

## **ECON 3190 – Health Economics IVC**

**Instructor:** Kelsey Carlston

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Department:** Economics

**Credit Hours:** 3

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**Semester:** Summer 2021

**Office:** Can meet via phone or Zoom

**Dates:** June 29 to August 4

**Office Hours:** Schedule as needed

**Meeting Time:** Tu/Th 9:10am to 12:05pm

### **Course Summary**

Healthcare is a very important sector of our economy. Healthcare accounts for almost one-fifth of the GDP, and many people have their lives upturned by medical expenditures. The US has a different healthcare system than anywhere in the world. The healthcare market also has many attributes that distinguish it from other markets and mean that normal economic theory does not apply.

The goal of this class is to explore a number of facets of the healthcare system, problems with the current health system, and ideas of how to fix it. We will use lecture, discussions, documentaries, popular books, etc. to get as full a view as possible of how economists view healthcare and how problem-solving is done. This course is aimed at anybody interested in healthcare at a college level, not just economics students.

### **Objectives:**

By the end of this course, we will have talked about the following questions in depth and from a variety of perspectives. One thing you will notice – there are no easy or “correct” answers!

What are the basic theories of economic markets? What makes the healthcare market different? What makes it the same?

How does health insurance work? Why do people buy it?

How do payment structures affect the actions of patients/physicians/hospitals/etc.?

Healthcare in the US is very expensive. Why? What does healthcare in other countries look like?

What is the ACA? Medicare? Medicaid? And what do ideas that people talk about, like “Medicare for all” or “single-payer system” mean?

How does rhetoric from the media and politicians relate to economics and healthcare? (Freedom, human rights, etc.)

What is the difference between health and healthcare? What role does healthcare play in health? What else plays into health?

If we have time, we will also cover: Pharmaceuticals, Behavioral Economics, Bias in medicine, Cost benefit analysis

## **Required Materials**

There is no textbook associated with this course. Course readings will come from a variety of sources including, but not limited to: peer-reviewed health economics and health policy journals, medical journals, reports, and newspaper articles. All of these readings will be posted on Canvas.

There is one full-length documentary which you will be required to purchase – it is available on most streaming platforms for \$4 or less. You will also read one book made for popular audiences, which should be less than \$20 and available in an online format or through your favorite book store.

## **Teaching and Learning Methods**

I believe the best way to learn is with a variety of tools and levels of learning. You will be given papers, videos, lectures, assignments, and discussions which allow you to explore topics thoughtfully. As this is a summer course administered over a short amount of time, you will have a large amount of demand put on your time and be expected to learn material quickly.

I want success for all of my students, and if you are struggling with the content, the course structure, or things outside of the course which are affecting your ability to participate, contact me promptly so I can help. One of my favorite parts about teaching is one-on-one interaction, so don't be afraid to reach out.

## **Canvas Time Zone Information**

To ensure you are viewing due dates and times correctly, as well as events in the calendar, set your student Canvas time zone to your current location by following this guide ([Links to an external site.](#)).

If you do not change your time zone, all due dates and times listed in Canvas default to Mountain Time.

Content written by instructors, such as office hours written in the syllabus, are in Mountain Time, unless stated otherwise.

## **ONLINE COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

While all of the academic expectations of this online course are equivalent to those in the traditional course section, there are a number of additional expectations that students should be aware of when participating in the course online.

### **Instructor Expectations**

Your course instructor is an expert in the topics you will learn about this semester. Your instructor is your mentor and facilitator of the classroom experience and is committed to the following expectations for this course:

- The instructor will design the course to include lectures, readings materials, and assignments that will challenge students and will provide them with opportunities to learn and practice course content.
- Your instructor will be engaged through class time, feedback on assignments, email, announcements, etc.

- The instructor will respond to emails in a timely fashion. “Timely” in this instance means within 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays. The preferred method of communication is before or after class time over Zoom, but the instructor understands that sometimes things need to be addressed between class periods.
- The instructor will be available for individual consultation via virtual meetings or email. Students will not be required to come to campus in order to meet with the instructor. The instructor will meet in person with students if that is their preference, but only if the student is vaccinated against COVID-19.
- The instructor will provide feedback on the assignments in a timely manner.
- The instructor will follow all official University of Utah policies regarding conduct in the classroom, incompletes, and accommodations. Accommodations will be considered on an individual basis and only with required documentation.

### **Student Expectations**

- Students may be expected to work with classmates; however, students are not expected to interact with their classmates in person. A good alternative to meeting in person would be online video conferencing, which allows students to find a time to meet that works best for their schedule.
- **Students will regularly check course announcements.** The Announcements area is the instructor’s official means of communication when distributing information to the entire class.
- Students will update their Canvas settings to ensure they receive timely notifications from the course.
- If students have any questions, are struggling with course materials, or need further assistance from their instructor, they will take the initiative to contact their instructor via the Inbox feature in Canvas or via email.
- Email isn’t perfect; sometimes, messages sent to instructors are lost before they are read. If you do not hear back from your instructor 3 days after sending a message, please contact your instructor again.
- Students will engage with the course, students, and the instructor in a respectful and professional manner at all times.

