

University of Oregon
Department of Economics
Winter 2023

EC 350: Labor Market Issues

TR 8:30 am – 9:50 am in Lillis 245

Instructor: Emily Arnesen

Class: Lillis 245, 8:30 am - 9:50 am TR
Office Hours: T 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm and R 10:00 am - 11:00 am in PLC 407, or by
appointment
Office: PLC 407
Email: earnesen@uoregon.edu
Course Website: Canvas
Textbook: Contemporary Labor Economics, 11th or 12th ed.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course, students should have the ability to interpret labor market statistics, explain the advantages and disadvantages of structuring compensation in various ways, explain why earnings differ so much across jobs and the factors that may reshape these wage differentials, explain the basic structure of government programs designed to influence labor markets and the likely impact of these programs, and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of government policies in terms of their effects on labor markets.

Prerequisites: The prerequisite for this course is EC 201 (Principles of Microeconomics) or equivalent.

Textbook/Readings: Contemporary Labor Economics (11th or 12th ed.) by McConnell, Brue and Macpherson (referred to later as MBM). A physical textbook or digital version of the textbook is acceptable. I will post on Canvas in the Announcements tab the specific sections of the book we will cover in class and if there are any parts of chapters we will be skipping. I reserve the right to amend the assigned reading as this course progresses.

We will also read a couple of scholarly journal articles related to labor economics. This is to provide you with some additional applications of the concepts we learned as well as introduce you to what labor economics research looks like. I will post these articles to Canvas.

Attendance: I encourage you to come to class. Attendance is not mandatory. However, extra credit will be offered during class. In order to complete the midterm, final and in class simulation, you must attend class on those three dates specified below.

Assessment: There will be final exam finals week, a midterm during week 5, weekly do at home quizzes, as well as four problem sets, and an in-class simulation project with a write up. Your final course grade will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Problem Sets (4 total)	21% (Each will be worth 7% with one problem set being dropped)
Weekly Quizzes (8 total)	14% (Each will be worth 2% with one weekly quiz being dropped)
Simulation Participation and Write Up	10%
Midterm [In class Thursday, February 9th, 2023]	25%
Final [Tuesday, March 21st at 8:00 am]	30%
Extra Credit	Up to 4%

The traditional grade scale (90-100% → an A of some kind, 80-89% → a B of some kind, et cetera, modified by + and - where applicable) will be used as a baseline when determining course grades. The letter grades will never be worse than the traditional grade scale would imply, but a curve favorable to students may be applied depending on the overall performance of the class.

Those students taking this course pass/fail must earn a “C-” in the course in order to receive a passing grade. You will receive no grade in this course if it is found that you have not received a “C-” or better in the prerequisite EC 201. Further, if you are not able to write the final exam for any reason, drop the course now (i.e., the “no makeup” policy below is not negotiable.)

Problem Sets

There will be total of four problem sets. These problem sets will be turned in through Canvas. You will need a way to turn in written homework problems. A few ways that have worked for students in the past: writing homework solutions on a tablet or iPad, scanning written assignments using a built-in scanner on a printer, using an app on their phone to scan assignments (I recommend CamScanner), or taking pictures of the assignment and uploading the images.

- Each problem set will be due at 11:59 pm (see calendar at the end of the syllabus for specific dates).
- I will post the problem sets on Canvas at least a week before they are due. Each problem set contains multiple choice, fill in the blank, and written answer questions (which may include graphing).
- I encourage you to work on the problem sets together, however, you must write solutions to your problem sets on your own.
- I will drop your lowest problem set score. This means that the three problem sets that are counted towards your final grade will each be worth 7% of your final grade.

Late problem set policy: Since I am dropping one problem set, I will not accept late problem sets.

Weekly Quizzes

There will be a total of eight weekly quizzes. These quizzes are to help you stay on top of the material, and each weekly quiz will contain 2 to 3 questions. Weekly quizzes will be administered through Canvas. These quizzes are open book and open note, but you are to complete them by yourself.

