PROGRAMME: Interdepartmental Programme of Postgraduate Studies in Business Administration (MBA)

SPECIALIZATION: Management of Health Care Organizations

OPCIONAL COURSE: Health Economics

SEMESTER: 3rd

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Vassilis Aletras

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:
In this course the economic principles and methods are applied in the field of health care, thus providing the necessary academic knowledge and practical skills to those employed or aiming to be employed in the Department of Health, Regional Health Systems, hospitals and elsewhere (e.g. pharmaceutical companies).

The basic economic problem of resource scarcity is discussed and the market failures that stem from the idiosyncratic nature of the good “health care” are analyzed, along with potential government intervention aiming at restoring efficiency. Next, students will familiarize themselves with various policies and methods applied across countries in order to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the health care systems. These involve, for instance, the methods of reimbursing hospitals and doctors, manpower planning, the estimation of hospital efficiency, the economic evaluation of health care programmes and priority setting. Moreover, the problem of waiting lists will be approached and policies aiming at its solution will be critically evaluated.

Learning Goals:

Students will gain the ability to:

- Critically approach and synthesize health economics articles in order to be able to conduct research on the field or simply get a good understanding in any subject of Health Economics might interest them.
- Evaluate health care policies based on theoretical arguments and empirical evidence.
• Understand the peculiarities and problems of the Greek health care system, as well as of other selected health care systems abroad.
• Explain the basic characteristics of the good “health care”, the problems these create and possible policies adopted in order to ameliorate health care systems.
• Deal effectively with problems health care systems are facing today (e.g. waiting lists).
• Understand the approaches for planning and development of health care personnel and its limitations.
• Assess the quality of published economic evaluation studies.
• Apply cost-effectiveness analysis to resource allocation decisions.
• Participate in priority setting exercises since they will know the available methods and their relative strengths and weaknesses.

Assignments - Assessment:
Students will be asked to submit a printed assignment (word limit: 3000) on a topic suggested by the instructor (30% of the course total grade). This will help them be better prepared for the final exams. Their work will be presented with the use of Powerpoint during the semester. Final written exams carry a weight of 70%.

Contact Information:
Students can contact the instructor via e-mail (valetras@uom.gr, valetras@gmail.com), or phone (2310891505, 6973808128).

Suggested Textbook:

Other useful books:
Αλετράς, Β., Ματσαγγάνης, Μ., Νιάκας, Δ. (2002) Θέματα Οικονομικής και Χρηματοδοτικής Διαχείρισης Υπηρεσιών Υγείας, Τόμος Α', Ελληνικό Ανοικτό Πανεπιστήμιο, Πάτρα.

CONTENTS / LECTURES

1. INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH ECONOMICS

- The scope of Health Economics
- The economic problem
- Choice and opportunity costs
- Is health care different?
- Goals of health care systems
- Health care systems in more detail
2. THE NATURE OF “HEALTH CARE” AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

- Health and health care
- Demand for health care
- Health care as a private and as a public good
- Characteristics of health care
  - Asymmetric information
  - Supplier induced demand
  - Uncertainty
  - Insurance
  - Moral hazard
  - Adverse selection
  - Certain and interrelated risks
  - Externalities
  - Monopolies
- Means of public intervention
- Models of health system organization

References:
3. Υφαντόπουλος (2003), κεφ. 5.
3. HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURE IN GREECE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

- The European health care agenda
- Population policy and economic growth
- Mortality
- Quality of life
- Health and economic growth
- Health and inequalities
- Poverty and health in the EU
- Health care expenditure and economic growth
- Macro-economic convergence
- The challenge of new EU member states

References:
1. Υφαντόπουλος (2003), κεφ. 3.
2. Κοντούλη-Γείτονα (1997), κεφ. 7 & 8.
3. Σούλης (1998), κεφ. 3.
4. Θεοδόρου, Σαρρής, & Σούλης (2001), κεφ. 3.
5. Τούντας, Γ., Τριανταφύλλου, Δ., & Φρισηρας, Σ. (2000) Δείκτες Υγείας στην Ευρώπη, Αρχεία Ελληνικής Ιατρικής, 17(1), 89-100.

4. SUPPLIER-INDUCED DEMAND

- The doctor as an imperfect agent of the patient
- Theoretical approaches to SID
• Difficulties in estimating the magnitude of SID
• Empirical evidence on SID
• Policies implemented to tackle SID

References:
2. Υφαντόπουλος (2003), κεφ. 7.

