

Course Introduction

- **Course Number:** Econ 3100 (Class number: 12430)
- **Prerequisite:** There are no prerequisites listed for this course. However, this course will make use of graphs and basic algebra. Previous knowledge in microeconomics (intro. level) will be helpful but not necessary.
- **Course credits:** 3 Credit Hours. This course also fulfills the "Quantitatively Intense (QI) Requirement" for bachelor of science degrees.
- **Class days/time/location:** Monday/ 6-9pm/ Bldg.73 Room 105
- **Faculty:**
 - Name: Eunice Han
 - Office: Bldg. 72, Room 222
 - Phone: (801) 587-1398
 - E-mail: eunice.han@economics.utah.edu
 - Office hours: By appointment only

Course Description and Objective

Labor Economics is a study of the market for labor services in the economy. In this course, we will address four main issues:

1. The relative scarcity of labor and other productive resources provides an incentive for society to use such resources efficiently.
2. The importance of labor economics is reflected in (i) current socioeconomic issues and problems, (ii) the quantitative dominance of labor as a resource, and (iii) the unique characteristics of labor supply and demand.
3. The economic perspective assumes that (i) individuals and institutions make rational or purposeful decisions, and that (ii) decisions are altered or adapted in the light of changing economic circumstances.
4. An understanding of the theories and analytic tools of labor economics contributes to more efficient personal and social decisions and leads to better labor policies.

Required Course Material

The textbook for the course is Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy 12th Edition, by Ehrenberg and Smith. Earlier editions (10th or 11th) are also acceptable. Problem set questions will come from the 12th Edition, and a scanned version of these problems will be provided for your convenience. Short articles and other readings will be assigned frequently. The readings may include newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, as well as excerpts from books. The readings will help you understand more about substantive economic issues and apply the economic ideas and methods you learn in class to real-world problems.

Course Assignments/Exams

1. Problem Sets

There will be six problem sets. The due dates are noted in the Course Calendar. Late problem sets will not be accepted under any circumstances, but you are allowed to drop the lowest problem set score. Working with other students (up to three students) is allowed; you may turn in your own

assignment or one assignment for a group. If you choose to work in groups, please make sure to put all the names of the participants on the first page of the problem set. Problem sets will be graded based on a 1-10 scale.

2. Two Midterm Exams and the Final Exam

Exams cover material from both lectures and the readings. You are responsible for all the material in the textbook even if not covered during lecture. The final exam is cumulative with an emphasis on the final third of the class materials.

3. Article Report

You will write a short report on five reading assignments, totaling five reports. Each report should include two-three paragraphs of summary and two questions you developed during your reading. The article report will be graded on a 1-10 scale. Late reports will not be accepted under any circumstances, but you are allowed to drop one report.

4. Class Participation

Class participation is not formally graded, but will be taken into account if you are on the border between one grade and the next. If you cannot attend a class, you need not notify me. If you need to miss more than one class in a row, please notify me in advance. Please make sure to obtain any copies of class notes from your classmates, if you miss a class.

Grading Scheme

Basic semester grades are determined by the final exam (30%), two midterm exams (20% each), problem sets (20%), and article reports (10%). There will be no make-up midterm exam. If you miss one of the midterm exams, the other midterm exam will be counted as 40%. There will be no make-up final exam. Your final grade will be curved. For instance, the top 20% of students will receive a grade of A range (A and A-), of B range for the next 35%, C for the next 35%, and D or F for the remaining 10%. The exact breakdown depends on the shape of the distribution.

Course Resources

1. Canvas Information

Canvas is the where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course.

- **Canvas login:** utah.instructure.com
- Problems with Canvas? Please contact Uonline Help Desk at classhelp@utah.edu or call 801-581-6112 and press 2 (M-F 8:00am-5:00pm MST)

2. Office Hours and Email

If you have any questions or concerns regarding class materials or other related issues, please come visit me during office hours; if you are not free during my regular office hours, please email me so that we can find another mutually convenient time to meet. I will usually respond to email

inquiry within 24 hours, but this is not guaranteed, especially on weekends, so plan accordingly if you have time-sensitive questions.

Course Calendar

Unit 1: Introduction

Monday, January 9 Lecture 1: Overview of the Labor Market
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapters 1 & 2*

Unit 2: Labor Demand

Monday, January 16 NO CLASS – Martin Luther King Day

Monday, January 23 Lecture 2: The Demand for Labor
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapters 3*
 <Note> Problem Set #1 assigned, Article report #1 due

Monday, January 30 Lecture 3: Labor Demand Elasticity
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 4*
 <Note> Article report #1 due

Monday, February 6 Lecture 4: Frictions in the Labor Market
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 5*
 <Note> Problem Set #1 due, Problem Set 2 assigned

Unit 3: Labor Supply

Monday, February 13 Lecture 5: Supply of Labor to the Economy: The Decision to Work
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 6*

Monday, February 20 NO CLASS – Presidents' Day

Monday, February 27 Lecture 6: Labor Supply: Household Production and Life Cycle
Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 7*
 <Note> Problem Set #2 due

**** MIDTERM 1****

Unit 4: Compensating Wage Differentials

Monday, March 6 Lecture 7: Compensating Wage Differentials and Labor Market

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 8*

<Note> Problem Set 3 assigned

Monday, March 13

NO CLASS – Spring Break

Unit 5: Human Capital

Monday, March 20

Lecture 8: Investment in Human Capital: Education and Training

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 9*

<Note> Problem Set #3 due, Problem Set #4 assigned, Article report #2 due

Unit 6: Worker Mobility

Monday, March 27

Lecture 9: Worker Mobility: Migration, Immigration, and Turnover

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 10*

<Note> Article report #3 due

Unit 7: Worker Productivity and Pay

Monday, April 3

Lecture 10: Pay and Productivity

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 11*

<Note> Problem Set #4 due, Problem Set #5 assigned

**** MIDTERM 2****

Unit 8: Discrimination

Monday, April 10

Lecture 11: Gender, race, and ethnicity in the labor market

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 12*

Unit 9: Labor Unions

Monday, April 17

Lecture 12: Unions and the Labor Market

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 13*

<Note> Problem Set #5 due, Problem Set #6 assigned, Article report #4 due

Unit 10: Inequality

Monday, April 24

Lecture 13: Inequality in Earnings

Ehrenberg and Smith, *Chapter 15*

<Note> Problem Set #6 due, Article report #5 due

Final Review

Thursday, April 27

**** FINAL EXAM ** 8:30 - 10:30 pm**

Other Class Policies

1. Computer Use

Due to the large number of graphs we use in class, it will not be feasible to take notes on laptops. Please do not use laptops or other portable electronic devices during class. If you must use a laptop, please talk to me before the class.

2. Classroom Etiquette

Be mindful of others and respect one another. Please be on time. If you have to leave early, sit near the door. If you must bring foods to class, please make sure that you don't disturb others.

3. Copyrighted Materials

Throughout the course you will receive copyrighted materials, such as test questions and sample answers. These materials are provided to you as a student of this section of Econ 3100, for use in this course only. Please remember that you may not copy or share these materials with others (including posting any of these materials online) without permission. Not only can such copying raise questions regarding academic integrity, but in many cases it is a violation of copyright law. If you have any questions about whether you can share course materials or work with students from other sections of Econ 3100, please see me.

Institutional Policies & Procedures

See refer to the course syllabus on Canvas