Welcome. I am Prof. Jeffrey S. Zax. This is Economics 8676, Seminar -- Labor Economics I. This class will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays in Economics 5. I will hold regular office hours between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Mondays in my office, Economics 111. Appointments can be made for meetings at other times, if these are inconvenient.

This course will explore static and dynamic models of labor demand, discrimination in the labor market, the composition of compensation, the economics of unions, efficient contracts, and the macroeconomics of labor markets. Prerequisites are a previous graduate course in microeconomic theory and some previous exposure to econometric analysis.

The material covered in this course is presented in chapters 6, 9, 13, 16-22 of the Handbook of Labor Economics, Vols. 1 and 2. The essays in these books are excellent. Unfortunately, the books are expensive. If your budget constraint prevents purchase of both, the purchase of volume 2, containing chapters 16-22, may be worthwhile. I will distribute reading lists identifying relevant journal articles during the course of the semester.

The final examination for the course will take place on Thursday, 20 December, at 7:30 a.m. It will be worth 180 points. A midterm examination will take place on It will be worth 75 points. A paper, of approximately ten pages in length, is due on 12 December. It will also be worth 75 points.

The course as a whole, then, is valued at 330 points. The score attained by each student, evaluated relative to those of other students and to the score which would be attained by an intelligent student of labor economics, will determine final letter grades. The tentative course schedule follows:

- Static models of labor demand: 2.5 weeks
- Dynamic models of labor demand: 2.5 weeks
- Labor market discrimination: 2 weeks
- The composition of compensation: 2 weeks
- The economics of unions: 3 weeks
- Efficient contracts: 1 week
- The macroeconomics of labor markets: 2 weeks