

ONLINE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HEALTH ECONOMICS (MG017)

Brochure for 2011



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BACKGROUND

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is South Africa's oldest university. It was founded in 1829 as the South African College, and developed into a university between 1880 and 1900. Today UCT is recognised internationally as Africa's leading research university. With more than 70 specialist units, UCT is home to more than a quarter of South Africa's A-rated scientists. Regarding teaching, particular emphasis is placed on postgraduate studies and around 30% of students are enrolled in postgraduate programmes.

The Health Economics Unit (HEU) was formally established in 1990 as a division of the School of Public Health and Family Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences. In recognition of the limited opportunities for postgraduate study in health economics within Africa and the importance of capacity development within this discipline, the HEU is delighted to offer the first online Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics to be available from an African university.

The curriculum gives a thorough introduction to economics as applied to health and the health care sector, covering areas such as efficiency, equity, resource allocation, priority setting, economic evaluation, health care financing, economics of health systems and current development in health economics.

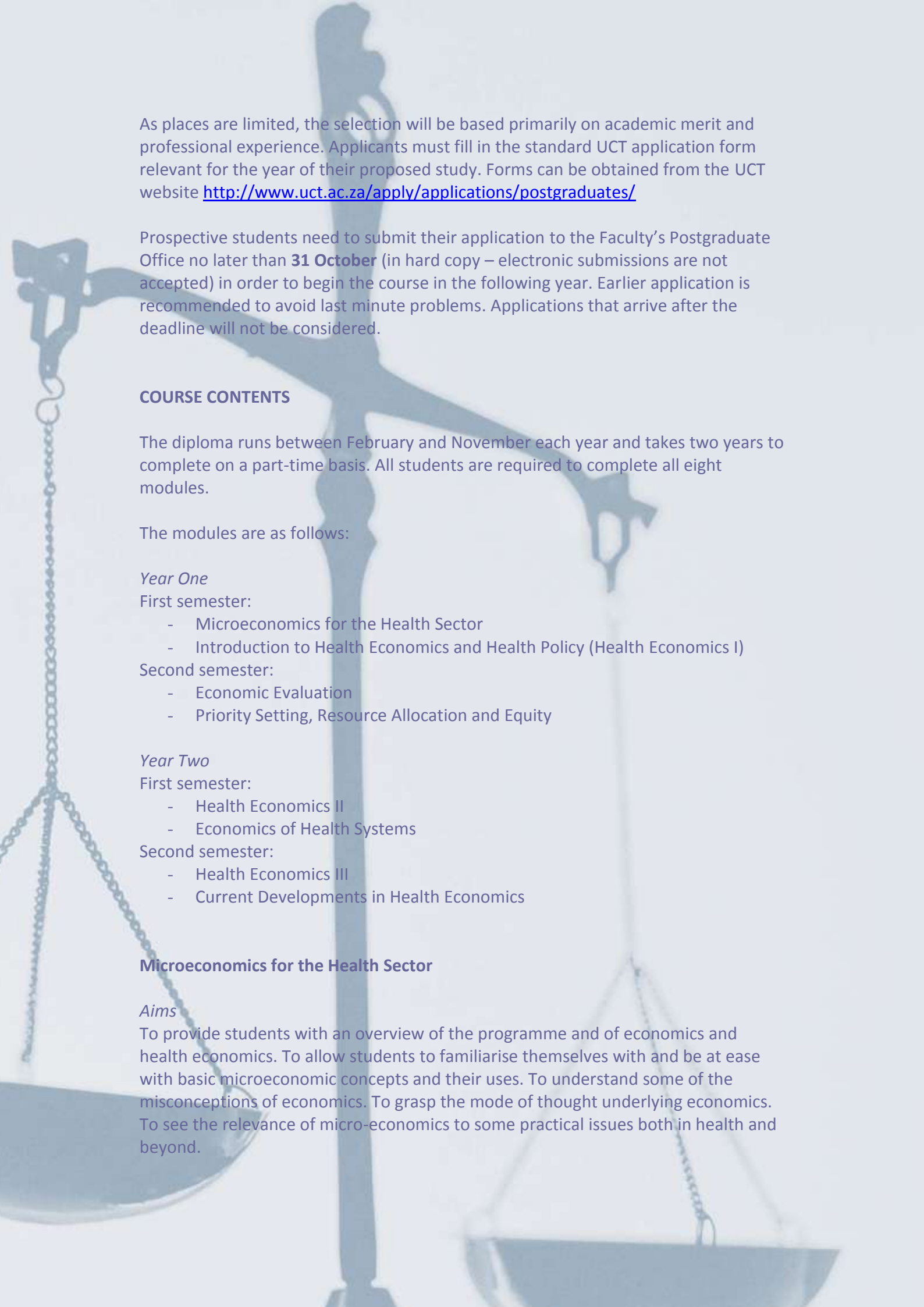
This diploma was initially developed by Prof Gavin Mooney and has been run for a number of years from Curtin University in Australia. The curriculum has now been reoriented to increase relevance to developing country audiences.

