

**The University of Maine
School of Economics**

**ECO 442 – Health Economics
Spring 2021**

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Course Description

In this course, we will survey major topics in health economics including: the economic determinants of health; the market for health care and insurance; the role of government. We will focus on the health system in the United States with comparisons to other countries, as well as health system reform. As a special topic, we will consider the economics of risky health behaviors.

This course satisfies the General Education requirement in Social Contexts and Institutions. It is worth three credit hours.

Prerequisite: C- or better in ECO 120 or permission

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Use economic models to analyze how individuals, physicians, insurance providers and governments make decisions about health, accounting for the interactions between these entities;
- Critically evaluate how such decision-making is affected by health and social policy;
- Describe health and social policy in the United States, as well as advantages and limitations compared to other countries;
- Use economic data to characterize a health-related issue and policy implications;
- Work in a collaborative academic setting (e.g. engage with peers, give and receive feedback).

Course Structure

This course will be delivered online from Monday, January 25 to Sunday, April 25. It is asynchronous, except for one synchronous Zoom activity on Wednesday, March 31 from 7:00 to 8:15pm Eastern. Please arrange to be available on this day and time.

Every Monday, I will post course materials and updates on the Learning Management System (LMS) (i.e. Brightspace). Please refer to the course outline for a list of modules and deadlines in each week.

Liam and I will be available on Zoom by appointment. You may access the Zoom link on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace). The passcode is 'Health'. You are also encouraged to email Liam or I with questions. We expect you to be professional and concise; long, technical questions should be addressed by appointment. We will respond within two days through the week, and three days on weekends and holidays. Please send all correspondence using your 'maine.edu' email; we will not respond to 'instant messages' on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace).

Materials

In this course, we will use the LMS (i.e. Brightspace), Kaltura, Zoom and 'maine.edu' email. You are expected to be familiar with these platforms. Liam and I will not provide technical support. For assistance, please visit <https://www.maine.edu/information-technology/support/> or <https://online.umaine.edu/tech-support/>.

Please monitor the LMS (i.e. Brightspace) and your 'maine.edu' email for course materials and updates.

There is no required textbook, however we will draw upon the following:

Folland, S., Goodman, A.C. and Stano, M. (2017). *The Economics of Health and Health Care* (8th edition). Routledge.

Grading

Your overall grade will be determined as follows:

Introductory Video	5 percent
Term Project	25 Percent
Take-Home Exams	40 Percent
Comparative Health Systems and Reform – Presentation and Zoom Activity	15 Percent
Participation	15 Percent

There will be no opportunities for extra credit. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Your overall grade will be assigned as follows:

A (93 to 100 percent); A- (90 to 92.9 percent); B+ (87 to 89.9 percent); B (82 to 86.9 percent); B- (80 to 81.9 percent); C+ (77 to 79.9 percent); C (72 to 76.9 percent); C- (70 to 71.9 percent); D+ (67 to 69.9 percent); D (62 to 66.9 percent); D- (60 to 61.9 percent); F (less than 60 percent).

Introductory Video

Introductory Video due Sunday, January 31 by 11:59pm Eastern

5 percent

Create an introductory video using Kaltura and upload it to the *Introduction to Peers* discussion board on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace). The purpose of this video is to help you get acquainted with your peers, and to connect with potential partners for the term project. You may include your name, program of study, why you are taking this course and/or anything else you would like to share, recognizing that everyone enrolled in this course will be able to watch your video. Please limit your video to one minute.

The introductory video will be graded on an individual basis as follows:

- 0.0 – Did not create an introductory video on time
- 2.5 – Created an introductory video on time, with some effort
- 5.0 – Created an introductory video on time, with good effort

I will accept the introductory video up to one week after the deadline without penalty. This policy is in place because I realize that unforeseeable things may prevent you from completing course requirements on time. However, I recommend that you try to meet the deadline out of consideration for other students in the course. One week after the deadline, the *Introduction to Peers* discussion board will close and late submissions will no longer be accepted.

You should review the videos of your peers and use the discussion board to connect with potential partners for the term project. Please notify me once you have formed a team or if you have difficulty with this.

