ECON 4369 – INTRODUCTORY HEALTH ECONOMICS
(CRN 17731)

Online course with Synchronous sessions, Wednesdays 1:00-2:30PM – via Blackboard

Faculty
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Course description
Healthcare is one of the most important sectors of our economy, and the demand for professionals in health economics and healthcare management is growing significantly. This course covers essential concepts of economics applied to the healthcare sector, and provides students with the tools for understanding the challenges of delivering and financing health care. A general background of the US healthcare system is the basis for this course, followed by a review of the economic forces which make the healthcare sector so unique in our economy. At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of the healthcare sector in the U.S. economy, and describe the organization, service delivery modalities, stakeholders, and financing of healthcare services.
- Explain the main economic theories related to the healthcare market place, including production and demand of healthcare services, insurance, and financing of healthcare services.
- Apply cost-effectiveness analysis for the evaluation of healthcare interventions.


Note: the syllabus and calendar are subject to change; any updates will be posted accordingly.
Pre-requisites

Econ 3310- Managerial Economics
QMB 3301- Quantitative Methods in Business
FIN 3310- Business Finance

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Related to UTEP/EDGE skills:

- **Problem Solving**: Find solutions to difficult or complex issues.
- **Communication**: Reach mutual understanding through effective exchange of information, ideas, and feelings.
- **Critical Thinking**: Analyze and evaluate issues in order to solve problems and develop informed opinions.

Regarding AACSB-type learning goals and sub-goals:

Goal 1: Appropriate application models for financial analysis and planning healthcare.

1. Apply diverse financial tools to critically analyze allocation of resources in healthcare.
2. Analyze data and possess proficiency in the use of data.

Goal 2: Understand multiple functional areas in healthcare operations

1. Understand the policy environment under which healthcare organizations operate.

Regarding competencies as outlined by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education:

Goal 1. Analytic and Technical Skills

1. Quantitative methods use to assess, and inform health care decision making.

Course Expectations

Students are expected to participate actively in class either via discussions during synchronous sessions, or through the discussion board setup on Blackboard. Timely completion of all written assignments, tests, and presentations is required. Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are individual and students are expected to produce original work and complete it providing proper references if required.

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Course Policy

Please follow these “etiquette” points that will make for a productive learning experience:

a. Students MUST read the assigned textbook chapters and additional readings.

b. Students must complete all assignments by the due date. Homework will be completed online via Blackboard.

c. Cheating or plagiarism is considered a serious violation of the University’s policies and will not be tolerated. For more information on plagiarism please refer to the Student Code of Conduct.

Student Grading Criteria

Student performance will be evaluated based on:

- Class participation and group peer evaluation (worth up to 5% of final grade);
- Group case study report & group presentations (worth 15% of grade);
- Weekly exercises and weekly article summaries (worth 15% of grade)
- Midterm Exam1 - multiple-choice and short answer - (worth 15% of grade);
- Midterm Exam2 - multiple-choice and short answer - (worth 20% of grade);
- Final exam - multiple-choice and short answer - (worth 30% of grade).

- 90 or above = A
- 80 – 89 = B
- 70 – 79 = C
- 60 – 69 = D
- Below 60 = F

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**Student group presentation – In the News.** In addition to participating in class discussion, students will be asked to do at least one presentation called “In the News”. This is a 3-minute, student-led, of a current event relevant to the topic to be dealt in class. For example, when dealing with the topic of elasticity a student group might select to discuss the impact of insurance rates on health services consumption. This presentation is given at beginning of class and the calendar and student assignment of these presentations will be distributed after the first week of class.

**Student group case discussion.** Students groups will be asked to review and discuss a selected case study in health economics. Student groups will be assigned a case study after the first scheduled exam. Case discussion will take place towards the end of the semester, should include appropriate PPT presentations, and should last about 10 minutes. Student groups will also be asked to review articles on relevant topics to health economics.

**Withdrawing from class**

Students are asked to review the UTEP academic calendar for deadlines if considering withdrawing from class. Please contact the class TA to notify of your decision.

**Students with Disabilities**

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) aspires to provide students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. If you have a disability and believe you may need services, you are encouraged to contact the center to discuss your needs with a counselor. All discussions and documentation are kept confidential. Contact: Monday thru Friday 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m. Phone: (915) 747-5148. Location: Union Building East Room 106. E-mail: cass@utep.edu

**Course Resources**

All presentations and assignments will be posted on Blackboard. We will use this tool to post announcements and respond student questions
Course Calendar and Assigned Text Readings

Below is the tentative calendar of topics to be covered for each of the target weeks, and assigned text chapters. Note that these are dates by week for covering a specific topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Target Dates (week of)</th>
<th>Text Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>8/24/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The US Healthcare Sector</td>
<td>8/31/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Is Health Important? The Economics View</td>
<td>9/7/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Economic Models: Production of Health</td>
<td>9/14/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production of Healthcare Services and Goods</td>
<td>9/21/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of topics covered MTD</td>
<td>9/28/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-term Exam 1</strong></td>
<td>9/30/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review on Perfect Competition</td>
<td>10/5/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply of Health Services: Physicians</td>
<td>10/12/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Background on Health Insurance</td>
<td>10/19/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Markets</td>
<td>10/26/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Markets</td>
<td>11/2/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-term Exam 2</strong></td>
<td>11/4/2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost-effectiveness</td>
<td>11/9/2020</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11/16/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Review</td>
<td>11/23/2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Presentations</td>
<td>11/30/2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
<td>12/7/2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grades Due</strong></td>
<td>12/18/2020</td>
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</table>

Note: the syllabus and calendar are subject to change; any updates will be posted accordingly
Calendar of Article Readings and Summaries – to be completed by each student.

