

Course Introduction

- **Course Name:** Labor Economics
- **Course Number:** Econ 3100-002 (Class number: 9920)
- **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.
- **Course Days/Time/Location:** Monday and Wednesday, 9:40am-11:10am. BU C 305
- **Faculty:**
 - Name: Eunice Han
 - Office: Gardner 4033
 - Phone: (801) 587-1398
 - E-mail: eunice.han@economics.utah.edu
 - Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 11:30am-12:30pm or by appointment

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 material.

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

Other Class Policies

1. **Computer Use**

Due to the large number of graphs and equations 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 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

[Emergency Action Plan](#)

Course Calendar

Unit 1: Introduction

Monday, August 20

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

Unit 2: Labor Demand

Wednesday, August 22	Lecture 2: The Demand for Labor Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapters 3</i>
Monday, August 27	Lecture 3: The Demand for Labor (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 3 (Cont.)</i> <Note> Problem Set #1 assigned
Wednesday, August 29	Lecture 4: Labor Demand Elasticity Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 4</i>
Monday, September 3	NO CLASS – Labor Day
Wednesday, September 5	Lecture 5: Labor Demand Elasticity (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 4 (Cont.)</i> <Note> Problem Set #1 due
Monday, September 10	Lecture 6: Frictions in the Labor Market Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 5</i> <Note> Problem Set #2 assigned
Wednesday, September 12	Lecture 7: Frictions in the Labor Market (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 5 (Cont.)</i>
Unit 3: Labor Supply	
Monday, September 17	Lecture 8: Supply of Labor to the Economy: The Decision to Work Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 6</i> <Note> Problem Set #2 due
Wednesday, September 19	Lecture 9: Supply of Labor to the Economy: (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 6 (Cont.)</i>
Monday, September 24	** MIDTERM 1 **
Wednesday, September 26	Lecture 10: Labor Supply: Household Production and Life Cycle Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 7</i>
Monday, October 1	Lecture 11: Labor Supply (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 7 (Cont.)</i> <Note> Problem Set #3 assigned

Unit 4: Compensating Wage Differentials

Wednesday, October 3	Lecture 12: Compensating Wage Differentials and Labor Market Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 8</i>
Monday, October 8	NO CLASS – Fall Break
Wednesday, October 10	NO CLASS – Fall Break
Monday, October 15	CLASS CANCELED

Unit 5: Human Capital

Wednesday, October 17	Lecture 13: Compensating Wage Differentials (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 8 (Cont.)</i>
Monday, October 22	Lecture 14: Investment in Human Capital: Education and Training Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 9</i> <Note> Problem Set #3 due
Wednesday, October 24	Lecture 15: Investment in Human Capital (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 9 (Cont.)</i>

Unit 6: Worker Mobility

Monday, October 29	Lecture 16: Investment in Human Capital:(Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 9 (Cont.)</i> <Note> Problem Set #4 assigned
Wednesday, October 31	Lecture 17: Worker Mobility: Migration, Immigration, and Turnover Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 10</i>
Monday, November 5	Lecture 18: Worker Mobility (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 10 (Cont.)</i>

Unit 7: Worker Productivity and Pay

Wednesday, November 7	Lecture 19: Pay and Productivity: Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 11</i> <Note> Problem Set #4 due
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Monday, November 12	** MIDTERM 2 **
Wednesday, November 14	Lecture 20: Pay and Productivity (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 11 (Cont.)</i> <Note> Problem Set #5 assigned
Unit 8: Discrimination	
Monday, November 19	Lecture 21: Gender, race, and ethnicity in the labor market Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 12</i>
Wednesday, November 21	Lecture 22: Gender, race, and ethnicity in the labor market (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 12 (Cont.)</i>
Unit 9: Labor Unions	
Monday, November 26	Lecture 23: Unions and the Labor Market Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 13</i> <Note> Problem Set #5 due
Unit 10: Inequality	
Wednesday, November 28	Lecture 24: Inequality in Earnings Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 15</i> <Note> Problem Set #6 assigned
Monday, December 3	Lecture 25: Inequality in Earnings (Cont.) Ehrenberg and Smith, <i>Chapter 15 (Cont.)</i>
Wednesday, December 5	Final Review <Note> Problem Set #6 due
Wednesday, December 12	** FINAL EXAM ** 8:00 – 10:00 am (Cumulative)