

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

PHCY 5246

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS, 2 Credit Hours

Asynchronous Online Delivery, Through WyoCourses

This Course Meets Daily on the Discussion Board in WyoCourses

Instructor Contact Information:

Professor David Brushwood, R.Ph., J.D., Phone: 307 766-6120, Email: dbrushwo@uwyo.edu, Office: HS 292. Your professor does not maintain an office in Laramie. Electronic communication through telephone or email (preferred) will always be welcomed.

Office Hours:

Sunday afternoons online, or at other times by appointment either by telephone or teleconference (Zoom meeting). Please post general questions about the course to the orientation module discussion board. Personal matters should be addressed directly to the instructor through email or telephone.

Course Prerequisites, Co-requisites, and Enrollment restrictions:

This course is open to professional students, and graduate students, with no prerequisites.

Course Description:

Overview of prescription drug prices and the consequences for patients and society of the high cost of pharmaceutical products. Causes of escalating pharmaceutical prices are reviewed. Legal and economic factors that contribute to high drug prices are considered. Potential solutions are identified.

Student Learning Objectives:

Knowledge-Based Learning Objectives

- Distinguish the concepts of price, cost, and value.
- Discuss the market failures of natural monopoly, public goods, externality, and information asymmetry.
- Describe and critique the Tragedy of the Commons and the Tragedy of the Anti-Commons.
- Explain how prescription drug insurance, discount cards, and coupons work.
- Compare the basic principles of prescription drug coverage under Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.
- Discuss the risk of fraud, waste, and abuse in prescription drug coverage programs.
- Distinguish between generic substitution, therapeutic interchange, and biosimilars.
- Explain the difference between a molecular entity, a formulated drug product, and a class of drugs.
- Describe the functioning of a Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee and the Formulary Process.
- Review the history and current status of managed care and prescription benefit management.
- Describe how prior authorization, tiered copays, and fail-first policies operate.

- Explain the basic principles of supply/demand, benefit-cost analysis, optimality, substitutes, and elasticity.
- Identify critical steps in the discovery, development, and distribution for therapeutic use of previously unapproved new drugs.
- Discuss important aspects of patents, non-patent exclusivity, and patent trolls.
- Explain the causes of drug shortages and the effects on price of drug shortages.
- Describe approaches to regulatory tinkering, such as sham petitions, pay for delay, and product hopping.
- Discuss proposals for legislative action to reduce prescription drug prices.

Application-Based Objectives:

- Develop for legislators a process to amend laws that currently operate to increase the prices of pharmaceutical products.
- Formulate a policy designed to provide patients with the most cost-effective pharmaceutical products and services available.
- Explain to a prescriber how drug therapy can be optimized, considering both the costs and benefits of proposed pharmaceutical care.

Practice-Based Objectives:

- Demonstrate to a patient how prescription drug insurance coverage functions.
- Evaluate a patient's drug therapy to maximize drug benefits and minimize drug prices.
- Construct a presentation that explains why a medication may cost more at one pharmacy than at another.
- Implement procedures to reduce unnecessarily inflated prescription drug prices.

Required texts, readings, and special tools or materials:

There is no textbook. However, there are background readings that must be downloaded from the internet (these readings are subject to change when they are updated or replaced by more current readings from the same source or from an alternative source). Selections from these documents will be assigned as required reading prior to each of the pre-recorded lectures.

- United States Government Accountability Office, PRESCRIPTION DRUGS U.S. Prices for Selected Brand Drugs Were Higher on Average than Prices in Australia, Canada, and France. 2021. This document can be found at: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-282.pdf>
- United States Food and Drug Administration, Importation of Certain FDA Approved Human Prescription Drugs, Including Biological Products, and Combination Products under Section 801(d)(1)(B) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act Guidance for Industry. 2020. This document can be found at: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/importation-guidance.pdf>
- Nguyen and Miller, Addressing Out of Control Prescription Drug Prices: Federal and State Strategies. 2018. This document can be found at: <https://www.communitycatalyst.org/resources/publications/document/2018/CC-PrescripDrugPrices-Report-FINAL.pdf>

