

ECON 3100-090 Spring 2018 Labor Economics

Peter Philips, Professor of Economics

Labor Economics, Economics 3100

This is a short video welcoming you to Labor Economics, Econ 3100-090 Fall 2017

(press the link and it will open in Vimeo and then push the play button)

<https://vimeo.com/217426717> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

As we get started, please fill out your personal information in Canvas. In particular, please indicate your major and also which if any economics courses you have taken. It would also be helpful to know whether you have familiarity with excel or similar spreadsheet. A head-shot picture would also be helpful if you are comfortable providing it.

About the Instructor

Peter Philips (that is--me) is a Professor of Economics at the University of Utah and has been teaching at the U since 1978 (see here for his University webpage):

<http://econ.utah.edu/profile.php?unid=u0035312> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

This is a short bio-video introducing you to me and a bit of my history:

In the summertime, Peter along with his wife Jean is a volunteer backcountry ranger in the Grand Teton National Park (see here):

<https://www.facebook.com/GrandTetonNPS/photos/a.134442479903690.25354.130250293656242/1379485815399344/?type=3> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

And this 7 minute video is about encountering bears in the back country:

<https://vimeo.com/229284093> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Weekly Assignments

Weekly assignments will consist of videos, readings and quizzes.

IMPORTANT! *This course is designed for weekly work assignments that are completed that week. Assignments will close at the end of the week and references to the readings and videos for that assignment will also close. To do well (or even pass) this course, you must stay up with the material on a weekly basis. Illnesses, business trips, family issues, work demands that have the potential to interrupt your weekly assignments are serious challenges. Make up assignments and other late work will not be permitted or accepted in this course.*

Midterm and Final Exam

The midterm and final exam are essay exams. You will be given thought questions in advance of the midterm and final along with videos helping you prepare for these essay exams. The exam essays will be drawn from these thought questions.

Grades

4 minute video on grades: <https://vimeo.com/229317290> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

50% of your course grade will come from your weekly assignments which may include quizzes, discussion participation and/or homework; 25% from your midterm essay and 25% from your final exam essay. Late quizzes and exams will not be permitted/accepted. Missed quizzes/exams/assignments are graded as zeros which can significantly lower your grade. So in this course it is very important to submit your assignments (that is, take the quiz or exam) by the deadline. It is good practice to do your assignments and submit them a day before the deadline just to avoid any technical problem in uploading your submission. Loss of internet or electricity or other unanticipated factors can lead to missing a deadline and hurting your grade. So staying ahead is a good idea.

Historically, the average grade in this course has been a B- or C+.

Note: the introductory video is incorrect in stating that the midterm, final and weekly assignments weight one-third each: it is 50% for assignments and 25% for each exam.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) provides undergraduate students and mentors the opportunity to work together on research or creative projects.

UROP provides assistantships up to \$1,200 for students who assist with a faculty member's research or creative project, or who carryout a project of their own under the supervision of a faculty member. Students may apply for an assistantship any semester and may be eligible for a one-semester renewal. UROP awardees are hired by the Office of Undergraduate Research and are paid \$10.00 per hour for up to 120 hours of work during the semester.

I have supervised several UROP students who have gone on to graduate work at Cornell, Columbia, Georgetown, the University of Michigan, Yale and elsewhere. UROP helps good students get better, test the waters of academic research and build resumes for top programs.

1 minute video on UROP: <https://vimeo.com/229331232> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

These are my UROP students with whom I worked from 2014 to 2016. All are now in Ph.D. programs. From left to right: Tao--Yale, Computer Science; Dave, Cornell, Industrial Relations; Guowang, Southern Methodist University, Economics; Elird, University of Michigan, Economics.

Each was an A student. Each did very well on their GREs. Each took a lot of math. What UROP gave them was that extra something which allowed them to learn whether research was for them and allowed me to write extensive and detailed letters of recommendation. UROP is not for most students. **But for some, it is just the right additional aspect of their undergraduate education to prepare them for top graduate programs.**

Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)

NOTE: THE ASSIGNMENTS AND DISCUSSION DATES SHOWN IN THE SYLLABUS BELOW ARE THE DUE DATES. GO TO THE ASSIGNMENT AND DISCUSSION PAGES TO SEE WHEN THESE ARE FIRST AVAILABLE.

