



INSTITUTE  
OF ECONOMIC STUDIES  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Charles University

## Health Economics

Spring Term

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**Course Code:** JEM101

### Course Description:

The course features a series of lectures on health economics issues. The course provides students with the framework to understand how health systems are organized from the point of view of funding, financing, purchasing, provision of health care and regulation of health systems. Topics regarding performance, effectiveness, and quality of health systems are also discussed.

Due to the growth in life expectancy and decrease in fertility rates, the proportion of elderly in populations of developed countries has grown substantially, resulting in rising demand for health care. At the same time, family support and other traditional social safety nets have become less certain, which puts more pressure on public social systems. As the share of the economically-active decreases, it is becoming more and more complicated to ensure the financial sustainability of health systems and access to needed health care to all citizens. Ensuring enough resources to cover health care needs of the population is placing great strain on European public social insurance systems and state budgets. A number of health systems are running deficits, which is raising new public policy debates as governments struggle to deal with this growing problem. At the same time, there are number of examples of poor quality and ineffectiveness of resource utilization in public health systems. Thus, the importance of understanding the health economics is increasing.

### Course Objectives:

The goal of the course is to teach students how the health systems in the developed countries function, what their goals are and how they are changing. We will discuss the motivation and roles of all stakeholders in the health systems as well as the most up-to-date issues of the health systems in the developed countries.

### Structure:

Lectures as well as seminars will meet once per week for 1.5 hours. The course is organized into 12 sessions divided between lectures and discussion sessions. The lectures will be given by teachers L. Bryndova and H. Tulejova and guest lecturers P. Hrobon and D. Hodyc. The goal of the discussion sessions is to actively involve students in the learning process. Each discussion session will cover two up-to-date topics in health policy and economics.

### **Instructions:**

Two groups of students will be created for each topic of discussion session (see DEADLINE in course requirements), covering 2 different points of view on the topic. The number of students in one student group is limited to 3 students.

Please contact the IEF staff to learn more about the instructions for this course, including meeting times and how to register.

### **Requirements:**

Each student group must prepare, in advance before their discussion session, a maximum 10-minute presentation. The presentation should cover and present clearly their point of view, explain it to other class participants and provide supporting examples, arguments and evidences from the literature. Groups' presentations will be then followed by the discussion of the 2 groups in the class and then summary of the arguments covering the topic.

By the end of the semester, each group of students shall hand in a group essay summarizing their point of view on the given topic. The essay should include the following parts:

- summary of the group's point of view, including supporting examples, arguments and evidences from the literature, with properly cited literature sources
- summary of the findings and contra-arguments from the class discussion
- reaction to the contra-arguments of the opponents stated in the class discussion and conclusion to the group's point of view. It should also answer such questions as whether the point of view of the group changed during the discussion, why and how it changes.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Although the students are encouraged to exchange ideas in and outside class, everybody is required to submit their own work. That means that copying the work of other students or published materials is strictly prohibited.

### **Grading System:**

Course requirements and grading rules:

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

1. Student seminar presentation and discussion (mandatory) - 30 points

Criteria for evaluation:

- 1.1 the quality and structure of the presentation, active participation of group members;
- 1.2 relevance and structure of used arguments, quality of used literature sources and references;
- 1.3 participation in the debate, quality of arguments used in the discussion.

2. Group essay on the team topic (2000 words), based on the seminar presentation and discussion - 30

points

Criteria for evaluation of essays:

- 2.1 structure of the essay - how well the essay is structured (introduction, arguments, conclusion),
- 2.2 content - arguments used, their relevance, innovativeness of arguments and conclusions, how well students reacted to contra-arguments of their opponents stated in the class discussion
- 2.3 references used - quality of literature sources, quality and properness of quotation and referencing in the text of the essay

3. Final written test - multiple choice, based on the lectures and seminars! - 40 points

Date of the test - will be announced later in the semester.

Date of the exam, if the test failed - will be announced later in the semester.

Failing one of the three criteria means failing the course.

**Reading Materials:**

The list of relevant literature will be included in every presentation or provided during lectures.