The Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation

The Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation invites students to submit essays to the 2026 Jack Boan Student Essay Competition

The intent is to foster Canadian health economics and health policy research among undergraduate and graduate students. The competition is publicized in French and English through undergraduate and graduate programs in economics, health policy, health administration, health law, community and public health and applied health research programs across Canada, the Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) network, and other local applied health research networks.

- Essays must be no more than 4,000 words in length (inclusive of references and appendices) and address any topic in health services or health policy with relevance to Canada.
- The Hall Foundation will award three prizes annually for the best submissions:
  - Best doctoral submission: $2,000
  - Best masters submission: $1,500
  - Best undergraduate submission: $1,000
- Winning essays will be selected by a panel appointed by the President of the Hall Foundation.
- Authors, titles, and abstracts of the winning essays will be posted on the Hall Foundation website: http://www.hallfoundation.ca/jack-boan-student-essay
- Submissions should be sent to Gillian Young at gyoung57@uwo.ca no later than **Friday, February 27, 2026 at 11:59 PM EST.**
- Winners will be notified by email in advance of the annual Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research conference (https://cahspr.ca/events/cahspr-conference-2026/). Prizes will be awarded during the conference.
- Essays may be submitted in English or in French and may be based on course or thesis work. For more information, please contact Gillian Young at gyoung57@uwo.ca.

The Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation
Jack Boan Student Essay Competition

Terms of Reference

Purpose and overview:
In 2008, the Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation launched its annual student essay competition. In 2015, the annual Justice Emmett Hall student essay competition was renamed to celebrate Dr. John (Jack) Boan's significant contributions to the field of health economics and policy.

The intent is to foster Canadian health economics and health policy research among undergraduate and graduate students. The competition is publicized in French and English through undergraduate and graduate programs in economics, health policy, health administration, health law, community and public health and applied health research programs across Canada, the Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) network, and other local applied health research networks.

Over 600 essays have been submitted since the launch of this competition. Essays are reviewed and scored independently by two members of the panel of judges to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Double blind protocols are maintained as much as possible.

Eligibility:

- Students must be registered at a Canadian University at the time of submission in an undergraduate or graduate (masters or doctoral) studies program related to any of the following fields:
    - Health services research;
    - Health policy;
    - Health law;
    - Health administration;
    - Health economics;
    - Health informatics;
    - Public health;
    - Health sciences or health studies;
    - Interdisciplinary health;
    - Epidemiology or biostatistics; or
    - Medicine, nursing, or other clinical health science programs.
- Students enrolled in a dual-degree program that includes graduate studies will be eligible for the award aligned with their level of graduate education (e.g., PhD award for MD/PhD students). Medical students are eligible for the undergraduate award.
- Students with a Canadian citizenship registered at a university outside the country are eligible to participate.
- The entrant(s) must be the lead author(s) of the work. If an essay submission has more than one co-author, all co-authors must be students. However, this work could have been supported by non-students (e.g., the entrant's thesis supervisor, course instructor, committee member).
- Essay submissions are limited to one per student/group.

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- This competition is open to both full-time and part-time students.
- Essays can arise from course or thesis work in the previous 18 months but must not be published at the time of submission.

Themes:
Essays must address at least one of the five criteria for a national health service advocated by Justice Emmett Hall in the 1964 Royal Commission on Health Services Report that later formed the principles for the Canada Health Act:

Public administration	The provincial and territorial plans must be administered and operated on a non profit basis by a public authority accountable to the provincial or territorial government.
Comprehensiveness	The provincial and territorial plans must insure all medically necessary services provided by hospitals, medical practitioners and dentists working within a hospital setting.
Universality	The provincial and territorial plans must entitle all insured persons to health insurance coverage on uniform terms and conditions.
Portability	The provincial and territorial plans must cover all insured persons when they move to another province or territory within Canada and when they travel abroad. The provinces and territories have some limits on coverage for services provided outside Canada, and may require prior approval for non-emergency services delivered outside their jurisdiction.
Accessibility	The provincial and territorial plans must provide all insured persons reasonable access to medically necessary hospital and physician services without financial or other barriers.

At a minimum, essays must include one paragraph (approximately 200 words) explaining the relevance of the issue being examined to the above principle(s). Entrants are encouraged to incorporate the principle(s) into their submission's title and ensure it is related/discussed throughout the essay.

Format:
Candidates must submit two documents as part of their submission:

File #1: Cover sheet with identifiable information

- The **cover sheet** must contain the essay title along with the student's contact information (name, email, phone number, mailing address), university, department, program of enrolment, and program coordinator and contact information.
- Required file name: **Cover Sheet_LastName_FirstName**

File #2: Anonymous cover sheet and essay ***(Should NOT contain ANY identifiable information)***

- A **cover sheet** must include only the essay **title** and an **abstract** or executive summary (250 words max) of the paper that includes a statement about its relevance to the Canada Health Act principles. In addition, a **declaration on the use of artificial intelligence (AI)** must be included which states whether and how AI was used in preparing the submission (e.g., brainstorming the essay topic; assisting with background research; drafting, proofreading, or editing the essay; etc.). **Essays should not include content directly generated by AI.**
- The essay must NOT exceed **4,000 words** (inclusive of references and appendices) in length and may be submitted in English or French.
    - After the essay's main text, a reference list should be included. The **American Psychological Association** style is acceptable for referencing source material.
- The student's name or other identifying information must **NOT** appear anywhere in this file!
- Required file name: **Essay_LastName_FirstName**

Note: Both files must be submitted as Word documents.

Evaluation:
Each essay will be judged on the five criteria below:

1) **Quality of analyses:** arguments must be convincing, substantiated, and understandable;
2) **Thoroughness of research:** types and varieties of source material;
3) **Originality:** author demonstrated new and innovative approaches and essay will add to Canadian health services or health policy research;
4) **Relevance to the Canadian health care system:** relevance to at least one of the competition's themes;
5) **Quality of writing**: style, clarity, and organization.

Deadline:

- Submissions must be submitted as two files (described previously under "**Format**") to gyoung57@uwo.ca no later than **Friday, February 27, 2026 at 11:59 PM EST.**
- Winners will be notified in April 2026 prior to the CAHSPR conference.
- The winning essays will be selected by a panel appointed by the President of the Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation.

Prizes:

- The Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation will award three prizes for the best submission:
    - Best doctoral submission: $2,000
    - Best masters submission: $1,500
    - Best undergraduate submission: $1,000
- Prizes will be awarded at the annual CAHSPR conference.

- Students unable to attend the conference will receive their award by mail.

Publication:

- The title, author(s), and abstract of the winning essays will be posted on the Hall Foundation website (http://www.hallfoundation.ca/jack-boan-student-essay).
- The overall best submission (across the three award categories) will be invited to publish in **Healthcare Policy Journal**. (Note: The submission will need to be adapted to align with the author guidelines specified by the journal and will undergo peer review. The publication costs will be waived.)
    - We will encourage other high-scoring, relevant essays to be submitted to **Health Reform Observer**.