# **Economics 5140/6140: Discrimination in Labor Markets**

# Fall 2013

# Thursdays 4:35-7:35pm BUC 305

## Instructor: Johan Uribe

## Office: OSH 376

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## Office Hours: By appointment / directly before or after class

### Course Overview

ECON 5140/6140 is designed to systematically investigate the following questions using both theoretical models and empirical evidence. Why is racial inequality so persistent? What are the economic reasons behind the racial gaps? Who is to blame for these gaps? Why are women still treated differently than men? What interventions, if any, can we use to create a more just society? However, we will have the opportunity to examine the experiences of other ethnic groups, as well as discrimination along age, religion, or other lines, through additional readings and research projects.

#### Course Objectives

This course has two main objectives: to imbue students with a useful set of analytical skillset, and to impart upon the students a sense of social responsibility and social awareness. The analytical skills include critical analysis of technical research, effective written communication of technical subject matter, and professional oral presentation skills. These skills will be enhanced on a daily basis through the use of active learning activities and critical discussions.

#### Learning Methods

Through the use of class discussion, critical reading, debates, mock trials and guided research, ECON 5140 will facilitate the development of analytical skills, research methodology, and effective communication skills so that students may answer these and many other important questions on their own. Furthermore, introspective written and oral assignments will be used throughout the semester to guide students toward an increased sense of social awareness.

#### Reading Materials

Class reading materials will mainly consist of book chapters and academic journal articles posted on Canvas. Everyone should purchase Sugrue (2005). We will use the Sugrue book as a kind of “case study” of issues relating to racial inequality. Other readings may be added depending on time and interest. I will also present a good deal of material from other sources. It will therefore be important to attend class regularly and to check Canvas in order to stay on top of this material.

Sugrue, T.J., (2005), “The origins of the urban crisis: Race and inequality in postwar Detroit”. Princeton University Press. **ISBN 10**- 0691121869.

### Policies

#### Attendance

While this class will be presented in a lecture format, attendance, promptness, and professional attitude are key elements to your success. Attendance will not be a formal requirement for this course. However, due to the interactive nature of this course, student’s grades will suffer from the lack of attendance or participation.

#### Late Work

No late work will be accepted unless a valid written excuse is provided.

#### Participation

This class is presented in a lecture and discussion format. Each student brings a valuable perspective to both individual and collective learning in class. It is highly encouraged that you add your voice to the content covered and share appropriately in class.

#### Expectations

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

Disrespectful behavior toward any student will not be tolerated. In particular, any use of racist, sexist, or other derogatory language will not be tolerated.

#### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. (www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/)

#### Wellness Statement

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu; 801-581-7776.

### Assignments and Grading

1. Exams: We will have two exams during the course of the class, a midterm and a final. The final will be a comprehensive take-home exam which will be administered during the last week of class and due during finals week. The format will be three essays covering what we learned in class. The final exam will be worth 30 percent of the final grade. The format of the midterm will be announced prior to the midterm and will constitute 20% of the final grade.

2. Research Project: Each student will conduct an independent research on a topic related to discrimination in labor markets. The research paper will be due on the last day of class and is expected to be between 7 and 9 pages long and to follow APA format. Students are not expected to embark on a major research project involving original data work or original theoretical work. However, students will be expected to pose an original research question, gather published evidence from scholarly sources, present an organized and coherent thesis using the gathered evidence, evaluate and criticize the relevant literature on the subject, and to discuss the shortcomings and potential future expansions of the paper. An initial half page to one page long research proposal will be due on the first day of class in October. The proposal must be a coherent explanation of your research question and what evidence you wish to use to back up your thesis. You must include citations and a work cited of at least three academic sources you plan to use. The proposal is worth 5% of your final grade. A rough draft of your paper is due on the first day of class in November. The rough draft should be at least six pages long, follow APA format, and should at least include a coherent introduction to your research question, your methodology, and a discussion of the relevant literature on your topic. The rough draft will be worth 5 percent of your final grade. The final draft, to be submitted to me in person on the last day of class, will be worth 15 percent of your final grade. The grades for all written assignments will be based on both content as well as form-clarity of the argument, grammar, spelling, citation, etc.

3. Presentations/Class Participation: The class participation grade will be decided by a deduction system. Any time a student comes to class and is not prepared to meaningfully contribute to the day’s discussion, they will lose points. The presentation portion of the grade will be decided based on a student’s performance during in class presentations made on a voluntary basis.

*Students who are taking this class for graduate credit need to meet with me to discuss additional requirements.*

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| Weighting of Assignments | Grade Scale |
| Final Exam – 30% | A: 92+ |
| Midterm Exam – 20% | A-: 90 - 91.999 |
| Research Proposal – 5% | B+: 88 - 89.999 |
| First Draft – 5% | B: 82 - 87.9999 |
| Research Paper Final Draft – 15% | B-: 80 - 81.9999 |
| Participation - 25% | C+: 75 - 79.9999 |
|  | C: 70 – 74.9999 |
|  | C-: 65 – 69.9999 |
|  | D+: 63 – 64.9999 |
|  | D: 57 – 62.9999 |
|  | D-: 55 – 56.9999 |

Semester Schedule

This schedule is very tentative. Additional readings, changes in the schedule, and other announcements will be posted on Canvas. This schedule will be updated on a weekly basis as the semester progresses.

8/29/2013 - Introduction to the course and an Introduction to Theories of Discrimination

9/5/2013 - A crash course on the basics of labor economics – Wolff (1997) ch. 5, 6

9/12/2013 – A crash course on the interpretation of econometric analysis

9/19/2013 - Introduction to models of discrimination Hyclak, Johnes and Thornton (2003), chapter 13 part 1 and 2

9/26/2013 – The historical context of discrimination – Detroit as a case study- Sugrue chapter 1-5

10/3/2013 – Discussion of Research Proposal and more Models of Discrimination

10/10/2013 – Empirical Evidence for Gender Discrimination