



**University
of Victoria**

Economics 524 (A01)
Health Economics

Session: Spring 2026
CRN: 21057
Type: Lecture
Building: BEC
Start Date: Jan 5, 2026

Meeting Time: TF 10:30–11:50 AM
Unit Value: 1.5
Mode: Face-to-face
Room: 363
End Date: April 2, 2026

Instructor and Teaching Assistant

Instructor Dr. Chris Auld
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Office Hours Wednesdays 2:30–4:00 (or by appointment; Zoom possible)
Contact Email is primary; responses within two business days.

Course content.

The course surveys selected issues in modern health economics. Beginning with a discussion of integrating health into standard economic models, we will proceed to discuss selected influential papers on a variety of topics. Emphasis will be placed on the economics of health behaviors rather than on the health care system *per se*. Health economics is a heavily empirical field and many of the papers discussed will be applied econometrics, and some of the course will focus on discussion of econometric methods of particular importance in health economics. Topics may include:

- Health in the utility function: modeling health as an economic good.
- Health insurance, moral hazard, information, and estimating the demand for health.
- Health, income, education, and economic growth.
- Economics of addictive goods, including the opioid epidemic and “deaths of despair.”
- Economic epidemiology: the study of how intentional behavior affects epidemics.

Teaching and assessment modality.

This course is delivered face-to-face. Lectures will be held in person unless illness or weather precludes, in which case no more than one-third of sessions will be moved online. There are no required devices for participation. Evaluation is based on in-class participation and a final paper and presentation, as detailed below.

Textbook and Materials

The course material consists mostly of academic papers, as there does not exist a graduate-level health economics textbook which covers the material in this course. Readings will be announced in class as the course progresses. The following undergraduate text does cover much of this material and you may find it useful,

Bhattacharya, J., T. Hyde, and P. Tu (2014) *Health Economics*, Palgrave.

You should also have access to both undergraduate and graduate level microeconomic theory texts.

Microeconomic methods are central to the course. You should have access to an advanced undergraduate or graduate econometrics textbook with good coverage of microeconomic issues, such as

Greene, W. *Microeconomic Analysis*

Wooldridge, J. *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*.

A highly recommended, inexpensive supplementary text is,

Angrist, J. and S. Pischke, *Mostly Harmless Econometrics*.

(Any edition of these texts will be fine for this course.)

Brightspace.

Brightspace will be used extensively in this course. Announcements, additional readings, and lecture slides will be posted there. Students are responsible for checking Brightspace regularly for updates.

Learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply microeconomic theory to analyze health-related behaviour, including decision-making under risk, intertemporal choice, and imperfect information.
2. Critically evaluate empirical research in health economics, with particular attention to identification strategies and the distinction between causal and non-causal evidence.
3. Interpret advanced econometric methods commonly used in health economics to address causal questions using real-world data.
4. Assess existing research or conduct novel research on topics in health economics, and clearly present research results.

Course structure, assessments, and grading.

Learning occurs through in-person lectures and independent reading. Students must request permission from the instructor before recording lectures. Learning components include lectures, in-class discussion, and posted practice materials.

AI policy.

Since evaluation is based largely on in-class participation and in-class presentation of a research project, use of AI is necessarily limited. How you may use AI for the research project will be a topic of class discussion. Please keep in mind that AIs will often confidently get things very wrong. If you are uncertain about some concept an AI has apparently helped you understand, please come to my office hours and we will determine together whether it has it right.

Grading scheme.

Evaluation will be as follows:

1. Participation and *ad hoc* presentations: 35%
2. Paper: 30%
3. Presentation: 35%

1. *Participation.* This is typically a small class so it is important to show up and be engaged. For this reason, a substantial proportion of your course grade depends on attendance and participating in classroom discussions, including at times short prepared presentations on a particular paper or concept.
2. *Paper.* You have the option of an in-depth literature review or a novel research topic. For a review, choose any topic in health economics and write a short (about six to 10 double-sided pages), critical literature review on that topic. Your review should summarize the important research questions, methods, and results on the topic you've selected, and then offer your considered opinions on their strengths and weaknesses. For a novel research topic, select an area of interest within health economics and conduct either a theoretical or empirical investigation, with the goal being to produce a paper which is credible candidate for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.
3. *Presentation.* Towards the end of the course we will have student presentations on the topics selected for papers. How long these presentations will be will depend on how many students are enrolled, but ideally we will have two per lecture.

Mandatory essential course components.

