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ECNS 491.01: Special Topics - Advanced Topics in Health Economics

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ECNS 491: ADVANCED TOPICS IN HEALTH ECONOMICS
Fall 2021 Syllabus

Logistics

- Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 11 – 11.50pm
- Classroom: Health Science 411
- Instructor: Katrina Mullan
 - [Email](mailto:katrina.mullan@umontana.edu): katrina.mullan@umontana.edu
 - Office hours: Monday, 12-1pm; Wednesday, 9.30-10.30am; or by appointment
 - Liberal Arts Building, Rm 412 or [Zoom](#)
- Teaching Assistant: Patrick Boise
 - [Email](mailto:patrick.boise@umconnect.umt.edu): patrick.boise@umconnect.umt.edu
 - Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 2:00-4:00 pm, and Thursdays 12:00-2:00 pm
 - Liberal Arts Building, Rm 408A
- Required textbook: Bhattacharya, J. et al. (2014) *Health Economics*. MacMillan International.
- Course website: I will post assignments, readings and any additional information on the class Moodle page. Announcements will be emailed via Moodle. Please ensure that you regularly check both the Moodle page and the email account associated with it.

Prerequisites

- Principles of Microeconomics (ECNS 201)

If you need or would like extra practice with any of the introductory concepts, let me know as early in the semester as possible so I can point you towards some useful materials.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This course applies microeconomic theory to understand how the incentives people face and the choices they make affect health behavior, the economics of infectious diseases, markets for health insurance, and determinants of health outcomes in the United States and other parts of the world.

Students who successfully complete this course will understand:

- Neoclassical and behavioral economic models of how people make decisions about their health
- What economic theory and empirical evidence tell us about the sources of health disparities
- Reasons for market failures in the market for health insurance
- Advantages and disadvantages of alternative healthcare systems
- The role of externalities in health policy and understanding of infectious diseases
- Development and economic evaluation of pharmaceutical drugs and other health interventions

Class assignments

- Homework assignments consisting of a mix of short-answer questions, essay questions and analysis of data.
- Reading or listening to journal articles, news articles or podcasts, answering quiz questions on the content before class, and discussing the content and ideas in class (“article discussion”)
- Presentation of a current health-related topic with discussion of relevant economic concepts (“news item”)
- Midterms held during class time on **Wednesday September 29th**, **Wednesday October 27th**, and **Wednesday December 1st**, and a final exam at **8-10am** on **Thursday December 16th**, all consisting of short-answer questions, long-answer questions and numerical problems.

Students taking the class for graduate credit will complete a graduate increment in the form of a research proposal. This will involve identification of an applied health problem that could be addressed through economic analysis; review of relevant existing theory and/or literature; and selection of a dataset appropriate for the proposed analysis. It will be worth 20% of the class grade and the other graded components will be scaled accordingly.

Detailed guidelines for each assignment will be posted on the course Moodle page. Assignments must be submitted by the deadline for full credit, but I will give partial credit for late assignments where possible and encourage you complete and submit all assignments for your own learning.

Participation grades will be based on participation in class discussions, in-class exercises, and online or in-class experiments.

Grading

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Homework assignments	40%
Article discussions and News Item	10%
Participation	10%
Exams	40%

Academic Conduct

All students must practice academic honesty. I expect you to know the requirements and penalties in the [Student Conduct Code](#). This includes the requirement that you do your own work in your own words, without seeking inappropriate assistance in preparing for or completing exams or assignments, and that you work to uphold high standards of integrity.

Students with Disabilities

Whenever possible, and in accordance with civil rights laws, The University of Montana will attempt to provide reasonable modifications to students with disabilities who request and require them. Please feel free to set up a time with me to discuss any modifications that may be necessary for this course. For more information, visit the [Disability Services for Students website](#).

Covid-19 precautions

- All class participants are required to wear an appropriate mask (e.g. not including neck gaiters or bandanas) that securely covers their nose and mouth while in the classroom and when attending office hours. I will let you know if this policy changes later in the semester based on case rates and/or vaccination rates at UM.
- If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330.
- If you are required to isolate or quarantine, I will support you to ensure continued academic progress by providing class materials and holding zoom meetings as needed.
- UM recommends students get the COVID-19 vaccine. Please direct your questions or concerns about vaccines to Curry Health Center.
- Where social distancing (maintaining consistent 6 feet between individuals) is not possible, specific seating arrangements will be used to support contact tracing efforts. I will record class attendance and ask you to sit in the same seats every class to support contact tracing efforts.
- Please avoid drinking liquids and eating food within the classroom.
- I have designed this course to be in-person with in-class lectures, discussions, and exams. However, it is possible that we will move to a remote format during the semester to help ensure our health and safety.

Most people are facing extra challenges right now, so we should all try especially hard to be kind to one another. If you are struggling with life, with classwork or with trying to combine the two, please don't think you have to deal with things alone. Send me a message or come to my office hours and we'll figure out some next steps together.

Outline Schedule

Week	Week beginning	Tentative topics <i>(we may go faster or slower)</i>	Textbook chapters	Key dates
1	30-Aug	Why Health Economics?	1	
2	6-Sep	Demand for healthcare	2	Monday Sept 6 th – Labor Day, no classes
3	13-Sep	Demand for health	3	
4	20-Sep	Health disparities	4, 5	
5	27-Sep	Catch up and review		Wednesday Sept 29 th – Midterm1
6	4-Oct	Behavioral economics of health	23, 24	
7	11-Oct	Demand for insurance	7	
8	18-Oct	Adverse selection	8, 11	
9	25-Oct	Catch up and review		Wednesday Oct 27 th – Midterm 2
10	1-Nov	Health policy	15-18	
11	8-Nov	Health externalities	20	
12	15-Nov	Economic epidemiology	21	
13	22-Nov	Pharmaceuticals and innovation	12	Nov 24 th and 26 th – Thanksgiving, no classes
14	29-Nov	Catch up and review		Wednesday Dec 1 st – Midterm 3
15	6-Dec	Health technology assessment	14	
16	13-Dec	Finals Week		Thursday Dec 16 th , 8-10am – Final Exam