

ECO369H1 Health Economics

Course Syllabus

Fall 2024

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

Scheduled course times:

Tuesdays: LEC0101 3:00 - 5:00 pm, LEC0201 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Friday: BOTH SECTIONS 3:00 - 5:00 pm

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. Do not contact the professor or TA at their personal email addresses.

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	Oct 4
20%	Test 2	In-person written exam	Nov 15
5%	Seminar Participation	Participation in seminars	Sep 13, Sep 20, Sep 27, Oct 11, Oct 25
15	Group Structured Debate	See Section 10	Nov 26, Nov 29
40%	Final Exam	In-person written exam	Final Exam Period

Note:

Dates are estimates

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 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.

6 Readings

Our course includes significant readings from the required textbook as well as important supplements, often academic peer-reviewed journal articles, 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 and seminars.

7 Lectures

Lectures will take place in-person on **Tuesdays**, at the the ACORN scheduled class times and locations. 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 your 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.

8 Seminars

Seminars will take place on some **Fridays**; please see the Course Calendar on Quercus for seminar dates. **Do not schedule conflicts during the two-hour Friday 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, the private sector or public sector. 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. As noted in the course grade weighting scheme, attendance and participation in all of the seminars makes up 5% of your final grade.

9 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.

10 Group Structured Debates

Students will form small groups and each group will be assigned a topic and a position (in favor or against). Each group will face an opposing group (the group assigned the opposing position for the same topic) in a brief structured debate. This assessment will require group members to work as a team to develop substantiated and articulate arguments on highly debated health economic policy topics. **Students must submit a debate preparation summary in advance of their debate (due 9am Monday November 25, 2024).** The debate preparation summary must include the agreements and rebuttals the group anticipates to make, including links to their sources. **The debate presentations will take place in person and during our ACORN scheduled class times on November 26 and November 29,** marks will be deducted and **accommodations will NOT be made if you are unable to attend your groups debate.** The date, format, topic and position of your groups debate presentation will be announced on Quercus in advance.

11 Term Tests and Final Exam

The term tests will be held during the Friday ACORN scheduled class time (3pm - 5pm). **Do not schedule any conflicts during the two-hour Friday ACORN time slot.** The Final exam will be held during the fall 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, seminars, 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.

12 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>.

13 University Accommodations

If you require accommodation, remember to register with both Accessibility Services (at <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/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 Center. 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.

14 Missed Work Accommodations

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**. To receive the accommodations described in the following subsections, you must officially declare your absence using the ACORN Absence Declaration site (<https://registrar.utoronto.ca/policies-and-guidelines/absence-declaration/>). **Note, the Absence Declaration form can only be used once per academic term (e.g., once per the fall term, not per course) and up to seven consecutive days.** We do NOT wish to see any document completed by a doctor or other professional.

14.1 Accommodation for ONE Missed Term Test

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. 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. Note that the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool cannot be used to seek academic consideration for any matter that requires a petition such as missing a final exam or final assessment.

15 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.

16 Remark Requests

If you believe there is an error in the grading of your 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.