ECON 3360 A: Introduction to Labour Economics
2019 Winter Term
Department of Economics
Carleton University

Instructor: David Pringle
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Office and hours: B840 Loeb or Richcraft 2310, by appointment

Lesson Times
Lectures: Tuesdays, 18:05-20:55 in 517 Southam Hall.
Website: Accessible through cuLearn at https://www.carleton.ca/culearn

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Economics is the social science that studies human activity in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in an economy.

To understand how economic systems function, it is essential to study how we organize our work. The principal institution in many societies for organizing work is the labour market. This course introduces the principles of labour market economics. The first half of the course introduces the neoclassical framework of labour supply and demand, critically assessing its underlying assumptions. The second half considers the role of labour markets in the larger macroeconomy (e.g., unemployment), explores labour market outcomes and wage determination (e.g., wage structure, human capital, market discrimination) and describes labour market institutions (e.g., unions).

Basic literacy in labour economics is vital to all aspiring economists, not least those working in academia, public policy, business enterprise and organized labour.

Preclusion: credit will not be given if taken concurrently with or after ECON 4305 (no longer offered) or ECON 4306 (no longer offered) or ECON 4360. Precludes additional credit for ECON 3506 (no longer offered).
Prerequisite(s): ECON 1000 or FYSM 1003.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:
• Describe the fundamental concepts and basic theories of labour economics.
• Apply analytic tools to explore questions arising in the subject matter.
• Create standard communications, including a briefing note.
• Critically appreciate the neoclassical framework in labour market economics.
• Converse about current issues in labour economics.
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I see myself as a tour guide for my students, introducing them to the shifting terrain that is economics, and equipping them with the tools, maps and critical outlook to continue their journey in economics. I see the textbook as a provisional road map, which I ask students to think critically about. I encourage students to apply these insights not only in their exercises but also when interpreting today’s media headlines as well as their own experiences.

LESSON FORMAT AND POLICIES

Each three-hour lesson will be conducted mainly in lecture formation. Each will be broken into two 75-minute sections with a 20-minute break.

Communication: Please contact me by email and include @econ3360 (all one word) at the start of the subject line (for the purpose of filtering and prioritizing email messages). An example could be: @ECON3360: question about assignment 3.

Responsiveness: I will try to respond within 48 hours (not including weekends and holidays). If for some reason I am unable to maintain this response time in a given period, I will notify you.

Devices policy: Students are strongly encouraged to minimize use of laptops, smart phones and other electronic devices during class.

COURSEWORK AND EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Explanation notes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assign 1: problem set</td>
<td>10% Formative assessment to prepare for mid-term exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted: Jan 22 (week 3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Due: Feb 5 (week 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>25% Summative assessment of the first half of course. Scheduled in-class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 26 (week 7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assign 2: briefing note on labour market policy</td>
<td>15% Formative assessment of an authentic job skill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posted: Feb 5 (week 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due: March 12 (week 9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign 3: problem set</td>
<td>10% Formative assessment to prepare for final exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted: Mar 19 (week 10)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Due: April 2 (week 12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>35% Summative assessment of the second half of course. During exam period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date: to be announced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (in-class or cuLearn)</td>
<td>5% Measured through class attendance or select class activities throughout the term.</td>
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POLICIES ABOUT EVALUATION

- Assignments are to be handed in at the lecture break on the Tuesday they are due.
- Late assignments are to be placed in the "dropbox" in the door of room C-876 Loeb in the Economics Department. Any assignment being handed in late without a valid reason will have marks deducted. Ten percent (10%) will be deducted for each 24-hour period the assignment is late. The end of each 24-hour period is marked by 4:30 pm.
- In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work. Please refer to Academic Regulation 2.6 in the Undergraduate Calendar.
- Students who can document a valid (compelling) reason for missing the mid-term examination will be excused and their final grade will be based on their performance in the rest of the course. The weight of the final exam will rise from 35% to 60%.
- Students who write the mid-term exam can have their mid-term grade given a weight of zero and have their final exam be worth 60% if it improves their overall final grade.
- Documentation provided by students (e.g. a doctor's note or police report) for a missed midterm may be subject to verification. If submitting a medical note, please also fill out and submit the form Consent to Release Information to a Third Party (found on cuLearn).
- Students must inform the instructor of such an absence in advance, if possible.
- Students must fulfill all of the preceding course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade (D- or higher).
- Students who do not write/attend a final examination because of illness of other circumstances beyond their control may apply to write a deferred examination. Application to write a deferred final examination must be made at the Registrar’s Office. Please refer to Academic Regulation 2.5 in the Undergraduate Calendar.
- No course grades are final until approved by the Faculty Dean.
COURSE MATERIALS


Other reading materials will be distributed throughout the term in class or via cuLearn.

Supplementary texts offering alternative perspectives on labour economics:


**LESSON SCHEDULE**

Note: this weekly schedule is tentative and may be adjusted throughout term to reflect the pace at which topics are covered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (J8)</td>
<td>Introduction: situating labour economics</td>
<td>Benjamin C1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 (J15) | Labour supply  
- fundamental model  
- analysis of effects of public policy | Benjamin C2, C3 |
| 3 (J22) | Labour supply  
- analysis of effects of public policy  
- household production and labour supply over life cycle | Benjamin C3, C4 |
| 4 (J29) | Labour demand  
- fundamental model  
- labour demand amid technological change  
- labour demand amid globalization | Benjamin C5 |
| 5 (F5) | Labour market model | Benjamin C7 |
| 6 (F12) | Labour market model  
Unemployment and other macroeconomic concerns | Benjamin C7, Benjamin C16, C17 |
| 7 (F26) | Mid-term | |
| 8 (M5) | Income inequality | Supplementary reading |
| 9 (M12) | Compensating wage differentials  
Human capital theory | Benjamin C8  
Benjamin C9 |
| 10 (M19) | Wages structure across markets | Benjamin C10 |
| 11 (M26) | Earning differentials across gender and race  
Immigration | Benjamin C12  
Benjamin C11 |
| 12 (A2) | Unions and industrial relations | Benjamin C14, C15 |
| 13 (A9) | Alternative employment arrangement and the future of work  
Course conclusion | Supplementary reading |
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Plagiarism
Please be aware that plagiarism is a serious offence at Carleton and should be recognized and avoided. For further information on how to do so, please see “Pammett on Plagiarism and Paraphrasing” at www.carleton.ca/economics/courses/writing-preliminaries.

Academic Accommodation
You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows.

- Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangements.

- Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/.

- Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/.

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