- Congressional Research Service, Frequently Asked Questions About Prescription Drug Pricing and Policy. 2018. This document can be found at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44832>
- United States Senate Committee on Finance, Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act of 2019 (Chairman's Markup). 2019. This document can be found at: <https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/FINAL%20Description%20of%20the%20Chairman's%20Mark%20for%20the%20Prescription%20Drug%20Pricing%20Reduction%20Act%20of%202019.pdf>
- NORC, Recent Trends in Hospital Drug Spending and Manufacturer Shortages. 2019. This document can be found at: <https://www.aha.org/system/files/2019-01/aha-drug-pricing-study-report-01152019.pdf>
- United States Department of Health and Human Services, Comparison of U.S. and International Prices for Top Medicare Part B Drugs by Total Expenditures. 2018. This document can be found at: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/259996/ComparisonUSInternationalPricesTopSpendingPartBDrugs.pdf>
- Commonwealth Fund, Getting to the Root of High Prescription Drug Prices: Drives and Potential Solutions. 2017. This document can be found at: https://www.commonwealthfund.org/sites/default/files/documents/_media_files_publications_fund_report_2017_jul_waxman_high_drug_prices_drivers_solutions_report.pdf

There are 20 Pre-Recorded lectures that must be viewed, studied, and discussed on the discussion board:

- General Trends and Unfortunate Aberrations in Rx Pricing
- Public Perceptions of High Rx Costs
- Adverse Therapeutic Outcomes Due To Unaffordable Rx Therapies
- Public Health Problems Related To Escalating Rx Costs
- Pharmaceutical Products and Services That Save Lives and Decrease Overall Healthcare Costs
- Balancing the Costs and Benefits of Prescription Drugs
- From Research Laboratory to Patient Care
- Profit Maximization as Justification for Rx Price Increases
- Health System Failures that Increase Rx Prices
- Whistleblowers and Rx Prices
- Healthcare Delivery that Focuses on Quality Over Efficiency
- Patient/Practitioner Choices that Increase Rx Prices
- Past and Present Federal and State Efforts to Reduce Rx Prices
- Lawsuits Alleging Illegal Increases in Rx Prices
- The Moral Foundation of Affordable Access to Prescription Medications
- Conflicting Interests in Rx Pricing
- Developing a Cohesive Solution to Rx Price Reduction
- Avoiding Unintended Consequences in Rx Price Reduction
- Rx Price Reductions in an Evolving Healthcare Climate
- Reducing Rx Costs by Increasing Rx Care

There are 13 journal articles that must be read, studied, and evaluated on the discussion board:

- Martin AB et al. National Health Spending in 2014: Faster Growth Driven by Coverage Expansion and Prescription Drug Spending
- Mello M. What Makes Ensuring Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs The Hardest Problem in Health Policy?
- Antonansaz M et al. The Value of Medicines: A Crucial but Vague Concept
- Ciociola AA et al. How Drugs are Developed and Approved by the FDA: Current Process and Future Directions
- Hernandez I et al. The Contribution of New Product Entry Versus Existing Product Inflation in the Rising Costs of Drugs
- Howard JN et al. Influencers of Generic Drug Utilization: A Systematic Review
- Murphy B. Getting High On Profits: An Analysis of Current State and Federal Proposals to Rein in Soaring Drug Prices
- Parker-Lue S et al. The Ethics and Economics of Pharmaceutical Pricing
- Kesselheim AS et al. The High Costs of Prescription Drugs in the United States: Origins and Prospects for Reform
- Dabbous M et al. President Trump's Prescription to Reduce Drug Prices: From the Campaign Trail to American Patients First
- Obama B. United States Health Care Reform: Progress to Date and Next Steps

General requirements and expectations for the course:

Each module of this course requires viewing of an online pre-recorded lecture, reading a posted journal article, participation in the discussion board, and a module exam.

Upon completion of all modules, students must take a proctored comprehensive exam.

Final Examination or Final Project Date:

There is no final exam. However, there is a proctored comprehensive exam that must be taken once the course modules have been completed.

Grading Scale and Grading Policies: Attendance and Absence policies.

