Syllabus

Instructor: Dr Barbara Morgan    Teaching Assistant: Mikhail Smirnov
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Office hours: Wednesday 1:30 – 2:30 or by appointment  Office hours: Monday 1:30 – 2:30
Merganthaler 286                  AMR II 002

Course Description
In this course students extend their knowledge of economic theory as it applies to the labor market, examine
earnings and employment outcomes, and assess the efficiency and equity impacts of several governmental
programs. In lectures and readings a continuing focus will be on the methodological and statistical
techniques labor economists employ. In the second part of the course students will have an opportunity to
use both economic theory and empirical evidence to analyze in depth topics such as discrimination, inequality,
and the impact of immigration and globalization on the labor market. Prerequisites for the course are
Microeconomic Theory (180.301) or permission of the instructor. Knowledge of statistical analysis up to the
level of simple regression is also helpful.

Text:
George J. Borjas, Labor Economics, 6th edition.. Required supplementary readings are on electronic reserve at
the Milton S. Eisenhower library (password MOR351).

Website:
This course has a Blackboard website which you should consult frequently for problem sets and
announcements. You can also access electronic reserves directly through the website.

Grading:
Statistical Exercises (2)  10%
Homeworks(4)              10%
Midterm Exams (2)         40%
Critiques (2)            10%
Final Roundtable         10%
Class Participation  20% (in discussions and presentations)

Class Format:
As a general rule, each week there will be one lecture and one discussion (focusing on a specific article). In
the final three classes of the semester we will have a series of presentations on selected labor economics
topics. Participation in class discussions and presentations will contribute to your grade.

Exams:
There will be two exams during the semester consisting of short-answer questions that draw on material from
the lectures, articles, homeworks and statistical exercises. You will need to complete four homeworks and two
short statistical exercises using Excel or STATA. These assignments will help prepare you for the exams. You
can discuss these exercises with other students, but please submit your own work. Bear in mind that if you do
not understand the problems you will not do well on the exams. There will be no final exam. Make-up exams
will be considered for documented medical reasons only.
Due dates for assignments:
Homework I  Monday February 11th
Statistical Exercise I  Monday February 18th
Homework II  Wednesday February 27th
Statistical Exercise II  Wednesday March 13th
Homework III  Wednesday April 3rd
Homework IV  Monday April 15th
We will endeavour to return homeworks and exercises in the next class period

Discussion Classes:
For discussion classes, 5-6 students will be assigned to formally critique the assigned article and should submit a two page summary/critique of the article (around 1,000 words) to me 24 hours before class. Further details as to how this critique should be structured are on the course website. Over the course of the semester, each student will be involved in two such critiques (if you are strongly wedded to critiquing a specific article, just email me). However, all students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading and ask questions (I will call upon you). Bring a copy of the article to class because we may need to focus on details within it.

Roundtables:
Each student will participate in a roundtable presentation at the end of the semester that will involve both economic analysis and policy recommendations (including an oral presentation and a written argument of approximately 1500 words). I will assign the topics, based on your preferences, early in the semester (most likely immigration, inequality and unemployment, but I am open to student input). Although a small group of students will be involved in the presentation, all students should come to class prepared to participate and ask questions.

Academic Dishonesty:
Cheating hurts our community by undermining academic integrity, creating mistrust and fostering unfair competition. The university will punish cheaters with failure on an assignment, failure in a course, permanent transcript notation and/or expulsion.
Violations can include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments without permission, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery, falsification and lying.
For more information, see the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board web site at http://ethics.jhu.edu
Course Outline and Reading List

Date:
M 1/28 Overview of the Labor Market - Lecture
Borjas, Chapter 1 (excluding Appendix)

W 1/30 Statistical Analysis in Labor Economics - Lecture
Borjas, Appendix to Ch. 1

M 2/4 Overview of the Labor Market - Discussion

W 2/6 Labor Supply – Lecture
Borjas, Chapter 2 pp. 21-64

M 2/11 Labor Supply – Discussion

W 2/13 Labor Demand - Lecture
Borjas, Chapter 3 pp.84-126

M 2/18 Labor Demand – Discussion

W 2/20 Labor Market Equilibrium
Borjas, Chapter 4 pp.144-164, 187-196

M 2/25 Labor Market Equilibrium – Discussion

W 2/27 Human Capital – Lecture
Borjas, Chapter 6, Chapter 8 pp. 350-360

M 3/4 Human Capital – Discussion

W 3/6 MID-TERM EXAM WEDNESDAY MARCH 6th IN CLASS

M 3/11 Inequality in Earnings – Lecture
Borjas, Chapter 7

W 3/13 Inequality in Earnings – Discussion
**M 3/25**  
**Immigration – Lecture**  
Borjas, Chapter 8 pp. 318-349, Chapter 4 pp. 164-182

**W 3/27**  
**Immigration - Discussion:**  

**M 4/1**  
**Discrimination - Lecture**  
Borjas, Chapter 9

**W 4/3**  
**Discrimination - Discussion:**  

**M 4/8**  
**Unemployment – Lecture**  
Borjas, Chapter 12, pp.498-523, 532-541

**W 4/10**  
**Unemployment –Discussion**  

**M 4/15**  
**An International Perspective**  

**W 4/17**  
**An International Perspective - Discussion**  

**M 4/22**  
**MID-TERM EXAM II MONDAY 22nd APRIL IN CLASS**

**W 4/24**  
**Policy Roundtable #1**

**M 4/29**  
**Policy Roundtable #2**

**W 5/1**  
**Policy Roundtable #3**