

# ECO369H1 Health Economics

## Course Syllabus

Fall 2022

## 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 highly debated topics regarding healthcare financing and provision. 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 1071

Wednesday: 3:00 - 5:00 pm in SS 1071

**Course Email:** [eco369.ugartebravo@utoronto.ca](mailto: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 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](mailto: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.

Your final grade will be calculated using whichever weighting scheme gives you a higher grade. If you perform better on the midterm than the final, your midterm will be weighted 30% and your final will be weighted

Table 1: Grading Scheme

Weight	.	Assessment	Description	Dates
15%	15%	Assignment 1	Short essay	Oct 12
30%	20%	Midterm	In-person written exam	Nov 2
15%	15%	Assignment 2	Short essay	Nov 23
40%	50%	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: actually timing may be plus/minus days or weeks.

Please see the course calendar on Quercus for dates

40%. If you perform better on the final than the midterm, your midterm will be weighted 20% and your final will be weighted 50%.

This is deliberately designed to give you the possibility to recover from a low grade on the midterm by demonstrating growth in your knowledge on the final. Alternatively, if you have a bad day on the midterm or the final for any reason, that exam will be automatically down-weighted.

## 5 Alternate Weights (for any forced shifts online)

If the midterm 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 either the midterm or the final take place online, the following weighting scheme will apply:
  - Assignment 1 and Assignment 2 will each be worth 20%.
  - The Midterm Exam will be worth 25%.
  - The Final Exam will be worth 35%.

## 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**, starting September 13. Lectures 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 Assignments

This course has two short writing assignments: **Assignment 1** and **Assignment 2**, 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. These short assignments provide 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 Centres (<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 Midterm and Final Exam

The midterm 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 midterm 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 (Assignment 1 or Assignment 2) 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.

In Assignment 1 and Assignment 2, 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 Missed Midterm Exam Accomodation

If you miss the midterm exam for any reason, you must officially declare your absence using the ACORN Absence Declaration site and complete the Missed Midterm Exam MS form available on the Quercus Additional Links Page. A cumulative make-up exam will be held at the end of the term, which will cover all weeks of material taught at that point, not just those that were covered on the original midterm. The flexible weighting scheme will not apply to the make-up exam.

If the make-up and final are written in-person, the make-up exam will be weighted 30% and the final exam will be worth 40%.

If the make-up or the final exam cannot be written in person due to changes in university policy, the following weighting scheme will apply:

- Assignment 1 and Assignment 2 will each be worth 20%.
- The Make-up Exam will be worth 25%.
- The Final Exam will be worth 35%.

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.

## 15 Remark Request

If you believe there is an error in the grading of your Assignment 1, Assignment 2 or Midterm Exam, 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 TWO WEEKS 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 two-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 TA, 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 Accommodations

**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.