The final grade in this course will be comprised of:

Ten Unit Exams	40%
Comprehensive Exam	30%
Class Participation	30%

Grading:

A:	90-100
B:	80-89
C:	70-79
D:	60-69
F:	<60

Students who miss exams or class participation may request an excused absence, which will be granted by the course instructor if warranted. Students who develop conflicts that prohibit their completion of 25% or more of course material should withdraw from the course. Students who satisfactorily complete 75% or more of the course material, and who cannot complete the balance within the confines of the course schedule, may be granted an incomplete, and missing coursework must be completed by the end of the following term.

Satisfactory participation in this course requires active posting on the course discussion board for each module (minimum of two posts per module), completion of the module exams, and completion of the proctored cumulative exam.

Classroom Behavior Policy

At all times, treat your presence in the classroom (discussion board) and your enrollment in this course as you would a job. Act professionally, pay attention to instructions and to your student colleagues, complete your work in a timely and professional manner, and treat all deadlines seriously. You will be respectful towards your classmates and instructor. Spirited debate and disagreement are to be expected in any classroom and all views will be heard fully, but at all times we will behave civilly and with respect towards one another. Personal attacks, offensive language, name-calling, and dismissive gestures are not warranted in a learning atmosphere. As the instructor, I have the right to dismiss you from the classroom, study sessions, electronic forums, and other areas where disruptive behavior occurs.

Classroom Statement on Diversity:

The University of Wyoming values an educational environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. The diversity that students and faculty bring to class, including age, country of origin, culture, disability, economic class, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, linguistic, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, worldview, and other social and cultural diversity is valued, respected, and considered a resource for learning.

Disability Support:

The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a disability, including but not limited to physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, and would like to request accommodations in this course due to your disability, , please register with and provide documentation of your disability as soon as possible to Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 128 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at (307) 766-3073 or udss@uwyo.edu. It is in the student's best interest to request accommodations within the first week of classes, understanding that accommodations are not retroactive. Visit the DSS website for more information at: www.uwyo.edu/udss

Academic Dishonesty Policies:

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with UW Regulation 2-114. The penalties for academic dishonesty can include, at my discretion, an "F" on an exam, an "F" on the class component exercise, and/or an "F" in the entire course. Academic dishonesty means anything that represents someone else's ideas as your own without attribution. It is intellectual theft – stealing - and includes (but is not limited to) unapproved

assistance on examinations, plagiarism (use of any amount of another person's writings, blog posts, publications, and other materials without attributing that material to that person with citations), or fabrication of referenced information. Facilitation of another person's academic dishonesty is also considered academic dishonesty and will be treated identically.

Duty to Report: Statement referring to your duty to report status as instructional personnel under Title IX.

UW faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's non-discrimination policy. Under Title IX, discrimination based upon sex and gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, the faculty member **MUST** report information you share about the incident to the university's Title IX Coordinator (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are people who can meet with you. Faculty can help direct you or you may find info about UW policy and resources at <http://www.uwyo.edu/reportit>

You do not have to go through the experience alone. Assistance and resources are available, and you are not required to make a formal complaint or participate in an investigation to access them.

Substantive changes to syllabus:

Note: This syllabus is a guide. Circumstances may alter the reading and/or test schedules. You are required to check WyoCourses and your email at least once a week.

Student Resources:

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES: udss@uwyo.edu, 766-3073, 128 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/udss

COUNSELING CENTER: uccstaff@uwyo.edu, 766-2187, 766-8989 (After hours), 341 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/ucc

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: 766-4286, 312 Old Main, www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs

DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE: dos@uwyo.edu, 766-3296, 128 Knight Hall, www.uwyo.edu/dos

UW POLICE DEPARTMENT: uwpd@uwyo.edu, 766-5179, 1426 E Flint St, www.uwyo.edu/uwpd

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT WEBSITE: www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct

Schedule of topics, activities, and assessment methods:

Module	Topic	Recorded Lectures	Assigned Articles	Assessment
I	Prescription Drug Costs: Facts and Concerns	-General Trends and Unfortunate Aberrations in Rx Pricing -Public Perceptions of High Rx Costs	Martin AB et al. National Health Spending in 2014: Faster Growth Driven by Coverage Expansion and Prescription Drug Spending	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
II	Individual and Social Consequences of High Prescription Drug Costs	-Adverse Therapeutic Outcomes Due To Unaffordable Rx Therapies -Public Health Problems Related To Escalating Rx Costs	Mello M. What Makes Ensuring Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs The Hardest Problem in Health Policy?	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
III	The Human and Economic Value of Prescription Drugs	-Pharmaceutical Products and Services That Save Lives and Decrease Overall Healthcare Costs -Balancing the Costs and Benefits of Prescription Drugs	Antonansaz M et al. The Value of Medicines: A Crucial but Vague Concept	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
IV	The Development, Approval, Marketing, Distribution, and Therapeutic Use of Prescription Drugs	-From Research Laboratory to Patient Care -Profit Maximization as Justification for Rx Price Increases	Ciociola AA et al. How Drugs are Developed and Approved by the FDA: Current Process and Future Directions	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
V	Rx Prices and Marketplace Inefficiencies	-Health System Failures that Increase Rx Prices -Whistleblowers and Rx Prices	Hernandez I et al. The Contribution of New Product Entry Versus Existing Product Inflation in the Rising Costs of Drugs	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
VI	Rx Prices and Health Profession Practices	-Healthcare Delivery that Focuses on Quality Over Efficiency -Patient/Practitioner Choices that Increase Rx Prices	Howard JN et al. Influencers of Generic Drug Utilization: A Systematic Review	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
VII	Reducing Rx Prices Through Legislation and Litigation	-Past and Present Federal and State Efforts to Reduce Rx Prices -Lawsuits Alleging Illegal Increases in Rx Prices	Murphy B. Getting High On Profits: An Analysis of Current State and Federal Proposals to Rein in Soaring Drug Prices	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
VIII	Reducing Rx Prices Through Professional/Industry Ethics	-The Moral Foundation of Affordable Access to Prescription Medications -Conflicting Interests in Rx Pricing	Parker-Lue S et al. The Ethics and Economics of Pharmaceutical Pricing	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
IX	Coordinating Changes That Reduce Rx Prices	-Developing a Cohesive Solution to Rx Price Reduction	Kesselheim AS et al. The High Costs of Prescription Drugs in	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam

		-Avoiding Unintended Consequences in Rx Price Reduction	the United States: Origins and Prospects for Reform	
X	Charting a Strategic Path Forward in Rx Price Reduction	-Rx Price Reductions in an Evolving Healthcare Climate -Reducing Rx Costs by Increasing Rx Care	Dabbous M et al. President Trump's Prescription to Reduce Drug Prices: From the Campaign Trail to American Patients First Obama B. United States Health Care Reform: Progress to Date and Next Steps	Discussion Bd Case Study Module Exam
Comp Exam				Proctored Comp Exam

Discussion Board (Class) Preparation/Participation

Grading Rubric

(30% of Grade)

	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Inadequate (C)
Contributions	Consistently initiates useful and relevant ideas when participating in the discussion board. A definite leader who contributes major effort and who makes class discussions better.	Usually provides useful ideas when participating in classroom discussion board. A strong student who tries hard but is more of a follower than a leader in discussions.	Inconsistent in providing relevant comments on discussion board. Fails to initiate new threads that stimulate participation by other students.
Attitude	Always respectful of others; has a positive attitude, and does not rudely criticize anyone else's ideas or work. Other students feel safe responding to this student's posts.	Occasionally becomes impatient with ideas or work of others. Usually has a positive attitude toward discussions. Usually treats others and self with respect.	On more than one occasion becomes disrespectful of ideas expressed by others, using insults rather than evidence to express contrary views.
Preparedness & Focus	Consistently stays focused on subject matter assigned for discussion board and achieves identified outcomes. Self-directed and highly motivated. Postings help with understanding of assigned materials.	Usually posts comments that are related to course materials, but occasionally rambles about subjects that are not relevant to the course.	Postings to discussion board are based on general knowledge and common sense, rather than on materials assigned for course.
Quality of Work	Provides work of the highest insight that motivates other students to achieve at a high level.	Provides quality work that is interesting but not consistently insightful.	Does work that reflects little understanding of the course material.