

**Dr. Christina Marsh Dalton**  
**ECN 240: Economics of Health and Medicine**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2015**

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**Prerequisite:** ECN 150 and an applied statistics course  
**Meeting Room:** Kirby 103  
**Office Address:** 204B Kirby Hall  
**Office Phone:** 336-758-4495  
**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday 4-5pm, or by email appointment

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## **I. Course Description**

This course serves as an introduction to the role of economics in health care and health policy. We will be using the methods of economic analysis to the study of the health care industry. It builds on microeconomic principles of supply and demand and covers topics such as the market for medical care, the market for health insurance, the role of government in health care, and health care reform.

## **II. Course Goals and Objectives**

The course aims to

1. Enhance your understanding of the economic principles that drive the health care system, including:
  - The role of health in an individual's economic decision-making
  - Supply and demand in health care and insurance
  - Sources of market failures and the role of government.
2. Introduce you to the use of economic analysis for evaluating reforms and proposals in health-care policy making.
3. Improve your research and presentation skills in general.

## **III. Course Text and Readings**

*Health Economics : Theory, Insights, and Industry Studies, 6th Edition* Santerre/Neun is the required text for the course. In addition, I will post readings at the course website.

## **IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations**

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading and class time will be spent as a combination of lecture and discussion. The goal of the course to learn health economics and health policy, but will also emphasize how to conduct research, work in teams, and present research. These are all important skills for your career development.

I strongly encourage you to read newspapers and magazines (such as *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*) to keep abreast of health-related news. There are a lot of changes and debates taking place right now in the U.S., and we can discuss any questions you have in class. Finally, *Health Affairs*, the policy journal of the health system, hosts a communal blog at <http://www.healthaffairs.org/blog/>.

## VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

Week	Day	Dates	Topic	Chapter	Notes
1	W	26-Aug	Overview & Economic Perspective	Ch. 1, Ch. 2	
1	F	28-Aug	Health in a Broader Context		Additional readings will be posted for in-class discussion.
2	M	31-Aug	Value of Health, Life		Read "Your Money or Your Life" Chpt 1 posted on the course website. There will be an in-class discussion.
2	W	2-Sep	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Ch. 3	Read "Your Money or Your Life" Chpt 2 posted on the course website. There will be an in-class discussion.
2	F	4-Sep	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Ch. 3	
3	M	7-Sep	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Ch. 3	
3	W	9-Sep	Technological Change		Read "Technological Change" posted on the course website. There will be an in-class discussion.
3	F	11-Sep	Demand For Medical Care	Ch. 5	
4	M	14-Sep	Demand For Medical Care	Ch. 5	
4	W	16-Sep	Demand for Health Insurance	Ch. 6	Groups chosen for project.
4	F	18-Sep	Demand for Health Insurance	Ch. 6	
5	M	21-Sep	Demand for Health Insurance	Ch. 6	
5	W	23-Sep	Demand for Health Insurance	Ch. 6	
5	F	25-Sep	Health Insurance Markets	Ch. 11	
6	M	28-Sep	<b>Midterm I</b>		
6	W	30-Sep	Health Insurance Markets	Ch. 11	
6	F	2-Oct	Health Insurance Markets	Ch. 11	
7	M	5-Oct	Health Insurance Markets	Ch. 11	
7	W	7-Oct	Market Models for Medical Care	Ch. 8	
7	F	9-Oct		Ch. 8	Group project paragraph due

<b>8</b>	M	12-Oct	Market Models for Medical Care	Ch. 8	
<b>8</b>	W	14-Oct	Economics of Physicians	Ch. 12	
<b>8</b>	F	16-Oct	<b>Fall Break</b>		
<b>9</b>	M	19-Oct	Economics of Physicians	Ch. 12	
<b>9</b>	W	21-Oct	Economics of Physicians	Ch. 12	
<b>9</b>	F	23-Oct	Economics of Hospitals	Ch. 13	
<b>10</b>	M	26-Oct	Economics of Hospitals	Ch. 13	
<b>10</b>	W	28-Oct	Economics of Hospitals	Ch. 13	
<b>10</b>	F	30-Oct	The Case for Government Intervention	Ch.9	
<b>11</b>	M	2-Nov	<b>Midterm II</b>		
<b>11</b>	W	4-Nov	The Case for Government Intervention	Ch.9	
<b>11</b>	F	6-Nov	The Case for Government Intervention	Ch.9	Group project drafts this week.
<b>12</b>	M	9-Nov	Government as Health Insurer	Ch. 10	Group project drafts this week.
<b>12</b>	W	11-Nov	Government as Health Insurer	Ch. 10	
<b>12</b>	F	13-Nov	Presentations		
<b>13</b>	M	16-Nov	Presentations		
<b>13</b>	W	18-Nov	Presentations		
<b>13</b>	F	20-Nov	Presentations		
<b>14</b>	M	23-Nov	Presentations		
<b>14</b>	W	25-Nov	<b>Thanksgiving</b>		
<b>14</b>	F	27-Nov	<b>Thanksgiving</b>		
<b>15</b>	M	30-Nov	Global Health Care Systems	Ch. 4	
<b>15</b>	W	2-Dec	Global Health Care Systems	Ch. 4	Additional readings will be posted.
<b>15</b>	F	4-Dec	Global Health Care Competition		In-class team competition.

