



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation **Scholars in Health Policy Research**



2008–2009 Call for Applications

Application Deadline

October 22, 2008

Program Overview

(Please refer to specific sections for complete detail.)

Purpose

The *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research* program helps to develop a new generation of creative health policy thinkers and researchers within the disciplines of economics, political science and sociology. Each year the program selects up to 12 highly-qualified individuals for two-year fellowships at one of three nationally prominent universities, with the expectation that they will make important research contributions to future United States health policy.

Eligibility Criteria (page 12)

We invite recent graduates of doctoral programs in economics, political science and sociology to apply. We will give preference to applicants who have not previously worked extensively in health or health policy research.

- Applicants must have received a doctoral degree after January 1, 2004, but no later than July 2009. For those who expect to receive degrees in 2009, all degree requirements must be completed by July 15, 2009.
- All applicants must be citizens of the U.S. or its territories or have permanent residency status at the time of application.
- We embrace racial, ethnic and gender diversity, and encourage applications from candidates who come from groups that historically have been underrepresented in the three disciplines.

Selection Criteria (page 13)

Proposals will be evaluated using the selection criteria on page 13.

Total Awards

- Up to 12 fellowships will be awarded in this grant cycle.
- Scholars will receive stipends from their university of \$86,000 for year one and \$89,000 for year two.

Key Dates and Deadlines

- **October 22, 2008**—Deadline for receipt of applications.
- **January 6–30, 2009**—Finalist interviews.
- **Late February 2009**—Notification of acceptance.
- **August 2009**—Fellowships begin.

How to Apply (page 14)

This program only accepts applications submitted online.

The online application may be accessed on the program Web site. For assistance, please contact the national program office by phone at (617) 353-9220 or by e-mail at rwjf@bu.edu.

www.healthpolicyscholars.org

Background

Public interest in health policy has intensified dramatically in recent years, as concerns about the nation's health and the health care system have grown. Compared with other industrialized nations, the United States continues to perform poorly on numerous health status indicators. And though health care expenditures continue to rise, increasing numbers of Americans are either uninsured or underinsured and lack adequate access to care. Further, health care delivery systems are reorganizing in response to competitive pressures in the marketplace and are grappling with the need to improve patient safety and quality of care. Efforts to reform health care financing and delivery at national and state levels pose serious challenges in terms of policy formulation and implementation. Moreover, problems with deep economic, political and social roots—such as substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, depression, racial and ethnic disparities in care, some infectious diseases, and conditions associated with unhealthy lifestyles—continue to burden the health care system and public health agencies with challenges that lie beyond their traditional missions.

Today, as our nation struggles with ways to promote the health of our people and how best to improve access to health care, as well as its quality, equity and efficiency, the health policy research field offers exciting challenges and opportunities. Clearly, any sector of the economy that consumes one-sixth of the gross domestic product deserves the attention of the most gifted scholars. As the health sector has grown in size and complexity over the past

About the Cover

Kyna Fong (Economics, University of California, Berkeley/San Francisco), Fabio Rojas (Sociology, University of Michigan) and Monique Lyle (Political Science, University of Michigan) at the 2008 annual meeting of the *RWJF Scholars in Health Policy Research* program.

Photo: Mary Sue Bonetti

three decades, so too has the need for research and analysis to guide development of health policy at the national, state and local levels.

The social science disciplines of economics, political science and sociology have made important contributions to health policy research, providing useful and insightful frameworks for understanding and analyzing the health sector and its problems. In the current environment—marked by growing market forces, an aging population, the increased prevalence of chronic illness and of conditions associated with culture and lifestyle, a public health system in disarray, and a health care system in organizational flux—social scientists who will apply their disciplinary perspectives to the study of complex policy questions are badly needed. Some examples from each field follow.

Economists may inform the discussion by:

- studying the economic burden of disease on different populations caused by disparities in access to care;
- analyzing the effects of organizational changes on the cost and quality of care and on the willingness of competing organizations to serve diverse population groups;
- assessing the effects of continued growth in health spending on federal and state budgets, as well as on other sectors of the nation's economy;
- analyzing the implications and effects of different tax policies on the health and well-being of populations and of individuals; and
- evaluating the impact of hospital workforce policy changes on patients' health outcomes.

Political scientists may furnish fresh insights into such areas as:

- the ways in which legislative battles are strategically framed and fought;
- the role of public opinion in shaping policy formulation;
- the balance of power among major players that may shift as a result of changing policies;
- the influence that interest groups exert over health policy decisions; and
- the forces that empower and mobilize communities to address health problems.

