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[Andrea Estrada](#)

Economics Forum to Focus on U.S. Health Care and Obesity

While the United States spends more money on health care than many other wealthy nations, in general, Americans haven't achieved the longer life expectancies that might be anticipated. This fact has led to criticism that the U.S. health care system is inefficient. New research providing a disciplined, quantitative means of comparing health care productivity among countries, however, reveals the poor performance is due mostly to high levels of obesity. Once that factor is taken into account, the U.S. falls within an average range.

That new research will be examined in a talk by H.E. (Ted) Frech, III, professor of economics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, at a UCSB Affiliates Economics Forum on Tuesday, Jan. 30. Speaking on "Health Care, Mortality and Obesity--Is the U.S. Special?" Frech will discuss international comparisons of health care productivity, including the subtle benefits and challenges of different health care systems, which cannot be quantified or modeled.

The lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 21 E. Constance St. Admission is \$8 for UCSB Affiliates or Chancellor's Council members and \$10 for the general public. Advance registration is recommended by calling the UCSB Office of Community Relations at 893-4388.

Frech, who earned his masters and doctoral degrees in economics at UCLA, received his bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Missouri. In addition to

directing the master's degree program in economics at UCSB, he is an adjunct professor at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, and an adjunct scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He has served on the faculties of Harvard University and the University of Chicago. His research has covered a variety of topics, including industrial organizations, antitrust, health economics, public policy, the tort system, mergers, market definition, predatory pricing, and health insurance. He has published over 100 articles and books, including "Is the United States an Outlier in Health Care and Health Outcomes: A Preliminary Analysis," which appeared in the International Journal of Health Care Finance and Economics in 2006.

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