Term Project

The term project is divided into four parts and must be completed with a partner. You can connect with potential partners on the *Introduction to Peers* discussion board. You will have the same partner throughout the term project. I reserve the right to assign different grades within a team in case of unequal contributions. Please notify me once you have formed a team or if you have difficulty with this. More information about the term project is available on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace).

Term Project Part 1 due Sunday, February 14 by 11:59pm Eastern

5 Percent

Term Project Part 2 due Sunday, February 28 by 11:59pm Eastern

5 Percent

Term Project Part 3

5 Percent

Draft of Policy Brief due Sunday, March 21 by 11:59pm Eastern

Peer Review Exercise due Sunday, April 4 by 11:59pm Eastern

Term Project Part 4 due Sunday, April 25 by 11:59pm Eastern

10 Percent

I will accept each part of the term project up to one week after the applicable deadline without penalty. This policy is in place because I realize that unforeseeable things may prevent you from completing course requirements on time. However, I recommend that you try to meet each deadline

out of consideration for your partner, and because each part of the term project contributes to the next. One week after each deadline, the applicable part of the term project will close and late submissions will no longer be accepted.

Take-Home Exams

There will be two take-home exams, which must be completed on an individual basis. More information will be provided on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace) at least one week prior to each deadline. There is no final exam in this course.

Take-Home Exam 1 due Sunday, March 14 by 11:59pm Eastern	20 Percent
Take-Home Exam 2 due Sunday, April 18 by 11:59pm Eastern	20 Percent

I will accept exams up to one week after the deadline without penalty. After one week, I will post the solutions on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace) and late submissions will no longer be accepted. This policy is in place because I realize that unforeseeable things may prevent you from completing course requirements on time.

Comparative Health Systems and Reform – Presentation and Zoom Activity

Presentation due Sunday, March 28 by 11:59pm Eastern	10 Percent
Zoom Activity on Wednesday, March 31 from 7:00 to 8:15pm Eastern	5 Percent

As part of the module on Comparative Health Systems and Reform, you will create a presentation using Kaltura and upload it to the LMS (i.e. Brightspace). This must be completed on an individual basis. More information about the presentation will be provided at least one week prior to the deadline.

Your presentations will form the basis of a synchronous Zoom activity on Wednesday, March 31 from 7:00 to 8:15pm Eastern. Please arrange to be available on this day and time. You should also allocate one hour to prepare for the Zoom activity between Monday, March 29 and Wednesday, March 31 (i.e. you will have to review the presentations of your peers). More information will be provided closer to the activity. There are no partial marks for the Zoom activity. You will earn five percent for participating or zero for not. You may access the Zoom link on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace). The passcode is ‘Health’.

I will accept presentations up to one week after the deadline without penalty. After one week, late submissions will no longer be accepted. This policy is in place because I realize that unforeseeable things may prevent you from completing course requirements on time. However, I recommend that you try to meet the deadline. If not, you will be unable to participate in the synchronous Zoom activity, which is based on the presentations.

If you miss the Zoom activity, a make-up assignment may be completed in extreme circumstances with the appropriate documentation. Please contact me immediately. The make-up assignment must be completed by Sunday, April 11 at 11:59 pm Eastern. Late submissions will not be accepted. The make-up assignment will be graded, possibly resulting in less than the five percent that can be earned by participating in the Zoom activity.

Participation

Participation is worth 15 percent of your overall grade. Specifically, you will earn up to five percent in each of these three areas:

1. You are expected to be familiar with the LMS (i.e. Brightspace), Kaltura, Zoom and 'maine.edu' email. Familiarity with these platforms, which will be used to foster participation, must be demonstrated throughout the course.

0.0 – Has poor familiarity with course platforms

2.5 – Has some familiarity with course platforms

5.0 – Has good familiarity with course platforms

2. There will be questions embedded in some of the instructional videos. You must complete the questions on an individual basis during the week in which the module is to be completed. I will accept late submissions for up to one week without penalty, after which late submissions will no longer be accepted.

