

Department of Economics, Carleton University
ECON 4460 A – Health Economics
Winter 2026

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Course delivery: In person

Course Brightspace page: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/365108>

ALGONQUIN TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

EMAIL POLICY

Students can expect a reply within two to three business days. To receive a timely reply, please use your Carleton email address and include ECON 4460 as the first part of the subject of all emails. For additional information on email etiquette, [click here](#).

COURSE COPYRIGHT

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copyright protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

The use of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT) is not permitted unless explicitly specified.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to give students an in-depth understanding of the contribution of theoretical and empirical economics to the study of health and health care. We will consider the application of economic theory to policy-relevant questions pertaining to the demand for and production of health and health care. Building on this, we will examine how health economists take theory to the data, the empirical challenges they face in doing so, and the econometric methods they use to address these challenges and meet their research objectives. In particular, we will discuss and critically assess research findings in light of these methods. Throughout the course, students will read seminal and more recent peer-reviewed academic journal articles in the field of health economics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Content objectives:

- To develop an in-depth understanding of the contribution of economics to the study of health and health care, including:
 - The application of economic theory to the study of health and health care, and the limitations of this application.
 - The use of economic theory to guide data-driven (empirical) work.
 - The challenges faced by empirical economists in answering policy-relevant questions.
 - The solutions that health economists have identified to address these challenges.

Skills objectives:

- To develop the ability to discuss and critically assess research findings in health economics.
- To develop competence and confidence exchanging with colleagues about these topics.

PREREQUISITES AND PRECLUSIONS

Prerequisite(s): ECON 2030 with a grade of C- or higher, and ECON 2220 (or equivalent) with a grade of C- or higher. Students who believe they can be exempted from the listed prerequisites should contact the Department of Economics Undergraduate Administrator, Renée Lortie.

Preclusion(s): N/A.

TEXTBOOK

There is no textbook for this course. Classes will be based on mandatory and optional readings (listed below). For students who wish to refer to a textbook treatment of some of the concepts that will be discussed throughout the semester, *Health Economics* by Jeremiah Hurley (2010) is recommended.

COURSE EVALUATION

The course will be graded as follows:

Evaluation	Grade %	Date	Delivery
Quizzes	30	See description below	In-person
Presentation	20	See description below	In-person
Participation	10	See description below	In-person
Final exam	40	Apr. 11-23	In-person

Quizzes: Starting in the second week of class, there will be one quiz per week, to be completed during class time, based on assigned readings. Out of the 12 quizzes that students will answer throughout the semester, their grade on the quiz portion of the course will be calculated using their results on their ten (10) best quizzes. Failure to answer a quiz will result in a grade of zero (0) for that quiz.

Presentation: Starting in Week 5 (Feb. 4), students will be responsible for presenting a paper and leading the class discussion on that paper. Students will work in groups of three (3) to four (4) students (depending on final enrollment). Each group will be asked to pick one paper from the reading list (to be provided in Week 1 on Brightspace), to be presented in the corresponding week. Alternatively, students may contact the instructor if they wish to present a paper that is not included in the reading list.

Time slots for presentations will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis starting in the second week of class. If there is more demand than availabilities for particular time slots, the instructor will randomly select students for the popular time slot and ask others to pick a different time. Students who have a valid reason to expect a scheduling conflict should communicate with the instructor as soon as possible. Additional information will be provided about the modalities for scheduling presentations in the first week of class.

There will be no make-up presentations. For students who cannot present on the scheduled date due to valid and documented circumstances (e.g., serious illness/emergency), the weight of the presentation will be placed on the final exam.

All members of the group must participate in the presentation.

Participation: Every student will be asked to participate as a discussant for one (1) presentation by other teams. For this role, students will need to come to class prepared to discuss the limitations of the paper. The presenting team will then have a chance to respond to these comments. The objective is for these exchanges to form the basis of a broader class discussion about each presented paper.

Final exam: The final exam will be held during the university's final examination period, based on the material covered during the entire semester (cumulative exam). The final exam will include a combination of multiple choice and short-answer questions.

In cases of serious illness/emergency or other circumstances that cause students to miss the final exam, students may petition the Registrar's Office to write a deferred exam. Students must make this petition no later than three (3) working days after the original final examination. In the interim, they will receive a grade of zero (0) for the final examination. If granted by the Registrar's Office, the deferred exam will take place during the time designated in Carleton University's calendar.

Final grade: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

RE-MARKING

Any request for re-marking must be submitted in writing within two (2) weeks of the evaluation being returned to the class. Students should include in that request a detailed explanation of why they feel they should receive a higher mark. Re-marking will apply to the entire evaluation, not just the contentious part(s). As a result, the revised mark may be higher than, lower than, or the same as the original mark.

SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Students must fulfill all of the course requirements, including the final exam, in order to achieve a passing grade (D- or higher).

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

The course calendar below is subject to change. Depending on time and interest, more or less class time may be dedicated to different topics. Any changes to the course calendar will be communicated in class and through Brightspace.

Class	Date	Topic	Evaluation
1	Jan. 7	Introduction to health economics Demand for and production of health among adults	
2	Jan. 14	Demand for and production of health among adults	
3	Jan. 21	Demand for and production of health among children	
4	Jan. 28	Health behaviours	
5	Feb. 4	Demand for health care	Presentations Start
6	Feb. 11	Demand for health care	
	Feb. 18	Winter break	
7	Feb. 25	Health insurance markets	
8	Mar. 4	Health insurance markets	
9	Mar. 11	Physician decision-making and the supply of health care	
10	Mar. 18	Physician decision-making and the supply of health care	
11	Mar. 25	The pharmaceutical industry	
12	Apr. 1	Health care markets and the role of governments	
	Apr. 11-23	Final examination period	Final exam

READING LIST

Students will be expected to complete one (1) to three (3) readings ahead of class every week and to arrive to class ready to discuss. Assigned readings for every week will be communicated to students ahead of time in class and through Brightspace. Most readings can be accessed through the Carleton library website. Other readings will be made available through Brightspace. Unless otherwise specified, students are to read the published version of papers, not working papers.

CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CISCE)

The Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement (CISCE), formerly known as the Centre for Indigenous Initiatives, supports First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit, and Métis students, staff, and faculty by providing culturally safe spaces for dialogue and learning. The Centre provides weekly, monthly and annual programming for students and also develops and delivers resources and training to educate the Carleton community about Indigenous histories, worldviews and perspectives. To learn more about the services offered, please visit <https://carleton.ca/indigenous/cisce/students/>. If you have any questions, you can email Indigenous@carleton.ca

PLAGIARISM, RESOURCES AND MENTAL HEALTH, AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

You are responsible for reading and knowing the information about plagiarism, Carleton University resources, and academic accommodations found [here](#).