IMPORTANT! *This course is designed for weekly work assignments that are completed that week. Assignments will close at the end of the week and references to the readings and videos for that assignment will also close. To do well (or even pass) this course, you must stay up with the material on a weekly basis. Illnesses, business trips, family issues, work demands that have the potential to interrupt your weekly assignments are serious challenges. Make up assignments and other late work will not be permitted or accepted in this course.*

This is a short video welcoming you to Labor Economics, Econ 3100-090 Fall 2017

(press the link and it will open in Vimeo and then push the play button)

<https://vimeo.com/217426717> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

And this is a short video on how to navigate on the course website:

As we get started, please fill out your personal information in Canvas. In particular, please indicate your major and also which if any economics courses you have taken. It would also be helpful to know whether you have familiarity with excel or similar spreadsheet. A head-shot picture would also be helpful if you are comfortable providing it.

Introduction

This is a course in labor economics. It is also a quantitative intensive course. Each week we will cover a distinct topic. In the first half of the course these topics are: basic microeconomic theory; labor supply, labor demand, labor market equilibrium, human capital accumulation, labor market discrimination. In the second half, the topics will be two modules (weeks) each covering labor unions, immigration and labor market policies.

Assignments can be viewed both at the bottom of this syllabus and on the assignment tab in Canvas.

Exams:

Midterm exam will be made available Monday October 2 and is due Friday October 6 just prior to the beginning of Fall Break. The midterm will cover the subjects of labor supply, labor demand, labor market equilibrium, human capital accumulation and labor market discrimination.

Final Exam in this course will be available Monday December 4 and due Monday December 11. The final exam will cover the topics of labor unions (two weeks), labor market policies (two weeks), and immigration (two weeks).

Weekly Modules:

Each Monday, an assignment will open and will be due the following Monday. Typically this assignment is a set of readings and videos, and typically there will be a quiz over this material that will be limited in the time you have to complete it and due at the end of the week. Any notes or other materials that you have developed from the week's assignments may be used as references during the quizzes, but the time for the quizzes will be short so that you will not have time to go over the material for the first time during the quiz.

Students will also need a media player such as VideoLAN VLC (available here <https://www.videolan.org/index.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.) in order to play some of the videos in this course that are not either on Youtube or Vimeo. No textbooks are assigned for this course.

Grades

50% of your course grade will come from your weekly quizzes; 25% from your midterm essay and 25% from your final exam essay. Late quizzes and exams will not be permitted/accepted except under important unusual circumstances. Missed quizzes/exams/assignments are graded as zeros which can significantly lower your grade. So in this course it is very important to submit your assignments (that is, take the quiz or exam) by the deadline. It is good practice to do your assignments and submit them a day before the deadline just to avoid any technical problem in uploading your submission. Loss of internet or electricity or other unanticipated factors can lead to missing a deadline and hurting your grade. So staying ahead is a good idea.

Historically, the average grade in this course has been a B- or C+.

Note: the introductory video on the home page is incorrect in stating that the midterm, final and weekly assignments weight one-third each: it is 50% for assignments and 25% for each exam.

Conferences

On occasion we will use Canvas' conference utility. To do so, students will need 1) a computer with a video camera, 2) headphones with a microphone or earbuds with a microphone. This course is designed so that students may work at their own schedule with a week/module. Consequently, conferences will be voluntary and not graded.

About the Instructor

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Advantages and Resources at a Research University

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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)Links to an external site. 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.

*As an example, the **Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)** provides undergraduate students and mentors the opportunity to work together on research or creative projects.*

UROP provides assistantships up to \$1,200 for students who assist with a faculty member's research or creative project, or who carryout a project of their own under the supervision of a faculty member. Students may apply for an assistantship any semester and may be eligible for a one-semester renewal. UROP awardees are hired by the Office of Undergraduate Research and are paid \$10.00 per hour for up to 120 hours of work during the semester.

I have supervised several UROP students who have gone on to graduate work at Cornell, Columbia, Georgetown, the University of Michigan, the University of California, Riverside and elsewhere. UROP helps good students get better, test the waters of academic research and build resumes for top programs.

See for instance

<https://lsa.umich.edu/econ/people/phd-students/haxhiu.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tao-yu-b9b551a5> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

<https://www.aeaweb.org/conference/2017/preliminary/paper/32Na4BK9> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

(Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. Students I work with must receive an A in this course as one of several prerequisites for doing a UROP with me.

1 minute video on UROP opportunities with me: <https://vimeo.com/229331232> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Semester Schedule

Classes begin	Monday, August 21
Last day to add without a permission code	Friday, August 25
Last day to wait list	Friday, August 25
Last day to add, drop (delete), elect CR/NC, or audit classes	Friday, September 1
Last day to withdraw from classes	Friday, October 20
Last day to reverse CR/NC option	Friday, December 1
Classes end	Thursday, December 7
Labor Day	Monday, September 4
Fall Break	Sun.-Sun., October 8-15
Thanksgiving Break	Thurs.-Sun., November 23-26

Some Background Information Regarding Your Opportunities, Rights and Responsibilities

Tolerance for Political and Economic Viewpoints

This course addresses historical and current issues in labor economics. At times, these can be controversial subjects and students (and the instructor) may hold strong views on some issues. This course tolerates and encourages the expression of strong and potentially contrasting opinions and conclusions regarding these topics. In conferences, students are asked to respectfully listen to, consider, critically evaluate and respond to the views of others including the instructor's in this course.

