Chapter 10

Discussion Questions.

1. The United States spends more on health per capita than any other country. The U.S. spends about 16 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on health care—the largest expenditure in this category among industrialized countries. Even though the U.S. health system is the most expensive in the world, comparative analyses consistently show the U.S. underperforms relative to other countries on most dimensions of health performance. Finally, the U.S. remains the only major industrial country without some form of universal health coverage. Given this information, why do you feel so many Americans are opposed to universal health care coverage in the U.S.?
2. Spending for prescription drugs in the U.S. totalled $234 billion in 2008. Prescription drugs are one of the fastest growing sectors of medical care. It isn’t uncommon to see prescription drug companies advertising their new drugs to assist with problems related to allergies, sexual dysfunctions, depression, cholesterol, and countless other ailments. Are drug companies looking out for the best interests of their consumers or have they simply become profit motive driven companies pumping out new drugs as fast as possible? Is there enough federal regulation on drug companies?
3. Because of the high costs of prescription drugs, should Americans be allowed to purchase prescription drugs legally from other countries which is currently illegal? Why do you believe it isn’t legal for Americans to have choice in the global free market to purchase their prescription drugs from where they want?
4. According to the guidlelines of the Affordable Care Act individuals who aren’t insured and don’t sign up are assessed an annual fee. Ask the students how they feel about the fee? Why would a fee be assessed? Is it fair?
5. Many Americans are going overseas to seek treatment and/or to have surgeries because the costs may be cheaper and more efficient. Discuss with the class the pros and cons of this type of practice.