
ECO402: TOPICS IN HEALTH ECONOMICS, FALL 2021
DEPT. OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
C. J. WARD, PHD

1. COURSE LOGISTICS:

Course website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/234046>

Course email: eco402.ward@utoronto.ca

Course schedule: There are two sections of ECO402 with scheduled meeting times of Mondays 10am-12pm (section L0101) and Mondays 1pm-3pm (section L0201). We have a common meeting time on Tuesdays 1pm-3pm. We assume students are available at the times given for their section in the university timetable. For a full description of the course schedule, please see the section on Course Coverage and/or our Quercus Calendar.

Communication: Most points of communication for the course (office hours, Piazza) go through the course website. Please see the section on course communication below for details on how to communicate with me, your fellow students, and the course staff.

Prerequisites: The Department checks whether students have the correct course prerequisites, and students will be removed otherwise. Please note that I cannot waive prerequisites. The prerequisites for ECO402 are here: <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/course/eco402h1>

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview: This course introduces students to the role of economics in health, health care, and health policy. It comprises a survey of major topics in health economics and is designed to introduce you to the issues, theory and practice of health economics. Topics include the economic determinants of health, the role of moral hazard and adverse selection on the market for health insurance, the role of the government in health care, and health care reform.

There are 11 course topics, and for each course topic you will find lecture slides, discussion questions, videos and a detailed reading list posted on the course webpage. Please check the website frequently for new announcements.

There is no required textbook for the course, but you may find the following useful introductory material:

- Sherman Folland, Allen Goodman and Miron Stano, *The Economics of Health and Health Care* (Prentice Hall), 7th edition.
- Jeremiah Hurley, *Health Economics* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson), 2nd edition.
- Jones, Andrew, *Applied econometrics for health economists: a practical guide*, Radcliff Publishing.

3. CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE DELIVERY

- Paper and a pencil (and probably an eraser, unless you're the kind of person that never makes mistakes)

- During lecture and tutorial time slots, you will need access to a reliable laptop, smartphone or tablet with wifi capabilities and ability to access a web browser and our Quercus materials.
- A current installation of Office 365, available at no cost to current U of T students, via the page Office 365 ProPlus: <https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/ic-faq-categories/microsoft-365-proplus>
- Regular access to a reliable laptop, desktop, or device with a working microphone and webcam
- Your TCard (your U of T Student ID card) ready
- To be proactive to avoid technical and other difficulties, which includes submitting well before dead-lines, maintaining your devices, keeping software up to date, minimizing the strains on your internet bandwidth, learning how to scan efficiently, carefully reading all assessment instructions, and contacting your instructor/TAs immediately with any problems
 - Regularly follow our Quercus site for detailed guidance, updated as our situation evolves.
- Contingencies: in the event that there are changes in our ability to meet in-person, you will need:
 - Regular access to a reliable laptop and/or desktop with a working microphone and webcam and a Zoom account under your U of T credentials (personal Zoom accounts are blocked from accessing U of T zoom sessions).
 - Regular access to reliable high-speed internet and reliable electricity
 - The hardware, software, and knowledge to scan your work to be uploaded. Most phones can scan (a separate scanner is unnecessary) to create PDF, JPG, or PNG files.

4. COURSE COVERAGE

Week	Lecture Topic	Workshops
Week 1:	The Economics of Health and Health Care	
Week 2:	Economic Evaluation	Econometrics Workshop I
Week 3:	Pharmaceutical markets	Econometrics Workshop II
Week 4:	Health Insurance	
Week 5:	Physician Behaviour and Remuneration	
Week 6:	Health Production	
Week 7:	The Health Endowment Reading Week	
Week 8:	Business cycles, Pollution, Climate Change	Presentation Workshop
Week 9:	Socioeconomic gradients in health	
Week 10:	Health externalities	Writing Workshop
Week 11:	Smoking, Obesity or Health System Comparisons	

5. EVALUATION

There are three types of assessment in ECO402: a midterm test, a final exam, and the capstone project. The capstone project is the backbone of the course, and it is due in phases including oral presentation, self-editing assignments, and peer feedback.