MODE OF LEARNING

This is an online diploma. At the start of each module, students will receive a login and password that will allow them to access the course materials from the programme's website. Course materials include formal materials such as books, journal articles and book chapters, and less formal materials such as study notes, learning questions, and commentary that will help students to maximise their benefit from the formal materials. Students will also be assigned a tutor who can be contacted at any time with specific questions. Detailed feedback will be given on assignments. A one week contact session will be offered annually which will give students the opportunity to interact with their fellow students and tutors and to broaden skills by engaging in "real-life" case studies.

TARGET AUDIENCE, ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The course is designed for graduates in social or health sciences. The entry requirement is at least an undergraduate degree in economics, health and social sciences, or equivalent, from an approved university. Fluency in English, both written and spoken, is also required. Medical doctors and other medical graduates must have demonstrated an interest in public health and an interest in economics.



As places are limited, the selection will be based primarily on academic merit and professional experience. Applicants must fill in the standard UCT application form relevant for the year of their proposed study. Forms can be obtained from the UCT website <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/applications/postgraduates/>

Prospective students need to submit their application to the Faculty's Postgraduate Office no later than **31 October** (in hard copy – electronic submissions are not accepted) in order to begin the course in the following year. Earlier application is recommended to avoid last minute problems. Applications that arrive after the deadline will not be considered.

COURSE CONTENTS

The diploma runs between February and November each year and takes two years to complete on a part-time basis. All students are required to complete all eight modules.

The modules are as follows:

Year One

First semester:

- Microeconomics for the Health Sector
- Introduction to Health Economics and Health Policy (Health Economics I)

Second semester:

- Economic Evaluation
- Priority Setting, Resource Allocation and Equity

Year Two

First semester:

- Health Economics II
- Economics of Health Systems

Second semester:

- Health Economics III
- Current Developments in Health Economics

Microeconomics for the Health Sector

Aims

To provide students with an overview of the programme and of economics and health economics. To allow students to familiarise themselves with and be at ease with basic microeconomic concepts and their uses. To understand some of the misconceptions of economics. To grasp the mode of thought underlying economics. To see the relevance of micro-economics to some practical issues both in health and beyond.



Topics

- Introduction to economics and health economics.
- Basic concepts of economics
- Medicine and economics – some value issues
- Economics at work in health care
- Demand and Supply
- Production
- Costs
- The power of the margin
- The health care market
- Basic welfare economics
- Cost benefit analysis
- Political economy and institutional economics

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Introduction to Health Economics and Health Policy (Health Economics I)

Aims

To give students an introduction to the scope and content of the sub-discipline of health economics. To explain the reasons why health care differs from other commodities and the basis of market failure in health care. To set health economics in the context of other relevant disciplines and issues such as epidemiology, medical ethics, medical sociology, etc.

Topics

- Health economic and health policy
- Health status measurement
- Market failure
- Demand and need
- Economic evaluation
- Medical ethics and efficiency
- Equity
- Hospital financing
- Financing and organisation
- Some reflections on health economics

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Economic Evaluation

Aims

To provide students with the theoretical and practical background to economic evaluation including cost effectiveness analysis, cost utility analysis and cost benefit analysis and the knowledge of when to use which. To give students the skills to critique articles using economic evaluation.