Sociologists may contribute to the policy analysis and debate by:

- increasing our understanding of the effects of changes in the structure and organization of the health care delivery system;
- assessing the impact of the changing roles and functions of health care providers;
- providing a framework for understanding how social movements affect the nation's health; and
- expanding our knowledge of the socioeconomic and cultural determinants of health.

The interplay among all three disciplines, when brought to bear on any single issue, results in a rich, multidisciplinary perspective that can enhance problem definition and resolution. To ensure that health policy research continues to benefit from these disciplinary perspectives—and from the interaction among them—the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) established the *Scholars in Health Policy Research* program in 1992. It is part of RWJF's rich history of programs and projects in its Human Capital Portfolio that seek to build and maintain a strong and diverse leadership and workforce in health and health care, as well as to help develop specific fields.

The Program

The *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research* program helps to develop a new generation of creative health policy thinkers and researchers within the disciplines of economics, political science and sociology. Each year, the program enables up to 12 highly-qualified individuals to undertake two-year fellowships at one of three nationally prominent universities: the University of California, Berkeley, in collaboration with the University of California, San Francisco (Berkeley/UCSF)—under the direction of John Ellwood, Ph.D.; the University of Michigan—under the direction of Paula Lantz, Ph.D.; and Harvard University—under the direction of Katherine Swartz, Ph.D. All three sites have nationally recognized social science departments and professional schools whose faculty has significant health policy expertise. Scholars in the program have the opportunity to work closely with faculty from the social sciences—as well as from medicine, public health and public policy—in an environment conducive to disciplinary and multidisciplinary learning and collaborative research.

Selected scholars will have access to the full range of university resources, including libraries, computers, databases and research support. They will receive stipends from their university of \$86,000 for the first year and \$89,000 for the second year. Financial support also is available for scholars' research expenses, including travel.

Scholars will be free from teaching, consulting and administrative responsibilities during their participation in the program. We invite recent graduates of doctoral programs in economics, political science and sociology, including junior faculty, to apply. At each site, the program brings together talented individuals—each rooted in one of the three disciplines—to learn about health, health policy and the perspectives of the other two disciplines. We expect that scholars will pursue careers within their disciplines, making important

research contributions to future United States health policy.

Curricular activities at the participating universities are designed to be flexible to meet scholars' educational needs and interests. Specific activities vary by institution, but generally include seminars, workshops, tutorials and independent research projects. At each institution, these offerings are intended to accomplish three objectives:

- Educate scholars about health, health care, the organization and financing of the health care delivery system, and the health policy-making process.
- Expose scholars to a learning environment in which each comes to appreciate the perspectives and methods of other social science disciplines, in addition to medicine and public health.
- Offer scholars the opportunity to develop a health policy research agenda and to conduct relevant research and analysis under the guidance of and in collaboration with distinguished faculty mentors.

The program's goal is to produce scholars who:

- have the commitment and capacity to inform and influence U.S. health policy discussions through their research, publications and active involvement as scholars in the policy-making process;
- bring a fresh perspective to important and perplexing questions facing health policy-makers today;
- understand and appreciate social science disciplines other than their own;
- continue to undertake research in their respective disciplines; and
- infuse their home disciplines with policy research questions related to health and health care.

Current and former scholars have pursued diverse and flexible career paths during and after completing the program. Some examples:

Elizabeth Armstrong, an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, has conducted research on the relationship between self-efficacy and health outcomes and the social construction of risk in pregnancy. This work, which she began while in the Michigan program, has resulted in a book, *Conceiving Risk, Bearing Responsibility: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and the Diagnosis of Moral Disorder* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). In 2004 she received a *Robert Wood Johnson Investigator Award in Health Policy Research* for work on “Fetal Personhood: the Raw Edge of Obstetrical Practice and Ethics.”

Michael Greenstone is the 3M Professor of Environmental Economics at MIT. His current research, initiated while he was in the Berkeley/UCSF program, includes a project on the association between particulates in air pollution and infant mortality rates. His article, co-authored with Ken Chay of UC Berkeley, on this research received the International Health Economics Association’s 2004 Kenneth J. Arrow Award for the year’s best paper in health economics.

Cathy Cohen, the David and Mary Winton Green Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, was a scholar in the program at Yale University, where she continued research begun in graduate school on the political response to AIDS in African-American communities. In 2005 she received a *Robert Wood Johnson Investigator Award in Health Policy Research* for a project, “Race, Politics, and Adolescent Health: Understanding the Health Attitudes and Behaviors of African American Youth.” She recently completed serving a term on the program’s national advisory committee and is now Deputy Provost for Graduate Education at the University of Chicago.

