



## **PBHL 852 – HEALTH ECONOMICS I (3 credits)**

Course Syllabus

Fall Quarter 2016

Mondays, 2:00 – 4:50 pm @ Pearlstein 308

### **Instructor**

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#### **Office Hours:**

- By appointment on Fridays (8:45-11:45 am) - make appointments on-line: <https://gpkanter.youcanbook.me>
  - To expedite scheduling, please do not e-mail with appointment requests.
  - If you can't be on campus during office hours, you may schedule a telephone appointment during these office hour times. Just indicate that it is a telephone appointment and the best number to reach you.
  - Note that appointment scheduling closes 24 hours before scheduled office hours (i.e. Thursday 8:45 am).
- After class on Mondays (5-5:30 pm) - no appointment necessary

### **1. Course Description**

PBHL 852 (Health Economics I) is the first course in a 2-course sequence in health economics. This course provides an introduction to the economics of health and health care. Topics covered in this course include: the production of health, the demand for medical care, health care production and costs, determinants of the supply of medical care, payment systems, health insurance, and problems in health insurance markets (adverse selection and moral hazard). Previous college-level coursework in economics is recommended but not required. Students are expected to have facility with high school algebra (including the understanding and graphing of functions).

### **2. Course Purpose**

This course satisfies a requirement of the policy concentration in the Department of Health Management and Policy. It is designed to introduce public health students to economic principles that can be applied to analyzing public health and health care policies.

### 3. Course Learning Objectives and Core Competencies

#### 3.1. Course Learning Objectives

- Identify and describe the features of an economic approach to analyzing social issues in general, and to analyzing health, health care, and health insurance issues in particular
- Describe historical trends in health care expenditures and identify the underlying forces driving these trends
- Describe the factors driving the demand for medical care
- Develop and apply simple economic models of health production, health care production, and health care costs
- Describe the factors driving the supply of medical care
- Develop and apply simple economic models of competitive health care markets
- Describe common forms of provider payment systems and economically analyze the implications of these systems
- Describe the concept of health insurance and two common problems, adverse selection and moral hazard, that can arise in insurance markets
- Use economic principles to analyze the implications of health care reform initiatives

#### 3.2. Core Competencies

- Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing, and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US
- Discuss the policy process for improving the health status of populations
- Apply "systems thinking" for resolving organizational problems
- Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health
- Identify unintended consequences produced by changes made to a public health system
- Analyze the effects of political, social and economic policies on public health systems at the local, state, national and international level

### 4. Textbooks and Software

#### 4.1. Required textbooks and readings

- Henderson, James W. 2015. *Health Economics and Policy, 6th Edition*. Cengage. ISBN 978-1285758497.
- Mankiw, N. Gregory. 2014. *Principles of Microeconomics, 7th Edition*. South-Western. ISBN 978-1285165905.

There will be additional readings that will be made available on-line through Blackboard.

#### 4.2. Optional readings

Students who would like a more advanced treatment of health economics topics discussed in this class are encouraged to consult the following textbook:

- Feldstein, Paul J. 2011. *Health Care Economics, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Cengage. Available at Hagerty Library.

## 5. Evaluation

The course grade will be based on 7 problem sets, 7 quizzes, a midterm exam, a final exam, and class (clicker) or bonus exercises.

Problem Sets #1-#7	21% (3% each)
Quizzes #1-#7	14% (2% each)
Midterm Exam	25% (Part A 15%, Part B 10%)
Final Exam	38% (Part A 20%, Part B 18%)
Class/Bonus Exercises	2%

### 5.1. Problem Sets

There will be 8 problem sets assigned, 7 of which will count towards your course grade (problem set with the lowest score will be automatically dropped). Problem sets will be assigned every week except during exam weeks. They are due at the beginning of each class. You may consult with other students on your problem sets but each student must write up his or her own work.

One problem, not announced in advance, from each problem set will be selected for grading. Solutions to the problem sets will be posted weekly. Students are advised to review the solutions and check their answers for the problems that are not graded. Late problem sets will be accepted and graded but no points will be recorded.

### 5.2. Quizzes

There will be 8 quizzes, 7 of which will count towards your course grade (quiz with the lowest score will be automatically dropped). Quizzes will be given at the end of class every week except during exam weeks. There will be no makeup quizzes.