Topics

- Concepts and theory
- Techniques: cost benefit, cost utility and cost effectiveness analysis
- QALYs, health status measurement and other benefits
- Costing and other issues
- Case studies in CEA and CUA
- Case studies in CBA, willingness to pay and conjoint analysis
- Reviews of economic evaluations
- How useful is economic evaluation?

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Priority Setting, Resource Allocation and Equity

Aims

To provide students with an overview of the economic approaches (and other approaches) to priority setting in terms of both efficiency and equity.

Topics

- Review of priority setting
- Programme budgeting and marginal analysis
- PBMA in practice
- Burden of disease and priority setting
- Communitarian claims
- Equity in principle and in practice
- The future of priority setting

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Health Economics II

Aims

To build on Health Economics I to give students a deeper understanding of the sub-discipline.

Topics

- Agency and supplier induced demand
- Equity revisited
- Medical practice variations
- Paying doctors and paying patients
- Health

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.



Economics of Health Systems

Aims

To allow students to understand and critique in economic terms different forms of organisation and financing of health care systems.

Topics

- Funding health care: general
- Funding through the market
- What are health care systems trying to do?
- Is there an optimal size of the health care system?
- How do we judge health care systems?
- What do we mean by quality
- What about public health?

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Health Economics III

Aims

To extend the breadth and depth of students' knowledge of health economics from that covered in Health Economic I and Health Economics II. This course will provide greater insights than was possible in these earlier modules.

Topics

- Community values in resource allocation decision making; theoretical basis of conjoint analysis; methodological issues in the application of conjoint analysis
- Mortality indicators and gender differences
- Globalisation and global public goods
- Competition revisited

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.

Current Developments in Health Economics

Aims

To expose students to new and exciting topics in health economics and provide an overall critique of the whole sub-discipline.

Content

Will vary with each course so as to reflect what is happening at the 'cutting edge' of health economics.

Assessment: Two assignments, each worth 50% of the course mark.



ASSESSMENT

Assessment takes the form of continuous assessment – there is no final examination. Students will be assessed on the basis of written assignments throughout the course. There are two assignments per module, each of which must be submitted for completion of each module. If a student fails an assignment (mark of less than 50%) he or she may rewrite, but a maximum mark of 50% will be awarded. A sub-minimum of 40% is required for each assignment in order to complete a module. Each module is weighted equally in calculating the final mark for the diploma.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR RE-REGISTRATION

A student who fails to meet the following minimum requirements may be refused permission to renew his/her registration for the diploma:

- (a) In each year of study the student shall complete at least half the courses/modules for which he/she is registered, with the exception of the final year of study in which the student will be expected to complete the requirements for the diploma.
- (b) Except by permission of the Senate, a student shall not be permitted to renew his/her registration for the degree if he/she fails the same course or module during more than one assessment cycle (a cycle being a set of two assignments and, if awarded, a re-evaluation).
- (c) The student shall satisfactorily complete all course requirements of the programme within four years.

PROGRESSION RULES

Students should complete the first-year modules before progressing to the second-year modules. The programme convenor will consider deviations on a case-by-case basis.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSING

Students are required to achieve an average of 50% in each module.

DISTINCTION

The Diploma may be awarded with distinction.

TEACHING STAFF

Staff of the HEU will be available to assist students with any questions and will provide detailed feedback on the assignments. The HEU is widely recognised as the leading research and training institution in the field of health economics in Africa. Our academic staff members are:

S Cleary, BA Rhodes Hons (Econ) MA (Econ) PhD Cape Town
D McIntyre, BCom (Hons) MA (Econ) PhD Cape Town
E Sinanovic, Bsc (Econ) *Zagreb* Postgrad Dip (Financial Management) *Maastricht*
MCom (Health Economics) Cape Town PhD (Health Economics) *Lond*
V Govender MPH (International Health) Boston MCom (Health Econ) Cape Town
J Ataguba, BSc (Econ) Nigeria MPH (Health Econ) Cape Town
S Silal B.Bus.Sci (Quant Fin. Statistics) UCT
E Worku BA (Econ) Addis Ababa University Ethiopia, MA (Monetary Econ) India, PhD (Econ) UWC

FEES

Fees will be set by UCT and published towards the end of the year. The fees are charged for each module and separate fees apply for international students who are not citizens of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). UCT does not grant any fee waivers.

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