### **Netiquette**

Students are expected to follow the core rules of netiquette (<https://coursedesign.colostate.edu/obj/corerulesnet.html>) at all times while participating in the class, interacting with other students, and communicating with the course instructor and teaching assistants. This can be an emotional topic for some people, and every person involved in the class is expected to approach other students with understanding and care.

## **EVALUATION AND GRADING**

### **Semester Grading Scheme**

In-Class Assignments and Discussions 35%

Homework Assignments and Discussions 35%

Book Report/Discussion 15%

Final Exam 15%

In-Class Assignments and Discussions: These activities are use for ensuring you attend class and also keeping you engaged during class. Three hours is a long class period, and these assignments and discussions will allow you to reflect on and apply what you are learning as you learn it. They will not be difficult assignments but may be graded on more than just completion. You will be given time to complete these during the class period, and they will only be available for completion during the class. If you cannot attend a class, contact me BEFORE and we can talk about what the appropriate solution is.

Homework Assignments and Discussions: These activities will be done outside of class. Some of them might be to give you more time for reflection or more practice with a concept, while others could be quizzes to ensure that you read or watch material. There will be a few of these each week.

Book Report: You will pick one of the following books to read. Each of them is good summer reading – read them on the beach or in a canyon and try to enjoy it! Or, listen to it as an Audiobook while you’re doing dishes or driving.

[\*Fast Food Nation\*](#) by Eric Schlosser

[\*Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression - and the Unexpected Solutions\*](#) by Johann Hari

[\*Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End\*](#) by Atul Gawande

You will then be asked to write a book report that provides a summary of the book and how it relates to what we’ve learned in class.

Final Exam: Final exam questions will be posted on Canvas through the quiz feature. The exam will not be proctored. The exam will be open-notes, but you will not be allowed to work with other students. The exam will include some multiple choice questions and a few short answer questions to test your understanding of the material, not just your knowledge of it. The final will be on the last day of class; however, if we get behind we might use the scheduled exam time from the university, Thursday, August 5 3pm to 5pm.

### **University of Utah Grading Scale**

A	100%–93%	A-	92.9%–90%		
B+	89.9%–87%	B	86.9%–83%	B-	82.9%–80%
C+	79.9%–77%	C	76.9–73%	C-	72.9%–70%
D+	69.9%–67%	D	66.9%–63%	D-	62.9%–60%
E	59.9%–0%				

### **COURSE POLICIES**

Technology Issues and Tech Help

Your instructor has invested time before the start of the semester to ensure that the technologies used in this online class will operate smoothly. Nevertheless, technology doesn't always do what we want it to do! As such, this course has the following expectations regarding tech problems:

- Students are required to contact the instructor immediately when they notice broken links or inaccessible files in the course. Links and files are assumed to work, unless students indicate otherwise. Points lost on assignments, due to inaccessible links and files, cannot be made up if students did not notify the instructor of the problem prior to the assignment due date.
- The instructor is committed to fixing broken links and inaccessible files as soon as possible after being notified by the students. In the case that there will be a significant delay before these items can be fixed, the instructor will post an announcement to let the class know about the problem and to describe any alternate files/links or alternate due dates for assignments, if applicable, that students should be aware of.
- Students are responsible for submitting all assignments and activities by their due dates. In the very rare case that technical problems prevent a student from submitting an assignment, students are required to—
  - o Immediately contact their instructor via email or the Canvas Inbox, to let them know about the problem and to submit a copy of their assignment as an attachment (where possible).
  - o Then, immediately contact the Canvas help desk to troubleshoot and resolve the problem.
  - o Submit an email updating the instructor on whether the problem was resolved and of any additional steps the student or instructor needs to take to get the assignment properly submitted to Canvas.
- It is not appropriate to send an email to your instructor informing them about tech problems after an assignment due date.
- Students are expected to read all assignment instructions and to submit work in the required file formats. Work submitted as improper file formats will not be considered to have been handed in on time. The instructor will only grade work submitted using the proper file format.
- It is the student's responsibility to reach out to the appropriate help desk to troubleshoot and resolve tech problems in the course,

24/7 help is available to all students via the Help button in the far-left Canvas menu.

For more detailed information about getting tech help, please review the information on the Tech Help page of the course.

### **Late Assignments**

This class is fast-paced and we do not have the luxury of getting behind. Because of this, I will not allow late submissions (though I am not concerned about times of less than an hour or two). However, if something comes up, let me know ahead of time if you can, and I will try to accommodate you. Decisions to accept late work will be made on a case-by-case basis.

