

ECON 4330-001 and 5330-001: Human Resource Economics (Labor Economics)
Spring 2015
Course Syllabus

Course Details

Time: TTH 12:30-1:50PM
Room: COBA 153

Instructor Details

Instructor: Christy Spivey
Office: COBA 328
Office Hours: TTH 3:30 – 5:00PM, or by appointment
Email/Phone: cspivey@uta.edu / 817-272-1218
Blackboard: elearn.uta.edu

Description and Student Learning Outcomes

We will study factors affecting the demand for labor and the supply of labor. Specific topics include wage differentials, education, the household as an economic unit, unemployment, inequality, discrimination, and migration and mobility. The goal of the course is to provide you with a theoretical and empirical background in labor economics that will enable you to:

- Describe the major factors affecting labor supply and labor demand
- Explain how wages and employment are determined
- Apply labor economics theory to solve economic problems
- Critically analyze and interpret data, articles, or news stories relating to labor economics

Prerequisites

ECON 2306 (undergraduates); ECON 5331 or equivalent (graduates)

Required Book

George Borjas. Labor Economics, 5th edition.

Assessment

Your grade will be determined by three exams and a presentation (optional for undergraduates but required for graduate students). The percentage of total points will be allocated as follows (parentheses show allocation for undergraduates who do not present):

Presentation	10%	
Highest Exam Grade	38%	(41%)
Next Highest Exam Grade	32%	(36%)
Lowest Exam Grade	20%	(23%)

Your letter grade will be determined by the percentage of total points earned as follows:

A	90% and above
B	80 – 89.99%
C	70 – 79.99%
D	60 – 69.99%
F	below 60%

You may wonder over the course of the semester if there will be a curve. The answer is almost certainly no, but if there is one, it is likely to be very small. So, you should ***absolutely not*** depend upon it. I do not determine this until the end of the semester after the final exam. However, you will have an idea of how you are progressing as the semester goes along. Please DO NOT inform me that you need a certain grade in the course in order to graduate, keep your scholarship, keep from getting kicked out of school, etc. I consider this to be a form of harassment. You will receive the grade you earn. In addition, I only assign incompletes in the course for documented health/family emergencies.

Practice Problems

I will provide practice problems either in class or on Blackboard. These problems are good practice for exams, but do not constitute a comprehensive preview of exam questions. When posted on Blackboard, these should be printed and brought to class. There will sometimes be time at the end of classes to work on practice problems. You should make use of this time to prepare for exams and ask me individual questions. I will also post answer keys to practice problems on Blackboard.

Presentation

You will give a presentation specific to a labor economics topic of interest, based on scholarly articles or in-depth current events articles. The main purpose is to expose you to the varied kinds of research that labor economists carry out. More details will be provided in a separate document.

Exams

Exam dates are listed below. Please bring a pencil and ***non-programmable, scientific*** calculator to each exam. ***No makeup exams will be given unless my permission is given BEFORE the exam.*** You can take a makeup exam early or late ONLY if you have appropriate documentation (e.g., a doctor's note, not simply verification you went to the health center). If you do not contact me prior to a missed exam you will receive a zero. Makeup exams must be taken before the next class meeting.

If you feel your exam has been graded incorrectly, please submit your issue in writing either on the front of the exam or on a separate sheet of paper attached to the exam. Please note the question number you are inquiring about and what you think is wrong. You have one week after the exam has been returned to submit any issues to me. After that, no grade changes will be made.

The final exam (the last of the three exams) will not be cumulative. You must take the final exam at the university-scheduled time. It is my policy not to provide the day and time of the final exam. It is your responsibility to find the day and time online AND to confirm it with a classmate.

Important Dates

Tuesday, February 24

Exam 1

Tuesday, March 31

Exam 2

Week of May 11

Final Exam (Exam 3)

Course Outline

The following is a general schedule of the topics to be covered, as well as the readings that go along with the topics. I have created a tentative timetable for the topics (attached), subject to change.

Topics:

Introduction and Regression Analysis
Labor Supply
Labor Demand
Market Equilibrium
Compensating Wage Differentials
Human Capital
Inequality and Wage Structures
Migration and Mobility
Discrimination
Job Search and Unemployment (if time permits)
Labor Unions (if time permits)

Material

Chapter 1 plus Appendix
Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6
Chapters 7, 11
Chapter 8
Chapter 9
Chapter 12
Chapter 10

Expectations

Treat this syllabus as a contract that you have “signed” by enrolling in the course. I will try to remind everyone of upcoming deadlines, but you are responsible for remembering all important dates. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester, although I will try not to do so. Any changes will be communicated to you via email and/or during class. You are responsible for being aware of these changes. Please refrain from asking me questions that can be answered by reading this document.