How to do well in Eco402:

Eco402 a topics course centered on a series of readings and other reference content, and your attendance and participation in weekly course meetings is strongly recommended as an important input to your overall preparation for course assessments.¹ Each of the weekly course meetings includes discussion questions that draw on the week's reference content. While ungraded, these questions form a reasonable basis for test content, and participation serves as an input into test preparation.

Further, there are several workshops spanning our course, which help you prepare for each phase of the Capstone Project. For two of these, the Presentation and Writing workshops, in-class attendance and participation is required. Full details on each phase of the capstone project will be provided in full on the course website.

The overall course grade will be determined as follows:

Assessment	Weight	Due Date	Collaboration
Term Test 1	25%	October 26	None
Capstone Project*	40%		Limited**
Phase 1: Topic selection (5%)	2%	November 1	
Phase 2: Oral presentation (25%)	10%	Nov 15 & 22	
Phase 3: Peer review & draft (10%)*	4%	November 29	
Phase 4: Final project (60%)	24%	December 6	
Final Exam	35%	TBA	None

* The weight in parentheses gives the percent contribution of each phase to the total project grade.

** Limited discussion/interaction regarding assignments (within the narrow parameters described below) is allowed.

*** Note that peer review marks are given for your completion of a peer review and not based on feedback from your peers.

5.1. COLLABORATION

Tests: This may seem obvious, but warrants saying anyway: there is absolutely no collaboration allowed on the midterm and final. Your submissions must be entirely your own work, and any collaboration (with ANYONE) for any portion is a serious infraction. Note that this means you may not post any material directly related to the tests, discuss any of the test content, or share any files related to the tests **before or during the test window**. After the testing date, discussion of test materials within the context of the course is permissible (and welcome, even), but note that

¹ Note that recordings will be provided until September 23rd to accommodate members of our class who are delayed in getting to campus. In this case, attendance and participation refers to lecture/workshop viewing and participation in asynchronous lecture activities.

test materials are protected by copyright and cannot be shared or posted outside the context of our course environment (i.e., our course environment is the Quercus page, course meetings, and office hours). To be clear, this means you are NOT ALLOWED to share these materials outside the course environment. Because copyright infringement has been an issue in the past, do not expect detailed test questions and solutions to be posted after the fact in an easily sharable form. Instead, expect practice test questions each week and actual midterm questions to be discussed after the fact as a group in-class time (discussion which you can relate back to personalized feedback on your test paper itself).

Capstone Project: In terms of the capstone project, your submission at every phase must be entirely your own work. You may engage in reasonable discussion with your classmates about how you are approaching your project. In fact, you will be expected to engage in productive discussion with your classmates in the presentation and writing workshops (participation here is required). In all cases, these discussions should take place through course infrastructure: e.g., on piazza, during workshops, or class discussion time. Other collaboration outside the course with ANYONE (such as sharing files, copying text or code, submitting text or code that is not your own) is prohibited. The project is due in phases, and cases of plagiarism become apparent either quickly during the semester or easily later on when reviewing the full history of submission across phases. Remember also that all course materials and work by other students is copyright protected, and a history of submission for each phase in past innovations of Eco402 is available for easy reference for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The consequences for plagiarism are severe, and the process of investigating plagiarism is distressing for everyone involved and takes a great deal of time to resolve (possibly impacting future course enrollment and graduation timelines).

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

5.2. EXPECTATIONS FOR DELIVERABLES

Capstone Project: The project allows for substantial revision beyond what is possible during timed assessments, and it gives you an opportunity to hone your presentation and writing skills while gaining a deeper knowledge of a specific topic in health economics. Detailed instructions and expectations will be posted on Quercus, and these expectations will include required participation in presentation and writing workshops on key weeks of the course. Submission of work product will occur according to the instructions on Quercus and on the schedule listed above. You must manage your time: you assume all risk of working on these in the final days before the deadline. Workshop deliverables must be ready/completed by the start of the workshop period, and you are expected to arrive on time. Online submission is expected by the deadline and clocks are set accordingly. Any deadline associated with a workshop is strict and students must attend in their section. For all other project due dates, there is a short grace period of 1 hour after the deadline for but beyond that we do not accept late submissions (no exceptions). There are no make-ups and no extensions for ANY reason.

Remark Requests: Remark requests must: (1) Be submitted to Remark Request, which is an MS Form, (2) Explain WHY more points are justified, (3) Be submitted within TWO WEEKS of the work's return to the class. The entire submission may be remarked: your mark can go up, down, or remain unchanged. Requests are reviewed together after the two-week deadline, not immediately. We will not consider any remark requests after the deadline.

Accommodations for the midterm and participation workshops: There is a very strict policy concerning a missed material, and any missed work earns an automatic mark of zero. This section explains special accommodations for: illness, injury, personal/family problems, enrolling after the course has begun, religious reasons, extracurricular conflicts, technology problems, internet or power outages, quarantine issues, accessibility concerns, and/or other challenging situations. For any issues that extend beyond our course, or last more than a week, you MUST contact your College Registrar immediately.

A grade of zero will be recorded for ANY missed material including a missed midterm, and/or missed participation in the presentation or writing workshop. In exceptional circumstances, we may grant an exemption for an entirely missed midterm, presentation or writing workshop (exemptions do not apply to other aspects of the capstone project). This exemption will be considered for not more than one entirely missed qualifying component, and we determine whether an exemption will be granted. You need to complete ALL of the following steps to be considered.

1. Complete “Missed Test” or “Missed Workshop,” which are MS Forms. It must be submitted AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE THE DUE TIME. For example, if the due time is 10 am, the LATEST you can request an accommodation is that morning at 9 am. It is unacceptable to fail to show up for an important engagement without advance notice. We do NOT wish to see any document completed by a doctor or other professional. All questions in the MS form are required.
2. Check your U of T e-mail. If an immediate resolution is possible, we may e-mail you quickly. Otherwise, within one week of the missed work you should receive an e-mail from us. Follow any instructions in it. Not seeing an e-mail from us is not an acceptable excuse for your failure to follow any time-sensitive or other instructions.
3. Complete all other course assessments including the final exam.
 - a. If the exemption is requested and granted for an entirely missed midterm, a cumulative make-up test will be scheduled by us. The style and timing of the make-up is at our discretion, e.g., it may be an individual oral test scheduled one-on-one with me or course staff, an individual written test scheduled in a joint session with other students, or a combination of both. Note that these will be held in-person unless policy dictates otherwise.
 - b. If the exemption is requested and granted for participation in the presentation workshop, you can make-up the missed workshop by taking the following actions. First, record your presentation to video and submit according to our instructions within 24 hours of the start of the presentation workshop. Second, we will provide time in one of the next course meetings for you to give your presentation in class. This presentation will be to the entire class as we will not be able to accommodate directed groups as we do in the workshop. Third, you will need to complete a peer review of another Eco402 presentation and submit it at a time scheduled by us. Note, you will not receive peer feedback on your presentation except in the case where it is possible to pair you with another exempted classmate. You will still need to submit your Phase 2 final presentation video on time.

- c. If the exemption is requested and granted for participation in the writing workshop, you can make-up the missed workshop by taking the following actions. First, submit your Phase 3 draft before the start time of the writing workshop. Second, you will need to complete a peer review of another Eco402 project draft and submit it at a time scheduled by us. Note, you will not receive peer feedback on your draft except in the case where it is possible to pair you with another exempted classmate. You will still need to submit your final Phase 4 project on time.

Not more than one exemption under 3a.-c. will be granted. Your performance on both the make-up materials and other graded course work, as well your MS Form submission and correspondence, will be taken under advisement in determining your final course grade. We do not report marks for make-ups. However, after all regular course work is complete and returned, we will report the mark assigned for the original missed assessment.

Failing to complete all three steps above, regardless of the reason, results in a mark of zero on the original missed work. We do not accept late submissions and there are no make-ups for the make-up and no extensions for any reason. Accommodations for missing more work than addressed above are extremely limited: (1) an ongoing and substantial injury, illness, or personal/family problem seriously affecting the student's ability to complete term work across all courses over an extended period of time where the student's College Registrar writes to me after meeting with the student and formally requests an accommodation on the student's behalf or (2) more than one conflict not related to injury, illness or personal/family problems where I am contacted by the student very far in advance. In these limited situations, I will consider whether accommodations can still meet all course requirements or whether the student must be advised to drop the course and retake it when able to complete the required work. Any such extraordinary accommodations are at my discretion and may involve completing work at an alternate time, an oral and/or other assessment, re-weighting, and/or may be contingent on performance on other work.

6. COURSE COMMUNICATION

This is a challenging course, and you will likely have many questions throughout. We welcome these questions, and to facilitate our collective discourse, we have organized the following as part of our semester:

1. Questions on course content (including the material covered in course assessments):
 - A primary way to address questions on course content is to come to the lectures and workshops to discuss.
 - Second, I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza (instead of using email). The Piazza system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently and, importantly, it builds an online community here in Eco 402. Piazza facilitates discussion primarily between you and your peers (there's more of you to populate the site), but our course TAs also check-in weekly to address any unresolved areas of confusion. They will also flag questions for me where cases warrant. If you have any problems/feedback, email team@piazza.com. Find our class signup link at: <https://piazza.com/utoronto.ca/fall2021/eco402h1f>
2. Technological issues:
 - If you are having an issue with your technology, try posting to Piazza first as some others

may share your issue and still more may have a potential solve for it. This also allows the course staff to become aware of it at the same time. Remember from Section 3 above; you should be proactive about avoiding technical and other difficulties, which includes learning to use the technology laid out in Section 3 ahead of “crunch” time.

3. For remark requests on course assessments OR inquiries regarding a missed term test:
 - Please use the MS forms links on Quercus.

Maybe you want to try to by-pass the above infrastructure altogether and email us. Please note, however, that asking questions via e-mail is almost never the best way to get an answer. It leaves others out of valuable discussions and, more generally, requires a lot of repetitive effort for us; effort better put towards course improvement (pareto improvement, even). Instead, consider the avenues of communication listed above, and choose one that best fits your inquiry. If you somehow missed this section of the syllabus the first time around and email me about something of general interest to others or something that has a structured process already attached to it, please do not take offence if you receive a canned reply directing you back to this section of the syllabus.

While most questions can be handled through points 1-3 above, for those of a private nature, please reach out to me directly through email (e.g. for concerns about accessibility accommodations, TA issues, typos or broken links on the website). The course email is eco402.ward@utoronto.ca. If you need to send an e-mail, please (1) email from your UofT email address (it will be ignored as spam otherwise), and (2) include your student number in your signature.

Use only the course email: eco402.ward@utoronto.ca to get in contact with us, i.e., DO NOT try to email us through Quercus or at another address (it will be missed or ignored). If we can answer briefly, we will reply within three business days. If you receive no reply please check the syllabus, review Quercus announcements, post to Piazza, or make an appointment to see me during office hours. My office hours are via Zoom on Fridays 2-4pm.

Lastly, please note that we will make important announcements through Quercus, which means you need to check in here regularly. You may also wish to customize your Quercus notification preferences to receive immediate notification of course messages.

7. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please read/refamiliarize yourself with the Faculty Arts & Science’s Statement on Academic Integrity at the start of our course: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>. As part of an academic community it is your responsibility to be aware of appropriate conduct. Any academic offence will be reported and acted upon immediately.

8. STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY

For accessibility concerns *immediately* visit <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> and also register with Accommodated Testing Services (ATS): <https://www.ace.utoronto.ca/ats/>. We can only provide accommodations for assessments as directed by ATS. If you have trouble, seek help right away from us, your College Registrar, and/or the Academic Success Centre. For any issues that extend beyond our course, or last more than a week, contact your College Registrar immediately.

9. PRIVACY

We are all expected to respect university privacy and copyright restrictions in this course.

Synchronous Events: The relevant policy states “Students may not create recordings of weekly synchronous events with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability, who should speak to the instructor prior to beginning to record these events.”

Course Recordings: The relevant policy states “Download and re-use is prohibited. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor. Non-compliance with these terms violates an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.”

Course Materials (lecture slides, tests and assignment questions and other course content): The relevant policy states: “Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor. Non-compliance with these terms violates an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.”