

WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL
POLICY TASK FORCES
SPRING 2006

WWS 402a – Providing Access to New Drugs for Tropical Diseases
Monday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM
Laura Frost

Fifteen years ago, the Commission on Health Research for Development pointed out that only 10% of global health research is devoted to conditions that account for 90% of the global disease burden. Of 1,393 new drugs approved between 1975 and 1999, only 13 were developed for tropical diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, sleeping sickness, and leishmaniasis. Because pharmaceutical companies focus on developing drugs that have market incentive, there has been less investment in research and development for diseases that predominate in the developing world. These diseases have become known as the “neglected diseases.”

Recent changes have brought pressure on governments and pharmaceutical companies to assist developing countries and improve global health. As a result of new public and private efforts in research and development for neglected diseases, at least eight new drugs may be developed by 2010. But the development of new drugs is only part of the challenge in improving global health with technologies. It is also essential to draw up global access plans to ensure that new drugs are made available widely and at low cost. Providing access is a complex process with many different actors, steps, and potential barriers. Experiences from previous efforts to provide access for diseases such as HIV/AIDS can provide important lessons for new drug access initiatives.

In this task force we will examine these previous efforts to scale-up access to drugs in developing countries in order to identify what works, and what does not, in getting new drugs to people who need them. What were the barriers encountered in providing access and the strategies used to overcome them? What key factors explain success in making drugs widely available? Has improved drug access led to the reduction of mortality and morbidity?

The task force will assess drug access efforts along a number of dimensions including affordability, organizational structure, demand, supply, and health outcome. The task force recommendations will be in the form of a report to the World Health Organization.

Laura Frost is a researcher with the Center for Health & Wellbeing at the Woodrow Wilson School and a consultant in global health. She previously worked in East and Southern Africa.

WWS 402b – Reforming Urban Schools

Thursday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Thomas Corcoran

The educational outcomes of large urban public school systems continue to lag far behind those of suburban systems and are not meeting the expectations of policymakers, civic leaders, parents, and the general public. Achievement is improving in many large urban systems, but more than half of the students still are failing to achieve even basic levels on national tests. In many urban school systems, nearly half of the students drop out of school, and many of those who do graduate are not adequately prepared for employment or postsecondary education. All of the available indicators show continuing performance gaps between urban and suburban students.

The task force will examine the progress that has been made in large urban public education systems and how to increase their rates of improvement. It will look at the evidence on the efficacy of popular reform strategies, and wrestle with the questions of what we know and don't know about improving learning for poor children. It will take a close, critical look at the strategies used in six urban communities - Boston, Chicago, El Paso, Minneapolis, New York, and San Diego, and one urban state, New Jersey – and the progress they have made in the past decade.

The task force will address questions such as: What counts as progress, and are we using the right measures? What strategies have the districts used, and what has worked? What external and internal factors have affected their efforts to improve their performance? What lessons can be learned from their experiences, and how can those lessons be shared? How are they being affected by “No Child Left Behind”? What should these systems be doing next? And what will it take to get them to do it? The task force report will be in the form of recommendations to one urban school system.

Thomas Corcoran is Co-Director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education at the University of Pennsylvania. He formerly served as Policy Advisor for Education to the Governor of New Jersey, and as Chief of Staff of the New Jersey Department of Education.

WWS 402c – Reviewing and Reforming Medicaid

Monday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Stephen Somers & James Verdier

The Medicaid Commission was appointed by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt in July 2005 to review and recommend options for Medicaid reform and cost containment. The 30-member Commission will make its recommendations to Congress by December 31, 2006. It will consider issues such as eligible populations; acute care delivery systems; long-term care delivery systems;

quality and health information technologies (IT); and system-wide administration (IT, fraud and abuse, and financing).

Since Medicaid is a program jointly funded by the federal government and states, and administered largely by the states, the task force, in consultation with commission staff, will review relevant Medicaid reform initiatives planned or underway in specific states, explore models of reform in the private sector, develop Medicaid reform options, and make recommendations in the form of a report to the commission and a briefing for interested commission members and staff.

Stephen Somers is president of the Center for Health Care Strategies in Princeton. He previously worked as a professional staff member in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. James Verdier is a senior fellow at Mathematica Policy Research in Washington, DC, and previously served as Indiana State Medicaid Director.

WWS 402d – Energy for Sustainable Development

Wednesday, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Denise Mauzerall

Energy issues are increasingly in the news. Following Hurricane Katrina domestic gasoline, natural gas and home heating fuel costs increased dramatically. Debate continues over opening the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge for oil drilling. Questions of national security surround Middle Eastern oil-supplying nations. Geoscientists are predicting that the world is reaching maximum annual oil extraction. Increasing Chinese and Indian demand for oil, and limited capacity to increase oil production, has led to a more intensive search for alternatives. Climate warming, now clearly linked to the emission of carbon dioxide from the combustion of fossil fuels, has made this a global concern.

The task force will examine different non-fossil fuel energy technologies (e.g. renewable energy, including solar and wind, nuclear power, etc.) as well as energy efficiency and the cleaner use of fossil fuels. It will examine existing policies and recommend future policies to encourage more widespread implementation and distribution of environmentally acceptable energy sources.

The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) has set “energy for sustainable development” as one of its themes on which to focus work in 2006-2007. At its annual meeting at the United Nations in May it will address means to implement this objective. The task force recommendations will be in the form of a report to the United Nations for use during this meeting.

Denise Mauzerall is Assistant Professor of Public and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School. She has held positions in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and at the National Center for Atmospheric Research.

WWS 402e – Rethinking the “War on Terror”: Towards a More Comprehensive Approach

Thursday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Robert Hutchings

More than four years after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the United States remains embroiled in a “Global War on Terrorism” that shows few signs of abating. Meanwhile, America’s prosecution of this war, together with the invasion and occupation of Iraq, has given rise to growing concern at home and abroad. Are we safer than we were four years ago? Is it time to revise our approaches?

Some critics have argued that the war metaphor is inappropriate, or at best insufficient, and that the terrorist challenge must be met through a wider array of instruments. The Bush Administration, too, has begun to link democracy promotion and public diplomacy to its counterterrorism policies, with a view to the longer term.

The task force will reassess the key instruments of counter-terrorist policy – military force, diplomacy, intelligence, democracy promotion, public diplomacy, counter-proliferation, and homeland security – as well as the ethical and legal issues connected with the protection of civil liberties at home and the treatment of detainees abroad. From these reviews, the task force will prepare an integrated strategy, with specific policy recommendations, for presentation to the Secretary of State or her designee.

Ambassador Robert Hutchings is Diplomat-in-Residence at the Woodrow Wilson School, where he previously served as assistant dean. From 2003 to 2005, while on public service leave from the university, he was Chairman of the U.S. National Intelligence Council.

WWS 402f – Setting U.S. Immigration Policy in the Context of Free Trade

Tuesday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Douglas Massey

Immigration continues to be a divisive issue in the United States, and recent policies to deal with the issue have not been successful. Despite a massive militarization of the nation’s southern border, undocumented migration continues and the United States currently houses a larger undocumented population than at any point in its history. Despite the spending of billions of dollars on border enforcement, the probability of apprehension has fallen, not risen; and a growing number of migrants each year lose their lives while attempting entry. Why have U.S. policies failed so badly and at such high cost, and what are the alternatives to the repressive enforcement model that has been applied so far?

The task force will review the history of U.S. immigration and border policy to distill lessons from past experience. It will then review the economic integration of Canada, Mexico, and the United States in the context of the North American Free Trade Agreement. It will examine the accession of Spain into the European Union as a possible model for management of labor migration from Mexico into the United States.

The task force will develop clear policy goals, specify the legal provisions necessary to accomplish them, and outline a political strategy for winning public support. Its recommendations will be in the form of a report to the United States Congress, which is now considering legislation on this subject.

Douglas Massey is Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University. He has testified before Congress on immigration-related issues, written background reports for congressional commissions, and provided briefings to policy makers on both sides of the border.

WWS 402g – Stabilization in the Aftermath of War: Windows of Opportunity

Thursday 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

William Nash

Success in post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations often depends on early action after the cessation of major combat operations. In some cases these “windows of opportunity” are created by political action, such as the signing of a peace agreement like 1995 Dayton Accords in the Bosnian War. In other cases, victory on the battlefield creates the conditions for the beginning of post-conflict actions.

This task force will explore the phenomena of “windows of opportunity” in post-conflict operations and will examine the multitude of activities that need to be accomplished in the early months so that long-term success is more probable. As part of this analysis it will try to develop an understanding of the requisites to transition from war to “non-war” to stabilization to peace building.

The task force will consider issues such as the establishment of public security; the provision of emergency humanitarian aid; the establishment of basic services (electricity, water, sewage disposal); the creation of jobs; the repair of infrastructure; the creation of interim governance institutions; the coordination of civilian and military authorities; the establishment of the rule of law; and the demobilization of the military.

The task force report will be in the form of recommendations to the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense.

William L. Nash is a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and director of its Center for Preventive Action. A retired Army major general, he has extensive military and civilian experience in peacekeeping and post-conflict operations.

WWS 402h – Integrating “Islamic” Turkey into “Christian” Europe

Tuesday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Mario Zucconi

Even after the decision to start accession negotiations, Turkey’s integration into the European Union continues to encounter strong resistance in European capitals. Turkey’s Islamic culture and its role as the “other” during many centuries, are elements that still play a role in the aversion of the European public to that country’s acceptance into the Union. Islam-inspired terrorism in the US and Europe, as well as the perception that the European Union is overstretched due to the recent inclusion of former Communist countries, has only made the situation more difficult and complex for Turkey.

Just the same, the inclusion of Turkey in the Union represents a test of the ability of that institution to continue to progress in its role as a promoter of democracy and the main factor in maintaining the political stability of a wide region – continental Europe and the Mediterranean. Turkey’s membership would enhance the EU’s credentials – as a culturally tolerant and secular club of countries – with the wider Islamic world and would make that institution an increasingly important actor in today’s world politics.

The objective of this task force is to clearly identify where the difficulties lie – how much they relate to Turkey’s lagging behind in its transition toward democracy and respect for human rights and how much on Europe’s cultural bias. On that basis the task force aims at giving political advice and at suggesting corrective measures to both European and Turkish officials in this early, decisive phase of the accession negotiations.

Mario Zucconi teaches international relations at the School of Political Sciences, Urbino Italy, and is a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Political Studies in Rome.

WWS 402i – Revising the Law on Medical Malpractice

Thursday, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Anthony Sebok

Medical malpractice litigation has come under attack in recent years by doctors, insurers, and various politicians. The critics argue that unpredictable verdicts and inflated damage awards have driven up health care costs, and have contributed to the crisis in affordable care in the United States. As a result, many states have legislated changes to their medical malpractice law, including limits on the amount of damages that medical professionals must pay if found negligent.

The task force will examine the leading criticisms of contemporary medical malpractice litigation and explore various options for reform. It will look into the empirical foundation for the claim that there is a medical malpractice insurance crisis. The task force will examine the relationship between litigation and cost of insurance as well as the effect of litigation on patient safety. It will evaluate and compare recent state reforms

and review competing reform proposals from public policy institutes, academia, and advocacy groups.

The task force will produce an integrated set of legislative recommendations to the Governor of a state considering whether to reform its existing “traditional” law of medical negligence.

Anthony Sebok is a Fellow in the Program in Law and Public Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School and Centennial Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School.

WWS 402j Attacking Poverty in South Africa

University of Cape Town

Francis Wilson

Despite strenuous efforts by the new government, the evidence suggests that the level of unemployment has risen dramatically in South Africa since the end of apartheid. The task force will consider the following questions: What has the state done since 1994 and what could it do in the future, to alleviate the poverty in households with income below certain minimum living levels? In particular, what strategy should the state pursue to enable those who are poor to work?

Before starting the course, in order to understand the context for consideration of these issues, students should read Charles Feinstein, **An Economic History of South Africa**, Cambridge University Press, 2005. Further reading assignments will be provided at the first seminar, soon after students arrive in Cape Town.

Francis Wilson is an emeritus professor in the School of Economics at the University of Cape Town and a Research Associate at the Southern Africa Labour & Development Research Unit, which he founded and directed for 25 years.

WWS 402k

University of Buenos Aires

Sergio Berensztein & Jose-Maria Ghio