



## Syllabus

Course Information	HAP 425: Health Economics Location: Distance Education/Canvas
Instructor	Dr. Priyanka Anand, PhD Email: <a href="mailto:panand4@gmu.edu">panand4@gmu.edu</a> Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30-11:30am on Zoom ( <a href="https://gmu.zoom.us/j/98444851146?pwd=rxRkbsfhVvAoKaEqJp8lpvab11rgMN.1">https://gmu.zoom.us/j/98444851146?pwd=rxRkbsfhVvAoKaEqJp8lpvab11rgMN.1</a> )
Course Description	An introduction to the role of economics in health care and health policy. The course will introduce concepts used by economists to analyze health outcomes, health behaviors, health care markets and the effect of health insurance on those markets, and the role of government. Concepts will be linked to current health policy issues and debates.
Course Objectives	Upon completion of the course, students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain major economic concepts as they pertain to the health care system, including:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demand for health and health care services</li> <li>b. Supply of health care</li> <li>c. Types of markets found in the health sector (e.g. competitive, monopoly, oligopoly)</li> <li>d. Uncertainty and the role of health insurance</li> <li>e. Sources of “market failure” (e.g. asymmetrical information, externalities).</li> <li>f. Sources of disparities in health care utilization and health outcomes</li> <li>g. Role of government in health care and public health</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Describe challenges and tradeoffs in achieving universal health care in a market economy</li> <li>3. Apply concepts to evaluate reforms and proposals in health care policy</li> </ol>
Course Methodology	The class format will combine online lecture videos, readings, and other learning tools. Some of the assignments require students to work in groups. <b>Your participation is crucial to your learning and also to your colleagues’ learning!</b> Every student will be expected to be an active participant in assignments dedicated to applying what you learn to every element of the course.

<p>Textbook(s) and/or materials</p>	<p>Recommended Text:  Friedson, A. (2023). <i>Economics of healthcare: a brief introduction</i>. Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Online Text (free to students):  Greenlaw, S.A. &amp; D. Shapiro. Principles of Economics 3e.  Openstax, 2017 (updated July 2024).  <a href="https://openstax.org/details/books/principles-economics-3e">https://openstax.org/details/books/principles-economics-3e</a></p> <p>Optional Text:  Bhattacharya, J., Hyde, T., &amp; Tu, P. (2013). Health economics. Macmillan International. Abbreviated BHT.</p> <p>Other readings from journals and newspapers, and video and audio material will be posted on Canvas. When clicking links to articles, be sure you have logged in to the GMU Library first (library.gmu.edu).</p> <p>I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the FREE subscription to the New York Times through the GMU Library:  <a href="https://infoguides.gmu.edu/nytimesonline">https://infoguides.gmu.edu/nytimesonline</a>. Some of our readings will be articles from the Times and other newspapers and magazines.</p>
<p>Course Grading &amp; Evaluation</p>	<p>Final thresholds for determining your letter grade may depend on the distribution of final scores in the class, but a typical distribution is below:</p> <p>A+ = 98-100  A = 93-97  A- = 90-92  B+ = 87-89  B = 83-86  B- = 80-82  C+ = 77-79  C = 73-76  C- = 70-72  D= 60-69  F= 0-59</p>
<p>Group Assignments – <b>35%</b></p>	<p>Each week, you will be randomly assigned to a group of 3 to 4 students to complete the reading assignment together. The steps of the assignment are outlined below. The goal is to 1) become a critical consumer of media (articles, videos, podcasts, etc.) through a health economics lens and 2) learn how to use the tools available to you responsibly when analyzing media.</p> <p><b>Step 0:</b> Create a google doc for your group.</p>

	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Read/listen to the assigned media (article/video/podcast) for the week and develop 2 to 3 individual questions that relate the content of the article to the week's topic. In your group google doc, fill out section 1 with each person's name and the questions they came up with.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Meet as a group (either synchronously or asynchronously), pick 3 questions from section 1, and discuss the tools you would use to answer each of these questions (google, AI, class notes, etc.) and what you learned from each tool. In your group google doc, fill out section 2 with the 3 questions from section 2 with your descriptions of the tools you will use and what you learned.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Using the same 3 questions from section 2, provide complete, accurate, and well-thought out answers using the tools you identified. In your group google doc, fill out section 3 with the 3 questions from section 2 along with the answers.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Submit your assignment by downloading the google doc and uploading it to Canvas as either a word or pdf file.</p> <p>Late assignments will incur a 5 percentage point reduction in the grade for each 24 hour period it is late. Assignments are not accepted after one week. The lowest assignment grade will be dropped when calculating the final grade by Sunday 11:59 PM EST.</p>
Homeworks – <b>10%</b>	<p>The weekly homeworks are designed to test your knowledge of the week's content and help you prepare for the midterm and final exams. They will be graded as complete/incomplete.</p> <p>The weekly homeworks should be submitted on Canvas by Sunday, 11:59 PM EST. Complete assignments will receive full credit if submitted on time, 50% credit if submitted before the midterm exam for homeworks 1-6 or final exam for homeworks 8-14, and no credit if submitted after the aforementioned exam.</p>
Midterm exam – <b>25%</b>	There will be a midterm exam during week 7 of the course.
Final exam– <b>30%</b>	There will be a final exam during week 15 of the course.
Course Website	<p>Canvas will be used for this course. You can access the site at <a href="https://canvas.gmu.edu/">https://canvas.gmu.edu/</a>. Login and click on the "Courses" tab. You will see HAP 425 course NOTE: Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account. You must have consistent access to an internet connection in order to complete the assignments in this course through Canvas (<a href="https://canvas.gmu.edu/">https://canvas.gmu.edu/</a>). Note the technology requirements for College of Public</p>

	Health in your Canvas course menu—it contains details of minimum technology requirements.
Participation	<p>Learning can only happen when you are playing an active role. It is important to place more emphasis on developing your insights and skills, rather than transmitting information. Knowledge is more important than facts and definitions. It is a way of looking at the world, an ability to interpret and organize future information. An active learning approach will more likely result in long-term retention and better understanding because you make the content of what you are learning concrete and real in your mind.</p> <p>Although an active role can look differently for various individuals, it is expected in this class that you will work to explore issues and ideas under the guidance of the professor and your peers. You can do this by reflecting on the content and activities of this course, asking questions, striving for answers, interpreting observations, and discussing issues with your peers.</p>
Rules and Expectations	<p>In correspondence/communication students will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Be professional and respectful in correspondence</li> <li>b) Make reasonable requests of the instructor. We will be happy to clarify course material and answer legitimate questions; however, please exhaust other information sources (e.g., syllabus, Canvas) for answering your question before contacting me and remember, “Poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part”</li> </ul> <p>In regard to honesty in work students will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review the University integrity and honesty policies in the student handbook for guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating (summarized below). I will gladly clarify my stance on any questionable or “grey area” issues you may have.</li> <li>b) Refrain from dishonest work as it will receive a minimum penalty of zero on the assignment and a maximum penalty of a zero for the course with a report to the Honor committee. The GMU Honor Code requires that faculty submit any suspected Honor Code violations to the Honor Committee. Therefore, any suspected offense will be submitted for adjudication.</li> </ul>
Mason Honor Code	<p><b>The complete Honor Code is as follows:</b>  <i>To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: <b>Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.</b></i></p> <p><i>(From the Catalog – catalog.gmu.edu)</i></p>

<p>Cheating Policy</p>	<p>Any form of cheating on an activity, project, or exam will result in zero points earned. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to, the following: reviewing others' exam papers, having ANY resources utilized when not allowed, collaborating with another student during an individual assignment.</p> <p>Some kinds of participation in online study sites violate the Mason Honor Code: these include accessing exam or quiz questions for this class; accessing exam, quiz, or assignments for this class; uploading of any of the instructor's material or exams; and uploading of your own answers or finished work. Always consult your syllabus and your professor before using these sites.</p> <p>If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU writing center.</p> <p>A word about AI: Chatbots such as ChatGPT, Claude, etc. are powerful tools but should not be misused. Do not use chatbots to substitute for your own writing when original writing is expected, as it is for all the exams required in this course.</p>
<p>Plagiarism and the Internet</p>	<p>Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic and professional integrity. For students, it can lead to expulsion from GMU. For researchers, it can lead to publication retractions and have an adverse impact on your professional reputation. Plagiarism is using the ideas, words, or images of another person without proper attribution. Here are two useful principles to follow: (1) work submitted must be your own; (2) when using the ideas of others, including classmates, give full credit through citations or co-authorship.</p>
<p>Individuals with Disabilities</p>	<p>Students with documented disabilities should contact the <u>Office of Disability Services</u> (703) 993-2474) to learn more about accommodations that may be available to them.</p> <p><i>(From the 2019-2020 Catalog – catalog.gmu.edu)</i></p>
<p>Academic Integrity and Inclusivity</p>	<p>This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences. That means, we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. <a href="http://oai.gmu.edu/">http://oai.gmu.edu/</a></p>
<p>Student Privacy Policy</p>	<p>George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records.</p> <p>Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy <a href="https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/">https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/</a></p>

E-Mail Policy	<p>Web: <a href="http://masonlive.gmu.edu">masonlive.gmu.edu</a></p> <p>Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback.</p> <p>Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.</p> <p>Students are also expected to maintain an active and accurate mailing address in order to receive communications sent through the United States Postal Service.</p> <p><i>(From the 2017-18 Catalog – <a href="http://catalog.gmu.edu">catalog.gmu.edu</a>)</i></p>
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**Need Help?**  
Utilize the “Course Q&A” discussion forum or email your instructor directly.

Expect to work 15-20 hours per week on assignments for this course.

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due by the end of the week in which they are assigned. For the purposes of this course, a week is defined as **beginning at 12:01 am each Monday EST, and ending at 11:59 pm on the following Sunday EST.**

To help you manage your schedule and time to complete the assignments in this course, please follow the recommended timeline below. If you have a question or concern or encounter a problem about an assignment, please contact me immediately so we can discuss and work out a resolution.

Weeks	Lessons	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	<p><b>Lesson 1a:</b> Introduction to health economics</p> <p><b>Lesson 1b:</b> Demand for Health and Health Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch introductory “The Economics of Health Care” YouTube video</li> <li>• Write introduction post</li> <li>• Watch Lesson 1 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read newspaper article for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 1 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 1 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapters 1 and 3</li> <li>• Optional: Read BHT Chapters 1 and 2</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b>	<p><b>Lesson 2a:</b> Supply of Health Care</p> <p><b>Lesson 2b:</b> Perfectly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 2a and 2b narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Listen to podcast for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 2 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 2 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapters 6, 7, and 8</li> </ul>

	Competitive Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommended: Read Chapter 8 of Greenlaw and Shapiro, <i>Principals of Economics</i> online textbook</li> <li>Optional: Read BHT Chapter 5</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b>	<p><b>Lesson 3a:</b> Monopolies and Oligopolies</p> <p><b>Lesson 3b:</b> Pharmaceuticals and the Economics of Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch Lesson 3a and 3b narrated power point slides</li> <li>Read newspaper article for group assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 3 Group Assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 3 Homework</li> <li>Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 15</li> <li>Recommended: Read Chapters 9 and 10 of Greenlaw and Shapiro, <i>Principals of Economics</i> online textbook</li> <li>Optional: Read BHT Chapter 12</li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b>	<p><b>Lesson 4a:</b> Hospitals – oligopolies?</p> <p><b>Lesson 4b:</b> Demand for Insurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch Lesson 4a and 4b narrated power point slides</li> <li>Read magazine article for group assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 4 Group Assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 4 Homework</li> <li>Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapters 9 and 10</li> <li>Recommended: Read BHT Chapters 6 and Chapter 7 (page 126 – 131)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Lesson 5:</b> Adverse Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch Lesson 5 narrated power point slides</li> <li>Read newspaper article for group assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 5 Group Assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 5 Homework</li> <li>Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 11</li> <li>Optional: Read BHT Chapters 8 and 10</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Lesson 6:</b> Moral Hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch Lesson 6 narrated power point slides</li> <li>Read magazine article for group assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 6 Group Assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 6 Homework</li> <li>Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 4</li> <li>Optional: Read BHT Chapter 11</li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Lesson 7:</b> Midterm prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take midterm exam</li> </ul>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Lesson 8:</b> Disparities in Health and Access to Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch Lesson 8 narrated power point slides</li> <li>Watch video for group assignment</li> <li>Complete Lesson 8 Group Assignment</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Lesson 8 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read BHT Chapter 4</li> <li>• Optional: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 18</li> </ul>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Lesson 9:</b> Technology and the Price of Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 9 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read magazine article for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 9 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 9 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 12</li> <li>• Optional: Read BHT Chapter 13</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Lesson 10:</b> Cost Effectiveness/Cost Benefit Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 10 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read interview for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 10 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 10 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read BHT Chapter 14</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Lesson 11:</b> The Health Policy Conundrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 11 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read magazine article for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 11 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 11 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read BHT Chapter 15</li> </ul>
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Lesson 12:</b> National Health Care Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 12 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read magazine article for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 12 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 12 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 19</li> <li>• Optional: Read BHT Chapters 16 and 17</li> </ul>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Lesson 13:</b> The American Healthcare System and the ACA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 13 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Read summary of the American Health Care Act</li> <li>• Read blog post for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 13 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 13 Homework</li> <li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 13 and 14</li> <li>• Optional: Read BHT Chapter 18 and additional BHT ACA chapter</li> </ul>
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Lesson 14a:</b> Health Externalities and Vaccines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch Lesson 14 narrated power point slides</li> <li>• Listen to podcast for group assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 14 Group Assignment</li> <li>• Complete Lesson 14 Homework</li> </ul>

	<b>Lesson 14b:</b> Population aging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recommended: Read Friedson, <i>Economics of Healthcare</i>, Chapter 16</li><li>• Recommended: Read BHT Chapter 19</li><li>• Optional: Read BHT Chapter 20</li></ul>
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Lesson 15:</b> Final prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take final exam</li></ul>