

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

2009 GENERAL EDUCATION SYNTHESIS ASSIGNMENT¹

Time limit: (50 minutes)

Introduction

A synthesis essay requires the respondent to cite and develop a position based largely upon the provided sources.

Suggested Timeframe:

Reading of Prompt and Sources: 10-15 minutes

Brainstorming/Organizing/Pre-Writing: 5 minutes

Writing: 30 minutes

Assignment

Read the introduction, assignment, prompt, and following sources. **Then write an essay in which you choose, defend, and support a position on whether or not the United States of America should have universal healthcare. To support your position, synthesize a minimum of three (3) sources given below.**

You may refer to the sources by their titles, e.g., (Source A, Source B, etc.) or by their parenthetical descriptions, e.g., (Chang, Ghate, Obama, etc.).

Source A

Source B

Source C

Source D

Source E

Source F

¹The ETS/AP/College Board have influenced the creation of this assignment:
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap08_eng_lang_frq.pdf

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Source A

Chang, Mignon. Progressive U.org 31 Aug. 2008. 3 Apr. 2009. <<http://www.progressiveu.org/054101-universal-health-care>>.

Knowing that most of the people reading this article have probably never visited a clinic in Taiwan, I'll give a brief narrative of a recent visit there:

I had a deep scratch on my knee due to a fall on the road. At first I just applied our average first aid kit disinfectant and bandaid to cover it up, but two days later it was very warm, red, and oozing yellow liquid. [My mom] gave me [about \$3] and told me to visit the clinic near my school.

I went to the clinic after class and gave the receptionist my smart card (every Taiwanese citizen enrolled in Universal Health Insurance has this) and [\$3], she told me to wait until my name was called.

I waited 15 minutes and flipped through a magazine... my name was called... [he] gave me a tetanus shot after informing me that I had to pay [\$1.50] for it (the government would pay for the rest), cleaned my wound and applied a layer of artificial skin so it would heal pretty and... told me that he'd prescribed antibiotics, and sent me out.

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Source B

Ghate, Onkar. "No Right to 'Free' Health Care." Business Week 2007. 18 Apr. 2009
<<http://www.businessweek.com/debateroom/archives/2007>>.

The cause of the U.S. health-care mess is governmental interference. The solution, therefore, is not more governmental control...

Health insurance costs so much today because the government, on the premise that there exists a "right" to health care at someone else's expense, has promised Americans a free lunch. When a person can consume medical services without needing to consider how to pay for them—Medicare, Medicaid, or the individual's employer will foot the bill—demand skyrockets. The \$2,000 elective liver test he or she would have forgone in favor of a better place to live suddenly becomes a necessity when its cost seems to add up to \$0.

As the expense of providing "free" health care erupts accordingly, the government tries to control costs by clamping down on the providers of health care. A massive net of regulations descends on doctors, nurses, insurers, and drug companies. As more of their endeavors are rendered unprofitable, drug companies produce fewer drugs, and insurers limit their policies or exit the industry.

Doctors and nurses, now buried in paperwork and faced with the endless, unjust task of appeasing government regulators, find their love for their work dissipating. They cut their hours or leave the profession...

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Source C

Obama, Barack. "The Time Has Come for Universal Health Care." 25 Jan. 2007.

<<http://obamaspeeches.com>> (18 Apr. 2009).

... You know the statistics. Family premiums are up by nearly 87% over the last five years, growing five times faster than workers' wages. Deductibles are up 50%. Co-payments for care and prescriptions are through the roof.

Nearly 11 million Americans who are already insured spent more than a quarter of their salary on health care last year. And over half of all family bankruptcies today are caused by medical bills.

But they say it's too costly to act.

Almost half of all small businesses no longer offer health care to their workers, and so many others have responded to rising costs by laying off workers or shutting their doors for good. Some of the biggest corporations in America, giants of industry like GM and Ford, are watching foreign competitors based in countries with universal health care run circles around them, with a GM car containing twice as much health care cost as a Japanese car.

But they say it's too risky to act.

They tell us it's too expensive to cover the uninsured, but they don't mention that every time an American without health insurance walks into an emergency room, we pay even more. Our family's premiums are \$922 higher because of the cost of care for the uninsured.

We pay \$15 billion more in taxes because of the cost of care for the uninsured. And it's trapped us in a vicious cycle. As the uninsured cause premiums to rise, more employers drop coverage. As more employers drop coverage, more people become uninsured, and premiums rise even further.

But the skeptics tell us that reform is too costly, too risky, too impossible for America to achieve. The skeptics must be living somewhere else...

Sen. Barack Obama

January 25, 2007

Families USA Conference, Washington, DC

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Source D

"Top Ten Reasons to Oppose Universal, Government-Paid Health Care!" Cartoon. 2007.
18 Apr. 2009 <<http://masbury.files.wordpress.com/2007/12/singlepayer10.jpg>>.



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Source E

Chart Comparing Healthcare Systems

Comparing Healthcare Systems' Costs and Health Indicators*

Country	A	B	C	D
Type of Healthcare system	Universal-Government Guaranteed	Hybrid Public-Private Providers	Universal-Government Guaranteed	Private Commercial Providers
Cost Per Person Per Year	\$5,000	\$4,500	\$5,500	\$4,500
Infant Mortality Rate/1,000 Births	6.5	5.5	6.0	4.8
Life Expectancy Rate	75	77	76	79

*For this table, assume that all other factors, such as diet, exercise, etc. are held equal for all countries above.

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Source F

Personal Reflections: Insurance Agent and Family Physician

Harry Kuculik, Insurance Agent

Universal health care will be catastrophic. Currently, the fiasco of Medicare/Medicaid, government run health programs, identifies users with the lazy, unemployed and elderly. Furthermore, health care workers who are involved with Medicare/Medicaid wait months to receive compensation. Why should universal health care be different? Did I mention that the middle income worker will be heavily taxed to pay for the health care of people who don't want to work, who didn't save enough of their income while they were working? Competition promotes excellence, hence buying health insurance from private companies, will mean superior health care workers and the administration of quality care. Let us not destroy the best health care in the world that is fueled by competitive private health insurance companies.

Dr. Cindy Garrindon, Family Physician

Health care is not a responsibility of the federal government. Universal health care would result in increased wait times for patients, which could result in unnecessary deaths. In fact, we'd have unequal access and health disparities continue under universal health care systems, and if the United States universalizes care, physician and health care workers' salaries would be lowered tremendously. You'd lose physicians to other careers.

Current Classification: _____ Major: _____ Date of Graduation: _____

