

**Faculty of Science Course Syllabus**  
**Department of Economics**  
*Economics 2231: Online Version*  
*Perspectives on Health Economics*  
*Winter 2021*

**Instructor:** Shelley Phipps

**Email:** shelley.phipps@dal.ca

**Office Hours:** These will be held via Brightspace 'Collaborate' (look under 'Content') on Mondays from 10 until 11:30 am Atlantic and on Tuesdays from 2:30 until 4 pm Atlantic.  
(These times may be changed after I know the time zones of all students in the class.)

**"Lectures":** I will post materials that can be viewed asynchronously each Monday morning.

---

### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to the role of economics in health, health care, and health policy. It comprises a survey of major topics in health economics and an introduction to ongoing debates over health care policy. Topics covered this term include the measurement of health, social and economic determinants of health, models of individual and family health behaviours, the Canadian health care system, health and the labour market, health externalities, child development, and health issues for an aging population.

### **Course Prerequisite**

*Economics 1101*

### **Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

- Develop a basic understanding of how economists apply theoretical models and empirical techniques to aid in understanding health issues/outcomes
- Become familiar with current issues in health/health care in Canada
- Begin to read/evaluate professional literature on health economics
- Enhance economic writing skills
- Learn to access, present, and analyse Canadian health economics data

## Course Materials

Powerpoint presentations with audio commentary posted on Brightspace, journal articles that can be accessed electronically via the Dalhousie library and occasional videos/podcasts.

### Online Access

When connecting to online resources, you are responsible for observing any applicable laws of the country you are connecting from.

You are responsible to establish whether you have access to all course material as soon as the term begins and before the ADD/DROP date (September 18th, 2020). If you do not have access to certain material, inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Alternative access methods are not guaranteed.

## Course Assessment (Winter 2021 online class version)

Component	Weight (% of final grade)	Date
Asynchronous participation through posts on Brightspace discussion board (weekly questions posted Mondays; due the following Monday)	10 (1 point each; must post 10/12)	Mondays, 4pm Atlantic
Essay Questions All weeks except when a mini-paper is due	6 (10 points each; best 6/7)	Wednesdays 4pm Atlantic
Mini-papers (2)	2 (15 each)	Wednesdays 4pm Atlantic (Feb 3; Mar 17)

**Conversion of numerical grades to Final Letter Grades follows the Dalhousie Common Grade Scale**

<b>A+</b> (90-100)	<b>B+</b> (77-79)	<b>C+</b> (65-69)	<b>D</b> (50-54)
<b>A</b> (85-89)	<b>B</b> (73-76)	<b>C</b> (60-64)	<b>F</b> (<50)
<b>A-</b> (80-84)	<b>B-</b> (70-72)	<b>C-</b> (55-59)	

**Dalhousie Definition/Explanation of above letter grades (17.1 undergraduate calendar)**

	Definition	Explanation
A+, A or A-	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyse and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
B+, B or B-	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
C+, C or C-	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.
D	Marginal Pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills
F	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter, weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

## Course Policies

ALL course work is to be completed independently; students are not allowed to work together on essay questions or mini-papers.

All work will be submitted through a dropbox on Brightspace and checked for plagiarism using 'Urkund.'

**Academic integrity must be respected in every aspect of the course.** You may not copy words written by someone else; nor may you take the words written by someone else and 'change them a little.' When you are using ideas/information/data you have taken from another source, you must acknowledge this with a parenthetical author/date reference in your text as well as an entry in your bibliography. Please ask me if you have any doubts; consult university policy in the link provided below.  
**Information:** [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

Students who cannot complete a course component on time because they are temporarily ill or have a family emergency, etc must complete and submit the 'Student Declaration of Absence' form via the dropbox on Brightspace. Following university policy, at most 2 such forms can be submitted in a one-semester class. If you have longer-term health issues, contact Patricia Laws, Assistant Dean (Student Affairs).

[https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university\\_secretariat/policy-repository/Student%20Absence%20Regulation%20\(May%202018\)%20\(3\).pdf](https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university_secretariat/policy-repository/Student%20Absence%20Regulation%20(May%202018)%20(3).pdf)

We will count the best 6/7 essay questions. If you miss one due to an illness/emergency, we will simply count that as the one to be dropped.