This course challenges you to be able to accurately and fairly summarize opposing views, compare and contrast those perspectives and critically evaluate contending arguments.

We seek in this course to balance a sense of individual and group comfort and safety with that of argument, disagreement and controversy. The University's position on these matters is summarized as follows:

The values held most strongly by the University of Utah community are those of academic freedom and integrity as they are expressed collectively by the colleges and departments as well as individually through research and teaching and as they exist within the wider context of advanced study as commonly understood by all universities. The community also values diversity and respect, without which there can be no collegiality among faculty and students. In addition, the University community values individual rights and freedoms, including the right of each community member to adhere to individual systems of conscience, religion, and ethics. Finally, the University recognizes that with all rights come responsibilities. The University works to uphold its collective values by fostering free speech, broadening fields of inquiry, and encouraging generation of new knowledge that challenges, shapes, and enriches our collective and individual understandings. <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Our hope is that all students in this class participating in conferences will feel comfortable and indeed drawn to expressing their views and conclusions both in class discussion, presentations and exams. If any student has a concern regarding these issues, please consult with me at your earliest convenience.

University Policies and Resources

1. ***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.

2. ***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).
3. ***Students should be aware of their rights and responsibilities found here:***

400. Student Code: <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
401. Please notice this:
1. "Plagiarism" means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.
 2. Basically the key here is to cite your source or sources that you rely on when you write or present something, (In powerpoints just put the website or other citation at the bottom of the slide.)
402. **Accommodation Policy** (see Section Q):
<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
1. Please notice: The University expects regular attendance at all class meetings. Instructors must communicate any particular attendance requirements of the course to students in writing on or before the first class meeting. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with and satisfying the entire range of academic objectives and requirements as defined by the instructor.
 2. Because this is a weekly class, attendance is very important. Students' grades will be reduced one level for each class missed after the first class missed. So if the student otherwise would have received an A, if the student missed two classes, the student would receive an A- and three missed classes would result in a B+ and so on.
 3. However, in cases of serious illness or other family, personal, business or other emergencies (including weather and transportation problems), the instructor reserves the right to waive part or all of this attendance requirement. Please consult with the instructor before or after missing a class if you wish to receive an accommodation for your absence. Basically we are just trying to get most people to come to class almost all of the time, but for serious issues, we also want to help you through reasonable accommodation.
403. **Wellness Statement.**
1. I recognize that your university education takes place within the broader world of your life including issues of wellness considered broadly to entail a wide range of issues. Please see me as your friend and ready to listen and hopefully help or accommodate you in integrating this course into your broader life activities. See this link for University resources as well:
 2. <http://wellness.utah.edu/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
404. **Veterans Center.**
1. Coming from the military to the university can sometimes be challenging. The University provides resources that can be found at this link below. I have personally worked with many veterans as my students over the years, and I am pleased to work with you on any issues you may have as a returning vet (and more generally all students are invited to consult with me on their specific issues.)
 2. <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

405. ***LGBT Resource Center.***
1. It is my hope and goal in this course and in all my teaching to provide a safe and welcoming environment to all my students. In this spirit, any who wish, may consider the resources at the LGBT Resource Center found here:
 2. <http://lgbt.utah.edu/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
406. ***Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language.***
1. This course is US focused and English language intensive both in written and verbal English. I recognize that this creates a special challenge for those whose native language is not English. I will do my best to work with you to help you effectively express yourself in this course. There are also University resources that you may wish to consider, including:
 2. <https://continue.utah.edu/eli> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. and <http://linguistics.utah.edu/eas-program/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Evacuation of Buildings in Case of Emergency and other emergency resources

Because this is an online course, on-campus emergencies requiring evacuating buildings is not directly relevant. However, some of you may go on campus for a variety of reasons. Please familiarize yourself with the basic evacuation plans for the buildings you enter. A smartphone app may help alert.utah.edu/headsup

EAP (Emergency Assembly Point) – When you receive a notification to evacuate a building either by campus text alert system or by building fire alarm, please proceed in an orderly fashion to the EAP designated for that building. Once everyone is at the EAP, you will receive further instructions from Emergency Management personnel. You can look up the EAP for any building you may be in on campus at <http://emergencymanagement.utah.edu/eap> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. .

