

Health Economics
ECON 236

Prof. Juan Pablo Atal
602 PCPE
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Fall 2018
TuTh1:30-3:00pm
PCPE 101

TA:

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Economics 236 is an advanced undergraduate course on the economics of health care provision and payment. In this course we will use the tools of microeconomics to analyze the functioning of different pieces of the health care system. We will draw from the sub-disciplines of information economics, industrial organization, labor economics, public economics, and behavioral economics. The primary goal is to use these tools to develop a critical analysis of the functioning of the health care system as well as of the policies aimed at improving it. We will learn about U.S specific institutional details and policies (most notably the Affordable Care Act), and we will compare them to other important international experiences.

Prerequisites: ECON 101, MATH 104 and MATH 114 or 115. Wharton students can satisfy the ECON 101 prerequisite with BEPP 250 HONORS. The regular BEPP 250 course does not count as a substitute for ECON 101.

Grading:

The grade of the course will be based on:

- Three midterms (3, 25% each; closed book)
 - MT1: **February 14**
 - MT2: **March 28**
 - MT3: **April 30**
- Homework (3, 25%), due: **February 7, March 21 and April 18**. Notes:
 1. You will be required to work on the homework in groups
 2. Homework 3 consists on a small research project and an in-class presentation on April 18 or the following lectures.

Additional credit may be given based on class attendance and participation in class

discussions on some marginal cases.

No extra credit assignments will be given.

Office Hours:

- Prof. Atal: Wednesday 4-6pm. 602 PCPE
- Michal: Fridays 10-12pm 500 PCPE

Course Material: Canvas is the official channel I will use to make announcements, post slides, homework, readings, etc. You must check Canvas regularly. Documents (including problem sets, practice exams, exams and their solutions), regardless of whether they are physically distributed during this course or are posted on Canvas site, are only for students enrolled in this course. Any re-posting online (or on any course material sharing website) is prohibited.

Required Textbook: Health Economics, by Jay Battacharya, Timothy Hyde, and Peter Tu (BHT), Palgrave Macmillan, 2013

Other online resources Health Care Triage (Youtube Channel):

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thehealthcatriage>; Health Care Dive:

<http://www.healthcaredive.com/>; Kaiser health news: <http://khn.org/about-us/>

Course Policies

The Department of Economics maintains a common set of policies that apply to all classes. By taking this class you agree to abide by these policies. Please read these policies carefully, which can be found here:

<https://economics.sas.upenn.edu/?q=undergraduate-program/course-information/guidelines/policies>

Attendance Policy: It is mandatory to attend the midterms. Please make sure that you schedule your travels, including job interviews, to avoid the exam dates. I will follow the Department's policies regarding exam attendance. The policy is copied below:

"In cases where attendance at a midterm or a final exam is mandatory, there are only a few valid excuses for missing an exam. They are:

- Three exams scheduled within one calendar day (for final exams ONLY!) This policy of 3 exams does not count for midterm exams given during class time.

- An exam is given outside of the regular class schedule and the timing conflicts with another class in which the student is enrolled.
- Observance of a university-recognized religious holiday.
- UPENN Business that takes you away from campus. Absence from campus on UPENN business includes, for example, athletic events in which you are actively participating. In such cases, you need to make arrangements with your professor ahead of the exam date to take the exam at another time (preferably earlier than the schedule date).
- An illness/health emergency.
- A death in your family.
- Documented disabilities that allow you to take the exam under other circumstances.

Examples of reasons that are not valid for missing an exam are:

- job internships;
- beginning fall or spring break early or returning after a scheduled exam;
- end of semester early flights; take home exams.
- any other reason you would prefer not to be at the university when the exam is scheduled.

Students are responsible for making sure, at the beginning of the term, that they can attend the exams. Registering for a course means that you certify that you will be present for the exam (unless one of the explicitly stated exceptions above arises.)

If you are unexpectedly ill at the time of the exam and unable to reach the instructor ahead of time, then you can give notification of your illness as soon as you are able. Do not take an exam if you are ill and then expect to have an opportunity to retake the exam because you were ill the first time and did poorly.

Students who arrive late to an exam will generally be required to hand in their exam at the same time as other students.”

Make-up exams: There will be no make-up written exams. However, if you have one of the valid excuses listed in the Department’s policy for missing a midterm exam - and appropriately reported in the CAR system – the following exams will be re-weighted accordingly to maintain the 100% total, as follows: If you miss the first midterm, midterm 2 and 3 will be worth 37.5% each. If you miss the second midterm, midterm 3 will be worth 50% of your grade.

A make-up exam for students who miss the last exam will be offered following the Department's rules.

Email policy: You may expect me to respond to emails between 9 and 5 Monday through Friday, and within 48 hours of receiving it. I am happy to use email to respond to fairly simple queries. Please see me in office hours for more involved discussions.

Electronic devices: You may use laptops or tablets in this class to consult online readings or to take notes. Common courtesy dictates that you should not use laptops and cell phones for anything other than the topics of our class. Please place your phone on mute before you come to class. The use of electronic devices during the exams is strictly prohibited.

Re-grading: All re-grade requests for exams must be submitted in writing, with a full explanation of why you think the work was incorrectly graded. The deadline to submit the request will be announced when exams are returned. We will not accept for re-grading any work written in pencil or that appears to have been altered. Except in cases where the grader has added numbers incorrectly, we will only re-grade entire exams. As a consequence, once you submit your work for re-grading, the grade can go either up or down.

Students with disabilities: In compliance with Penn policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except under unusual circumstances, to arrange reasonable accommodations. Students must register with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Academic integrity: It is your responsibility to be familiar with the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for adjudication.