The final exam is December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

## VI. Electronic Device Policy

You are expected to be present and focused during lecture. Empirically, this happens with the absence of electronic devices. Your choice, but electronic devices make you a cold call target.

## VII. Evaluation and Grading

You will be evaluated on both individual and group activity as detailed below:

2 Midterms:	40% (20 % each)
Final:	25%
Group Draft Presentation:	5%
Group Final Presentation:	20%
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>100%</u>

Midterms: The midterms will include the material covered in class and assigned as reading (whether discussed in class or not) up to *one class period previous* to the exam. If you have a letter registered with the Learning Assistance Center & Disability Services, you must inform the instructor within two weeks of the exam in order to schedule accommodation.

Final: Final will be *cumulative* and will include the material covered in class and assigned as reading (whether discussed in class or not). The final will also cover all the in-class Group Presentations.

Group Project: You will complete a group project as a part of a team (3-5 individuals). The goal of the group project is to give you an opportunity to use the tools and concepts learned in class to evaluate recent health care reform topics.

The first outline of your project is due after Midterm I. This is an opportunity for me to provide as much feedback as possible before your draft presentation. The more complete, the better position you will be in for the draft grade. This outline is mandatory and is a component of the final project grade. Failure to turn in this outline on time will result in a zero for that part of the project.

At the end of the project, you will be asked to peer review your team members. 25% of your group project grade will depend on your team members' peer review.

The outcome of the group project will be a full-class presentation. There is a draft presentation approximately one week before the in-class presentation. I reserve the right to cancel your final presentation if your group does not show up for the draft presentation or if the presentation is sufficiently underprepared that it would waste your colleagues' time. This would result in a zero for both the draft and the final project.

Your group will choose a topic from health reform, broadly defined—meaning any way to improve market functioning, whether proposed currently or not. The presentation will be based on resources such as academic publications, think tank research, and media. You are not required to pick a side. The key is the demonstration of critical thinking based on the economics tools acquired in class. You will be expected to evaluate economic arguments behind the reform proposals.

**This is an academic presentation- make sure it is organized appropriately, including MLA citations and a bibliography with *reputable* sources. This means primary sources when possible, and concentrating on academic papers, responsible media outlets, and published material. If you are unsure what constitutes a *reputable* source, please consult with the professor.**

Some useful websites

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/index.dtl>

[http://www.commonwealthfund.org/General/General\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=670761](http://www.commonwealthfund.org/General/General_show.htm?doc_id=670761)

<http://www.nhpf.org/>

<http://www.kff.org/uninsured/reform.cfm>

<http://www.urban.org/health/index.cfm>

**Class Participation:** Be on time and ready to participate. However, just sitting in the class does not fulfill participation. Other components of participation:

- In some lectures, we will have seminar-like active “in-class” discussions based on the additional reading. Your attention and participation in these discussions will improve your participation grade.
- Participation may also include discussion or writeup of articles related to course material. These articles can be from newspapers such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, or other reputable news sources or blogs.

**Make-Up Exam policy:** There will be no makeup exams or group presentations. Individual rescheduling is only considered with a university-approved absence brought to the professor at least 2 weeks ahead of time.

**Re-Grade policy:** Students requesting that their exam must be re-graded have to submit their original exam with a written note explaining the reason for their re-grade request within 2 course meetings of the time the exams are returned. Any exam submitted for a re-grade will be subject to a complete re-grade of the whole text by the instructor.

**The course syllabus is a general plan; deviations will be announced in class by the professor.**