Preface

Health economics is a relatively new economic field, and teaching is an ancient vocation, avocation, and love. This book is the outgrowth of over a decade of thought about the right ways to teach and learn health economics. It had its genesis at the Toronto meetings of the International Health Economics Association (iHEA) in 2011, and it has moved forward through five more iHEA conventions, numerous web pages, countless blogs, thousands of emails, and months and years of thoughtful discussions.

As this volume goes to press, there is a new urgency in discussing the importance of teaching methods. The educational enterprise has been turned on its head by the COVID-19 virus pandemic, and although this will almost certainly pass, instructors at all levels in the year 2020 were thrust into reassessing their teaching and evaluation methods, learning objectives and subject content, and adapting them to a remote teaching environment.

This volume was under preparation long before the pandemic swept through the population, but we have sought, where applicable, to bring chapters up to date for current use, while trying to keep them general enough for longer-term use. We wish to provide a durable toolbox of teaching methods, whether they exist within the physical classroom, in some sort of ‘hybrid’ setup, or entirely in online settings.

We invite readers to pick and choose among the different offerings, and to communicate with the editors and authors and exchange ideas. Teaching is a living and breathing organism which thrives with the nutrition of fresh ideas. We hope that this volume will transmit the enthusiasm that the authors offer to the readers/instructors, and hence their students, and that all of them can use and improve our content.