

**CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY H. JOHN HEINZ III COLLEGE**  
**HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT – 90721 Section A1, FALL 2021**  
**COURSE OVERVIEW AND SYLLABUS**

**INSTRUCTOR**

Laura W. Synnott  
Associate Teaching Professor  
2107B Hamburg Hall  
[synnott@cmu.edu](mailto:synnott@cmu.edu)  
Office Hours by Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the knowledge and skills required to strategically manage the rapidly changing internal and external environment of health care organizations. Through readings, lectures, class discussions and case reviews, the course is designed to provide students with a foundation in contemporary health care organizational structures and management practices. Students will explore problems and decisions facing health care executives in areas such as clinical quality, organizational effectiveness, efficiency, growth, stakeholder conflicts, provider incentives, margin versus mission tradeoffs, human resources, and the like, all in a highly complex political environment.

A primary theme of this course is the application of ethical management practices as codified in the American College of Healthcare Executives' Code of Ethics. By providing a general overview of the responsibilities of health care leaders and managers, students will have a contextual reference for the application of future coursework.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Delve into the primary components and functions of health care provider organizations
- Assess the unique challenges involved in managing complex health care organizations
- Appraise the motivations and interests of key internal and external stakeholders and the role of the health care executive in managing expectations and communicating with these stakeholders
- Weigh common problems and decisions faced by health care leaders, and explore the implications of various alternative strategic solutions
- Adopt professional, ethical approaches to decision-making to respond to complex problems facing health care executives

**COURSE MODALITY**

In Fall 2021 the course modality is In Person Expectation (IPE).

This course will be conducted in a seminar format. Seminars are typically defined as small, discussion-based courses. Students complete readings and watch lectures before the class and discuss major themes or topics during class. The flexibility of class discussions stems largely from grounding in the Vygotskyian social learning theory, which emphasizes knowledge and conceptual gain through peer-to-peer dialogue. Vygotsky understood peers to coexist in the “zone of proximal development,” where knowledge could be shared and misconceptions clarified through dialogue (Vygotsky, 1962). Moreover, this kind of semi-public dialogue can facilitate better speaking skills and human reasoning (Hollander, 2002).

Sources: Adopted from Yale University Poorvu Center. Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Original work published in 1934) and Hollander, J. (2002). Learning to Discuss: Strategies for Improving the Quality of Class Discussion. *Teaching Sociology* 30 (3): 317-327.

### **REQUIRED LECTURES AND READINGS**

Several lectures have been pre-recorded and posted on Canvas. They should be watched before coming to that day's class.

Required readings are outlined in the syllabus and should also be read before coming to that day's class. Those that are in PDF format, as well as readings that are not required but recommended, are available on Canvas. Since health care is a dynamic field, additional articles may be assigned by the instructor prior to class. Students are also encouraged to share relevant articles on the discussion board or with the instructor.

### **CLASS ENGAGEMENT**

Class attendance and participation are critical for successful completion of the course. Students will be expected to review course materials from Canvas prior to class, including taped lectures and reading assignments. All students should actively engage in class discussions with the instructor and one another and be prepared to answer questions about that day's topic.

Reading reflections (noted below) are designed to assist students be prepared for each class discussion. Due to the small class size, each student will be called upon frequently to contribute to the group's knowledge of the subject matter. Such contributions should not be mere repetition of materials, but rather, thoughts regarding the implications and applicability of readings to contemporary problems and situations.

### **DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS**

Students may be asked to continue class discussions on Canvas, particularly if there's insufficient time to cover an issue in class. They are also welcome to start threads on related topics, post articles, etc.

### **COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Success in a seminar course is achieved by coming to class prepared and actively engaging in discussions. Performance will be evaluated in three ways:

Reading / Video Reflections for each class will answer the prompts provided. A paper copy is to be handed in to the instructor at the start of the class when the readings are due. Exception: the reflection for September 1 can be handed in at the start of class on Wednesday September 8, along with the reflection due on that date.