### 5.3. Midterm Exam

There will be one midterm exam. The midterm exam will consist of two parts. Part A is the in-class portion of the exam. Part A will be conducted during class in the conventional way, with no notes or resources--electronic or otherwise--permitted during the exam. Part B is the take-home portion of the exam. Students are not allowed to consult with other classmates on Part B of the exam but are allowed to refer to class notes, books, and web sources. Part B exams are due at the beginning of class on the day scheduled for the Part A exam (you turn in Part B before taking the in-class Part A exam). Late Part B exams will be accepted and graded, but penalties will be levied for lateness. Penalties for late Part B exams are as follows: (a) within 24 hours: 25% penalty; (b) more than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late: 50% penalty; (c) more than 48 hours late: no points.

### 5.4. Final Exam

The final exam is cumulative. It consists of two parts and follows the same protocol as the midterm exam. Part A is the in-class portion of the final exam. Part A will be conducted during class in the conventional way, with no notes or resources--electronic or otherwise--permitted during the exam. Part B is the take-home portion of the exam. Students are not allowed to consult with other classmates on Part B of the exam but are allowed to refer to class notes, library books, and web sources. Late Part B exams will be accepted and graded, but penalties will be levied for lateness. Penalties for late Part B exams are as follows: (a) within 24 hours:

25% penalty; (b) more than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late: 50% penalty; (c) more than 48 hours late: no points.

Part A of the final exam will be given during final exam week on the day/time scheduled by the Registrar. Part B of the final exam will be due at 12 noon on Friday of Finals Week (December 9).

#### 5.5. Class/Bonus Exercises

On occasion, you will be asked to participate in class exercises or complete surveys. A small number of points will be given for participation in these activities.

#### 5.6. Blind Grading

Every effort will be made to grade problem sets and exams blind, i.e. the instructor/grader will not know the identity of the student submitting the work when the problem sets and exams are being graded. For this reason, please include, with your assignments, a cover sheet or header with the assignment title and *only* your ID number (no names). Please use the following format for your ID number: xxx-xx-xxx.

#### 5.7. Makeup Exams

Makeup exams for this class are highly unusual and granted only under extenuating circumstances with extensive documentation (e.g. hospital discharge notice, obituary notice). In any case, you must notify the instructor within 24 hours of a missed exam.

#### 5.8. Re-grades

Although care is taken in grading, mistakes in grading assignments and exams can on rare occasions occur. If you feel an error was made in grading, please do the following:

- (1) Make a photocopy of your graded assignment, as re-grades will only be examined at the end of the quarter, after the final exam, and you may need the graded assignment to study.
- (2) If you believe an error was made in grading, submit a written explanation of why you believe an error was made--i.e. why your original answer was the correct answer compared to the solution or reference document--and submit a hard copy of your explanation and the graded assignment. These documents should be submitted (in-person or in mailbox) by 5 pm the day *before* the in-class Final Exam, Part A.
- (3) In the past, credit has been given when a computational error was made in assigning points, when the student answer matched the solution but was erroneously misinterpreted as incorrect, or when the student answer presented a reasonable and well-justified alternative to the problem set or exam solution. A request for a re-grade can unfortunately result in a lower score based on your explanation or justification.

*All appeals for re-grades must go through this formal process. No informal (i.e. in-person) appeals will be accepted.*

#### 5.9. Submission of Problem Sets, Quizzes, and Exams

Because of the re-grade appeals process, all problem sets, quizzes, and exams must be typed or written in ink, and submitted as paper documents (in hard copy); a 25% penalty will be levied in the first instance that an assignment includes sections that are not typed or written in ink, and zero credit for an assignment will be given for any subsequent instance. No soft copies (sent by email or uploaded to Blackboard) will be accepted.

### 5.10. Grading Scale

A+	98-100
A	94-97
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73

## 6. Class Policies and Expectations of Student Conduct

### 6.1. Class Attendance

Attendance will not be taken. Nevertheless, it is strongly recommended that you attend class and be well-prepared to engage in class discussions and activities because attendance in class will be crucial in preparing you for the assignments and exams. In addition, there may be in-class activities and assignments that count towards your course grade. If you have to miss class for any reason, you are responsible for reviewing the material covered and for turning assignments in when they are due. If what you need is not available on Blackboard, please request materials and information from a fellow student.

