

Economics 4616 – Labor Economics
Fall 2006, MWF 9:00-9:50, ECON 119
<http://ucsub.colorado.edu/~snipes>

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Office Hours

MWF 10:00-11:00, or by appointment

I am usually in my office, however, so it's pretty easy to set up an appointment. Just send me an e-mail or talk to me after class.

Course Prerequisite

This class requires previous completion of Economics 3070, Intermediate Microeconomics, or the equivalent. Do not take this class without the prerequisite!

Textbook

George Borjas *Labor Economics* McGraw-Hill, 3rd edition, 2005.
2nd edition is fine.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the economics of labor markets. We will be discussing questions such as: How do individuals choose whether to work or not, and if so, how much? How do families decide who works outside the home and who “does the dishes”? How do employers decide how many workers to hire? Why do some people go to college and others don't? Why do some people get paid more than others? How do you set wages so that employees will work harder?

Course Structure

In-Class Exercises: In-class group exercises will be given frequently. These exercises will be used to promote discussion of the issues we cover, and most importantly, give students practice with the material in preparation for exams. These exercises are not graded, but students will be called on to provide answers to the class.

Attendance: Attendance is critical to the success of this class, and in fact any class! Substantial practice will take place through the in-class exercises. That being said, we're all adults here and I will not take attendance. You are responsible for your own attendance and grade in this class! Besides all the obvious reasons to attend lecture, some exam questions will not be covered in the text but only covered in lecture. In the off chance that you miss a lecture, you should try to get lecture notes from a fellow student, if they are willing to share. I don't give students my notes as they are only outlines of topics to discuss and will not be of much help to you.

Exams: There will be two exams and one non-cumulative final. The first exam is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 27; the second is scheduled for Friday November 3; the final is Wednesday, Dec 20, 7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Woo-hoo! As far as I know, the final will be in the same room as the class.

Grades

Grades will be based on:

1/3 first midterm

1/3 second midterm

1/3 final exam

I will curve the final grade for the course.

Other Concerns

Missed Exams: Make-up exams are not given. Exam absences will only be excused for compelling circumstances (family emergencies or *documented* illness), in which case the other exams will be re-weighted. Please let me know of any other concerns as soon as possible.

Special Accommodations: Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should speak with me during the first three weeks of class. Also contact the Disability Services Office, Willard 322 (303-492-8671), so that such accommodations may be arranged.

Extra Credit Assignments: are not given.

Class Disruptions: Please be respectful and turn off cell phones and do not bring pets to class.

There will be no class Friday, September 29th!

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Aug 28-Sept 1): Introduction to Labor Supply

Textbook: Chapters 1 and 2

Week 2 (Sept 4-8): Non-linear Budget Lines

Textbook: Chapter 2 continued

Week 3 (Sept 11- Feb 15): Household Production

Textbook: Chapter 3

Week 4 (Sept 18-25): Introduction to Labor Demand

Textbook: Chapter 4

First Midterm: Wed, Sept 27

Week 5 (Oct 2- 6): Labor Demand, Cont

Textbook: Chapter 4, cont.

Week 6 (Oct 9-13): Taxes, Monopsony and Minimum Wages

Textbook: Chapter 5

Week 7 (Oct 16- 20): Compensating Wage Differentials

Textbook: Chapter 6

Week 8 (Oct 23 - 27): Human Capital: Schooling

Textbook: Chapter 7

Week 9 (Oct 30- Nov 3): Human Capital: On-the-Job Training, Wage Profiles and Signaling

Textbook: Chapter 7, cont.

Second Midterm: Fri, Nov 3

Week 10 (Nov 6-10): Labor Mobility

Textbook: Chapter 9

Week 11 (Nov 13-17): Discrimination

Textbook: Chapter 10

Week 12 (Nov 20-24): Labor Unions

Textbook: Chapter 11

Week 13 (Nov 27- Dec 1): Labor Contracts and Work-Incentives

Textbook: Chapter 12

Week 14 (Dec 4-8): Labor Contracts and Work-Incentives, Cont

Textbook: Chapter 12

Wednesday, Dec 20, 7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

All dates are tentative, but will follow this general schedule.