



Valuing Medicines: Drug Pricing and Healthcare Decisions

HCISR_ECONPUBH 340_01012026

HEALTH ECONOMICS • PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY • HEALTHCARE DECISION SCIENCE

Credits

3

Contact Hours

40

Term

Summer

Course Description

This course examines a fundamental challenge in modern healthcare: how health systems determine whether a new medicine provides sufficient value to justify its cost. Students explore the economic frameworks used in pharmaceutical pricing and reimbursement decisions, as well as the role of clinical evidence in evaluating new medicines.

Students analyze epidemiological and healthcare expenditure data to understand how economic evidence informs healthcare resource allocation and reimbursement decisions. The course introduces key approaches in health economic evaluation, including cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), quality-adjusted life years (QALYs), and budget impact analysis.

Seminar discussion is combined with applied data workshops, site-based academic activities, and guest lectures from health policy professionals. By the end of the course, students prepare a Policy Brief recommending whether a health system should reimburse a new pharmaceutical intervention, drawing on both quantitative evidence and policy considerations.

Course Requirements

Required Text

Digital access and/or copies will be provided at no cost to students.

Additional Readings and Resources

Course readings will be provided through instructor-selected academic articles, policy reports, and digital resources related to health economic evaluation, pharmaceutical pricing, and healthcare resource allocation. Materials may include selected readings on cost-effectiveness analysis, quality-adjusted life years (QALYs), and international approaches to health technology assessment.

Assignments

Course Requirements	Percentages
Class Participation and Seminar Discussion	15%
Data Interpretation Exercises	25%
Economic Evaluation Case Study	25%
Final Policy Brief	35%
Total	100%

Assignment Descriptions

1

Class Participation and Seminar Discussion

Students are expected to actively participate in seminar discussions based on assigned readings and case materials. Participation includes contributing to guided discussions on pharmaceutical pricing, healthcare resource allocation, and policy trade-offs in drug reimbursement decisions.

2

Data Interpretation Exercises

Students complete short analytical exercises interpreting epidemiological and healthcare expenditure datasets. These assignments focus on developing skills in reading quantitative evidence used in health economic evaluation and understanding how such evidence informs resource allocation and reimbursement decisions.

3

Economic Evaluation Case Study

Students analyze a structured case involving the economic evaluation of a pharmaceutical intervention. Using simplified cost-effectiveness frameworks, students interpret clinical outcomes, treatment costs, and estimated health benefits in order to assess the value of a medical technology.

4

Final Policy Brief

Students prepare a short policy brief recommending whether a healthcare system should reimburse a new pharmaceutical intervention. The brief requires students to synthesize clinical evidence, economic evaluation results, and policy considerations in order to defend a resource allocation recommendation.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A+	98-100
A	94-97
A-	91-93
B+	88-90
B	84-87
B-	81-83

Grade	Percentage
C+	78-80
C	74-77
C-	71-73
D	60-70
F	Below 60

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

On completion of the course, students should be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Course Requirement(s) that will be used to assess the student's achievement of this outcome
Analyze the economic factors influencing pharmaceutical pricing and reimbursement decisions in contemporary healthcare systems.	Seminar participation and case discussions
Interpret epidemiological and healthcare expenditure data in order to assess the economic value of medical interventions.	Data interpretation exercises
Apply basic health economic evaluation frameworks, including cost-effectiveness analysis and budget impact analysis.	Economic evaluation case study
Evaluate the trade-offs involved in healthcare resource allocation using quantitative and policy evidence.	Case study and seminar discussion
Construct a concise policy brief recommending whether a health system should reimburse a pharmaceutical intervention.	Final Policy Brief

Course Outline

Week	Topic	Planned Activities & Field Components
Week 1	Introduction to Health Economic Evaluation	Introductory seminar; analysis of pharmaceutical innovation and health system decision-making; introduction to economic evaluation concepts; evaluation of healthcare resource allocation decisions. site-based seminar on the Greek healthcare system.
Week 2	Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA) and QALYs	Applied data workshop; interpretation of clinical and epidemiological datasets related to chronic disease outcomes; introduction to cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) and quality-adjusted life years (QALYs); guest lecture on prevention and public health; academic day excursion to Aegina including a Mediterranean diet workshop.
Week 3	Pharmaceutical Pricing and Economic Evaluation	Case study analysis of a pharmaceutical intervention related to chronic disease management (e.g., cardiovascular disease); evaluation of clinical outcomes and treatment costs; discussion of pricing and reimbursement frameworks; three-day academic excursion focused on health and medicine. (e.g., Nafplio, Epidaurus, or Delphi).
Week 4	Health Policy, Resource Allocation, and Policy Brief	Policy debate on healthcare resource allocation; Site visit to a pharmaceutical or health policy organization; development of Policy Brief; final Policy Brief presentations.

