

SOC. 2060

COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS AND HEALTH POLICY:

HEALTH CARE REFORM AND THE CHALLENGES OF PERSONALIZED MEDICINE

FALL 2009

WEDNESDAYS 9 – 12 NOON

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We are currently confronted with two seemingly incompatible goals: 1) reforming US health care policy (and the US healthcare delivery system), and 2) moving the delivery system toward the adoption of goals/structures/processes that enhance its capacity to deliver upon the promise of personalized medicine. In this graduate level seminar we will examine a number of questions concerning both of these goals and the roles of various healthcare and policy organizations in formulating and implementing these two goals, including: What are these two goals all about? What is the likelihood of the federal government achieving health policy reform this year, and how will it look? What effect will reform have upon current healthcare organizational profiles? What is personalized medicine? What do our healthcare organizations need to look like in order to deliver upon the promise of personalized medicine? What role does “translational research” play in delivering personalized medicine?

This seminar will blend readings from a number of different literatures (organizational decision-making, history of health policy, contemporary news analyses, innovations in biotechnology and pharmacology, healthcare organizational research, and health services research), with a small-group seminar structure. Course grades will emphasize participation in discussion, performance as a discussion leader, contributions to an evolving reading list, and a critical analysis paper.

These issues are unfolding NOW, and there are no clear answers to any of these questions. There are probably more questions than there are answers. But our goal will be to lay out the questions and various attempts to frame them theoretically, as well as respond to them empirically and practically. Please join us for a challenging and (hopefully) rewarding semester as history unfolds once again on the questions of healthcare reform.