



ECON 3100 – Labor Economics Spring 2021

Syllabus

Course Information

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Course Description

Course Summary

Labor economics examines the operations of the labor market and the world of work. After exploring what determines the demand for and supply of labor, we turn to a range of labor market issues including education and training, the determination of wages, the effects of unemployment, the causes and consequences of discrimination, immigration, unions and other issues.

This course surveys the market and institutional factors that affect decisions about employment. Econ 3100 is a 3-credit course designated Quantitative Intensive. In accordance with this designation, students will develop the skills to interpret and critically assess labor issues presented in academic and popular publications using text and graphical expression. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Objectives

At the end of the term students will be able to contextualize the operation of labor markets in both history and current events. By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Explain the decisions of workers and employers that provide the foundation for the labor supply and demand framework, and predict the wage and employment outcomes associated with these decisions in a competitive labor market

- Interpret US labor market data including the monthly unemployment report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Understand current issues in labor market policy through theoretical and empirical approaches.

Required Materials

Ronald G Ehrenberg and Robert S. Smith, *Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy*, 13th Edition (Prentice Hall, 2014).

The textbook is available through the University's inclusive access program which offers discounted text access for those students who are willing to use a digital textbook through the Canvas course site. You may opt in to or out of inclusive access using the 'bookshelf' tab in the menu on screen left and the instructions available in the file titled 'Access the textbook.' You may also opt out at the link <https://portal.verba.io/utah/login>.

Additional required materials will be made available on Canvas.

Teaching and Learning Methods

This course includes a combination of reading and video instruction with learning evaluated through conceptual and technical practice. Each Monday one learning module is opened; all requirements of the module must be completed before the module closes on the following Monday. Modules will include some combination of reading, video, and power point content. Each module includes one quiz and one practice problem or activity to test your mastery of the presented material. Class discussion using the discussion feature of Canvas will complement the self-directed requirements.

Use the modules tab on Canvas to view the course calendar and access the course content including links, lectures, and assignments. Each module is presented in the Module Overview and Instructions page showing the objectives and organization for the week, links to live sessions and associated assignments, and housing the recorded lecture material.

Effective communication is essential for the success of this course and you are encouraged to contact the instructor via email or Canvas, to set up in-person or virtual appointments to discuss any questions, and to reach out when the content or delivery is not working for you. Your instructor is a human being who is invested in your intellectual progress.

Canvas Time Zone Information

To ensure you are viewing due dates and times correctly, as well as events in the calendar, set your student Canvas time zone to your current location by following this [guide](#).

If you do not change your time zone, all due dates and times listed in Canvas default to Mountain Time.

All written content in the course, including office hours written in the syllabus, is in Mountain Time unless stated otherwise.

Online Course Expectations

While all of the academic expectations of this online course are equivalent to those in the traditional course section, there are a number of additional expectations that students should be aware of when participating in the course online.

Instructor Expectations

Your course instructor is an expert in the topics you will learn about this semester. Your instructor is your mentor and facilitator of the classroom experience, aided by graduate teaching assistants, and is committed to the following expectations for this course:

- The instructor will design the course to include lectures, readings materials, and assignments that will challenge students and will provide them with opportunities to learn and practice course content.
- Though this online course includes pre-recorded lectures, it is **not** a class that is run “automatically” by technology. The instructor will interact with the class via announcements, virtual office hours, emails/the Canvas **Inbox**, feedback on assignments, and comments on lecture bulletin boards, among other methods.
- The instructor will respond to emails in a timely fashion. “Timely” in this instance means within 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays.
- The instructor will be available for individual consultation via virtual office hours, email, or phone. Students will not be required to come to campus in order to meet with the instructor.
- The instructor will provide feedback on the assignments in a timely manner.
- The instructor will follow all official University of Utah policies regarding conduct in the classroom, incompletes, and accommodations. Accommodations will be considered on an individual basis and only with required documentation.