Other Policies

Expectations

The HCISR academic community encourages civility, respect for the rights and opinions of others, and academic integrity. Students are required to comply with principles of academic integrity and bear responsibility for their academic work. All submitted academic work must represent the student's original work and appropriately cite all sources used. Any act of academic misconduct, including fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, cheating, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will result in disciplinary action.

Attendance/Participation

The academic program is organized around classroom instruction and structured experiential learning. Attendance is therefore crucial to academic success. Prompt attendance, full preparation, and active participation in all class sessions, applied workshops, and supervised site visits are required. There are no unexcused absences. Repeated absences will negatively affect the student's grade.

In the case of illness, students must notify the course coordinator by SMS or WhatsApp at +30 697 483 1229 at least 30 minutes prior to the start of class.

Course Policies

For official course communications, students must use their Arcadia University email account. Students are responsible for any information provided by email or through the designated learning management system. This syllabus is subject to change, and any updates will be communicated through official course channels.

Academic Integrity & Student Policies

Plagiarism

Representation of another's work or ideas as one's own in academic submissions is plagiarism, and is cause for disciplinary action. Cheating is actual or attempted use of resources not authorized by the instructor(s) for academic submissions. Students caught cheating in this course will receive a failing grade. Fabrication is the falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submissions, and cause for disciplinary action.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading unless prior arrangements have been approved by the instructor due to documented extenuating circumstances.

Students with Disabilities

Persons with documented disabilities requiring accommodations to meet the expectations of this course should disclose this information during program enrollment and prior to the start of term so that appropriate academic arrangements may be made.

Incident Reporting and Compliance with Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policies

The Hellenic Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and Research (HCISR) serves as the on-site academic and operational provider for this course. Students experiencing any incident impacting their safety, well-being, or academic participation—including, but not limited to, reports of possible crime, behavioral issues, discrimination or harassment, sexual misconduct, hospitalization, other health concerns, or issues prompting early program departure ("Incidents")—are encouraged to immediately contact HCISR staff for local support and guidance.

Arcadia University, as the School of Record, is committed to supporting students abroad who are affected by such incidents. This may include academic and classroom supportive measures. While Title IX does not extend to classes off U.S. soil, Arcadia University complies, where applicable, with its **University's Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment** and relevant laws for all programs operating under its auspices. Information regarding formal reporting procedures and available student support resources is provided in the **Arcadia Student Handbook**.

Prerequisites

No formal prerequisites. The course is open to undergraduate students from a range of academic backgrounds. Basic familiarity with statistics, economics, or public health concepts may be helpful but is not required.

Country and Program Connection

This course is delivered within the **Ascle+ Athens Experience**, an interdisciplinary academic program based in Athens, Greece, offered by the **Hellenic Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and Research (HCISR)**. The program integrates public health, health policy, and applied health sciences through structured academic coursework and field-based learning.

Based in Greece, the course examines how European health systems evaluate pharmaceutical innovation, manage healthcare expenditures, and make reimbursement decisions within constrained public budgets. Students engage with site-based academic learning and expert guest lectures that complement the course's academic content and provide broader perspectives on health and medicine. The course complements the program's interdisciplinary focus on health, prevention, and evidence-based decision-making within the broader Athens-based curriculum.

© Hellenic Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and Research (HCISR). All rights reserved.



This syllabus and all related academic content are the intellectual property of HCISR. Unauthorized reproduction, adaptation, or distribution is prohibited.

HCISR | ASCLE+ ATHENS EXPERIENCE — SUMMER 2027

Ready to Study Health Economics in Greece?

Join a cohort of American undergraduate students examining pharmaceutical pricing, healthcare decision-making, and public health policy — in one of the world's most compelling academic settings.

[Apply now](#)

[Learn About Arcadia Abroad](#)

ARCADIA
ABROAD