Dalton Conley, University Professor of the Social Sciences, and Chair of the Department of Sociology at New York University, has extended his research interests in race and poverty to the areas of social and biological health risks. Work for his book, *The Starting Gate: Birth Weight and Life Chances*, with Kate W. Strully and Neil G. Bennett (University of California Press, 2003), was begun while he was a scholar in the Berkeley/UCSF program. In 2005 he received the National Science Foundation’s Alan T. Waterman Award, which recognizes an outstanding young researcher in any field of science or engineering.

Rucker Johnson, an assistant professor in the Richard and Rhoda Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley, is continuing research begun while in the Michigan program on health dynamics and the evolution of health inequalities over the life course, with particular focus on the importance of neighborhood and family background. This work grew out of his award-winning dissertation in labor economics.

Daniel Carpenter, Professor of Government and Director of the Center for American Political Studies at Harvard University, is continuing research (begun while he was in the Michigan program) in complex administrative organizations that operate in the health policy domain. He is conducting historical, formal and statistical studies of the FDA drug approval process, pharmaceutical markets and public attention to disease. Carpenter received a *Robert Wood Johnson Investigator Award in Health Policy Research* in 2004 for a project on “Reputation and Regulation: A Study of Pharmaceutical Policy at the FDA.”

Chiquita Collins, an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas, Austin, continues research (initiated while in the Berkeley/UCSF program) on the extent to which racial residential segregation impacts mortality rates for African Americans and whites in urban areas. In 2004

she was one of 20 recipients of a Career Enhancement Award for Junior Faculty administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

John Cawley, an associate professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University, is continuing research initiated at the Michigan program on the economics of obesity, including the effect of body weight on labor market outcomes and on adolescent behavior. He received the 2005 John D. Thompson Prize for Young Investigators from the Association of University Programs in Health Administration for his contributions to the research literature in health economics and the economics of obesity. Cawley also is co-editor of a three-volume set, *The Economics of Health Behaviors* (Edward Elgar Publishers, 2006).

Jonathan Oberlander, Associate Professor of Social Medicine in the School of Medicine, and Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration in the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, teaches health policy in the School of Medicine and the Department of Political Science. He continues research on Medicare politics, which he began in graduate school and expanded while in the Berkeley/UCSF program. Oberlander is the author of *The Political Life of Medicare* (University of Chicago Press, 2003) and will be a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation during the 2008–2009 academic year.

Helen Levy, a research assistant professor in the Department of Health Management and Policy at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, has expanded the research begun while in the Berkeley/UCSF program to include the financial consequences of poor health for households without health insurance and the determinants of men's and women's occupation choices.

Recent publications by these and other program alumni include:

Carpenter, Christopher (Cohort 9–Michigan). “Workplace Drug Testing and Worker Drug Use.” *Health Services Research*, 42(2):795–810, 2007.

Carpenter, Daniel (Cohort 5–Michigan) and Sin, Gisela. “Policy Tragedy and the Emergence of Regulation: The Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938.” *Studies in American Political Development*, 21:149–180, 2007.

Encinosa, William E. (Cohort 2–Michigan), Gaynor, Martin and Rebitzer, James B. “The Sociology of Groups and the Economics of Incentives: Theory and Evidence on Compensation Systems.” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 62(2):187–214, 2007.

Finch, Brian (Cohort 7–Berkeley/UCSF), Lim, Nelson, Perez, William and Do, Phuong. “Toward a Population Health Model of Segmented Assimilation: The Case of Low Birth-Weight in Los Angeles.” *Sociological Perspectives*, 50(3):445–468, 2007.

Garrett, Bowen (Cohort 3–Berkeley/UCSF), and Chernew, Michael. “Health Insurance and Labor Markets: Concepts, Open Questions, and Data Needs.” *Inquiry*, 45(1):30–57, 2008.

Herd, Pamela (Cohort 9–Michigan), **Goesling, Brian** (Cohort 10–Michigan), and House, James. “Socioeconomic Position and Health: The Differential Effects of Education versus Income on the Onset versus Progression of Health Problems.” *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 48(3):223–238, 2007.

Ketcham, Jonathan (Cohort 9–Berkeley/UCSF) and Epstein, Andrew J. “Medicaid Preferred Drug Lists’ Costs to Physicians.” *Medical Care*, 46(1):9–16, 2008.

Lantz, Paula (Cohort 1–Michigan), Lichtenstein, Richard and **Pollack, Harold** (Cohort 1–Yale). “Health Policy Approaches to Population Health: The Limits of Medicalization.” *Health Affairs*, 26(5):1253–57, 2007.

Oberlander, Jonathan (Cohort 2–Berkeley/UCSF). “Through the Looking Glass: The Politics of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act.” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 32(2):187–219, 2007.

Perry, Cynthia (Cohort 11–Harvard). “Does Treating Maternal Depression Improve Child Health Management? The Case of Pediatric Asthma.” *Journal of Health Economics*, 27(1):157–173, 2008.

