Health Economics

Course prefix: ECON

Course number: 4510

Section: MPT

CRN: 88919

Instructor First Name: Mayra

Instructor Last Name: Pineda-Torres

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

This course surveys theoretical and empirical evidence on current health and healthcare issues in the United States. The course presents individual-level models of health behaviors and the demand for health and medical insurance. Students analyze the economic behaviors of physicians, hospitals, and insurance companies, as well as the government's possible role in encouraging the equitable and efficient performance of health markets. The course emphasizes current debates involving individual health decisions, healthcare reform, and the diffusion of new medical technologies.

Course learning outcomes:

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how economists model consumer and supplier behavior in healthcare markets and the role of government policy on competition, innovation, and the quality and quantity of healthcare services.
- Understand the scope and limitations of health economic models to explain real events.
- Develop the intuition to articulate the concepts covered in class and relate them to real-world situations.
- Analyze current and past events through the lens of Health Economics.

Required course materials:

Required Textbook: *Health Economics*, by Jay Bhattacharya, Timothy Hyde, and Peter Tu (2013), Bloomsbury. (BHT, from now on)

- The textbook is already available to purchase in Barnes & Noble at Georgia Tech.

- A printed copy is available in the library, and another copy can be requested via Interlibrary Loan.

Optional Textbooks:

- *Health Care Reform: What It Is, Why It's Necessary, How It Works*, Jonathan Gruber, 2012.
- *Random Acts of Medicine. The hidden forces that sway doctors, impact patients, and shape our health*, Anupam B. Jena and Christopher Worsham, 2023.

Grading policy:

We will follow a standard grading scale for this course.

- A: 90%-100%
- B: 80%-89.99%
- C: 70%-79.99%
- D: 60%-69.99%
- F: < 60%

Your grade for this course will comprise five elements:

- Problem sets: 15%
- Exams: 60%
- Policy write-up: 10%
- In-class quizzes: 10%
- Healthcare systems presentation: 5%

Attendance policy:

Class attendance: Although class attendance is not one of the grading elements, I will take class attendance for extra credit. Those students with at least 90% class attendance will receive 2 extra percentage points in their final grade. For example, if your final grade is 88, which is equivalent to a B, but you attended at least 90% of the classes, your final grade will be 90, which is equivalent to an A.

Note: If you miss a class due to a GT-approved excused absence, I will consider this class as if you had attended it to calculate your attended number of classes.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's

academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

ECON 4510 will direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course will enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities, and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion