

**Business C721  
Health Policy Analysis  
Fall 2019 Course Outline**

**Health Policy and Management  
DeGroote School of Business  
McMaster University**

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***COURSE OBJECTIVES***

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The goal of this course is to introduce students to the field of health policy analysis. The scope includes administrative, clinical, and public policies. Students will be exposed to concepts and methods that will provide a foundation for conducting policy analysis, including gaining an understanding of how to approach descriptive, explanatory, and instrumental research. Current policy topics in health care will be used in order to demonstrate the practical relevance of policy analysis for health care managers. In-class small group activities will be used to help develop communication and analysis skills for use in health policy work settings.

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***INSTRUCTORS, TEACHING ASSISTANT, AND CONTACT INFORMATION***

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<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Section 2</b>
Mondays	Mondays	Wednesdays	Wednesdays
8:30-11:20am	2:30-5:20pm	2:30-5:20pm	7:00-9:50pm
DSB A102	DSB A102	DSB A102	DSB A102

**Instructor (Sections 3 & 4)**

Neil Barr, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
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**Instructor (Sections 1 & 2)**

Gillian Mulvale, PhD  
Associate Professor  
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**Teaching Assistant**

Puspita Hossain  
PhD Student, Health Policy Program  
[hossap1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hossap1@mcmaster.ca)

Course website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

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### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

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This course examines the field of health policy analysis with particular emphasis on administrative, clinical, and public policy. After establishing a framework by which to analyze policy—which will include consideration of ideas (values, research evidence), interests (stakeholders, pressure groups), and institutions (organization, rules)—various tools will be studied as a means of formulating and evaluating policy. Techniques from various disciplines (e.g., political science, sociology) will be used. Specific policy topics and applications will be discussed to illustrate issues in the policy analysis process. Group discussions, a mock policy dialogue, as well as written and oral presentations of analyses will be used to help develop skills in conducting and communicating health policy analysis through experiential learning.

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### ***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

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Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of policy and policy analysis in Canadian health care;
- Describe the stages and nature of the policy development process;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the significant factors which impact policy development and outcomes;
- Identify key ideas, interests, institutions that affect health policy development;
- Demonstrate an understanding of how issues make it onto the policy agenda;
- Explain why some policy solutions succeed while others fail;
- Communicate effectively in the policy environment;
- Design a policy dialogue and conduct a mock dialogue; and
- Conduct a mini policy analysis.

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### ***REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS***

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**Required:**

Course materials are available on Avenue to Learn  
(<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>)

**Free**

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## ***EVALUATION***

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Learning in this course comes from readings, lectures, in-class discussion, small group work, as well as participation, preparation of assignments, and out-of-class analysis. All work will be evaluated on an individual basis except where group work is expected. In these cases group members will share the same grade, unless all group members agree to an adjustment.

### **Components and Weights**

Class Participation	Participation in all group discussions, including any online forums. Thoughtful participation is also expected for group presentations.	20%
Assignment #1 (in groups)	<b>Policy Report</b> Presentation regarding the analysis of a health policy document.	15%
Assignment #2 (in groups)	<b>Stakeholder Dialogue</b> Protocol for a proposed stakeholder dialogue, including facilitation guide (15%) In-class mock stakeholder dialogue (15%)	30%
Assignment #3 (in pairs)	<b>Mini Policy Analysis</b> Outline (no formal grade); poster (25%); in-class poster presentation (10%)	35%

### **Class Participation**

Students are expected to post their photograph on the Avenue to Learn (A2L) system during the first week of class. Name cards and class pictures are used to help give credit for participation. You must have a name card with your full first and last names clearly written and displayed in front of you for every class. Participation will not be graded by simply counting each contribution a student makes (i.e., the quality of contribution is most important). Students are expected to come to class prepared (having reviewed the assigned readings) and to be involved in group discussions. Students are also expected to attend all classes.

### **Assignments**

\*Further guidance on the three assignments outlined below will be posted on A2L.

NOTE: If a student has conducted a project or assignment for another course on a similar topic to one proposed for this course, they are required to obtain permission from the instructor/s in

advance of proceeding with the topic. This is to ensure that projects or assignments are sufficiently different from one another. If in doubt, please contact the instructor/s.

### **Assignment #1 – Policy Report**

The purpose of this assignment is to assist students in understanding various course concepts through the examination of current issues in health policymaking.

