

**Department of Health Policy and Management  
College of Public Health  
University of Georgia**

**HPAM 8600  
Health Economics  
Spring 2009 Syllabus**

**Course Information**

Instructor: Angela R. Fertig, Ph.D.  
Office Location: Paul Coverdell Building, Room N120  
Contact Information: 706-542-9332 or 7142, [afertig@uga.edu](mailto:afertig@uga.edu), [fertighealth@gmail.com](mailto:fertighealth@gmail.com)  
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11-noon, or by appointment  
Course webpage: <http://afertig.myweb.uga.edu/healthecon.html>

**Course Meeting Time and Location**

Location: Life Sciences Building 1057, Room C130  
Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:35pm-4:50pm

**Textbooks and Other Required Course Material**

**Textbook:**

*The Economics of Health and Health Care* by Sherman Folland, Allen Goodman, and Miron Stano, 5th edition.

Other readings assigned will be handed out or can be downloaded from the internet.

**Course Description**

This course provides an overview of the role of economics in health, health care, and health policy. We will survey major topics in health economics and discuss the ongoing debate over health care policy. Topics include the economic determinants of health, the market for medical care, the market for health insurance, the role of the government in health care, and health care reform. Students completing this course will have an understanding of the basic tools in economics relevant to the public health field.

**Course Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the basic features of a market, including supply and demand, for health care and insurance.
2. Identify various and sometimes competing theories of the non-medical determinants of health.
3. Explain the role of government in improving health and providing access to health care.
4. Discuss factors behind the rising costs of health care and approaches to health reform.
5. Evaluate the intended and unintended effects of policies from an economic perspective.
6. Demonstrate effective written and oral skills for communicating economic arguments to a lay audience.

## Course Requirements for Grading Purposes

The course requirements will contribute to your grade as follows:

2 Midterm Exams	40%
2 Short papers	20%
Homework	10%
Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	10%

### Exams:

There will be two in-class midterms and one final exam. The exams will be cumulative.

### Papers:

There will be two short writing assignments. Each paper should be no more than 300 words. Your assignment is to use a principle, or principles, discussed in the course to explain some pattern of events or behavior that you personally have observed. The topic should preferably be in the health field, but that is not a requirement. Do not use complex terminology. Imagine yourself talking to a relative who has never had a course in economics. Do not use any algebra or graphs. You can include a few citations, but you need not include a bibliography. You are not expected to do a lot of research in support of your argument, although a relevant fact or two might help persuade you that your argument is correct. Your topic need not be 'important,' but try to make it interesting. Each student will turn in a draft of the paper, receive feedback and then turn in the final memo for grading.

### Homework:

There will be 10 homework assignments.

### Class participation:

Class participation will be defined by two things: (1) class attendance and (2) informed participation. Please see attendance policy for details about (1). Your informed participation should demonstrate that: you are paying attention and listening; you are completing the reading and assignments in a timely fashion; and you are thinking about the course material, as demonstrated by your comments and questions. Perfect attendance in the absence of informed participation is a "C" grade. You may feel free to email me comments and questions that demonstrate these criteria as evidence of your informed participation. These emails should be sent to [fertighealth@gmail.com](mailto:fertighealth@gmail.com).

## Make-Up Policy

Any known scheduling problems should be brought to my attention as soon as possible. If it is necessary to miss a midterm exam, the student must contact me (before the exam if possible). If a student misses a midterm exam with an official excuse, that midterm exam grade will be determined by the final exam grade. If the midterm exam is missed without an official excuse, that midterm exam grade will be based on the final exam grade minus 10 points. At least one midterm and the final exam are required of all students.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is required and will contribute to the class participation portion of your grade. Any known scheduling problems should be brought to my attention by email. I strongly discourage students who

are ill from attending class. If you are sick, simply send an email indicating that you are ill and that you will miss class. If there is some other reason you must miss class (for example, due to a family situation or planned professional event), please send me an email and I will notify you of whether the absence will be excused. You may not be excused from class for discretionary activities on your part (e.g., travel dates, road trips, etc.)

## Topical Outline

The following is a tentative schedule of the topics to be covered.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Ch.</b>	<b>Due</b>
Mon, Jan 12	Introduction	1	
Wed, Jan 14	Demand for health & health care	2,5	
Mon, Jan 19	NO CLASS		
Wed, Jan 21	Demand for health & health care	2,7	Hwk1
Mon, Jan 26	Demand for health & health care		
Wed, Jan 28	Supply of health care - Hospitals	6,14	Hwk2
Mon, Feb 2	Supply of health care - Hospitals	14	
Wed, Feb 4	Supply of health care - Non-profits	13	Hwk3
Mon, Feb 9	Supply of health care - Labor	15	
Wed, Feb 11	Supply of health care - Labor	16	Hwk4
Mon, Feb 16	<i>Review</i>		
Wed, Feb 18	<b>Midterm Exam 1</b>		
Mon, Feb 23	Supply of health care - Pharmaceuticals	17	
Wed, Feb 25	Insurance – Supply & demand	8	Draft1
Mon, Mar 2	Insurance – Moral hazard	8	
Wed, Mar 4	Insurance – Adverse selection	10	Hwk5
Mon, Mar 9	NO CLASS		
Wed, Mar 11	NO CLASS		
Mon, Mar 16	Insurance, employment, and the uninsured	11	
Wed, Mar 18	Managed care	12	
Mon, Mar 23	Market failure and government intervention	19	Paper1
Wed, Mar 25	Medicare and Medicaid	21	Hwk6
Mon, Mar 30	<i>Review</i>		
Wed, Apr 1	<b>Midterm Exam 2</b>		
Mon, Apr 6	Regulation in health	20	
Wed, Apr 8	Public health initiatives	23	Draft2
Mon, Apr 13	Public health initiatives		
Wed, Apr 15	Racial disparities in health		Hwk7
Mon, Apr 20	Health system reform	22	
Wed, Apr 22	Economic evaluation	4	Hwk8
Mon, Apr 27	Economic evaluation	4	Paper2
Wed, Apr 29	Economic epidemiology	24	Hwk9
Thu, Apr 30	<i>Review</i>		
Wed, May 6 (3:30-6:30pm)	<b>Final Exam</b>		

## **University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy**

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work (<http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/procedures.html>).

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact me during regular office hours or by appointment.

## **General Disclaimers**

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.