Case Exercises will be assigned throughout the course so that students can apply key learnings to a hypothetical or actual case. Students will briefly summarize the case analysis and hand in a paper copy, then be asked to discuss their analysis and recommendations during class.

Overall Engagement: Participation will primarily be assessed through the reflections and exercises, but an engagement score reflecting attendance, preparation, and group work will be assessed. **Students are permitted one "free" absence during the mini**, which can be used for illness, travel, a job interview, or other reason. Additional absences will result in a lower score.

**Score Breakdown:**

Reading / Video Reflections:	3 pts each x 8 (out of 9 possible)	24 points
Small Case Exercises:	10 pts each x 2	20
Larger Case Exercises:	20 pts each x 2	40
Overall Course Engagement:		<u>16</u>
Total		100 points

**QUESTIONS REGARDING THE COURSE OR ASSIGNMENTS**

All questions regarding the course asked outside of class time should be posted to the Canvas discussion board. In this way, all students will be able to review answers to questions. Students are encouraged to monitor the discussion board on a regular basis to ensure that they have up to date information. Please note that questions received via e-mail or phone, and last-minute questions may not be answered. The Canvas discussion board is also for you to interact with others in the course. Feel free to post questions, comments, and items of interest on this bulletin board. Personal questions regarding the course should be directed to the instructor.

**COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE**

For assistance with the written or oral communication assignments in this class, visit the Global Communication Center (GCC). GCC tutors can provide instruction on a range of communication topics and can help you improve your papers and presentations. The GCC is a free service, open to all students, and located in Hunt library. You can make tutoring appointments directly on the GCC website at <http://www.cmu.edu/gcc>. You may also find out about communication workshops offered at <http://www.cmu.edu/gcc/workshops/GCC%20Workshops.html>.

**ETHICAL STANDARDS**

Students are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards with respect to plagiarism and cheating. Neither plagiarism nor cheating will be tolerated on any exercises or assignments. Students may collaborate with others only when expressly permitted by the instructor. Students who violate academic standards will at a minimum receive a failing grade for the assignment, and may also receive a failing grade for the course.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO COVID-19**

**For Our In-Person Course**

The modality for this course is In Person Expectation (IPE). In order to attend class in person, I expect that you will abide by all behaviors indicated in [The Tartan's Responsibility](#), including any timely updates based on the current conditions. In terms of specific expectations for in-person students, this includes wearing a facial covering throughout class if mandated by the university. If you do not wear a facial covering to class, I will ask you to put one on (and if you do not have one with you, you will need to procure one). If you do not comply, please remember that you will be subject to student conduct proceedings, up to and including removal from CMU. Accordingly, I will be obliged to take other measures for the safety of the whole class.

**If We Need to Go Fully Remote**

If the class needs to go fully remote, you will receive an email from me and an announcement will be published on our course website on Canvas. If this happens, I will create Zoom links which will be available on Canvas. Please make sure that your Internet connection and equipment are set up to use Zoom and able to share audio and video during class meetings. (See [this page](#) from Computing Resources for information on the technology you are likely to need.) Let me know at [synnott@cmu.edu](mailto:synnott@cmu.edu)

if there is a gap in your technology set-up as soon as possible, and we can see about finding solutions. If we do need to use Zoom, students are expected to have their cameras on during class.

### **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Laptops, tablets, cell phones and other electronic devices are to remain closed in class unless the instructor gives permission to open them. However, students are expected to have their laptops with them in the event they need to research a topic that is relevant to the class discussion.

### **RECORDING OF CLASS SESSIONS**

No student may record or tape any classroom activity without the express written consent of the instructor. If a student believes that he/she is disabled and needs to record or tape classroom activities, he/she should contact the Office of Equal Opportunity Services, Disability Resources to request an appropriate accommodation.

