyright. Federal copyright law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public performance, or public display of copyrighted materials without the express and written permission of the copyright owner, unless fair use or another exemption under copyright law applies. Additional copyright information may be located on the UNT website.

Important Notice for F-1 Students Taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken online or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An online or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no online or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

1. Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
2. Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, they should contact the UNT

International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use "I" statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual's experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people's ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as "YELLING!"
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using "text-talk" unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these Engagement Guidelines (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information. For all other UNT Policies, please go to the Student Handbook.

STUDENT PROGRAMS / SERVICES / ORGANIZATIONS

Academic Support Services

Academic Resource Center (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)

Academic Success Center (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)

UNT Libraries (<https://library.unt.edu/>)

Writing Lab (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

MathLab (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)

Library Resources

UNT Libraries (<https://library.unt.edu/>)

UNT Library Research Support (<https://library.unt.edu/research/>)

Subject Librarian - Jennifer Rowe

Phone: 940-369-7815

Email: jennifer.rowe@unt.edu

PUBH Subject Library Resources Page (<https://guides.library.unt.edu/c.php?g=69648&p=452741>)

PUBH 4050 Public Health and Health Policy Library Guide (<https://guides.library.unt.edu/PUBH4050>)

Student Support Services

Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)

Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

Student Legal Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)

Career Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)

Multicultural Center (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)

UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)

Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

Student Affairs Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)

Student Health and Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)

Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)

UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

ALL Programs and Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/programs-and-services>)

Student Organizations

Did you know there are more than 400 student organizations at UNT? Joining an organization is a great way to meet other students with similar interests. There are clubs related to academics, recreation, advocacy, entertainment, and so much more. Many organizations offer students opportunities to gain leadership skills and network with others to expand career opportunities.

Student Organization Homepage (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-org>)

UNT Student Organizations Related to Public Health

Public Health Student Association (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/phsa>)

Future Without Poverty (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/future-without-poverty>)

UNT Rotaract Club (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/global-medical-brigades>)

Global Medical Brigades (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/global-medical-brigades>)

Student Health Advisory Committee (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/student-health-advisory-committee>)

Alternative Breaks (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/alternative-service-breaks>)

Health Occupation Students of America (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/hosa-unt>)

Pre-Physician Assistant Club (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/pre-physician-assistant-club>)

Alpha Epsilon Delta Health Pre-Professional Honor Society

(<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/alphaepsilondelta>)

American Planning Association (https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/apaso_unt)

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/delta-sigma-theta-sorority-inc>)

Public Administration Student Association (<https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/public-administration-student-association>)

Full List of Organizations Related to Public Health, go to the student organization search page and search 'public health' <https://unt.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

CALENDAR — FALL 2026

A semester calendar is posted below. It includes information for each week's topic, required weekly readings, and due dates for assignments. Remember, weekly supplemental material is not listed here. It is your responsibility to go to the course Canvas page to find the posted material for the week. The course Canvas page is where you will find the weekly instructions, supplemental materials, lectures, slides, weekly participation assignments, discussions, assignments, grades, and more. Material for the course will be posted throughout the semester. These dates and topics are subject to change.

Week	Dates	Module Topic	Materials to Review	Participation and Assignments
Week 1	8/17 – 8/23	Introduction to the course	Find access to textbook; Readings in Week 1	Participation Group Work 1 Discussion 1
Week 2	8/24 – 8/30	The Role of Health Policy and Law	Chapter 1; Readings in Week 2	Participation Group Work 2 Discussion 2
Week 3	8/31 – 9/6	Policy and the Policymaking Process	Chapter 2; Readings in Week 3	Participation Group Work 3 Discussion 3
Week 4	9/7 – 9/13	Law and the Legal System	Chapter 3; Readings in Week 4	Participation Group Work 4 Discussion 4; Policy Fact Sheet due 9/25
Week 5	9/14 – 9/20	Overview of the United States Healthcare System	Chapter 4; Readings in Week 5	Participation Group Work 5 Discussion 5
Week 6	9/21 – 9/27	Public Health Institutions and Systems	Chapter 5; Readings in Week 6	Participation Group Work 6 Discussion 6
Week 7	9/28 – 10/4	The Art of Writing a Health Policy Analysis	Chapter 14; Readings in Week 7	Participation Group Work 7 Discussion 7
Week 8	10/5 – 10/11	Individual Rights in Health Care and Public Health	Chapter 6; Readings in Week 8	Participation Group Work 8 Discussion 8
Week 9	10/12 – 10/18	Social Determinants of Health and the Role of Law	Chapter 7; Readings in Week 9	Participation Group Work 9 Discussion 9; Policy Brief due 10/30
Week 10	10/19 – 10/25	Health Insurance; Health Economics	Chapters 8 and 9; Readings in Week 10	Participation Group Work 10 Discussion 10
Week 11	10/26 – 11/1	Health Reform in the United States	Chapter 11; Readings in Week 11	Participation Group Work 11 Discussion 11
Week 12	11/2 – 11/8	Government Health Insurance Programs	Chapter 10; Readings in Week 12	Participation Group Work 12 Discussion 12
Week 13	11/9 – 11/15	Healthcare Quality and Emergency Preparedness	Chapters 12 and 13; Readings in Week 13	Participation Group Work 13 Discussion 13
Week 14	11/16 – 11/22	Concluding Thoughts	Chapter 15; Readings in Week 14	Participation Group Work 14 Discussion 14
	11/23 – 11/29	Thanksgiving Week — No Class		
Week 15	11/30 – 12/4	Question and Answers; Policy Discussions		Participation Group Work 15 Discussion 15
Finals	12/7 – 12/11	Finals Week		Policy Analysis due 12/10 by 11:59 pm