
PHLT/PSCI 236 SYLLABUS SUMMARY F26

Fall 2026

Dewey Room 2110D | Tues/Thurs | 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Molly McNulty (I prefer to be called Dr. McNulty)

Email: m.mcnulty@rochester.edu

Drop-In Location and Hours:

Morey Hall Suite 206 (tunnel level)

Tuesdays 11:00 am – 12:30 pm OR

by appointment on Zoom (please use the "[Book time to meet with me](#)" link)

On-campus drop-in hours will start on Tuesday, September 1, 2026

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to *Healthcare and the Law*, (a course cross-listed in Political Science). The overall purpose of this course is to bring to vivid life the hottest health law debates of the day.

- Module 1, Introduction, will cover the key points of the course, including how to succeed, a description of the workload, grading, and the importance of voting to health law.
- Module 2, Legal Interpretation, will introduce the skill of interpreting the law.
- Module 3, Foundations, will introduce basic knowledge of understanding health law, including the U.S. health care system, public health, U.S. Law, and the connections between health care and law.
- Module 4, The Common Law, describes the “common law” and its history, the police power and control of infectious diseases, and regulations of the health professions (state licensing laws).
- Module 5, The Constitution and Individual Health Rights, covers the pertinent sections of the U.S. Constitution, and how selected doctrines such as federalism, separate of powers, and the Bill of Rights are related to health care law
- Module 6, Bioethics and the Law, addresses bioethics in a legal context, including the doctrine of informed consent, the right to intentional dying, and advance planning for death.
- Module 7, Health Insurance, addresses the role of health insurance in the U.S., including its history, government health insurance programs, and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, VALUES & DUE DATES

All in class, except for the *Living Will* assignment.

Gradable Item	Date	Points
Quiz 1	9/8/2026	50
Quiz 2	9/15/2026	150
Quiz 3	10/1/2026	200
Quiz 4	11/12/2026	200
Midterm Exam	10/22/2026	500
Living Will	12/6/2026	300
Final Exam	12/10/2026	1000
In-Class Case Briefing #1	TBD (OCT)	150
In-Class Case Briefing #2	TBD (OCT)	200
In-Class Case Briefing #3	TBD (OCT)	300
In-Class Case Briefing #4	TBD (NOV)	300
In-Class Case Briefing #5	TBD (NOV)	300
Attendance		200
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS		3850

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Prof. McNulty reserves the right to change dates and topics)

MODULE 1 INTRODUCTION

Class	1	9/1/2026	How to Succeed in this Course; GenAI Policies
Class	2	9/3/2026	Law, Health, and Voting

MODULE 2 INTERPRETATION

Class	3	9/8/2026	Interpreting the Law: The Importance of Definitions
Class	4	9/10/2026	How to Read and Interpret a Case
Class	5	9/15/2026	Intro to US Health Care System

MODULE 3 FOUNDATIONS

Class	6	9/17/2026	Public Health
Class	7	9/22/2026	Introduction to U.S. Law
		9/24/2026	NO CLASS - PROF. AT CONFERENCE
Class	8	9/29/2026	Connections Between Health and the Law

MODULE 4 COMMON LAW

Class	9	10/1/2026	The Common Law and Its History
Class	10	10/6/2026	Common Law and the Role of Case Precedent
Class	11	10/8/2026	Common Law - Police Power & Infectious Disease Control
		10/13/2026	NO CLASS - OCTOBER BREAK
Class	12	10/15/2026	Regulation of the Professions (State Licensing Laws)
Class	13	10/20/2026	MIDTERM EXAM

5 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND INDIVIDUAL HEALTH RIGHTS

Class	14	10/22/2026	Intro to Constitutional Law
Class	15	10/27/2026	The Separation of Powers Doctrine
Class	16	10/29/2026	The Federalism Doctrine
Class	17	11/3/2026	Individual Rights in the Healthcare System
Class	18	11/5/2026	Freedom of Speech and Exercise of Religion Clauses
Class	19	11/10/2026	The Equal Protection Clause

6 BIOETHICS

Class	20	11/12/2026	Right to Informed Consent
Class	21	11/17/2026	The Right to Intentional Dying
Class	22	11/19/2026	Advance Planning for Death
		11/24/2026	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING DAY FREE FOR TRAVEL
		11/26/2026	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK

7 HEALTH INSURANCE

Class	23	12/1/2026	Understanding Health Insurance
Class	24	12/3/2026	Government Health Insurance Programs
Class	25	12/8/2026	Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act
Class	26	12/10/2026	FINAL EXAM