- Each weekly quiz will be due at 11:59 pm on the Monday following the week that we cover the material.
- There will be no weekly quiz due on week 1, week 6 or week 11.
- There is no time limit other than the due date.
- I will drop your lowest weekly quiz score. This means that the seven weekly quizzes that are counted towards your final grade will each be worth 2% of your final grade.

Late weekly quiz policy: Since I am dropping one weekly quiz, I will not accept late weekly quizzes.

Simulation Participation/Write Up

We will be doing a simulation of a labor market in class on February 28th, 2023. You will also write a 300-word report/reflection. You will be graded on your participation in the simulation and the written portion. Grading details and prompts to help you think about the report/reflection will be posted to Canvas closer to when we do the simulation. The report/reflection is due Friday, March 10th, at 11:59 pm and cannot be turned in late.

Midterm Exam

The midterm examination will be in class on Thursday, February 9th, 2023. This exam is closed book and closed note, but I will allow you to have a one, half-page (size 8.5" x 5.5"), single sized equation sheet which can either be typed or handwritten. I will check equation sheets at the beginning of the exam to make sure they meet the parameters and confiscate those that do not. The exam will include multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, short-form and long-form questions. Please bring a writing utensil and a 4-function calculator (non-graphing). Scratch paper will be provided for you. You will have our whole class period to take the exam.

Final Exam

The final examination be on Tuesday, March 21st, 2023, from 8:00 am to 10:00 am. The final exam will be closed note and closed book, but I will allow you to have a one, half-page (size 8.5" x 5.5"), single sized equation sheet which can either be typed or handwritten. I will check equation sheets at the beginning of the exam to make sure they meet the parameters and confiscate those that do not. The exam will include multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, short-form and long-form questions. Please bring a writing utensil and a 4-function calculator (non-graphing). Scratch paper will be provided for you. The final is cumulative, but more material will be from the latter portion of the class.

There are no make-up exams.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be offered during class. The steps to earn extra credit will be explained during the first class meeting.

Re-Grades: Any requests for re-grades on any assignment must be submitted in writing within *two days* of when the assignment is graded. A re-grade request should include an argument of why you feel your answer was correct. I reserve the right to re-grade the entire assignment when a re-grade request is made.

Extra Help: Office hours are scheduled to provide opportunities for one-on-one help. Please reach out to me if my office hours do not work for you and you would like to meet. I am happy to meet

with you at a different time. There are many good examples from the book that provide explanations of many concepts that will be taught in this course. Office hours will be held in person in PLC 407. If you would like to meet over Zoom during my office hours, please send me an email before my office hours start saying you would like to meet over Zoom, and I will send you a Zoom link.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please acquaint yourself with the Student Conduct Code, which is available at conduct.uoregon.edu.

Among other things, it is not allowed to let another student copy problem sets or to copy answers to problem sets from any source. Copying cheats you of the practice necessary to succeed on exams. If I observe that you copy homework answers or answer keys in any fashion, I will give you zero credit for all homework assignments for the class. If you have questions about the boundaries between working on homework assignments jointly and copying them, ask me for clarification.

Any violations of the Student Conduct Code will result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, an incident report will be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

Student Athletes: If you are a student athlete and will need special accommodations, it is your responsibility to notify me in a timely and appropriate manner, and to support your request for special accommodations by providing appropriate documentation.

General Policies

Academic Disruption due to Campus Emergency

In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. Students are also expected to continue coursework as outlined in this syllabus or other instructions on Canvas.

Accessible Education

Please let me know within the first week of the term if you need assistance to fully participate in the course. Participation includes access to lectures, web-based information, in-class activities, and exams. The Accessible Education Center (<http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) works with students to provide an instructor notification letter that outlines accommodations and adjustments to class design that will enable better access. Contact the Accessible Education Center for assistance with access or disability-related questions or concerns.

Academic Misconduct

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>.

Inclement Weather

It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Canvas and by email. Updates on inclement weather and closure are also communicated in other ways described here: <https://hr.uoregon.edu/about-hr/campus-notifications/inclement-weather/inclement-weather-immediate-updates>

Reporting Obligations

I am an assisting employee. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see [Employee Reporting Obligations](#) on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence should call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE [7244] or visit safe.uoregon.edu for help. Students experiencing all forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment may contact the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator/OICRC at 541-346-3123. Additional resources are available at investigations.uoregon.edu/how-get-support. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Mental Health and Wellness

Life at college can be very complicated. Students often feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own--there's help and support on campus.

As your instructor if I believe you may need additional support, I will express my concerns, the reasons for them, and refer you to resources that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I care and that help is available. Getting help is a courageous thing to do—for yourself and those you care about.

University Health Services help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the Duck Nest (located in the EMU on the ground floor) and get help from one of the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates. Find out more at health.uoregon.edu/ducknest. University Counseling Services (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more at counseling.uoregon.edu or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

Basic Needs

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support. This UO webpage includes resources for food, housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, technology, finances, and legal support: <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/basicneeds/food/>

Accommodation for Religious Observances

The university makes reasonable accommodations, upon request, for students who are unable to attend a class for religious obligations or observance reasons, in accordance with the university

discrimination policy which says “Any student who, because of religious beliefs, is unable to attend classes on a particular day shall be excused from attendance requirements and from any examination or other assignment on that day. The student shall make up the examination or other assignment missed because of the absence.” To request accommodations for this course for religious observance, visit the Office of the Registrar’s website (<https://registrar.uoregon.edu/calendars/religious-observances>) and complete and submit to the instructor the “Student Religious Accommodation Request” form prior to the end of the second week of the term.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings
1/10/23	Introduction, Syllabus, Review of EC 201	MBM Ch 1 and Ch 3*
1/12/23	Labor Supply	MBM Ch 2 and Tuttle (2019)
1/17/23	Labor Supply	MBM Ch 2 and Ch 5
1/19/23	Labor Demand	MBM Ch 5 and Peri et al. (2020)
1/24/23	Labor Demand	MBM Ch 5
1/26/23	Labor Market Equilibrium and Wages	MBM Ch 6 and Azar et al. (2020)
1/31/23	Human Capital	MBM Ch 4 and Arteaga (2018)
2/2/23	Human Capital	MBM Ch 4
2/7/23	Human Capital	MBM Ch 4
2/9/23	Midterm	
2/14/23	Alternative Pay Schemes	MBM Ch 7*
2/16/23	Wage Differentials	CH 8*
2/21/23	Labor Market Discrimination	MBM Ch 14
2/23/23	Labor Market Discrimination	Bertrand et al. (2004) and Agan and Starr (2014)
2/28/23	In Class Simulation	
3/2/23	Government and Regulation	MBM 12*
3/7/23	Government and Regulation	MBM Ch 13* and Jarmin et al. (2017)
3/9/23	Mobility	MBM Ch 9* and Chetty et al. (2020)
3/14/23	Unions	MBM Ch 10*
3/16/23	Class Choice Topic	TBD
3/21/23	Final Exam	

* indicates that we may not cover the whole chapter. I will post specifics to Canvas as we get close to these topics.

IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Time	Assignment
1/16/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 1 due (On Canvas)
1/23/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 2 due (On Canvas)
1/24/23	11:59 pm	Homework 1 due (On Canvas)
1/30/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 3 due (On Canvas)
2/6/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 4 due (On Canvas)
2/7/23	11:59 pm	Homework 2 due (On Canvas)
2/9/23	8:30 am – 9:50 am	Midterm Exam (In class)
2/20/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 5 due (On Canvas)
2/27/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 6 due (On Canvas)
2/28/23	8:30 am – 9:50 am	In Class Simulation
2/28/23	11:59 pm	Homework 3 due (On Canvas)
3/10/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 7 due (On Canvas)
3/10/23	11:59 pm	Simulation write up due (On Canvas)
3/16/23	11:59 pm	Weekly Quiz 8 due (On Canvas)
3/17/23	11:59 pm	Homework 4 due (On Canvas)
3/21/23	8:00 am – 10:00 am	Final Exam (In class)