## Discussion Questions

# Chapter 8 Health Care Policy

Questions for small groups or larger class discussion.

1. Discuss: Consider the data provided in this chapter on the rising cost of health care services. What are the most effective ways to control these costs? Try to think of several alternative ways to do so, and then compare them in terms of the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, and equity.
2. Discuss: In light of the chapter’s discussion of the consequences of being uninsured, what else should governments do to meet the needs of Americans without health care insurance beyond what the Affordable Care Act does?
3. Discuss: Should employers continue to carry the burden of providing health care benefits to employees, or should the government institute a form of national health insurance instead? What difference might this make for the ability of U.S. companies, such as automobile manufacturers, to compete internationally when most other developed countries provide national health insurance?
4. Discuss: Was Congress right to approve the new Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in 2010 despite unanimous opposition by Republicans and considerable doubt about it among the American public? What provisions in the act ought to be kept and which would you favor repealing or replacing with something else, and why?
5. Discuss: What kinds of public policies might be designed to give individuals more incentives to remain healthy and reduce demand for costly health care services?
6. Discuss/Group breakout: Assign an entitlement program to groups. Assign the following: Medicare, Medicaid, veterans’ programs, SCHIP. Each group research and answer the following questions about each program: Who’s entitled? How is it funded? What does it cover (in general)? What are the benefits? What are the current challenges with this program?
7. Discuss: The Medicare program serves elderly Americans, and we know that the elderly use the most care. Baby Boomers are retiring. What might this mean for the program?