Communication

I will post course materials such as PowerPoint slides on Blackboard. I will also email you somewhat regularly, so **please check your university-provided email account daily.** Please feel free to email me at the address listed above to ask a question or set up an appointment. I check email regularly Monday-Friday, but I cannot guarantee a quick response over the weekend or late at night. I will not be able to accommodate requests to call you on the telephone. I also request that you communicate with me if you have concerns about any aspect of the course. I appreciate feedback.

Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I have decided that attendance will not be a formal part of your assessment. However, I reserve the right to take attendance and use that information to give extra credit or when determining whether to “round up” when determining final grades. Thus, you are strongly encouraged to attend every class and arrive to class ON TIME (I understand there are legitimate reasons for being late, so please enter QUIETLY if you cannot help being late). You are also expected to silence your cell phone. **You are responsible for all material covered in class whether you are present or not (including material not covered in the text). If you miss a class, you should get notes from a classmate and review them BEFORE coming to**

me for help on that particular topic. I will not provide you with class notes beyond what is contained in the PowerPoint slides.

Keeping Up

Taking notes will be much easier if you print the PowerPoint slides for the current topic and bring them to class. However, please realize that the slides do not include everything covered in class and are a poor substitute for taking your own notes. You should read the relevant sections of the text listed in the course outline as many times as needed to feel that you have a grasp on the material. If you are willing to work hard understanding the concepts, you are likely to succeed in this course. I want everyone to do well, and everyone is given that opportunity.

Please ask questions in class and come see me during office hours (or schedule an appointment) if you need further clarification. I do not know if you don't understand something unless you tell me!

Academic Integrity

All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

According to the UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

More specifically related to this course, academic dishonesty includes communicating with other students during exams or referencing books, notes or "cheat sheets" during exams (except when authorized). In addition to the disciplinary action mentioned above, violators will automatically receive a grade of zero on the exam.

Administrative Policies

Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session (***April 3 for Spring 2015***). ***Note: I am unable to sign a drop form after the official deadline.*** It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of

financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week

A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable

accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX

The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Emergency Exit Procedures

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event that the university cancels class due to inclement weather, any exam scheduled that day will automatically be scheduled during the next class period. Please check your university-provided email account regularly if bad weather is in the area.

Emergency Phone Numbers: In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911.

Labor Economics			
Spring 2015			
Tentative Schedule of Topics			
Lecture	Day	Date	Topic
1	Tuesday	Jan 20	Welcome
2	Thursday	Jan 22	Introduction, Regression Analysis
3	Tuesday	Jan 27	Labor Supply
4	Thursday	Jan 29	Labor Supply
5	Tuesday	Feb 3	Labor Supply
6	Thursday	Feb 5	Labor Supply
7	Tuesday	Feb 10	Topics in Labor Supply
8	Thursday	Feb 12	Topics in Labor Supply
9	Tuesday	Feb 17	Labor Demand
10	Thursday	Feb 19	Review for Exam
11	Tuesday	Feb 24	EXAM 1
12	Thursday	Feb 26	Labor Demand
13	Tuesday	Mar 3	Labor Demand
14	Thursday	Mar 5	Equilibrium
	Tuesday	Mar 10	SPRING BREAK
	Thursday	Mar 12	SPRING BREAK
15	Tuesday	Mar 17	Equilibrium
16	Thursday	Mar 19	Equilibrium
17	Tuesday	Mar 24	Wage Differentials
18	Thursday	Mar 26	Review for Exam
19	Tuesday	Mar 31	EXAM 2
20	Thursday	Apr 2	Wage Differentials
21	Tuesday	Apr 7	Human Capital
22	Thursday	Apr 9	Human Capital
23	Tuesday	Apr 14	Human Capital; Inequality and Wage Structures
24	Thursday	Apr 16	Inequality and Wage Structures
25	Tuesday	Apr 21	Migration
26	Thursday	Apr 23	Migration
27	Tuesday	Apr 28	Migration
28	Thursday	Apr 30	Discrimination
29	Tuesday	May 5	Discrimination
30	Thursday	May 7	Discrimination