COURSE SYLLABUS: ECONOMICS 4616

LABOR ECONOMICS

Professor Jane Lillydahl
Office hours: MWF 11:00 - 12:00
Phone: 492-4599
Class Hours: MWF 10:00 - 10:50
Classroom: Geol. 127
Prerequisites: Econ. 3070

The goal of this course is to learn how labor markets work. Employing the "economic way of thinking," the field of labor economics will be surveyed. Students will (1) become better informed about major events, trends, and developments in the world of work; (2) be able to explain these real-world outcomes; and (3) learn how to apply economic theory to analyze current labor and public policy issues.


Articles are on reserve at the main circulation desk in Norlin Library.

Course Assignments

Week of:

August 26  Chapter 1. Introduction to Labor Economics; Appendix (An Introduction to Regression Analysis)
           "How Will Welfare Recipients Fare in the Labor Market?" by Danziger and Lehman, Challenge, March-April 1996
Sept 16  Chapter 3. Labor Supply Over Time
           "Has Downsizing Gone Too Far?" by Robert Reich, Challenge, July-August, 1996
Sept 23 & 30 Chapter 4. Labor Demand

First Hourly Exam October 4.

Oct. 7  Chapter 5. Labor Market Equilibrium
Oct. 14  Chapter 6. Compensating Wage Differentials

Assignment #1 due October 30

Nov. 4  Chapter 9. Labor Mobility

Hourly exam #2 November 11

Nov. 11  Chapter 10. Labor Market Discrimination

Nov. 18  Chapter 11. Trade Unions


Assignment #2 due November 27

Dec. 2 & 9  Chapter 13. Unemployment

Assignment #3 due December 4

Dec. 19  Final exam 11:30-2:30

Assignments

1) Prepare a one-page analysis of the expected lifetime earnings of an individual in a particular career and compare these earnings with the lifetime earnings of the average high school graduate. You may choose any profession you wish. This exercise will require research into salaries by occupation, discount rates, educational expenses, and foregone earnings while being trained/educated in the profession. (5% of grade)

2) Keep an economic issues notebook of news clippings (or xeroxed news articles) relevant to the Presidential candidates' stands on labor economic issues. Each clipping is to be "annotated" with your comments. Annotations are not to be summaries of the clippings, but rather intellectual interactions with the news and opinions they contain. (5% of grade)
3) Write a 5-page paper investigating a question in labor economics. The introduction of the paper should include the question being addressed; the middle section should tie in economic analysis with empirical and factual information; and the concluding section should summarize your findings on the subject and any public policy implications. (15% of grade) Clarity of exposition, grammar, spelling, and writing style will be considered as well as economic content in determining a grade for this assignment.

Grading

The three assignments listed above will comprise 25% of your course grade. In addition, the two hourly exams and the final exam will each count for 25% of your final grade.