0.0 – Did not complete questions on time

2.5 – Completed questions on time, with some effort

5.0 – Completed questions on time, with good effort

3. Some modules include discussion boards. You must contribute to the discussion boards on an individual basis during the week in which the module is to be completed. I will accept late submissions for up to one week without penalty, after which late submissions will no longer be accepted.

0.0 – Did not contribute to discussion boards on time

2.5 – Contributed to discussion boards on time, with some effort

5.0 – Contributed to discussion boards on time, with good effort

Course Outline

Any updates to the course outline will be posted on the LMS (i.e. Brightspace).

Week	To Be Completed
Monday, January 25 to Sunday, January 31	Module 0 – Introductions Module 1 – Introduction to Health Economics <i>* Introductory Video due Sunday, January 31 by 11:59pm Eastern</i>
Monday, February 1 to Sunday, February 7	Module 2A – Production of and Demand for Health
Monday, February 8 to Sunday, February 14	Module 2B – Production of and Demand for Health <i>* Term Project Part 1 due Sunday, February 14 by 11:59pm Eastern</i>
Monday, February 15 to Sunday, February 21	Module 3A – Health Insurance and Consumer Behavior
Monday, February 22 to Sunday, February 28	Module 3B – Health Insurance and Consumer Behavior <i>* Term Project Part 2 due Sunday, February 28 by 11:59pm Eastern</i>
Monday, March 1 to Sunday, March 7	Module 4 – Physician Behavior and Health Care Labor Markets

Week	To Be Completed
Monday, March 8 to Sunday, March 14	* Take-Home Exam 1 due Sunday, March 14 by 11:59pm Eastern
Monday, March 15 to Sunday, March 21	Module 5 – Efficiency, Equity and Need * Term Project Part 3 – Draft of Policy Brief due Sunday, March 21 by 11:59pm Eastern
Monday, March 22 to Sunday, March 28	Module 6 – Comparative Health Systems and Reform * Comparative Health System and Reform – Presentation due Sunday, March 28 by 11:59pm Eastern
Monday, March 29 to Sunday, April 4	* Comparative Health Systems and Reform – Zoom Activity on Wednesday, March 31 from 7:00 to 8:15pm Eastern * Term Project Part 3 – Peer Review Exercise due Sunday, April 4 by 11:59pm Eastern
Monday, April 5 to Sunday, April 11	Module 7 – Special Topic: The Economics of Risky Health Behaviors
Monday, April 12 to Sunday, April 18	* Take-Home Exam 2 due Sunday, April 18 by 11:59pm Eastern
Monday, April 19 to Sunday, April 25	* Term Project Part 4 due Sunday, April 25 by 11:59pm Eastern

Required Syllabus Statements

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University.

Students Accessibility Services

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Services, 121 East Annex, 581.2319, as early as possible in the term. Students who have already been approved for accommodations by SAS and have a current accommodation letter should meet with me privately as soon as possible.

Course Schedule Disclaimer (Disruption Clause)

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities (due to COVID-19 or other long-term disruptions), the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

Observance of Religious Holidays/Events

The University of Maine recognizes that when students are observing significant religious holidays, some may be unable to attend classes or labs, study, take tests, or work on other assignments. If they provide adequate notice (at least one week and longer if at all possible), these students are allowed to make up course requirements as long as this effort does not create an unreasonable burden upon the instructor, department or University. At the discretion of the instructor, such coursework could be due before or after the examination or assignment. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to a student's grade for the examination, study, or course requirement on the day of religious observance. The student shall not be marked absent from the class due to observing a significant religious holiday. In the case of an internship or clinical, students should refer to the applicable policy in place by the employer or site.

Sexual Discrimination Reporting

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any

form of gender discrimination involving members of the campus, your teacher is required to report this information to Title IX Student Services or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For confidential resources on campus: Counseling Center: 207-581-1392 or Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000.

For confidential resources off campus: Rape Response Services: 1-800-871-7741 or Partners for Peace: 1-800-863-9909.

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For support services on campus: Title IX Student Services: 207-581-1406, Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409, University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040 or 911. Or see the OSAVP website for a complete list of services.

