Course Syllabus

Required Reading:
- Fuchs, Victor, How We Live, Harvard University Press, 1984 (paper).

Grading:
Your final grade will be based on two midterms (25 percent each), a final comprehensive exam (45 percent), and class attendance and participation (5 percent). With the permission of the instructor a paper (not longer than 10 pages) may be substituted for either midterm.

Course Content and Objectives:
This course will cover topics in human resources that have received much recent attention by economists, the press, and policymakers. For example, over the last decade there has been a striking increase in the number of female-headed households and in the incidence of poverty among children. The labor supply, fertility, and marital decisions of women as well as policies about welfare and training programs and public support for childcare facilities will have a direct impact on these phenomena. Choices about education, occupation, job training, and geographical location will affect an individual's economic wellbeing throughout the life cycle.

The course will provide students with the analytical tools and empirical background to be able to make informed judgments about these human resource issues. In addressing the issues the course will focus on several common themes and questions:

1. In what ways can economic analysis contribute to a better understanding of the issue?
2. What are the limitations of economic analyses?
3. How can we discriminate among competing explanations of a particular human behavior?
I. Introduction
Fuchs, p.1-14, Blau and Ferber p. 1-7

   A. The Economic Approach to the Study of Human Resources
   B. Recent and Historical Trends in Demographic and Economic Variables

II. Birth and Childhood

   A. The Demand for Children
      Fuchs, p. 15-50
   B. Household Production and the Costs of Children
      Fuchs, p. 51-90; Blau and Ferber, p. 139-151

III. Adolescence
Fuchs, p. 91-124

   A. Education and Human Capital
      Blau and Ferber, p. 190-193
   B. Youth Employment
   C. Leaving Home
   D. Teenage Pregnancy

EXAM #1 - Tuesday 10/16/90

IV. Adulthood - Work and Family
Fuchs, p. 125-158

   A. Allocation of Time Between the Household and the Labor Market
      1. Labor Force Participation
         Blau and Ferber, p. 67-92
      2. Supply of Hours
         Blau and Ferber, p. 93-115
   B. Post-schooling Investments and Wage Growth
      Blau and Ferber, p. 201, 206-210
      1. On-the-job Training
      2. Job Search
      3. Migration
   C. Family
      1. Marriage
         Blau and Ferber, p. 116-119
      2. Division of Labor Between Husband and Wife
         Blau and Ferber, p. 37-66, 119-122, 125-139
      3. Divorce and Remarriage
         Blau and Ferber, p. 122-125

EXAM #2 - Thursday 11/15/90
D. Male/Female and Black/White Wage and Earnings and Unemployment Differentials
   Blau and Ferber, p. 152-181
   1. Human Capital Explanation
      Blau and Ferber, p. 182-190, 193-206, 211-227
   2. Occupational Segregation, Dual Labor Market Theory, and other
      Theories of Discrimination
      Blau and Ferber, p. 228-279
   3. Unemployment Experience
      Blau and Ferber, pp. 280-302

V. Old Age
   Fuchs, p. 159-208
   A. Retirement
   B. Health Care
   C. Social Security Financing
      Fuchs, p. 208-217

VII. Income Distribution and Economic Welfare Over the Life Cycle
     Fuchs, p. 219-242
     A. Age Versus Cohort Effects
     B. Intergenerational Transfers
     C. The Dependent Population: Competition Between Children and the Elderly for Government Resources
     D. Sex Differences in Other Countries
        Blau and Ferber, pp. 303-343

FINAL EXAM - REGULAR CLASSROOM
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1990, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.