Student Expectations

Though the online format allows students greater flexibility to complete their work, this course does have a structure and timeline, including due dates for course assignments. As such, the following is expected of all students in this class:

- Students will log in to the course a minimum of 3 times per week.
- Students may be expected to work with classmates; however, students are not expected to interact with their classmates in person. A good alternative to meeting in person

would be online video conferencing, which allows students to find a time to meet that works best for their schedule. Depending on the assignment, students can also choose to interact with their classmates with whatever technology they are most comfortable with (Groupme, FaceTime, Google Hangouts, etc).

- To do well in online courses, students must be self-motivated, organized, and willing to stay on top of their schedule. Students should take control of their learning while in this course.
- Students will regularly check course announcements. The [Announcements](#) area is the instructor's official means of communication when distributing information to the entire class.
- Students will update their Canvas settings to ensure they receive timely notifications from the course.
- If students have any questions, are struggling with course materials, or need further assistance from their instructor, they will take the initiative to contact their instructor via the **Inbox** feature in Canvas or via email.
- Email isn't perfect; sometimes, messages sent to instructors are lost before they are read. If you do not hear back from your instructor 3 days after sending a message, please contact your instructor again.
- Students will engage with the course, students, and the instructor in a respectful and professional manner at all times.

Netiquette

Students are expected to follow the [core rules of netiquette](#) at all times while participating in the class, interacting with other students, and communicating with the course instructor and teaching assistants.

Evaluation and Grading

Semester Grading Scheme

Grades will be calculated based on the following required work and letter grades assigned according to the University of Utah grading scheme.

Weekly Quizzes, completed on Canvas before class each Monday: 30%

Practice Problems, Reading Responses, and Discussion: 30%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Weekly Quizzes

Each module includes a short quiz on the presented content. This quiz serves several functions for you as a student. First, it highlights essential information from the reading, lecture, or power point slides. Second, it provides an opportunity for you to assess your learning in a situation where you have resources at hand to improve your learning. Finally, the quizzes give you a sense of the language, format, and content that will be included on the midterm and final exams.

Application Problems

Each week students will implement key tools and ideas from the material presented through completing application problems, responding to material, or formulating a 3-6 slide power point presentation of one important concept. These assignments will be graded for accuracy and precision. The applications are intended to give you a deeper understanding of the material.

Discussions

Students are expected to engage in assigned class discussions regarding contemporary issues in labor economics and labor policy. These discussions will include a selection of supplementary reading material which students will synthesize, interpret, and respond to.

Exams

The midterm exam will be held in Module 7, during the week beginning March 2nd. The final exam will be held in Module 15, during the University final exam period beginning on April 29th. Each exam will include 60 multiple choice questions. The final exam is not cumulative.

Exams will not be proctored and can be taken from your home computer using the resources available to you including the textbook, power point slides, video lectures, and your notes. Each student is expected to complete the exam on his/her/their own - no collaboration is permitted. Exams will be timed - once you have opened the exam page you will have 80 minutes to complete the test. You must study for the exam in order to complete it in the time available.

Late Assignments

This course is designed for weekly work assignments that are completed that week. To do well in this course, you must stay up to date with the material on a weekly basis. Please note due dates and work each week to keep up with the course.

Late exams will not be accepted without an excuse from the University or a medical professional.

University of Utah Grading Scale

A	100%–94%	A-	93.9%–90%		
B+	89.9%–87%	B	86.9%–84%	B-	83.9%–80%
C+	79.9%–77%	C	76.9–74%	C-	73.9%–70%
D+	69.9%–67%	D	66.9%–64%	D-	63.9%–60%
E	59.9%–0%				

Course Policies

Technology Issues and Tech Help

Your instructor has invested time before the start of the semester to ensure that the technologies used in this online class will operate smoothly. Nevertheless, technology doesn't always do what we want it to do! As such, this course has the following expectations regarding tech problems:

- Students are **required** to contact the instructor immediately when they notice broken links or inaccessible files in the course. Links and files are assumed to work, unless students indicate otherwise. Points lost on assignments, due to inaccessible links and files, **cannot** be made up if students did not notify the instructor of the problem prior to the assignment due date.
- The instructor is committed to fixing broken links and inaccessible files as soon as possible after being notified by the students. In the case that there will be a significant delay before these items can be fixed, the instructor will post an announcement to let the class know about the problem and to describe any alternate files/links or alternate due dates for assignments, if applicable, that students should be aware of.
- Students are responsible for submitting all assignments and activities by their due dates. In the very rare case that technical problems prevent a student from submitting an assignment, students are required to—
 - Immediately contact their instructor via email or the Canvas **Inbox**, to let them know about the problem and to submit a copy of their assignment as an attachment (where possible).
 - Then, immediately contact the Canvas help desk to troubleshoot and resolve the problem.
 - Submit an email updating the instructor on whether the problem was resolved and of any additional steps the student or instructor needs to take to get the assignment properly submitted to Canvas.
- It is **not** appropriate to send an email to your instructor informing them about tech problems after an assignment due date.
- Students are expected to read all assignment instructions and to submit work in the required file formats. Work submitted as improper file formats will **not** be considered to have been handed in on time. The instructor will only grade work submitted using the proper file format.
- It is the student's responsibility to reach out to the appropriate help desk to troubleshoot and resolve tech problems in the course,

24/7 help is available to all students via the *Help* button in the far-left Canvas menu.

For more detailed information about getting tech help, please review the information on the **Tech Help** page of the course.

Content Accommodations

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 this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All

written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Institutional Policies

All students and instructors are expected to adhere to the following university policies:

The Americans with Disabilities Act

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 this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Accommodation Policy (see Section Q): <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>

University Safety Statement

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message.

For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu (Links to an external site.).

Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Drop/Withdrawal

Students may drop a course within the first two weeks of a given semester without any penalties. Students may officially withdraw (W) from a class or all classes after the drop deadline through the midpoint of a course. A “W” grade is recorded on the transcript and appropriate tuition/fees are assessed. The grade “W” is not used in calculating the student’s GPA. See the [Academic Calendar](#) for the last day to withdraw from term, first and second session classes.

Deadlines for courses with irregular start and end dates policy:

<https://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/miscellaneous.php>

Plagiarism/Cheating

It is assumed that all work submitted to your instructor is your own work. When you have used ideas of others, you must properly indicate that you have done so. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code, *“includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.”*

For detailed definitions and possible sanctions, see the Student Code:

<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>

Wellness Statement

Your personal health and wellness are essential to your success as a student. Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive in this course and at the University of Utah. Please speak with the instructor or TA before issues become problems.

For helpful resources, contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

Veterans Support Center

The Veterans Support Center is a “one stop shop” for student veterans to find services, support, advocacy, and camaraderie. They are located in the Park Building Room 201.

You can visit their website for more information about their services and support at:

<http://veteranscenter.utah.edu>

LGBT Resource Center

The University of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 of the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm.

You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu>.

Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language and writing development.

These resources include:

Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu>)

Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu>)

English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli>)

About the U

As the only institution in the state classified in the highest research category (R1), at the University of Utah you will have access to state-of-the-art research facilities and be able to be part of the knowledge creation process. You will have the opportunity to do research of your own with faculty who are leading experts in their field, engaging in programs that match your research interests. Further, you will interact with and often take classes with graduate students that provide an advanced understanding of the knowledge in your field.

CSBS Emergency Action Plan

Not every online student comes to campus, but some do. Familiarize yourself with the [CSBS Emergency Action Plan](#) before you come to campus.

Course Outline

The course is organized into 15 week-long modules. To see the module schedule and assignment due dates, students should view the Course Summary section below and the course **Modules**.

Syllabus Changes

This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to

accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be posted to Canvas under [Announcements](#).

Course Summary

January 19: Intro/Orientation & Supply and Demand

January 25: Labor Market Supply and Demand – the Basics

February 1: Understanding Labor Market Data & Current Trends

February 8: Labor Demand

February 15: Labor Demand Elasticity

February 22: Employer-side Frictions & the Gig Economy

March 1: **Midterm Exam**

March 8: Labor Supply I – Households & the Division of Labor

March 15: Labor Supply II –the Individual Choice Model of Market Labor

March 22: Labor Supply III – the individual choice model in public policy

March 29: The Minimum Wage

April 5: Monopsony Labor Markets

April 12: Human Capital Investments

April 19: Discrimination

April 26: **Final exam period opens on Thursday, April 29th**