COVID-19 Syllabus Statements

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The virus is transmitted person-to-person through respiratory droplets that are expelled when breathing, talking, eating, coughing, or sneezing. Additionally, the virus is stable on surfaces and can be transmitted when someone touches a contaminated surface and transfers the virus to their nose or mouth. When someone becomes infected with COVID-19 they may either have no symptoms or symptoms that range from mild to severe and can even be fatal. During this global pandemic, it is imperative that all students, faculty, and staff abide by the safety protocols and guidelines set forth by the University to ensure the safety of our campus. All students are encouraged to make the Black Bear Cares Pact to protect the health of themselves, the health of others, and the College of Our Hearts Always.

Black Bears Care Pact

<https://umaine.edu/return/black-bears-care/>

Symptom Checking

The symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe, and even people with mild symptoms may transmit the virus to others. Students are encouraged to use the symptom checking app each day before attending class or moving about campus and follow the recommendation prompted within the app. Students should monitor for the following symptoms daily: fever (temperature >100.4F/38.0C) or chills, new cough, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath/difficult breathing, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting, or the onset of new, otherwise unexplained symptoms such as headache, muscle or body aches, fatigue, or congestion/runny nose.

Physical Distancing

Students need to make every effort to maintain physical distancing (6 feet or more) indoors and outdoors including within classrooms. The University classrooms and physical spaces have been arranged to maximize physical distancing. Follow the traffic patterns outlined in each building and outdoor space to avoid crowding. If students are in an academic setting (i.e. clinical or lab class) that requires them to reduce physical distancing, they should follow the instructor's guidelines.

Face Coverings

Students must wear appropriate face coverings in the classroom. Face coverings must be worn in indoor and outdoor spaces on campus unless people are alone in a room with a door closed or when they are properly physically distanced and do not expect someone to approach them. When face coverings are removed people are placing themselves and those surrounding them at increased risk for COVID-19.

Eating and Drinking in Classrooms

Students may not eat or drink in the classrooms and are encouraged to take their food or drink into areas designated for these purposes where they can maintain 6 feet physical distance from others.

Hand Hygiene

Proper hand hygiene is an effective measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Students should wash their hands often with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, especially after using the bathroom, before eating or drinking, and before and after going to class or university spaces such as the recreation center, library, or dining halls.

Contingency Plans

Classes will be held in various formats to offer flexibility, compassion, and empathy during these unprecedented times. Under certain circumstances, students or instructors may need to miss classes or in-person classes may be disrupted. Students are expected to notify their instructor if they are unable to attend an in-person or online class but will not be penalized for missing class due to illness or the need to care for a family member affected by COVID-19. If a disruption occurs, your instructor will provide communication and contingency plans.

What to Do if You Have or Suspect You Have COVID-19

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been possibly exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should stay home, not interact with others, and contact your health care provider immediately to be tested for COVID-19. You may not attend in-person classes and should suspend interactions with others until you are tested. Prior to receiving test results you should quarantine in your living area according to the Maine CDC guidelines below. Please follow the guidance of your health care professional regarding testing, quarantine, and isolation during the testing process and potential illness period.

What to Do if Someone You Know Has or May Have COVID-19

If someone you know or that you have had close contact with (defined by the ME CDC as 15 mins or more within 6 feet or less) has tested positive for COVID-19, you should stay home and quarantine according to the guidance of the ME CDC, contact your health care provider, and continue to monitor for symptoms. You may be required to quarantine and/or be tested for COVID-19 under these circumstances. You may also have been exposed to COVID-19 by someone you do not know, and it is possible that you could be contacted through contact tracing to determine if you were exposed. Everyone should respond to these confidential questions to ensure the safety of themselves and those around them.

Maine CDC Guidelines

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/general-information.shtml>

If You Have Questions or Would Like Additional Information Related to the University of Maine COVID-19-Specific Policies or Procedures Please Use the Following Sources

University Webpages: umaine.edu/return and [together.maine.edu](http://umaine.edu/together)

COVID-19 Information line: 207.581.2681

Emergency Operations Center Email Contact: umaine.alerts@maine.edu