

ECO369H1 Health Economics

Course Syllabus

Winter 2023

1 Welcome

Welcome to ECO369H1 where you will learn how to apply economic concepts and methods to critically analyze problems in the health sector. We will take a policy analysis approach as we discuss some commonly debated topics regarding healthcare funding, financing, provision and use. This course focuses primarily on the Canadian health sector, however international similarities and differences are pointed out throughout the course.

2 Key Information

Instructor: Karen Ugarte Bravo

TAs: Alaina Olson, Natalia Vigezzi

Scheduled course times:

Tuesdays: 12:00 - 2:00 pm in SS 1073

Wednesday: 3:00 - 5:00 pm in SS 1073

Course Email: eco369.ugartebravo@utoronto.ca

Prerequisites: The course prerequisites are listed at <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/course/eco369h1>. An administrator will remove anyone missing prerequisites and I cannot waive prerequisites.

3 Contact Information

Weekly Student Hours will be hosted in person or on Zoom. Please see the Student Hours page on Quercus for the student hours schedule and Zoom links. Questions about the readings or material taught in class will only be answered during lectures, student hours or review sessions. For private matters that would not be relevant to your classmates you may contact the professor and TA's using the course email eco369.ugartebravo@utoronto.ca. If you directly contact the professor or TA at their personal email addresses, your email will be mixed in with many others and replies will be slower, not faster.

4 Grading Scheme

The course assessments and weights are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Grading Scheme

Weight	Assessment	Description	Dates
20%	Test 1	In-person written exam	Feb 15
20%	Assignment	Short written assignment	Mar 8
20%	Test 2	In-person written exam	Mar 15
40%	Final Exam	In-person written exam	Final Exam Period

Note:

Section 5 explains alternate weights. Section 14 explains accommodated weights

Dates are estimates. Assignment dates are estimated due dates

These are rough guides to the approximate timing in our course: actual timing may be plus/minus days or weeks.

Please see the course calendar on Quercus for dates

5 Alternate Weights (for any forced shifts online)

If the term tests or the final exam cannot be written in person due to changes in university policy:

- The exams may be replaced with take-home exams or digitally-invigilated timed exams.
- If ONE of the term tests take place online but the final exam is in person, the following weighting scheme will apply:
 - The online term test will be worth 5%
 - The in-person term test will be worth 25%
 - The Final Exam will be worth 50%.
- If both of the term tests take place online but the final exam is in person, the following weighting scheme will apply:
 - The term tests will each be worth 10%
 - The Final Exam will be worth 60%.
- If both of the term tests take place in-person but the final exam takes place online, the following weighting scheme will apply:
 - The term tests will each be worth 25%
 - The Final Exam will be worth 30%.

6 Required Textbook

The textbook required for our course is “Health Economics” (2010) By Jeremiah Hurley. If you search most online bookstores, you will likely find that this book is either sold out or quite expensive. Fortunately for us, Dr. Hurley is a professor and dean at nearby McMaster University and has informed me that the textbook is available for sale online at the McMaster University Bookstore website (<https://bit.ly/3sO7VTB>) at an affordable price.

Our required textbook highlights important points within chapter boxes and end of chapter appendices: take the boxes and appendices seriously. With each textbook chapter, the boxes, appendices and end of chapter questions are always part of the required reading. Consider our textbook author as a co-instructor.

7 Readings

Our course includes significant readings from the required textbook as well as important supplements that are available to you at no charge on the course Quercus site. The Course Calendar page on our Quercus site gives the reading assignment for each week. Complete readings before attending lectures.

8 Lectures

Lectures will take place on **Tuesdays**, and will be in person unless university guidelines advise otherwise.

Please see the Lecture Slides page of the course Quercus site for the slides that accompany lectures. **Note that studying the slides is by no means a replacement for attending lecture**, they are simply there to facilitate note taking during lecture. Be sure to complete the readings before lecture and come to class prepared with a digital or printed copy of the slides and ready to take notes. **Do not schedule any conflicts during the two-hour Tuesday ACORN time slot.** If you miss a class for any reason, the professor and teaching assistant will not be able to provide completed notes or recordings.

9 Seminars

Seminars will take place on some Wednesdays; please see the Course Calendar on Quercus for seminar dates. **Do not schedule conflicts during the two-hour Wednesday ACORN time slot.** In the seminars, we will discuss research applications of the concepts and theories studied in lectures. We will read and discuss some recently published and working academic papers on prominent health policy topics. Our seminars may also include presentations by guest speakers who are health economists in academia and the private or public sectors. The required readings for the seminars will be listed in the Course Calendar on Quercus. Complete the required seminar readings in advance of the seminar and come prepared to actively participate in the discussion.

10 Assignment

This course has a short writing assignment which will be graded primarily on the strength of the reasoning and critical thought displayed. Minor grammatical issues that do not detract from the conceptual points you make will not harm your grade. This short assignment provides a great setting to practice your writing skills.

For many students in this class, writing an essay in English may feel daunting or simply unfamiliar. Even if you have written essays in the past, you might be out of practice if you have primarily been taking introductory economics and mathematical courses. No matter what experience you bring, if writing an essay sounds challenging I would encourage you to embrace that challenge. Writing clearly and persuasively is an essential skill in any career you pursue after university. This course is an excellent training ground to hone that skill. The Writing Centers (<https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/>) at U of T are a fantastic resource: you can work individually with a trained instructor to develop your ability to plan, organize, write, and revise academic papers in any subject. If writing essays for this course sounds like a challenge, I strongly encourage you to plan ahead and take advantage of the personalized assistance available to you.

