Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Epidemiology 9574S
Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
Winter 2018

Time:
Monday: 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Thursday: 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Room K116

Instructor: Sisira Sarma
Office Hours: Monday 3:30 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.
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Teaching Assistant: Zhe (Claudia) Li
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Office Hours: TBA

Course Information

Prerequisite: 9572Q or equivalent

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from the Graduate Chair to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus

This course is designed to provide students with theoretical foundations and empirical methods to evaluate health interventions from an economics perspective. More emphasis will be placed on the methods to evaluate health programs, policies and interventions arising in the field of modern health economics. The topics to be covered are: cost-effectiveness analysis, cost-benefit analysis, decision-analytic models and sensitivity analysis. This course will also provide students with a hands-on experience in constructing simple decision-analytic models to conduct economics evaluation using TreeAge Pro software package.

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this term, students should be able to:

- critically appraise published literature on health economic evaluations;
- identify the differences among cost-minimization, cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost-utility analyses and know the strengths and weaknesses of each technique;
- understand the importance of perspective, time horizon and discounting in economic evaluation; and
- build simple decision-analytic models to conduct cost-effectiveness analysis and sensitivity analysis using TreeAge Pro software package.

**Software:**
We will be using TreeAge Pro 2017 software packages. Students in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics are eligible to claim reimbursement of the cost of the TreeAge Pro 2017 Student Version (@ US$45) upon submission of receipts. A group session will be organized with Sarah Guerrero for the expense claim reimbursement process.

**Course Materials**

**Textbook:**
There is no assigned textbook for this course. We will instead focus on selected materials from several books, journal articles and handouts. This course will cover core health economics evaluation topics and selected advanced topics depending in part on the interests of students and availability of time.

**Useful Texts:**

**Health Economic Evaluation:**

I. Health Economic Evaluation

Cost-effectiveness, Cost-utility and Cost-benefit Analyses

Readings: Drummond et al. Chapters 5-7; Gray et al., Chapters 2,5.


Additional journal articles may be assigned.

II. Modelling in Health Economic Evaluation

Gray et al., Chapters 8-11
Briggs et al., Chapters 2-4
TreeAge Pro Suite 2017 User’s Manual, Chapters 32-36, 38, 40. Williamstown (MA): TreeAge Software Inc.


Additional journal articles may be assigned.

**Methods of Evaluation**

In order to really understand applied health economics analysis, you need to have the experience of doing it by yourself. Assignments during the term will include problem solving exercises. Some problems will involve use of TreeAge Pro and STATA software packages to find solutions. You will be practicing the necessary steps to learn how to ask your software package for what you want and then how to interpret and explain the results.

The assignments will be based on lecture material, assigned readings from the textbooks, journal articles and all other assigned course materials. You are allowed to work together with your fellow classmates on the assignments, but the answers and interpretation of the results and analysis should be your own. The course assessment will be based on class participation and presentation, four assignments, and a final project.

The course requirements and their weights in the final grade are as follows:

- 5% - Regular class attendance, class participation and presentation
- 20% - Two Assignments: January 22, February 15 (dates are subject to change)
- 25% - Literature Review and Project Proposal: February 20, 2018

**Your project proposal should have the following components:**

- The study rationale: clinical and/or economic significance must be clearly written upfront.
- A comprehensive review of the previous literature, including any relevant meta-analysis.
- If your project involves cost-effectiveness analysis, you must propose a decision-analytic model as your analytical framework. If your project does not involve cost-effectiveness analysis, you need to use an alternative modelling framework (you are encouraged to discuss the project with the instructor in advance).

**Policy on Accommodation for Medical and Non-Medical Absences**
For assignments worth 10% or more, refer to Western University’s Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm.

All non-medical absences must be approved in advance. In the case of an unexpected absence on compassionate grounds, documentation may be requested. If documentation is required by the instructor for either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean`s office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean`s office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

Statement on Academic Offences
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Support Services
As part of a successful student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western’s Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca/, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate or undergraduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html

To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/module.html. This module is 30 minutes in length and provides participants with a basic understanding of mental health issues and of available campus and community resources. Topics include stress, anxiety, depression, suicide and eating disorders. After successful completion of the module, participants receive a certificate confirming their participation.

Department & Faculty Offices
The Epidemiology & Biostatistics main office is located in K201 in the Kresge Building on Main campus.
For undergraduate academic counselling assistance, students will need to speak with the Bachelor of Medical Sciences Office: http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/bmsc/general-counselling.

Technology Requirements
You are responsible for all required course materials and announcements posted to the course’s OWL website. Please ensure after the first class that when you log in you are able to access the course site. A copy of the course outline will be available on both OWL and the departmental website.