U Heads Up App: There's an app for that. Download the app on your smartphone at alert.utah.edu/headsup to access the following resources: • Emergency Response Guide: Provides instructions on how to handle any type of emergency, such as earthquake, utility failure, fire, active shooter, etc. Flip charts with this information are also available around campus. • See Something, Say Something: Report unsafe or hazardous conditions on campus. If you see a life threatening or emergency situation, please call 911! Safety Escorts: For students who are on campus at night or past business hours and would like an escort to your car, please call 801-585-2677. You can call 24/7 and a security officer will be sent to walk with you or give you a ride to your desired on-campus location.

This is an example showing the emergency assembly points for the library:



Course Summary:

Date	Details
Thu Jan 11, 2018	Voluntary video chat with instructor 12pm to 12:30pm
Fri Jan 12, 2018	Week 1: course overview video due by 11:59pm
Mon Jan 15, 2018	Week 1: Economic Inequality due by 11:59pm
	Week 1: Introducing yourself due by 11:59pm
	Week 1: Microeconomic Basics: Supply, Demand & Equilibrium due by 11:59pm
	Week 1: Students' academic background (ungraded survey) due by 11:59pm

Date	Details
Mon Jan 22, 2018	Week 2: Labor Supply due by 11:59pm
Mon Jan 29, 2018	Week 3 DO THIS AFTER LABOR DEMAND THEORY (6 points--15 MINUTES): Labor Demand Theory Quiz due by 11:59pm
	Week 3: Labor Demand Theory, Data, Policy and History due by 11:59pm
	Week 3: Minimum Wage Policy Quiz due by 11:59pm
	Week 3: The labor supply of servants quiz (2 points) due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 2, 2018	Preparing for the midterm: Big Picture Part 1 (worth 4 points on your midterm grade) demand, supply & equilibrium due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 4, 2018	Week 2: Labor Supply Quiz due by 11:59pm
Mon Feb 5, 2018	Week 1: the basics of demand, supply and equilibrium Quiz due by 11:59pm
	Week 4 : Labor Market Equilibrium Theory due by 11:59pm
	Week 4 Quiz (6 points): Labor Market Equilibrium Policy due by 11:59pm
	Week 4: History--the Globalization of Labor Markets and World Capitalism due by 11:59pm
	Week 4: Labor Market Equilibrium Data due by 11:59pm
	Week 4: Labor Market Equilibrium Policy due by 11:59pm
	Week 4: Quiz (6 points)--Labor Market Equilibrium Data (carpenters & electricians) due by 11:59pm
Mon Feb 12, 2018	Week 5: Human Capital due by 11:59pm
	Week 5: Human Capital Quiz due by 11:59pm

Date	Details
Mon Feb 19, 2018	Week 6: Economics of Discrimination Quiz (also found in Quiz tab) due by 11:59pm
	Week 6: Economics of Discrimination Readings and Videos due by 11:59pm
Mon Feb 26, 2018	Answer to the midterm question: a video--available for two days Sunday and Monday Oct 8-9 due by 11:59pm
	Week 7: Unemployment due by 11:59pm
Sun Mar 4, 2018	Midterm Essay (canvas calls it a file upload quiz) due by 11:59pm
Sat Mar 10, 2018	Week 7: Unemployment Quiz due by 11:59pm
Mon Mar 12, 2018	Week 8 Quiz: the Future of Work due by 11:59pm
	Week 8: The Future of Work due by 11:59pm
Mon Mar 19, 2018	Week 9: The Gig economy due by 11:59pm
	Week 9: the Gig Economy quiz due by 11:59pm
Mon Mar 26, 2018	Week 10: Immigration due by 11:59pm
	Week 10: Immigration Quiz due by 11:59pm
Mon Apr 2, 2018	Week 11: Labor Market Regulation--the minimum wage due by 11:59pm
	Week 11: Quiz--Labor Market Regulations due by 11:59pm
Mon Apr 9, 2018	Week 12: Unions due by 11:59pm
	Week 12: Unions Quiz due by 11:59pm
Mon Apr 23, 2018	Week 13: Inequality due by 11:59pm
	Preparing for the Midterm part 2: Big Picture video--Human Capital
	Preparing for the Midterm Part 3: Big Picture video Discrimination
	Preparing for the midterm: Pat 4 Big Picture video--Unemployment

Date

Details

[Week 1 to Week 13: Debates in Labor Economics \(ungraded supplementary material\)](#)

[Week 14: Preparation for Final Exam](#)