### 6.2. E-mail Guidelines

- Please e-mail me about any typos or errors you see on slides, problem sets, exams, and solutions, and any clarifications you need for assignments.
- Clarifying questions related to assignments or exams should be sent by (12 noon) the Friday before the assignment is due or by (12 noon) the day before the exam is scheduled.
- You *do not* need to e-mail me on issues related to class attendance (e.g. if you are not able to attend) or to confirm appointment scheduling.
- If you have substantive questions about or difficulty with specific topics, these are better addressed in-person (after class or during office hours) rather than e-mail.
- Try not to be offended if you do not receive a response; this is because of the volume of e-mails rather than intended neglect (please remind me of your question in class).

### 6.3. Holidays

Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the quarter of any anticipated (exam) absences because of religious holidays, and we will negotiate reasonable accommodations for those absences.

### 6.4. Civility in Discourse and Courtesy Towards Fellow Classmates

Please respect each person and his/her ideas and questions. Please turn off all cell phones and do not listen to music, play games, web-surf, or read outside materials during class.

### 6.5. Academic Conduct

Students are expected to know, understand, and abide by the academic integrity policy as specified in the Code of Conduct in the Drexel University Official Student Handbook, pp. 110-113: [http://www.drexel.edu/studentaffairs/community\\_standards/studentHandbook/](http://www.drexel.edu/studentaffairs/community_standards/studentHandbook/)

Unless otherwise instructed, all of your work in this course should represent your own completely independent work. Any student found to have committed acts of misconduct (including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, misconduct of research, breach of confidentiality, or illegal or unlawful acts) will be subject to the sanctions and procedures outlined in the Code of Conduct.

#### 6.6. Drexel E-mail

Announcements and other course information will be sent to students via Blackboard to your Drexel e-mail account, so please be sure to check that account regularly.

#### 6.7. Syllabus Changes

Course content and policies described in the syllabus are subject to change, and written notice and dates for when these changes will be put into effect will be provided prior to any change.

### 7. Drexel Academic Policies

#### **Technology Policy**

It is up to the discretion of the instructor to decide the use of technology in the classroom. This is related to the use of hand held devices, laptops and cell phones. The policy will be communicated to the students by the instructor.

#### **Drexel University Policy on Plagiarism**

[http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic\\_dishonesty.asp#plagiarism](http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp#plagiarism)

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. By placing his/her name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Plagiarism covers unpublished as well as published sources. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Quoting another person's actual words, complete sentences or paragraphs, or an entire piece of written work without acknowledgment of the source
- Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in one's own words without acknowledgment of the source
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials that are not clearly common knowledge without acknowledgment of the source
- Copying another student's essay test answers
- Copying, or allowing another student to copy, a computer file that contains another student's assignment, and submitting it, in part or in its entirety, as one's own
- Working together on an assignment, sharing the computer files and programs involved, and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work
- Students are urged to consult with individual faculty members, academic departments, or recognized handbooks in their field if in doubt regarding issues of plagiarism.

#### **Drexel University Policy on Cheating**

[http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic\\_dishonesty.asp#cheating](http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp#cheating)

[http://drexel.edu/studentlife/community\\_standards/overview/](http://drexel.edu/studentlife/community_standards/overview/)

Cheating is an act or an attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper
- Allowing another student to copy from a test paper
- Unauthorized use of course textbook or other materials, such as a notebook to complete a test or other assignment from the faculty member
- Collaborating on a test, quiz, or other project with any other person(s) without authorization
- Using or processing specifically prepared materials during a test such as notes, formula lists, notes written on the students clothing, etc. that are not authorized
- Taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you

### **Disability Statement**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations and services with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards need to present a current accommodation verification letter (AVL) before accommodations can be made. AVL's are issued by the Office of Disability Resources (ODR). For additional information, contact ODR at [www.drexel.edu/odr](http://www.drexel.edu/odr) , 3201 Arch St., Street, Suite 210, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 215.895.1401 (V), or 215.895.2299 (TTY).  
<http://drexel.edu/oed/disabilityResources/overview/>

### **Course Change Policy**

It is the discretion of the faculty member to change aspects of the course during the term. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to articulate how, and when these changes will occur and be communicated to the students.

### **Course Add/Drop Policy**

<http://drexel.edu/provost/policies/course-add-drop/>

### **Additional Questions on Drexel Academic Policies**

If you have additional questions or need further clarification, please refer to the Academic Policies from the Office of the Provost:

<http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/grades.asp>