



## **ECON 131-1: Health Economics – J Term 2027**

**Class Time:** MTWF, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

**Location:** GOLI-201

**Instructor:** Dr. Carlana Cochi Ficano [she/her]

**Email:** ficanoc@hartwick.edu | **Office:** Golisano 229 | **Phone:** 607-431-4946

### **Drop-In Office Hours (No appointment needed)**

- **Monday & Wednesday:** 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM
- **Tuesday & Thursday:** 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM
- *Note: If you have a schedule conflict, please email or call to set up an appointment. Email messages are usually returned within 24 hours.*

### **Course Overview**

At some point in our lives, we all interact with the US healthcare and health insurance systems. Understanding these systems from an economic perspective helps us make informed decisions as consumers and voters.

This course examines how markets supply healthcare services and the inherent problems of relying solely on market provision. Over the semester, we will study models of asymmetric information, externalities, and market power to analyze pharmaceutical pricing, antibiotic resistance, Medicaid/Medicare, and "Obamacare."

### **Learning Outcomes & Assessments**

- **Enhanced engagement with US healthcare and insurance systems:**
  - *Measurable Outcome:* Explain and justify personally relevant aspects of healthcare.
  - *Assessment:* "What I know / What I want to know" personal inventories (pre and post).
- **Comparative analysis with international health systems:**
  - *Measurable Outcome:* Collect, present, and interpret comparative data.
  - *Assessment:* Group presentation featuring a data-driven comparative slide.

- **Connecting healthcare to broader social and economic systems:**
  - *Measurable Outcome:* Articulate connections between health and other market systems.
  - *Assessment:* Public service infographic.
- **Active participation in policy debates:**
  - *Measurable Outcome:* Formulate an informed personal stance on public health insurance expansion.
  - *Assessment:* A formal letter to a US Senator detailing your perspective.

## Grading & Materials

### Course Grade Breakdown

- **In-Class Assignments and Reflection Assessments:** 50%
- **Posts (5):** 25%
- **Preparation Assignments and Posts:** 25%

### Course Materials

- All texts are distributed electronically via **D2L**. Students are responsible for making copies for in-class use.
- **Important:** Assignments must be submitted on D2L in **MS Word format only**. Hard copies, emails, and alternative formats (like Pages or .hesc) will not be accepted.

### Keys to Success & Classroom Code

- **Attendance & Engagement:** Attendance matters. Arrive on time having completed pre-class work. This course includes daily graded in-class assignments. **Late credit is only given if you notify the instructor before class starts that you will be absent.**
- **Device Policy:** Unplug during class. Phones, earbuds, and smart devices must be silenced and put away. Computers/tablets should remain out of sight unless explicitly needed for an in-class assignment.
- **Notebook:** Keep a dedicated notebook for this class and bring it daily.
- **AI / ChatGPT Policy:** AI is supported as a learning aid to help you understand difficult concepts. However, it **must not** be used to substitute or supplement your own work on Economic Analyses.

## Tentative Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Preparation Due (Before Class on D2L)</b>	<b>In-Class Topic</b>
<b>Class 1</b>	Course Goals: Mine and yours!	What we already know... what we want to learn.
<b>Class 2</b>	Assigned articles & Discussion Post	For-profit healthcare and health insurance in the US; Navigating choice.
<b>Class 3</b>	Assigned article, data review & Discussion Post; Text chapter & online quiz	Healthcare expenditure trends (Intro to Health Care Tracker tool); Supply, demand, and elasticity.
<b>Class 4</b>	Assigned data review & Discussion Post	Health insurance and healthcare inequity; Subsidies and taxes.
<b>Class 5</b>	Assigned articles & Discussion Post	Contemporary issues: Changes under President Trump.
<b>Class 6</b>	Practice questions	Review for learning assessment.

<b>Class 7</b>	Study	<b>Assessment 1: Exam</b>
<b>Class 8</b>	Select focus country; Review US system baseline slide deck; Discussion post	<b>International Perspective:</b> Insurance, adverse selection, and moral hazard.
<b>Class 9</b>	Complete Google Form on country of interest; Prepare questions in Discussion Post	Health production function; Price and non-price healthcare rationing.
<b>Class 10</b>	Submit outcome metrics on Google Sheet for focus country	Understanding metrics; Connecting inputs and outputs.
<b>Class 11</b>	Draft Poster	Workshop: Narrative building with data.
<b>Class 12</b>	Complete Poster	<b>Assessment 2: Poster Session and Comparative Analysis</b>
<b>Class 13</b>	Read assigned material	<b>Systems Perspective:</b> Market linkages, brainstorming connections, and finding evidence.
<b>Class 14</b>	Text chapter & online quiz	Externalities (graphing exercises).

<b>Class 15</b>	Assigned reading & Discussion Post	Food externalities (graphing and applying data).
<b>Class 16</b>	Text chapter & online quiz	Health as a public good (graphing exercises).
<b>Class 17</b>	Select article for class; Rewrite abstract	Strategies for reading academic articles; Bibliographic annotations.
<b>Class 18</b>	Complete source outline for your article	Source outlining workshop.
<b>Class 19</b>	Prepare article to share; Discussion Post	Practice questions for Exam 3.
<b>Class 20</b>	Study	<b>Assessment 3: Exam</b>
<b>Class 21</b>	Listen to podcast & Discussion Post	<b>Market Perspective:</b> Monopoly power and pharmaceutical patents.
<b>Class 22</b>	Text chapter & online quiz	Monopsony power and the role of government.

<b>Class 23</b>	Assigned reading & Discussion Post	Debate Introduction (Patents & Govt. Negotiation); Team assignment.
<b>Class 24</b>	Team debate preparation (out of class)	Platform preparation and evidence gathering.
<b>Class 25</b>	Team debate preparation (out of class)	<b>Assessment 4: Class Debate</b>
<b>Class 26</b>	Recommendations for Reform Discussion Post	<b>Final Assessment: Policy Letter Due</b>

## Campus Policies & Resources

**Title IX / Sexual Misconduct:** Hartwick College is committed to a safe community. To report sexual misconduct, contact the Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@hartwick.edu](mailto:titleix@hartwick.edu) or (607) 431-4293. For confidential support, contact the Perrella Wellness Center (607-431-4120) or Opportunities for Otsego's Violence Intervention Program (607-432-4855). Faculty are mandatory reporters.

**Academic Accommodations:** If you need modifications due to a disability, contact Lara Sanford, Director of AccessAbility Services, at [sanfordl@hartwick.edu](mailto:sanfordl@hartwick.edu) as early as possible.

**Mental Health Support:** Free and confidential services are available through the Counseling Center at (607) 431-4420 or [counselingcenter@hartwick.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@hartwick.edu). You can also reach out to Heart (peer counseling) at (607) 431-5050.

**Departmental Incomplete Policy:** Incompletes ("I") are only given for extreme, uncontrollable circumstances (e.g., serious illness late in the semester) and must be approved by the entire Economics Department faculty. Unapproved missing final exams or assignments will receive a grade of zero.

**Inclement Weather Plan:** If campus closes due to weather, class will meet at the normal time via Zoom Link.