

FCS 5430: FAMILIES, CONSUMERS, AND HEALTH

Spring 2004

Professor Robert N. Mayer (robert.mayer@fcs.utah.edu)

Tuesday, Thursday–12:25 - 1:45 p.m.

John Tallmadge Building – Room 140

This course takes a “consumer perspective” on some of today’s most pressing health and health care issues. A consumer perspective focuses on consumer problems in the health arena as well as the role of consumers and consumer advocates in determining health policy. Some of the specific issues that will be examined from a consumer perspective are:

- (1) food safety, food health claims, organic food, transgenic foods
- (2) dietary supplement safety and marketing
- (3) dieting and beauty products
- (4) the FDA and pharmaceutical safety and approval
- (5) pharmaceutical access, prices and direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs
- (6) prescription drug benefits for Medicare enrollees
- (7) internet pharmacies and internet health advice
- (8) patients rights, privacy, the right to sue, and malpractice insurance
- (9) consumer aspects of genetic testing
- (10) smoking control policies

As we study topic areas such as the ones listed above, we will also address broader questions about the role of consumers and consumer advocacy in the health care context. We will identify the major organizations involved in representing the interests of consumers, and we will assess their tactics, accomplishments, and critics. In this regard, we will read the thoughtful book, Smoke in their Eyes, Michael Pertschuk’s insider’s look at, in his view, the lost opportunity to more strictly limit the selling of tobacco products in the United States. The remainder of the course readings will be available online or in a course packet.



www.healthfinder.gov = your information Rx

I hesitate to specify the types of written work and tests upon which grades will be based. These will depend somewhat on the number of students in the class and student preferences. I can promise, however, that classes will be well organized and engaging. I am proud to mention that I have won the Superior Teaching Award of the College of Social and Behavioral Science and the Distinguished Teaching

Award of the University of Utah.