

UNC Greensboro

Department of Economics

ECO 637-01: Empirical Health Economics Fall 2021

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ECO 637: Empirical Health Economics

Course Description

This course is an introduction to empirical health economics. It will blend empirical work using a common health dataset with the development of key theoretical models in health economics that will help interpret our empirical analyses. You will learn how to conduct empirical analyses, select the appropriate estimation method, and interpret the results using one, or more, theoretical models.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Procedures

ECO 637 is entirely online. It consists of 10 units (or modules) numbered from 1 to 10 and a capstone, which I have listed as Module 11. Most of the units should take about one week to complete, but I have allocated two weeks for each of units 7 and 9. I have also left ample buffer time so that if we discover that things are taking longer than expected, we can delay later modules without the risk that we will not cover important topics.

Each unit will have a discussion area where you can ask me or each other questions. Participation is not required, but civility is. Be professional.

Getting Help & Communication Expectations

In addition to the discussion board, you are welcome to send me a message within Canvas or email me at msander4@uncg.edu. I do not have a preference at the present time.

I have regularly scheduled office hours on Thursdays from 10AM to Noon on Zoom (I will post Zoom links to Canvas). If those times do not work, please let me know and we can find another mutually agreeable time.

Grading

Your grade will be determined by assignments and a project. Each unit has an assignment associated with it. You will be working on the project throughout the semester as you do the unit assignments. Some part of each assignment – and in many cases the entire assignment – will assist you in completing the project in some way, although we will be using different datasets for the assignments and the final project.

Units 2 through 10 will be weighted equally and are worth a total of 80% of your final grade. The project accounts for the remaining 20% of the grade.

All unit assignments are due on Monday nights at 11:59 PM. Answer keys will become available at 12:00 AM on Tuesdays. Since the assignments build on each other and build toward the project, it is imperative that you study the answer key and any feedback you receive from me on your assignments and fix any issues before the next assignment.

Late work is not accepted without prior written permission.

Grading scale

We will use the following grading scale, subject to the caveat that follows it:

Letter Grade	Percentage Score
A	93 to 100%
A-	90 to 92%
B+	87 to 89%

B	83 to 86%
B-	80 to 82%
C+	77 to 79%
C	70 to 76%
F	below 70%

(C- and D grades are not allowed by the graduate school.)

Now the caveat: I have taught a course similar to this one for many years and have curved the final course grade every year I taught it. Therefore, I fully expect that the final course grades will be curved. Because I curve the final course grade rather than individual assignments, I will not know the exact curve until the semester is over. If you are concerned about your grade during the semester, please feel free to contact me.

Software

We will be using R for this course. The Canvas site provides directions and links to install R and I will, where possible, introduce the commands that we will be using in the course pages. If you run into problems working with the data on your computer, you can use UNCG's JupyterHub at <https://kangaroo.uncg.edu/> or MyCloud at <https://mycloud.uncg.edu>.

Required Books

There is one required book for this class:

Bhattacharya, J., Hyde, T., & Tu, P. (2013). Health Economics(1st edition). Palgrave Macmillan.

Deb, Norton, and Manning have produced a [set of slides](#) on health econometrics, although those slides are for use with Stata. However, they can be a useful resource nonetheless as needed.

Course Schedule

As currently set up (and subject to the caveat that this is the first year I have taught this course in this way), the course will proceed at roughly one module per week (I have given two weeks to modules 7 and 9):

Week	Starts on	Module #	Module Name
1	8/17/2021	1	Introduction
2	8/24/2021	2	Defining and Measuring Health
3	8/31/2021	3	The Health Capital Model
4	9/7/2021	4	The Derived Demand for Healthcare
5	9/14/2021	5	Understanding healthcare spending
6	9/21/2021	6	Regression basics
7	9/28/2021	7	Model specification in health and healthcare
8	10/5/2021	7	Model specification in health and healthcare
9	10/12/2021	8	Interpreting healthcare spending
10	10/19/2021	9	Adverse selection
11	10/26/2021	9	Adverse selection
12	11/2/2021	10	Moral hazard
13	11/9/2021	11	Capstone
14	11/16/2021	11	Capstone

Accessibility Policy & Information

UNCG seeks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must register with the [Office of Accessibility Resources & Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#) located in 215 Elliott University Center: (336) 334-5440.

Additional resources:

- [UNCG Web Accessibility Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [UNCG Academic Accommodations Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Canvas is certified as conforming with Level A and Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Summary of accessibility information for G Suite \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Summary of accessibility information for Microsoft Office \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Student Support

- For help locating sources and materials, talk with the [library\(Links to an external site\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#).
- For computer questions, contact [6-TECH \(Links to an external site.\)](#).
- Other student resources can be found through the [Students First Office \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and the [Graduate School \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity is fundamental to the university enterprise and is therefore expected at all times. By submitting any assignment for this course, you are agreeing to abide by the [UNCG Academic Integrity Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Health Concerns

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu

COVID-19 Spartan Shield Video

UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam has challenged us to create a Culture of Care at UNCG where we all wear face coverings and social distance, less to protect ourselves but rather more to protect everyone around us. It shows that you care about the well being of everyone around you. We have created this video featuring your student body presidents to better explain how and why this is so important.

[Please watch this video before the first day of classes.](#)

For Students Visiting Campus

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in fall 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's Culture of Care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth. \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- Observing [social distancing \(Links to an external site.\)](#) in the classroom.
- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene when possible.
- [Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19. \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- Staying home if you are ill.
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill, or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for maintaining appropriate social distancing during class and facilitating contact-tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seat at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs.

Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking and social distancing requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one, and only return when they follow these basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and social distancing requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.