



INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

MPH222 Health economics: foundations, areas of application and methodology, 15 credits

Hälsoekonomi: utgångspunkter, tillämpningsområden och metodik, 15

högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Institute of Medicine on 2019-10-10 and was last revised on 2022-10-24 to be valid from 2024-01-15, spring semester of 2024.

Field of education: Medicine 100%

Department: Institute of Medicine

Position in the educational system

The course is a part of the Master's Programme in Public Health Science. The course can also be offered as a freestanding course on advanced level.

The course can be part of the following programme: 1) Master's Programme in Public Health Science (M2PHP)

Main field of studies

Public Health Sciences

Specialization

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

Qualification for admission to the course requires professional degree/Bachelor's degree of at least 180 credits in a health science, social science, science, economics, arts or engineering field of education and grade Passed/E in English B/English 6.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Describe theories of demand and supply and how it can be applied in the areas of individual health behavior, public health and health care
- Orally and in writing, explain public health program evaluation theory and methods of health economic evaluations

Competence and skills

- Apply microeconomic concepts to analyze consequences of public policies on economic efficiency and the distribution of health and utilization of health services
- Independently identify and formulate research questions to conduct a public health program evaluation, including a health economic evaluation

Judgement and approach

- Analyze and critically draw conclusions of health economics research, its strength, limitations, and applicability to understand population health
- Identify and discuss challenges and dilemmas in public health program evaluation methods, including health economic evaluation, as a research and policy tool
- Critically reflect on the relationship between health economic tools and ethical considerations in evaluation and priority setting in the public health area

Course content

The course consist of two major parts: (1) microeconomic analyses of public health policy, and (2) theories and methods used to assess the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of public health interventions and policys.

The first part introduces basic microeconomic theories and concepts and how these can be applied to understand and analyze health behavior, health care and public health policy, such as; theories of demand and supply, production and delivery of health and health care, financing of health services, adverse selection and moral hazard, economic analyses of the pharmaceutical market and innovation. Throughout the first part of the course, the theories and methods will be presented, discussed, and analyzed in relation to applications to public health topics and policy.

The second part of the course deals with methods to evaluate public health interventions and policy, both in terms of efficacy and effectiveness (e.g. effects on a certain health outcome) and in terms of the cost-effectiveness. Considering that interventions in the public health area often lack evidence from randomized experimental studies, a particularly important part of the second part refers to if, when, and how causal conclusions can be drawn from non-experimental evaluation studies. Theories and methods to assess cost-effectiveness will include how to identify, measure, and value economic costs, health outcomes and benefits from public health interventions, and specifically how to relate benefits to costs. Methods to analyze and assess the

uncertainty from evaluation studies will also be an important section in the second part of the course. Finally, the second part of the course will also include a section where health economic, ethical and distributional theories and perspectives are jointly discussed in terms of how they can be used as inputs to public health and health care priority setting and decision making.

Form of teaching

Lectures, seminars, computer labs, and individual home assignments.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

The course will be examined through:

- two individual written exams

A student who has taken two exams in a course or part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner. The student needs to contact the department for a new examiner, preferably in writing, and this should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

If a student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for special educational support, where it is compatible with the learning outcomes of the course and provided that no unreasonable resources are required, the examiner may decide to allow the student to sit an adjusted exam or alternative form of assessment.

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, but no more than two years, after the course has ceased/been changed. The same applies to placements and professional placements (VFU), although this is restricted to just one additional examination session.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

In order to Pass the course (G), a student has to complete both the individual written exams (see under “Assessment”) with a Passing grade (G).

To Pass with Distinction (VG), a student has to earn a Pass with distinction (VG) on both the individual written exams.

Course evaluation

The course evaluation is carried out in writing and orally with the students. The course leader is responsible for analyzing the evaluations and giving propositions for development. The analysis and propositions of development is shared with the students through the program council. The result and potential changes should be shared to both the students who carried out the evaluation and the students that are about to start the course.