Eligibility Criteria

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research program embraces diverse racial, ethnic and gender perspectives, and encourages applications from candidates who come from groups that historically have been underrepresented in the three disciplines of interest.

Field of Study

Applicants must have received a doctoral degree in economics, political science or sociology during the time period noted below. We will give preference to applicants who have not previously worked extensively in the areas of health or health policy research.

Receipt of Degree

Applicants must have received a doctoral degree after January 1, 2004, but no later than July 2009. For those who expect to receive degrees in 2009, all degree requirements must be completed by July 15, 2009.

Citizenship

All applicants must be citizens of the United States or its territories or have permanent residency status at the time of application to the program.

Selection Criteria

Review of Applications

The following criteria will be considered in the course of the application review process:

- The applicant’s potential to contribute creatively as a social scientist to future U.S. health policy thinking—either by identifying emerging health policy issues and problems or by bringing new insight to the examination and analysis of existing issues and problems.
- The applicant’s commitment to a career consistent with the program’s purpose and goals.
- The quality of the applicant’s past research, including dissertation research.
- The capability of the applicant to undertake this challenging program.
- Recommendations by faculty and other individuals with whom the applicant has studied or worked.

All applications are screened by the national program office (NPO) and forwarded to members of the national advisory committee, the program site directors and RWJF staff for extensive review.

We will select approximately 25 finalists for interviews with faculty at one or more of the participating universities. From these interviewed finalists, we will select up to 12 scholars to receive fellowships.

Use of Foundation Funds

The Foundation has made grants to the three participating universities in accordance with our regular funding guidelines. The universities will provide scholars with their stipends, health insurance, expenses associated with the move to their fellowship site, and funds to purchase a computer. Financial support also is available at each university for expenses associated with scholars’ research, including travel.

How to Apply

Individuals who meet the eligibility requirements may access the online application system on the program Web site at www.healthpolicyscholars.org. Individuals may contact the NPO at the address listed under Program Direction to discuss any questions about the program, selection criteria or application requirements. We encourage candidates to begin the application as early as possible.

For assistance, please contact the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research program by phone at (617) 353-9220 or by e-mail at rwjfb@bu.edu.

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of applications submitted.

Program Direction

The Boston University Health Policy Institute, which serves as the NPO, provides direction and technical assistance for the program.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research
Boston University Health Policy Institute
53 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215-2197
Phone: (617) 353-9220
Fax: (617) 353-9227
E-mail: rwjfb@bu.edu
Web site: www.healthpolicyscholars.org

Responsible staff members at the national program office are:

- Alan B. Cohen, Sc.D., *program director*
- Catherine M. Player, M.A., *deputy director*
- Melissa Manolis, B.A., *program manager*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Lori A. Melichar, Ph.D., *senior program officer*
- David C. Colby, Ph.D., *vice president, Research and Evaluation*
- John R. Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., *senior vice president and director, Health Care Group*
- Linda Wright Moore, M.S., *senior communications officer*
- Christine Phares, *grants administrator*

For more information about the program please visit www.healthpolicyscholars.org.

**National Advisory
Committee**

MARK A. PETERSON, Ph.D., Chair
Professor of Public Policy and Political Science
School of Public Affairs
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, Calif.

KAREN S. COOK, Ph.D.
Ray Lyman Wilbur Professor of Sociology
Stanford University
Stanford, Calif.

WILLIAM N. EVANS, Ph.D.
Keough-Hesburgh Professor of Economics
Department of Economics and Econometrics
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Ind.

ROBERT M. HAUSER, Ph.D.
Vilas Research Professor of Sociology and
Samuel A. Stouffer Professor of Sociology
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Madison, Wis.

DAVID MECHANIC, Ph.D.
René Dubos University Professor of Behavioral
Sciences and Director, Institute for Health,
Health Care Policy, and Aging Research
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, N.J.

JAMES A. MORONE, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science
Brown University
Providence, R.I.

MARK V. PAULY, Ph.D.
Bendheim Professor and
Professor of Health Care Systems
The Wharton School
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pa.

BARBARA SINCLAIR, Ph.D.
Marvin Hoffenberg Professor of American
Politics Emerita
Department of Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, Calif.

BARBARA L. WOLFE, Ph.D.
Director, LaFollette School of Public Affairs
Professor of Economics and Population
Health Sciences
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Madison, Wis.

RASHI FEIN, Ph.D., Chair Emeritus
Professor of the Economics of Medicine, Emeritus
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Mass.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change.

For more than 35 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime.

For more information visit www.rwjf.org.

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at www.rwjf.org/services.



Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation

Route 1 and College Road East
P.O. Box 2316
Princeton, NJ 08543-2316

July 2008