5. FINANCING HEALTH CARE AND COST CONTAINMENT: THE PATIENT’S SIDE

- Uncertainty and insurance
- Problems of moral hazard and demand inducement
- Patient’s cost sharing
- Empirical evidence on the effect of cost sharing on utilization, costs, quality and access
- A critical evaluation of cost sharing

References:


6. FINANCING HEALTHCARE AND COSTS CONTAINMENT: THE PRODUCER’S SIDE

- The failure of non-price competition in USA during the ‘70s
- Cost containment policies
- Suppression of competition with price regulations
- Encouragement of price competition
- A critical evaluation of different cost containment financing methods
- Empirical evidence on the effect of different policies on efficiency, quality and access
References:
2. Αλετράς, Ματσαγγάνης & Νιάκας (2002), κεφ. 2.
4. Σουλιώτης (2000), κεφ. 3.
9. Νόμος 3918: Διαρθρωτικές αλλαγές στο σύστημα υγείας και άλλες διατάξεις. Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως Αρ. Φύλλου 31 2-3-2011.
11. Υπουργείο Υγείας και Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής (2013) Σχέδιο Δράσης για ένα καθολικό, ενιαίο και ολοκληρωμένο σύστημα Πρωτοβάθμιας Φροντίδας Υγείας. Αθήνα.
12. Σουλιώτης Κ και συν. (2013) Βασικά σημεία πρότασης για τη μεταρρύθμιση της Πρωτοβάθμιας Φροντίδας Υγείας. Μελέτη της Επιστημονικής Επιτροπής για την Υποστήριξη της Μεταρρύθμισης της Πρωτοβάθμιας Φροντίδας Υγείας.


### 7. REIMBURSEMENT OF DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS

- Doctor’s reimbursement
  - Salary
  - Fee-for-service
  - Capitation
  - Global budget
- Hospital’s reimbursement
  - Retrospective (cost-based) payment
  - Per diem
  - Fee-for-service
  - Global budget
  - DRGs

References:

2. Σουλιώτης (2000), κεφ. 3.
3. Υφαντόπουλος (2003), σελ. 438-452.
5. Θεοδώρου, Σαρρής, & Σούλης (2001), κεφ. 6.

8. THE HOSPITAL AS AN ECONOMIC ENTITY AND ITS EFFICIENCY

- The hospital as an economic entity: inputs - outputs – costs - quality
- The hospital’s objectives
- Economics of scale
- Economics of scope
- X efficiency
- Empirical estimates and suggestions for health care policy making

References:
2. Υφαντόπουλος (2003), κεφ. 10 & 11.
3. Τούντας (2008), κεφ. 15.

5. Αλετράς, Β. (1997) Θεωρητική και Εμπειρική Ανάλυση της Αποδοτικότητας τύπου Χ των Νοσοκομείων του Εθνικού Συστήματος Υγείας, Αρχεία Ελληνικής Ιατρικής, 14(6), 662-674.


7. Αλετράς, Β. (1998) Το Άριστο Μέγεθος των Νοσοκομείων του ΕΣΥ, Ελληνική Ιατρική, 64(5-6), 408-415.


9. WAITING LISTS

- Causes of waiting lists
- Policies tackling waiting lists
- Empirical evidence on waiting lists

References:

10. EPIDEMIOLOGY OF HEALTH IN GREECE AND EUROPEAN UNION (invited lecture by K. Christoglou)

- Analysis of epidemiologic data from Greece and the European Union
- Description and analysis of the levels of planning health care
- The Greek Health Chart

References:
1. Τούντας Γ. (Επιμέλεια) (2000) Η Υγεία στην Ελλάδα. Κέντρο Μελετών Υπηρεσιών Υγείας Εργαστηρίου Υγιεινής & Επιδημιολογίας Ιατρικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών.
2. Πηγές: ΕΣΥΕ, Hellastat, Eurostat
11. ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF HEALTH CARE PROGRAMMES

- Methods of economic evaluation
- A critical evaluation of economic evaluations
- Cost minimization analysis
- Cost effectiveness analysis
- Cost utility analysis
- Cost benefit analysis
- Empirical studies in economic evaluation

References:
2. Σούλης (1998), κεφ. 7.
4. Ματσαγγάνης, Μ. (1997) Η Οικονομική Διάσταση της Νόσου και το Κόστος των Πνευμονοπαθειών στην Ελλάδα, Πνεύμων, 10(1), 11-12.
5. Ματσαγγάνης, Μ., Γεωργάτου, Ν., & Μελισσηνός, Χ. (1997) Το Κόστος του Άσθματος στην Ελλάδα, Πνεύμων, 10(1), 40-52.
Cardiology guidelines for the management of arterial hypertension in Greece.  


### 12. PRIORITY SETTING IN HEALTH CARE

- The economic approach to priority setting
- Implicit priority setting
- The needs assessment approach
- Programme budgeting and marginal analysis
- QALY league tables

References:


