The University of Oklahoma  
Department of Economics  

Econ 3513 - Labor Problems  
Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00 - 4:00 pm, and by appointment

Teaching Assistants:  
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Class Meetings: January 17, 2017 - May 5, 2017  
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays  
From 10:30 AM to 11:20 PM at Cate Center 1, Classroom No. 237

Course Description  
This is an intermediate-level Economics course, in which we examine the labor market. The underlying learning objective of this course is to improve students’ critical thinking skills in a wide range of topics that relate to the functioning of labor market. To achieve this goal, this course is designed to introduce selected theoretical tools that are employed to model the allocation of labor forces. It also provides a survey of labor market institutions. Lastly, it introduces some empirical facts that relate to labor market to improve students’ understanding of how labor forces are allocated in the United States. This course begins with modeling labor market equilibrium. Then, selected issues such as compensating wage differentials, human capital, and wage structure are discussed. Following these discussions, this course puts particular emphasis on the international mobility of labor force.

Prerequisite  
Econ 1113 and Econ 1123.

The Required E-textbook  
Labor Economics (7th ed.) by George J. Borjas  
ISBN: 9781259359668  
How to purchase the required e-textbook?  
You have two options: 1.) you may purchase this through the OU Bookstore for about $140; or 2.) you may purchase through other online retailers for less than what OU Bookstore asks for. The price on Amazon is about $110, for instance. As long as you have access to the required e-textbook AND Connect platform, I do not care which option you choose. Make your choice given your budget.

Course Website  
The main websites is Canvas. From there, you will be directed to a repository on Google,
where the lecture materials are kept. You will also be directed to Connect, where the assignments are done.

**Course Software**

To write the required essay for this course, students may need to use a software to report some basic descriptive statistics and to perform some hypothesis testing. For this, students will be introduced to Stata. They do not need to purchase this software, however, as they have free access to Stata at the Economics Computer Lab.

**Assessment**

Students’ performance will be assessed based on two exams (with 50% weight), a number of assignments (with 20% weight), a short essay (with 20% weight), and class participation (with 10% weight):

- **The Exams Grade:**
  There are two exams. Though the concepts are closely related to each other, the exams are not going to be cumulative. The exams include multiple choice questions. When it comes to final letter grade calculation, the exams have 50% weight. For a given student, 30% weight will be allocated to the exam with higher grade, and 20% weight will be allocated to the exam with lower grade.

- **The Assignments:**
  There are a number of assigned problems for each chapter. The assignments are usually done on Connect. When it comes to final letter grade calculation, the assignments have 20% weight. For this I consider the average grade for your assignments, where all chapters are equally weighted.

- **The Short Essay:**
  There is one required essay, which will be turned in at the last day of the lecture series. This essay must be done in groups of two. When it comes to final letter grade calculation, the essay has 20% weights. Coauthors will receive the same grade.

- **The Class Participation Grade:**
  Students are expected to actively take part in class, which is why I take attendance. For each chapter, there are also a number of assignments that are partly done in class. Your class participation grade contributes to 10% of your final letter grade calculation. If you miss more than six sessions but less than ten, you will receive only 5%. If you miss ten sessions or more, you will receive nothing. If you miss a lecture due to well-justified reasons (e.g., health, job, army, etc.), you will be asked to provide my teaching assistant with a note, justifying your absence.

The sum of your exams, assignments, essay, and class participation grades will determine your final letter grade on a scale where 90 or above is an A and less than 60 is an F. Tests will not be curved, needs based appeals will not be entertained, and grades will be determined in strict accordance with the above policy.

**Some Tips**

In what follows, I share some tips on how to succeed in this course:

- **Take part in classes.** The key concepts are introduced in the lectures. You also get to see the application of those concepts in a number of in-class assignments. We
also discuss how those new concepts relate to what we have already learned. This is
the most efficient way to learn the concepts of interest and to see their applications.

- Take personal notes during the lectures. I share the materials that I use in class.
  However, it is very useful if you also keep some personal notes. Keep your notes
  organized.

- Read the materials that are shared with you in class. The chosen chapters describe
  the concepts thoroughly while providing lots of examples and real life applications.
  Take personal notes when you read the materials. Organize your notes.

- To be prepared for the exams, review the lecture presentations, in-class assignments,
  and your personal notes. Samples of previous exams are also available on Canvas.

- At any stage, feel free to contact me if you have any problems with the concepts
  or the assignments. I do not have fixed office hours during summer, but I will be
  available upon your request.

Some Notes
Read the following notes, and let me know, please, should you have any questions:

- My goal is to create a class in which everyone is welcome, included, and able to
  learn and succeed. Please talk to me if there is something I need to know in order
  to facilitate a positive and productive learning experience for you.

- If you require an accommodation based on disability, please let me know during the
  first week of the semester. Also, please bring the authorized documentation, issued
  by the Disability Resource Center.¹

- The academic misconduct policy is as stated in the University of Oklahoma Aca-
  demic Integrity Code.² Cheating, for instance, is a very serious violation of the
  code and will be treated as such. Signing the class roll for someone else or having
  someone else sign the class roll for you is also considered academic misconduct.
  Honor yourself, and honor the code.

- Except for the computers that are available in the classroom, you are not allowed
  to use your laptop computer, tablet, smart phone, or any other electronic gadget
  during the lectures or the exams. They must be turned off, in fact.

Course Outline³

- An Introduction to Labor Economics (Chapter 1)
  Lectures: 01/18 - 01/23; The due date for assignments: 02/03 at 11:59 PM

- Labor Supply (Chapters 2)
  Lectures: 01/25 - 02/06; The due date for assignments: 02/10 at 11:59 PM

- Labor Demand (Chapters 3)
  Lectures: 02/08 - 02/20; The due date for assignments: 02/24 at 11:59 PM

¹You may reach this center via phone. Voice: (405) 325-3852; TDD: (405) 325-4173
²A student’s guide to academic integrity is available at: http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html
³I reserve the right to make changes in the course outline.
• Equilibrium in Labor Market (Chapters 4)
  Lectures: 02/22 - 03/06; The due date for assignments: 03/10 at 11:59 PM

• Labor Supply, Demand, and Equilibrium - Concluding Remarks
  Lecture: 03/08

• Midterm exam (Ch. 1, 2, 3, and 4)
  Monday, 03/10 (10:30 - 11:20, Cate Center 1, No. 237)

• A Brief Survey of Descriptive Statistics (my notes), Hypothesis Testing (my notes), and Regression Analyses (Chapter 1 Appendix)
  Lectures: 03/20 - 03/24

• Compensating Wage Differentials (Chapter 5)
  Lectures: 03/27 - 04/03; The due date for assignments: 04/07 at 11:59 PM

• Human Capital (Chapter 6)
  Lectures: 04/05 - 04/14; The due date for assignments: 04/21 at 11:59 PM

• The Wage Structure (Chapter 7)
  Lectures: 04/17 - 04/24; The due date for assignments: 04/28 at 11:59 PM

• Immigration (selected readings)
  Lectures: 04/26 - 05/03

• Concluding Remarks
  Lectures: 05/05

• Final exam (The main focus is on Ch. 5, 6, and 7 as well as selected topics in Statistical Inference and Immigration)
  Monday, 05/08 (8:00 - 10:00, Cate Center 1, No. 237)