### **SELF CARE**

***Take care of yourself.*** Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

*All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.*

*If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.*

*If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call someone immediately, day or night: **CaPS: 412-268-2922 or Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226***

*If the situation is life threatening, call the police: **On campus: 412-268-2323 or off campus: 911.** If you have questions about this or your coursework, please let me know.*

## **SYLLABUS**

### **Monday August 30, 2021**

#### Topics

- Course Overview; Complexity and Purpose of Health Care Organizations

#### Assignment

- Read syllabus in its entirety before next class
- Complete required readings for August 31 and September 2 before next class
- Ensure that you receive all notifications regarding the course. As such you must go to **Canvas / Account (Upper Left) / Notifications then select the checkmarks next to three areas: Announcement, Discussion and Discussion Post.**

#### Required Reading

1. Understanding Health Care as a Complex System - The Foundation for Unintended Consequences; Lewis A. Lipsitz, MD  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3511782/>
2. Improving the Quality of Health Care: What's Taking So Long? Mark Chassin, Health Affairs,  
<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2013.0809>

### **Wednesday September 1, 2021**

#### Topics

- Governing Board Responsibilities and Oversight
- Management Responsibilities

#### Pre-Taped Lecture

1. Governing Board
2. Management

#### Required Reading:

1. Building Your Healthcare Board as a Strategic Asset – AHA Trustee Services (on Canvas)
2. Beyond Bylaws: Four Healthcare Governance Lessons from COVID-19 – AHA Trustee Service (on Canvas)
3. The Hospital CEO's Ultimate Dashboard: What to Check Daily, Quarterly and Yearly;  
<https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-management-administration/the-hospital-ceo-s-ultimate-dashboard-what-to-check-daily-quarterly-and-yearly.html>
4. 3 CEOs Share Their Must-Check Metrics; <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-management-administration/3-ceos-share-their-must-check-metrics.html>

#### Recommended Reading:

1. Chapter: Health Care Management (on Canvas)

### **Monday September 6, 2021 – NO CLASS DUE TO HOLIDAY**

### **Wednesday September 8, 2021**

#### Topic

- For Profit and Non-Profit Organizations

#### Required Reading:

1. Nonprofit, for-profit hospitals play different roles but see similar financial struggles  
<https://www.healthcaredive.com/news/nonprofit-for-profit-hospitals-play-different-roles-but-see-similar-financ/442425/>
2. For-profit hospitals blaze separate path to efficiency, quality  
<https://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20160528/MAGAZINE/305289981/for-profit-hospitals-blaze-separate-path-to-efficiency-quality>
3. Nonprofit Hospitals Leave the City for Greener Pastures – WSJ (on Canvas)
4. Benefits Questioned in Tax Breaks for Nonprofit Hospitals – WSJ (on Canvas)
5. Hospital Giants Vie for Patients in Effort to Fend Off New Rivals – WSJ (on Canvas)

### **Monday September 13, 2021**

#### Topic

- Physicians and Providers

#### Pre-Taped Lecture:

1. Medical Staff

#### Required Reading:

1. Chapter 4 Cultural Factors: The Expert Culture and the Collective Culture (on Canvas)
2. Chapter: Healthcare Culture in the United States by William W. Stead, M.D.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK61963/>
3. Most Doctors Have Little or No Management Training and That's a Problem (on Canvas)
4. American Medical Students Less Likely to Choose Primary Care (on Canvas)
5. Why Doctors Hate Their Computers; Atul Gawande for the New Yorker (on Canvas)

