Syllabus

HPAM-GP 4832

Health Economics: Topics in International Health Policy

NYU Wagner | Spring 2016 | Building: GODD Room: B06


Contact Information

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Course Prerequisites

HPAM-GP 4830 Principles of Health Economics

Course Description

Building on HPAM-GP 4830 this course examines current health policy debates in developing countries from an economics perspective. Topics may vary but are likely to include the relationship between health and economic development, the need for financial risk protection against health shocks, the economics of HIV/AIDS prevention and transmission, the control of malaria, the determinants of fertility, and other topics. There will be a strong focus on applying theoretical insights from HPAM-GP 4830 and interpreting the relevant literature.

Competencies

This course will address the following CAHME competencies:

- The ability to synthetize evidence and apply statistical, financial, economic, and cost-effectiveness tools/techniques in organizational analysis.
- The ability to understand how policy and delivery processes work, and to consider the demographic, cultural, political, and regulatory factors involved in and influencing health policy and management decision-making.
- The ability to present convincingly to individuals and groups the evidence to support a point of view, position, or recommendation.
- The ability to communicate and interact productively (via listening, speaking, and writing) on matters of healthcare with a diverse and changing industry, work force, and citizenry.

1 The building is located on 45 W 4th St
Learning Objectives

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

- Understand key statistical methods commonly used in the health economic literature in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of policy options to improve health and healthcare delivery in developing countries.
- Define health and describe the methods commonly used to measure it in order to understand the way in which public policies are effective at improving health outcomes in developing countries.
- Describe the factors that affect the demand for health and health services in order to predict responses price, quality, and other factors commonly influenced by health policies in developing countries.
- Describe the factors that affect the supply for health and health services in order to develop policies that ensure adequate quantity and quality of health services are delivered in developing countries.

Grading

Your final grade in this course will be composed of the following elements:

- In-class Midterm Exam (30%)
- In-class Final Exam (30%)
- In-class Presentations (20%)
- Homework Assignments (20%)

Each one of the students will conduct two in-class presentations during the semester. Homework assignments will consist of writing a summary highlighting the main ideas of each of the academic articles assigned in the lecture guide.

Homework Assignments

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the end of each class (8:25 PM). Late assignments will be penalized 10% for every 24-hour period that it is late. If unforeseen circumstances arise and you are unable to hand in your assignment on time, please let me know as soon as possible to discuss an alternative arrangement. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Please do not wait until the last minute to write to me to ask for an extension. If assignments have been scheduled on a religious or cultural holiday, please let me known as soon as possible so that we can find an alternative arrangement for your case.

Readings: Students should complete and summarize the readings for that week and be prepared to discuss them in class. I have attempted to select papers that are mostly accessible to students with some quantitative background and previous course in microeconomics. That said, you may still find some of the readings technically challenging. I do not expect you to understand most of the models,
mathematical, or econometric content in all of these papers. When you read them, you should be reading them to help understand the background to the paper and the main findings of them. When reading them, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the main research question that is being addressed by the paper?
- How can you place this research question into the context of the classroom discussion?
- What basic research methodology or approach do the authors use to answer the research question? That is, how do the authors attempt to show that one variable causes another?
- What data do the authors use and why?

Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course, but you might find the following one useful: “Principles of Health Economics in Developing Countries” by W. Jack (1999) – The World Bank. It can be viewed or downloaded online on Google Books free of charge.

I do recommend this book but I do not make it required.

Academic Integrity

The NYU Wagner School values both open inquiry and academic integrity and students are asked to sign a pledge of academic integrity at the start of the program. Students are expected to follow standards of excellence set forth by New York University. Such standards include respect, honesty, and responsibility. The program does not tolerate violations to academic integrity including:

- Plagiarism.
- Cheating on an exam.
- Submitting your own work toward requirements in more than one course without prior approval from the instructor.
- Collaborating with other students for work expected to be completed individually.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his/her own work.
- Purchasing or using papers or work online or from a commercial firm and presenting it as your own work.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the University's policy on academic integrity as they will expected to adhere to such policies at all times, as a student and an alumni of New York University.
Course Calendar

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Lecture Guide

Session 1 (March 23): Health and Economic Development

Questions to be addressed:

a) What is the relationship between health and economic development?
b) What is the relationship between human capital and economic growth?
c) What is the rationale for public investment in health in developing countries today?

Academic Articles:


Session 2 (March 30): The Demand for Health and Health Services in Developing Countries

Questions to be addressed:

a) What factors affect the demand for health and health services in developing countries?
b) How do health shocks affect consumption and savings in developing countries?
c) How does health insurance protect against health shocks?
d) What other public policies influence the demand for health services?
Academic Articles:


Session 3 (April 6): Malaria

Questions to be addressed:

a) What are the roles of public and private actors in the prevention of malaria?

b) What impact does malaria have on the economy?

Academic articles:


Session 4 (April 13): Midterm Exam & Obesity


Session 5 (April 20): Fertility and Early-Life Health

Questions to be addressed:

a) What is the demographic transition?
b) What factors influence the decision for children or contraception?

c) How does early-life health affect overall health and other outcomes?

Academic Articles:

- Ebenstein, A. (2014) "Fertility and Population in Developing Countries" Encyclopedia of Health Economics (pp.300-308) Elsevier

Session 6 (April 27): HIV/AIDS

Questions to be addressed:

a) How do biological and behavioral factors influence the spread of HIV/AIDS?
b) How should public policies be designed to promote prevention?
c) What are the economic effects of providing treatment in the developing world?
d) What are the macro-economic and micro-economic impacts of HIV/AIDS?

Academic Articles:

- Shah, M. (2014) "Sex Work and Risky Sex in Developing Countries" Encyclopedia of Health Economics (pp.311-315) Elsevier

Session 7 (May 4): Final Exam & Water, Sanitation, and Environmental Health


Water, Sanitation, and Environmental Health

Questions to be addressed:

a) What are the challenges in bringing clean water and promoting safe hygiene practices?
b) What are the health consequences of industrialization in developing countries?

Academic Articles: