

# ECON 3100-001 – LABOR ECONOMICS

## SYLLABUS

### COURSE INFORMATION

Pre-requisites: none

Credit Hours: 3

Semester: Fall 2023

Instructor: Catherine C Ruetschlin

Department: Economics

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Office Location: Gardner Commons 4326

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 pm

### 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, data, 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**

McConnell, Campbell R., Stanley L. Brue, and David A. Macpherson, *Contemporary Labor Economics, 12th Edition* (McGraw Hill, 2020).

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**

The course is organized into weekly modules with new material presented during Tuesday and Thursday class meetings. Your participation is encouraged in every class session.

Use the **modules** tab on Canvas to view the course calendar and access the course content. The content of each module is presented in the Module Overview and Instructions page, including the objectives and organization for the week and associated assignments. Each module of this course includes reading, lecture, question and answer, one quiz, and one application problem. All assignments are administered using the Canvas learning management platform.

Effective communication is essential to our progress this semester and you are encouraged to contact the instructor via email or Canvas to set up in-person or virtual appointments to discuss any questions or 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**

Assignments in this course are submitted through Canvas. 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.

## EVALUATION AND GRADING

### **SEMESTER GRADING SCHEME**

Grades will be calculated based on the following required work.

- Weekly Quizzes, completed on Canvas: 40%
- Application Problems, Reading Responses, and Discussion, completed on Canvas: 40%
- Mid-semester Peer Teaching Assignment: 10%
- End-of-semester Peer Teaching Assignment: 10%

### **UNIVERSITY OF UTAH GRADING SCALE**

		A	93 - 100%	A-	90 - 92.9%
B+	87 - 89.9%	B	83 - 86.9%	B-	80 - 82.9%
C+	77 - 79.9%	C	73 - 76.9%	C-	70 - 72.9%
D+	67 - 69.9%	D	63 - 66.9%	D-	60 - 62.9%
E	0 - 59.9%				

### **WEEKLY QUIZZES**

Each module includes a short quiz on the presented content. The quizzes highlight essential information from the reading, lecture, or power point slides and provide an opportunity for

you to assess your comprehension in a situation where you have resources at hand to improve your learning.

Quizzes in this course do not have a time limit. You can use all of your resources to find and verify the correct answers. I recommend starting with the power point slides.

Take the time you need to answer quiz questions correctly by reviewing materials and thinking carefully. This process will reinforce the concepts as you learn.

Quizzes open at the beginning of each module and are due before beginning the next module. Generally, this means that quizzes are due each Tuesday before 12:20 pm.

## **APPLICATION PROBLEMS**

Each week students will implement key tools and ideas from the material presented through completing application problems or responding to material in an online discussion. These assignments will be graded for accuracy and precision. The applications are intended to address quantitative aspects of labor economics and give you a deeper understanding of the material.

Application problems open at the beginning of each module and should be completed on a weekly basis to keep up with the course. The due dates on application problems are set to encourage weekly submissions. However, because these assignments require some time to complete, there will be no penalty for late assignments from the first half of the semester that are submitted before we return from spring break and no penalty for applications from the second half of the semester that are submitted before the end of the term. Application problems for modules 1 through 6 are due before class returns from fall break, at 12:20 pm on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. Application problems for modules 7 through 15 are due before the end of the University-assigned final exam period for this class, at 12:30 pm on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Students are expected to engage in online 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.

## **PEER TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS**

Peer teaching is a group-work assignment in which students prepare and lead a discussion of assigned course material. Peer teaching assignments give students more control over the course content for the assigned module, as well as more responsibility. Students will be

grouped into teams of 4 to 6 students and provided with the required reading for the module, as well as several additional optional readings. Each team takes responsibility for developing classroom presentation materials and discussion questions on a central topic. During class time, students from each team lead the class for the introduction of their topic either in small groups (mid-semester peer teaching) or to the class as a whole (end-of-semester peer teaching). Peer teaching grades will be based on preparation, presentation, self-assessment, and peer feedback. A detailed project description, readings, and assigned topics will be available four weeks before the first peer teaching module.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **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 to keep up with the course.

Quizzes submitted after their due date will earn a deduction of 1.5 percent of the quiz grade for each day late (this deduction amounts to -10.5 percent per week late).

No assignments from Modules 1 through 6 will be accepted after the return from fall break deadline at 12:20 pm on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. No assignments will be accepted after the final exam period at 12:30 pm on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Peer teaching assignments cannot be performed outside of the assigned weeks without an excuse from the University or a medical professional.

### **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](http://safeu.utah.edu).**

## 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.

It is expected that students adhere to University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing.

Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-410.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](http://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.

## 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.