Working in assigned groups, this assignment will involve analyzing/assessing a recent report related to Canadian health policy by identifying and applying concepts from the course. Each group will be assigned a different topic (group assignments will occur during the first week of class). Students will present to the class (and facilitate relevant discussion) the class/week after the associated concepts/material have been covered.

### **Assignment #2 – Stakeholder Dialogue**

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to become actively involved in health policy analysis by identifying relevant concepts and issues using a practical example of stakeholder engagement, while exposing students to a range of policy topics. In addition, it will help students to become familiar with a typical format and style of communicating in the policy environment.

Working in assigned teams of four to six (depending on class size), students will select one important issue in health policy and develop a protocol for a stakeholder dialogue to inform policymaking in a selected jurisdiction. Teams will then host a mock stakeholder dialogue on their topic with members of the class taking on the roles of various stakeholder groups. Teams will facilitate the dialogue by engaging classmates in their stakeholder roles to meet the stated objectives outlined in the protocol. Each team will design their own approach to conduct an effective dialogue to inform policy development on their chosen topic.

### **Assignment #3 – Mini Policy Analysis**

The purpose of the final assignment is to pull together the concepts and techniques covered during the course and apply them to an interesting policy issue. Students will conduct a mini policy analysis on a topic of their choice (subject to final approval from the instructor). Topics pertaining to countries/jurisdictions other than Canada are acceptable. The topic must be analyzed in either: 1) the agenda-setting stage of the policy cycle; or 2) the policy formulation stage of the policy cycle.

Specific policy analysis tools/concepts must be used in the analysis. Examples of possible topics and published policy analyses will be posted on the A2L site. Students are required to submit an outline (of approximately one page) describing the proposed policy analysis. The outline is intended to make sure students are on the right track. The final analysis will be provided in poster format and students will present their posters during a mock in-class poster session in class. This assignment will require the rigour of a paper, but allow students to gain important communication skills that will sharpen their analysis so it can be presented in a concise format. Samples of previous posters will be provided on A2L.

### **Grade Conversion**

At the end of the course, overall percentage grades will be converted to letter grades in accordance with the following conversion scheme:

<b>LETTER GRADE</b>	<b>PER CENT</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
A+	90-100	12
A	85-89	11
A-	80-84	10
B+	75-79	9
B	70-74	8
B-	60-69	7
F	00-59	0

### **Communication and Feedback**

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TA directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Administrative Assistant. Instructors are encouraged to conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

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### ***ACADEMIC DISHONESTY***

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You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences (e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript - notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

[www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism (the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained);
2. Improper collaboration in group work;
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/turnitin/students/>

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### ***ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS***

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In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

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***MISSED ACADEMIC WORK & PENALTY FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS***

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**Late Submissions**

Deadlines for assignments are set. All work must be submitted to the corresponding A2L Assignments folder on the due date and time as stated in the Course Schedule. Do not submit work by email. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for every 24 hours, or part thereof, they are submitted past their due date and time. If you anticipate being unable to complete an assignment on the due date, please contact the instructors prior to the due date. Requests for extensions will not be considered within 48 hours of the deadline except under exceptional circumstances.

**Missed Midterm Examinations/Tests/Class Participation**

Where students miss a regularly scheduled midterm or class participation for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office, the weight for that test/participation will be distributed across other evaluative components of the course at the discretion of the instructor. Documentation explaining such an absence must be provided to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office within five (5) working days upon returning to school.

To document absences for health related reasons, please provide to Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and the McMaster University Student Health Certificate which can be found on the DeGroote School of Business website at:

<https://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-applications/>

Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form as this is for Undergraduate students only. University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) medical certificates per year after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.

To document absences for reasons other than health related, please provide Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and documentation supporting the reason for the absence.

Students unable to write a mid-term at the posted exam time due to the following reasons: religious; work-related (for part-time students only); representing university at an academic or varsity athletic event; conflicts between two overlapping scheduled mid-term exams; or other extenuating circumstances, have the option of applying for special exam arrangements. Such requests must be made to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled exam along with acceptable documentation. Instructors

cannot themselves allow students to unofficially write make-up exams/tests. Adjudication of the request must be handled by Student Experience – Academic (MBA). If a midterm exam is missed without a valid reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

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### ***STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES***

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Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor, normally within the first three (3) weeks of classes, by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

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### ***POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE***

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The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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### ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES***

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Your registration and continuous participation (e.g., on A2L, in the classroom) to the various learning activities of C721 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies, and to act accordingly.

Lack of awareness of the course policies cannot be invoked at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.