



Course Title: Economics of Health and Population

Course Coordinator: Dr Christopher J Gerry

Course Code: SEESGS38

Course Prerequisites: Introductory Level Economics

Credit Value: 15 (6 ECTS) Runs in (2013/14): Term 2

Contact hours: 2 hours per week

Compulsory for: Core for MA Comparative Economics and Policy

Open to: Students on Comparative Economics and Policy; Comparative Business Economics; IMESS (all tracks); MRes; Other social science or health related Masters (*dependent upon personal timetable and availability*).

Course Outline

This is an economics course designed to develop the tools which enable us to examine and understand patterns in population health. The course is structured around three overlapping thematic blocks:

- (i) *Health outcomes and distribution (what is health?);*
- (ii) *Health determinants (why are some people healthy and others not?);*
- (iii) *Systems and policies: how should society intervene in health?*

Introducing Health Economics, through these 3 organising 'containers' we are able to analyse the nature of and explanations for diverging outcomes in population health within and between countries and to consider the rationale and potential for different types of intervention. While rooted in a broad economic approach we are necessarily open to multi- and interdisciplinary thinking as we seek to develop a narrative to promote improved understanding and communication across the disciplines and among different stakeholders. There is though some technical economics material.

At the end of the course you will have acquired:

- i. A clearer understanding of global 'health and population' – the stylised facts and the challenges ahead.
- ii. An Introduction to the approach of Health Economics.
- iii. Greater ability to critically evaluate evidence relating to health and population.
- iv. Capacity to understand and contribute to debates around population health.
- v. An analytical framework for constructing arguments for and evaluating evidence concerning population health and associated government interventions.
- vi. Skills of working critically with academic literature and particularly with empirical information.
- vii. Improved critical thinking and analytical skills.

Assessment Methods

Assessment Style: Coursework and two-hour Written Exam

Assessment Weighting: 50% - 50%

Feedback

Coursework: Verbal/written feedback on presentations, assessed and non-assessed coursework.

Examination: Students will be permitted access to markers' comments on individual scripts in line with the SSEES Policy on Examination Feedback.

Reading

There is no single core text for this course, but we will draw principally on the following textbook:

Folland, S., Goodman, AC. and Stano, M. (2013) *The Economics of Health and Health Care*, Seventh edition, Pearson.

Examples of other reading:

Kindig, David, A. (2007) Understanding Population Health Terminology. *The Millbank Quarterly*, Vol. 85, No. 1. Pp. 139-161.

Meslé, F. & Vallin, J. (2011) *Historical Trends in Mortality* in International Handbook of Adult Mortality.

Gerry, C.J. (2012) The Journals are full of great studies but can we believe the statistics? Revisiting the Mass Privatisation – Mortality debate. *Social Science & Medicine* Vol. 75(1) pp. 14-22.

Rosin, O. (2008) The Economic Causes of Obesity: A survey. *Journal of Economic Surveys*. Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 617-647.