Discussion board posts are worth a maximum of 1 point each. You will receive the full point if your post engages clearly with the course material; posts showing less effort will receive only 0.5. You are only required to post responses on the bulletin board in 10/12 weeks; missing one due to ill health can thus be one of your 'free' weeks.

Both mini-papers must be completed to pass the course. Please contact me through email to make arrangements if you will be late due to an illness/emergency.

**Schedule of Topics:****Week One: Jan 6 – Jan 10****Introduction****What is health?****What is health economics?****Week Two: Jan 11 – Jan 17****Measuring Health****Measuring health Vital Statistics****Measuring health with survey microdata****New forms of data for measuring health****Long-term health trends****Some current health issues in Canada****Week Three: Jan 18 - 24****Social and economic determinants of population health****Avoiding unnecessary deaths in a rich country****Inequalities in health in Canada****Week Four: Jan 25 – Jan 31****Social and economic determinants of population health (cont'd)****Policies to reduce poverty/inequality****Gender as a social determinant of health****Week Five: Feb 1 – Feb 7 (Munroe Day on Feb 5)****Overview of the Canadian health care system****Overview****Out-of-pocket expenditures****Overview of econometrics****Access to Care****Week Six: Feb 8 – Feb 14****Prescription Drugs****Economics of health insurance and physician behaviour****Mandatory prescription drug coverage in Quebec****Pharmacare for Canada?****Reading Week: Feb 15 – Feb 21****Week Seven: Feb 22 – Feb 28****Physician labour supply and Grossman model of health behaviour****Family models of physician labour supply****Fee for service, capitation, salary****Grossman model of individual health behaviour**



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Week Eight: March 1 – March 7**

**Policies to improve health motivated by the Grossman perspective**

**Health externalities**

**Taxes, subsidies, regulation**

**Behavioural economics and health behaviour**

**Week Nine: March 8 – March 14**

**Lessons from Behavioural Economics**

**Week Ten: March 15 – March 21**

**Child Health and Development**

**Family models of health ‘production’**

**Poverty and healthy child development**

**Health ‘externalities’ within families**

**Week Eleven: March 22 – March 28**

**Health and the Labour Market**

**Unemployment, economic stress and health**

**Disability and labour market outcomes**

**Week Twelve: March 29 – April 4**

**Health Issues for an Aging Population**

**Chronic health problems and labour market participation**

**Geographic differences in access to care**

**Caregiving for seniors**

**(April 2 = Good Friday and April 4 = Easter Sunday) + April 8 = last day of term**

## University Policies and Statements

**This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and by Senate**

### Missed or Late Academic Requirements due to Student Absence

As per Senate decision instructors may not require medical notes of students who must miss an academic requirement, **including the final exam**, for courses offered during fall or winter 2020-21 (until April 30, 2021). Information on regular policy, including the use of the Student Declaration of Absence can be found here: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-late-academic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-late-academic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html).

### Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

**Information:** [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

### Accessibility

The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (Canada and Nova Scotia).

**Information:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/accessibility.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)

### Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

**Code:** [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html)

### Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness

**Statement:** <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

### Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre (1321 Edward St) ([elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca)).

**Information:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

### Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)

[https://www.dal.ca/academics/important\\_dates.html](https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html)

### University Grading Practices

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html)

## Student Resources and Support

### Advising

**General Advising** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html)

**Science Program Advisors:** <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/current-students/academic-advising.html>

**Indigenous Student Centre:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

**Black Students Advising Centre:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/black-student-advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html)

**International Centre:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/international-centre/current-students.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre/current-students.html)

### Academic supports

**Library:** <https://libraries.dal.ca/>

**Writing Centre:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)

**Studying for Success:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html)

**Copyright Office:** <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>

**Fair Dealing Guidelines** <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fair-dealing.html>

### Other supports and services

**Student Health & Wellness Centre:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/health-and-wellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html)

**Student Advocacy:** <https://dsu.ca/dsas>

**Ombudsperson:** [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html)

### Safety

**Biosafety:** <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/biosafety.html>

**Chemical Safety:** <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/chemical-safety.html>

**Radiation Safety:** <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/radiation-safety.html>

**Scent-Free Program:** <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>