11 Ungraded homework

Under the Homework page on the course Quercus site you can find ungraded homework. These include assigned end-of-chapter text-book exercises and questions that supplement the textbook. Additionally, some

questions will be posted to help guide your reading of the required readings that supplement the textbook.

12 Term Tests and Final Exam

The term tests will be held during the Wednesday ACORN scheduled class time (3pm - 5pm). **Do not schedule any conflicts during your two-hour Wednesday ACORN time slot.** The Final exam will be held during the winter term final exam period. The date and format of the term tests and the final exam will be announced on Quercus in advance. **The final exam is cumulative.** Topics addressed in lectures, required readings, and homework are testable. If a concept appears in multiple venues, that signals high importance. Construct full replies for homework and other suggested practice materials in test-like conditions. If you cannot solve a question after a sustained effort, turn to your notes, book, and homework.

13 Late Assignment Submissions

Assignments must be submitted online on Quercus. The time-stamp from Quercus will apply to determine whether the submission is on-time or late. If you are submitting an assignment late (if even by 1 minute), please complete the Late Assignment MS form available on the Additional Links page on our course Quercus site.

5% will be deducted from the grade for each day a written assignment is submitted late, up to a 35% deduction for an assignment submitted seven days late. Note that 5% will be deducted whether it is 1 minute late or 23 hours and 59 minutes late. **No assignments will be accepted more than seven days late** in order to provide enough time to grade the assignments and return them to students at a timely pace.

For each day within the seven day period leading up to the deadline (including the date of the deadline) that a student is officially absent according to the ACORN Absence Declaration site, the 5% penalty will be waived for one day of late submission. For example, if a student is absent for 3 days during the 7 days leading up to the deadline, the 5% penalty will be waived for the first 3 days of late submission.

14 Term Test Accommodations

14.1 Accommodation for ONE missed Term Test

Complete work as scheduled in Table 1. Any missed work earns a mark of zero. This section explains special accommodations for: illness, injury, personal/family problems, religious reasons, quarantine issues, accessibility concerns, and/or other challenging situations. Remember, for significant challenges, which last more than a week, work with your College Registrar immediately.

For ONE entirely missed term test, the weight of the missed term test will be redistributed to the other term test (increasing the weight by 5 percentage points) and the final exam (increasing the weight by 15 percentage points). To receive this accommodation you must complete the following steps.

Step 1: You must officially declare your absence using the ACORN Absence Declaration site and complete the Missed Term Test MS form available on the Quercus Additional Links Page. It must be submitted **AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE THE TEST START TIME.** It is unacceptable to fail to show up for an important engagement without any advance notice. In extreme circumstances (e.g. being arrested), we may accept a later form, but unconvincing reasons for not submitting earlier are factored in when assessing your performance. We do NOT wish to see any document completed by a doctor or other professional. All questions in the MS form are required, including a copy of your Absence Declaration.

Step 2: Complete all other assessments as scheduled. Your performance on those and your MS Form submission will be taken under advisement in determining your final course grade. However, if some term

tests and/or the final exam cannot occur in person, you may be notified via your U of T e-mail about a cumulative oral make-up test, where your performance on that would also be taken under advisement. Any reweighing is at my discretion and will privilege work that can occur in person and the cumulative final exam.

The rules and accommodations for a missed final exam are governed by the Faculty of Arts and Science. Professors have no discretion to excuse a student from writing a final exam, nor can they offer an alternative date or form of examination.

14.2 Accomodation for relatively low performance on ONE term test

If you do not miss any test (Term Test 1, Term Test 2, or Final Exam) but one term test is relatively poor because of any kind of problem or challenge and if we are able to hold all of our term tests and final exam in person as planned, we will reweigh your lowest term test (reduce the term test weight by 10 percentage points) and shift the weight to the final exam (increase final exam weight to 50%). This is designed to give you the possibility to recover from a low grade on a term test by demonstrating growth in your knowledge on the final.

15 Remark Request

If you believe there is an error in the grading of your Assignment, Term Test 1 or Term Test 2, you may submit a remark request. For a remark request you must: (1) submit a Remark Request MS form, the link to this MS Form is available on the Additional Links page on Quercus, (2) Explain WHY more points are justified, (3) Be submitted within ONE WEEK of the work's return to the class. Your mark may remain unchanged, go up, or go down. These are given a fair look: TAs are not seeking to penalize those with genuine marking concerns. Requests are reviewed after the one-week deadline, not immediately. We will not consider any remark requests after the deadline.

16 Academic Integrity

Please do not create a horrible situation for yourself, your classmates, our TAs, and myself. Even if you are suffering stress, under extreme pressure, far behind, facing failure, and/or lacking self-confidence, cheating is not worth it. Infractions can take many, many agonizing months to resolve and sanctions can be severe. We must all work together supporting the integrity of our course and U of T. Read this link and sub-links <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>.

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>).

17 Absences and Accomodations

Everyone must officially declare all absences affecting any work in our course (at <https://help.acorn.utoronto.ca/blog/uFAQs/declare-an-absence/>).

If you require accommodation, remember to register with both Accessibility Services (at <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>) **and** Accommodated Testing Services (ATS) (at <https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/>).

Everyone can benefit from U of T's support services, including the Academic Success Centre. In addition, if you find yourself in a particularly challenging situation, you will need to work with your College Registrar. They can provide comprehensive guidance and, when appropriate, contact your professors for you while maintaining your privacy. This requires working closely with your College Registrar, and not merely having them restate your requests to your professors. Remember, **for significant challenges, which last more than a week, work with your College Registrar immediately**. Also, please note that there are limits to the situations that we can accommodate: in some cases the only option is to drop the course.