#### Recommended Reading:

1. Chapter: Physician Management (on Canvas)

#### Recommended Movie:

1. The Doctor (1991) on Amazon (included with Prime or rent), or YouTube Subscription

### **Wednesday September 15, 2021**

#### Topics

- Management Code of Ethics and Ethical Decision-Making

#### Required Reading:

1. ACHE Code of Ethics (on Canvas)
2. ACHE Ethical Decision-Making Process (on Canvas)

## **Monday September 20, 2021**

### Topics

- Long Term Care

### Required Reading:

1. Long-Term Services and Supports – AARP Public Policy Institute (on Canvas)
2. LeadingAge Market Snapshot Report 2020 (on Canvas)
3. The Social Determinants of Health: Safe and Affordable Housing – AHIP (on Canvas)
4. Additional Articles may be assigned by the instructor and posted on Canvas

## **Wednesday September 22, 2021**

### Topic

- Human Resources Functions and Significance

### Pre-Taped Lectures:

1. Human Resources Part One
2. Human Resources Part Two

### Required Reading:

1. Dynamic professional boundaries in the healthcare workforce  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9566.2005.00463.x/full>
2. HBR - How to Get Health Care Employees Onboard with Change <https://hbr.org/2016/11/how-to-get-health-care-employees-onboard-with-change>
3. Changes in Healthcare Professions' Scope of Practice – A Legislative Guide (on Canvas)
4. The Case for Diversity in the Health Care Workforce  
<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.21.5.90>
5. How COVID Exposes Healthcare Deficits for Black Workers  
<https://www.umass.edu/employmentequity/how-covid-exposes-healthcare-deficits-black-workers>

### Recommended Reading:

1. Chapter: The Legal Environment of Human Resource Management (on Canvas)
2. Chapter: Performance Management (on Canvas)

## **Monday September 27, 2021**

### Topic

- Human Resources, continued

## **Wednesday September 29, 2021**

### Topics

- Impact of the Pandemic on Providers and Caregivers

### Required Reading:

1. The Emotional Evolution of Coronavirus Doctors and Patients; The New Yorker (on Canvas)
2. Why People are Still Avoiding the Doctor (it's not the Virus); The New York Times (on Canvas)
3. Home Caregivers Shoulder Burden in COVID-19 Fight; The Wall Street Journal (on Canvas)
4. Additional Articles may be assigned by the instructor and posted on Canvas

## **Monday October 4, 2021**

### Topic

- Disparities

### Required Reading:

1. Opioid-Addiction Treatment is Limited by Shortage of Authorized Doctors; The Wall Street Journal (on Canvas)
2. The Black American Amputation Epidemic; <https://features.propublica.org/diabetes-amputations/black-american-amputation-epidemic/>
3. In Focus: Reducing Racial Disparities in Health Care by Confronting Racism <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/newsletter-article/2018/sep/focus-reducing-racial-disparities-health-care-confronting> (PDF on Canvas)
4. Nothing Protects Black Women from Dying in Pregnancy and Childbirth; <https://www.propublica.org/article/nothing-protects-black-women-from-dying-in-pregnancy-and-childbirth>
5. Genes Don't Cause Racial-Health Disparities; Society Does; The Atlantic (on Canvas)

## **Wednesday October 6, 2021**

### Topic

- Leadership

### Required Reading:

1. The rarest commodity is leadership without ego: Bob Davids at TEDxESCP <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQrPVmcgJjk>
2. The Profile of an Effective Healthcare Leader <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-management-administration/the-profile-of-an-effective-healthcare-leader.html>
3. Why Do You Want to be a CEO? Patrick Lencioni - Chief Executive (on Canvas)
4. Meetings Are a Chief Executive's Stage, Patrick Lencioni - Chief Executive (on Canvas)
5. When a CEO's 'Position Authority' Gets in the Way – Chief Executive (on Canvas)
6. Additional Articles may be assigned by the instructor and posted on Canvas

### Recommended Reading:

1. Chapter: Decision-Making (on Canvas)
2. Chapter: Managing Costs and Revenues (on Canvas)

### Recommended Movie:

1. The Bleeding Edge (Netflix Documentary)

## **Monday October 11, 2021 - LAST DAY OF CLASS**

### Topics

- Course Wrap-Up
- Course Evaluations