All components of the course are mandatory: you must attend and participate in lectures, submit a research paper, and give a presentation on your paper.

Dates of assessments and due dates.

The research paper will be due on the final day of the exam period. Presentations will occur during the closing lectures of the course.

Grading scale.

The standard UVic grading scale applies:

Grade	Percentage Range
A+	90–100%
A	85–89%
A-	80–84%
B+	77–79%
B	73–76%
B-	70–72%
C+	65–69%
C	60–64%
D	50–59%
F or N	0–49%

Missing assessments (academic concession).

Should students encounter a situation where they miss an exam, they may qualify for an academic concession. Students must indicate the specific grounds and provide a justification outlining the impact on their ability to complete course requirements. For in-course extensions, follow the posted procedure (or Brightspace form, if used). In case of a missed final exam, submit a deferral request per University policy.

Waitlist policies.

Instructors have no discretion to admit waitlisted students or raise the course cap. Students on the waitlist should discuss with the instructor how to ensure they are not behind with coursework in the event they are admitted. Registered students who do not participate as specified in this outline during the first 7 calendar days from the start of the course may be dropped from the course. Registered students who decide not to take the course are responsible for dropping the course and are urged to do so promptly out of courtesy toward waitlisted students. Waitlist offers cease after the last date for adding courses irrespective of published waitlists.

Academic integrity.

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students are expected to observe the same standards of scholarly integrity

as their academic and professional counterparts. A student who is found to have engaged in unethical academic behaviour, including practices described in the University Policy on Academic Integrity, is subject to penalty by the University. The University reserves the right to use plagiarism-detection software to detect violations of academic integrity.

Appeals.

Depending on the nature of your concern, the order in which you should normally try to resolve the matter is: (1) the course instructor; (2) the Associate Chair (econassoc@uvic.ca); (3) the Associate Dean of Academic Advising; (4) the Senate. For formal review of an assigned grade, consult the regulations in the Academic Calendar regarding review of an assigned grade. Grading inquiries on assignments and exams must be submitted in writing within one week of the release of the grade.

University Policies and Statements

The University of Victoria requires that the following information be included in all course outlines. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with these policies:

- **Academic Calendar:** The Calendar is the official source for program and course requirements. See uvic.ca/calendar.
- **Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to adhere to UVic's policy on academic integrity. Violations (cheating, plagiarism, multiple submission, etc.) are taken seriously. See uvic.ca/current-students/academics/academic-integrity.
- **Accessibility and Accommodations:** The Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) provides resources and coordinates academic accommodations. Students requiring support should contact CAL as early as possible. See uvic.ca/centre-for-accessible-learning.
- **Equity and Human Rights (EQHR):** UVic is committed to a safe and inclusive environment. Information on discrimination and harassment policies is available at uvic.ca/eqhr.
- **Copyright:** Course materials are for registered student use only and are protected by copyright law. See uvic.ca/library/research/citation/copyright.
- **Academic Concessions:** Procedures for concessions (illness, family affliction, etc.) are described in the Calendar. See uvic.ca/current-students/academic-concessions.
- **Conflict of Interest and Academic Responsibilities (AC1205):** Full policy available at uvic.ca/universitysecretary/policies/general/AC1205.html.

Resources for Students

- [Student Wellness](#)

- Centre for Accessible Learning
- UVic Learn Anywhere (learning workshops and resources)
- Library Resources
- Centre for Academic Communication (CAC)
- Learning Strategies Program (LSP)
- Academic Advising
- Economics Undergraduate Advising: ecadvice@uvic.ca
- Student Awards and Financial Aid
- International Student Advising
- Indigenous Student Services (ISS)
- Student groups and resources including UVic Ombudsperson

Student experience of learning (SEL) survey.

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential SEL survey regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future.

Email.

Emails should normally be limited to critical matters (e.g., inability to attend class, an exam, or prolonged illness) and must include the course name and number in the subject line. Questions on course material should normally be asked during office hours or in class. Emails should follow a professional format with a salutation and signature including your name and student number. I will normally respond to email within two business days. If you do not get a response within two days consider an overly aggressive spam filter or other technical problem may have occurred and try again or contact me another way.

Use of devices in lectures.

Use of devices should be limited to course-related activities to maintain a respectful learning environment.

Educational technology.

This course does not require the use of educational technology hosted outside Canada.

UVic Territorial acknowledgement.

We acknowledge and respect the *lək'wəḡən* peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNÉĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.