

Course Syllabus

Lecture Time: Monday & Wednesday 8am-10 noon (lecture), and Friday 8-10 (discussion). Lectures and discussion will be in room 61-262. The Graduate Reader is Jay Dixon (jdixon@ucla.edu).

Instructor's office hours: Wednesday 2-3pm and by appointment (825-2595 or sschweit@ucla.edu) at CHS 31-269.

Purpose of the Course:

HS 236 is designed to enable students to use the tools of economics in analyzing health services policy issues. Though many paradigms are useful in studying health policy, familiarity with the principles of economic analysis is essential for understanding alternative ways of organizing and financing health care. It is also essential to the understanding of likely results of changes in health policy. A wide variety of topics will be covered in the course, both institutionally and analytically. The topics covered are only a sampling of the breadth of application of economics to health services research. Many topics are not covered in the course, but all of those that are included are useful.

Prerequisite:

The prerequisite for the course is a recent course in micro economic theory, such as Economics 1 or 11. Material from this course will be utilized extensively in class discussions and will be covered in all the examinations. Microeconomic theory will be the basis of the discussion section meetings. Therefore, attendance in discussion sessions is especially important - and mandatory for all students without a very strong microeconomics background.

Course Readings:

The texts for the course are (**Ph**) Charles Phelps, Health Economics (2nd ed), (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley), 1997 and (**Pa**) Michael Parkin, Microeconomics, 4ed (Reading Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley), 1994. Additional readings have been collected and will be noted by (**AR**). Students are expected to purchase the Phelps and Parkin texts and the additional readings. The texts are available at the Health Sciences Book store and the additional readings are available at Westwood Copies, on Gayley Avenue (next to The Coffee Bean).

Course Requirements and Grading:

Students will be expected to have read each session's chapters carefully. Students will be selected during the previous class session to report on and critique the relevant chapter. These brief oral presentations will teach the art of abstracting as well as critical thinking, and will assure a thorough understanding of the chapter.

There will be three examinations given, respectively, during weeks 4, 7, and 10. The exams, together, will count 81 percent toward the grade. All three exams will count equally (27% each).

Class participation (including discussion section) will constitute 9 percent of the grade, and

exercises in the discussion session will count an additional 10 percent. One point of extra credit (up to a maximum of 5 points) will be given for each half-page abstract of health related articles appearing in The Economist magazine, available outside 31-269C and in the AGSM and University Research Libraries. These summaries are to be turned in to the Graduate Reader. The extra credit points for the Economist abstracts will be added to one's total score at the end of the quarter before rankings and grades are determined.

Class Schedule and Readings:

Monday September 30	Introduction to Health Economics (Ph 1)
Wednesday October 2	Markets and Health Care (Ph 2,3)
Friday October 4	Introduction, Budget Constraints, Utility, Choice (Pa 1-3)
Monday October 7	Demand for Health and Medical Care (Ph 4)
Wednesday October 9	Empirical Studies of Demand (Ph 5)
Friday October 11	Demand and Supply (Pa 4,5)
Monday October 14	Demand for Health Insurance (Ph 10)
Wednesday October 16	The Health Insurance Marketplace (Ph 11)
Friday October 18	Utility, Demand, and Preferences (Pa 8,9)
Monday October 21	The Healthcare Work Force (Ph 6 and 7)
Wednesday October 23	First Midterm examination (2 hours)
Friday October 25	Resource and Labor Markets (Pa 15,16)
Monday October 28	Hospitals (Ph 8 and 9)
Wednesday October 30	Medicaid (Ph 13)
Friday November 1	Cost Curves (Pa 11)
Monday November 4	Medicare (Ph 12) and Managed Care I (Getzen) (AR)
Wednesday November 6	Managed Care II (Getzen) (AR)
Friday November 8	Inequality and Redistribution (Pa 17)
Monday November 11-13	No class (APHA Annual Meetings)
Friday November 15	Uncertainty and Information (Pa 21) Second examination (one hour)
Monday November 18	Medical Malpractice (Ph 14)
Wednesday November 20	Pharmaceuticals (Schweitzer and Comanor) (AR) (guest speaker: William S. Comanor)
Friday November 22	Regulation and Antitrust Law (Pa 19)
Monday November 25	Regulation (Ph 16)
Wednesday November 27	Market Failure (Ph 15)
Friday November 29	Market Failure (Pa 18)
Monday December 2	Health Insurance Issues (Ph17)
Wednesday December 4	International Comparisons (Getzen)(AR)
Friday December 6	Third examination (two hours)