In addition to problem assignments, students will be asked to read and summarize the articles listed below. The summaries should consist of a one-page in length maximum, and contain a description of the following article areas: background and objectives of the study, main methods (if applicable), and conclusions. NOTE: summaries due dates are also posted on Blackboard under the “Assignments” section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Summary Assignments (Individual)</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a summary of your health insurance plan. I you don’t have health insurance, or prefer not disclose details, just provide a description of any health plan available in El Paso</td>
<td>8/28/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skinner, J, Staiger, D., Fisher, E. “Is Technological Change In Medicine Always Worth It? The Case of Acute Myocardial Infarction”. Health Affairs, Web Exclusive 7 February 2006, w34-w47.</td>
<td>10/16/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP’s Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Course Communication: How we will stay in contact with each other

Because this is an online class, we won’t see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours:** by appointment using Blackboard collaborate or Zoom. Feel free to send me an email (rdelgado16@utep.edu) to setup an appointment. My wife complaints that I am a workaholic, so I am available weekends if needed.

- **Email:** UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.

- **Discussion Board:** If you have a question that you believe other students may also have, please post it in the Help Board of the discussion boards inside of Blackboard. Please respond to other students’ questions if you have a helpful response.

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• **Announcements**: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

**NETIQUETTE**

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It’s possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other’s ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

**Course Policies: What do you need to do to be successful in the course?**

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by completion of the following activities:

- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements
- Participating in engaging discussion with your peers on the discussion boards (grading rubric provided in the “grading information” area of each forum)
- Participating in scheduled Blackboard Collaborate sessions
- Other activities as indicated in the weekly modules

Because these activities are designed to contribute to your learning each week, they cannot be made up after their due date has passed.

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**EXCUSED ABSENCES AND/OR COURSE DROP POLICY**

According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

OR

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

**BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE SESSIONS**

This class requires that you participate in scheduled Blackboard Collaborate sessions. The purpose of these sessions are for you to view live demonstrations of the course material and/or to participate in small discussion groups with your classmates. These sessions will be held every Wednesday from 1:00-2:30pm (MST). If necessary, we will have two sessions per week as we move along the semester so we can have time to review problem assignments.

Students are expected to, at least occasionally, participate in these sessions with a webcam and microphone. The sessions will be recorded and provided so that they can be reviewed by classmates at a later time. Students should not record the sessions and post them to any sites outside of Blackboard.

If you are unable to attend a Collaborate session, please let me know as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made when appropriate.

**MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work will be given only in the case of a documented emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

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ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

COVID-19 Accommodations

Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations.

(classes with on-campus meetings) Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

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SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

CLASS RECORDINGS

The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP’s acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. You may not share recordings outside of this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

TEST PROCTORING SOFTWARE

Two course assessments (the midterm and final exams) will make use of Respondus Lock Down Browser and Respondus Monitor inside of Blackboard to promote academic integrity. You are encouraged to learn more about how to use these programs prior to the first test.

Please review the following guidelines:

- The assessments will only be available at the times identified on the course calendar.
- You may take the test at any time during the 24-hour window.
- A reliable Internet connection is essential to completing the exam. If you must go to a location to take the exam (such as the library), be sure to follow their health and safety requirements.
- You have 2 attempts to take the test. Once the window closes, your answers will be saved, and no changes can be made. The higher score will be recorded.
- Respondus Lockdown Browser will require that all internet tabs are closed prior to the start of the test.
- Respondus Monitor requires a webcam and microphone.
• You will be required to show the webcam your student ID prior to the start of the test.
• Your face should be completely visible during the test. Blocking the camera will disable the test.
• No notes or textbook materials are permitted during the test. Respondus Monitor requires you to take a video of your surrounding area (desk, chair, walls, etc.)
• You should not have conversations with other people and/or leave and return to the area during the test.

PLAGIARISM DETECTING SOFTWARE

Some of your course work and assessments may submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

You must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at screening.utep.edu. If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu.

For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website (screening.utep.edu) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. Students are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present. You must wear a face covering over your nose and mouth at all times in this class. If you choose not to wear a face covering, you may not enter the classroom. If you remove your face covering, you will be asked to put it on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear a face covering and follow preventive COVID-19 guidelines will be dismissed from the class and will be subject to disciplinary action according to Section 1.2.3 Health and Safety and Section 1.2.2.5 Disruptions in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures.

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