

University of Colorado Boulder  
Department of Economics  
Econ 4646-001, Spring 2016

January 10, 2016

## Health Economics

### 1 Course Description

Instructor: Shuang Zhang (Assistant Professor of Economics and International Affairs)

Contact: Economics 10  
303-492-2585  
shuang.zhang@colorado.edu

Course time: TTH 2:00-3:15pm

Location: HLMS 141

Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-2pm or by appointment

Location: Economics 10

Course Description:

Health economics is a growing field and is an important aspect of public policy in developed and developing countries. This course is designed to introduce upper level undergraduate students in economics to the field of Health Economics. The course focuses on two broad areas: 1) population health; 2) health care. We will cover a number of topics including basic economic concepts important for the study in health economics, human capital model of health, health and human development, health insurance, the US health care market, health care in other countries, health care reform, health and economic development, etc.

Textbook:

Jay Bhattacharya, Timothy Hyde and Peter Tu. **Health Economics** Palgrave Macmillan

## 2 Course Requirements

### 1. Mid-term exams (30%)

(a) Mid-term 1 (15%): Feb. 11th (Thursday)

(b) Mid-term 2 (15%): Mar. 15th (Tuesday)

### 2. Group project (20%)

The objective of this project is to become the expert on the health system of a country of your choice, to describe the health challenges facing the country, and prescribe a potential policy solution. You may NOT choose the US. Two or three students form a group. Each group will present your group project. Each person in your group needs to participate in giving the presentation. A group should plan on talking for 25 minutes and leave 10 minutes to lead a discussion with the class. We will have two presentations per class in the final presentation weeks.

The presentation will include 4 parts:

Part 1: Performance of the Health Care System. For example, you may include figures on:

- Trends in health expenditures (per capita, public versus private)
- Trends in mortality/life expectancy: by age (infant, under 5, and adult) and gender
- Trends in morbidity: find statistics on the diseases that are relevant for your country and make the case why the diseases you choose are relevant.
- Trends in health care resources: doctors and nurses per capita, hospital beds per capita, medical equipment per capita.

Part 2: Overview of the Health Care System. For example, you may talk about:

- History: when the system was created and what led to its creation.
- Funding: which areas are publicly or privately funded or both?
- Delivery: Who delivers the health care? The private sector or the public sector?
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### 3 Course Schedule

## 4 Required readings

41 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 1.3 (Demand for health: the Grossman model)

42 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 1.2 (Demand for health care)

43 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 3.7 (Demand for Insurance) and Chapter 3.10 (Adverse selection in real markets)

44 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 3.11 (Moral hazard)

45 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 18 (The American Model)

46 ~~W~~

Textbook: Chapter 16 (The Beveridge model: nationalized health care) and Chapter 17 (The Bismark model: social health insurance)

47 ~~W~~

"Hammering home reform", **the Economist** Mar 22nd 2010

<http://www.economist.com/node/15758185?zid=318&ah=ac379c09c1c3fb67e0e8fd1964d5247f>

"Young, fit and uninterested", **the Economist** Jan 18th 2014

<http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21594300-was-supposed-be-month-uninsured-got-health-insurance-not-enough>

"Uphill all the way", **the Economist** Mar 29th 2014

<http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21599786-deadline-signing-up-nears-obamacare-looks-precarious-uphill-all-way?zid=318&ah=ac379c09c1c3fb67e0e8fd1964d5247f>

48 ~~W~~ 12

"Global child mortality total is halved", **the New York Times** February 2, 2008

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/22/health/22iht-CHILD.4.9413329.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/22/health/22iht-CHILD.4.9413329.html?_r=1&)

"Health: unpicked low-hanging fruit", **the Economist** Apr 22nd 2011

[http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2011/04/banerjee\\_and\\_duflor\\_0](http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2011/04/banerjee_and_duflor_0)

Dupas, Pascaline. 2014. "Getting Essential Health Products to Their End Users: Subsidize, but How Much?" **Science** 345(6202): 1279-1281.

Dupas, Pascaline. 2014. "Global Health Systems: Pricing and User Fees." **Encyclopedia of Health Economics** Anthony J. Culyer, Ed. , 2:136-141.

## Students with Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services by Jan. 19th so that your needs may be addressed. Disability