This unique two-week elective, offered each February, is designed for fourth year medical students and residents in Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, and other disciplines who have an interest in public health and health policy but no advanced degree in these subjects (MPH or JD). The course combines class lectures by health policy experts and site visits in the Washington, D.C. area with a goal of engaging course participants in the health care system, illustrating how they can incorporate health policy and public health knowledge/expertise in their careers, and helping them take advantage of important training in our nation’s capital. Residents and students attend morning lectures and afternoon site visits at NGOs, governmental agencies, and congressional offices, where they can see changemakers bring theory to practice and receive real-world context for topics such as insurance systems, healthcare economics, health reform, and public health.

In addition, special multidisciplinary grand rounds are held to coincide with public health topics during this course. This elective culminates in a mock congressional committee hearing where residents “testify” before faculty members standing in for a Senate committee to demonstrate what they’ve learned. In February 2013, this course was attended by 18 Georgetown University Medical Center residents and 12 fourth-year Georgetown University School of Medicine students.

I would highly recommend this course to any medical student or resident who would appreciate having opportunities to make personal connections with leaders in the field.

-Annie Savarese, M.D., Georgetown resident

(Continued)
The Experts

Current and past course lecturers with distinguished backgrounds in health policy include:

Margaret Hamburg, MD, Commissioner of the FDA, former Commissioner for the New York Department of Heath, and a member of the Institute of Medicine.

Robert Phillips, Jr., MD, MSPH, Vice President for Research & Policy at the American Board of Family Medicine and a member of the Institute of Medicine.

Robert D. Reischauer, PhD, public trustee of the Social Security and Medicare trust fund and former president of the Urban Institute.

Senator Tom Daschle, former U.S. Senator and Senate Majority Leader, and co-founder of the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

D. A. Henderson, MD, MPH, a Distinguished Scholar at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a member of the Institute of Medicine.

Halley Faust, MD, MPH, MA, President of the American College of Preventive Medicine, biomedical ethicist, and medical venture capitalist.

Sample Class Topics

- Overview of Medicare and Medicaid Services
- National Health Expenditures
- Health Care Economics, Payment, and Reimbursement Methods
- Social Determinants of Health
- The Uninsured and Access to Care
- The Politics of Health Reform
- Legal Medicine: Malpractice and Contracts
- Cost-Effectiveness in the Era of Universal Health Care: Can They Coexist?
- Urbanization and Health
- Policy and Funding for Preventive Care Programs
- Health IT Policy
- Health Policy in the Media
- Comparative Effectiveness Research and the Affordable Care Act
- Public Health 101: Health Promotion and Population-Level Prevention
- Integration of Public Health and Primary Care
- Policy Leadership: A Full Contact Sport

Sample Site Visit Locations

Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality

The Association of American Medical Colleges

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Food and Drug Administration

The Robert Graham Center

The Urban Institute

United States Department of Health and Human Services

United States Senate

Washington, D.C. Department of Health