Instructor: Dr Barbara Morgan

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 methodologies 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:

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

Grading:
Response papers 15%
Class participation 15%
Presentation/paper 20%
Midterm exam 25%
Final exam 25%

Class Format:
The format of the class is lecture and discussion. Participation in class discussion and response papers will contribute to your grade. As a general rule I will lecture on Tuesdays. On Thursdays in the first half of the semester there will be a combination of lecture and discussion; in the second half of the semester there will be more formal student presentations.
For Thursday classes, you should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading indicated with an asterisk (*). Bring a copy of the article to class because we may need to focus on details within it. For each discussion class, prepare a single typed sheet (around 400 words) of the main issues raised in the asterisked (*) reading and upload it to the course website before class. The response paper will ensure that everyone does the required reading and will permit a more substantive discussion. The papers will be graded (check plus, check, check minus). Papers that are too long, late or miss the point will be penalized.

Presentation:
Each student will also participate in a more formal presentation in the second half of the semester and submit an associated term paper. This will involve making an economic argument for or against a controversial labor economics topic. I will assign the topics, based on your preferences, early in the
semester. Preparation will involve meeting at least twice in a small group setting. Although a small group of students will be involved in the presentation, all student should come to class having completed the required reading and prepared to ask questions.

The term paper is an individual assignment. It should be 5 pages (about 2,000 words) long (typed, double-spaced, 12 point font), not including bibliography, cover page or abstract. Include your name, a title, and a one-paragraph abstract. In addition to the central body of the paper include an Introduction (stating the central question), Literature Review (presenting and evaluating information relevant to your topic from books and articles), Conclusion (summarizing the paper and its findings) and Bibliography (which should include at least 3 academic sources). The final paper should have a clear writing style, correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, and be well-organized. Evidence of clear thinking, use of outside readings and meaningful examples are all important. An excellent resource for those of you whose writing is weak is the Johns Hopkins University Writing Center located in Room 127 of the Greenhouse (behind Gilman Hall). The paper is due one week after your presentation. Late papers will not be accepted, so please plan accordingly.

Exams:
Every couple of weeks problems will be posted on the course website. They will not be graded but working on them will ensure that you keep up with the material and understand it. There will be two exams consisting of short-answer questions (both interpretive and analytical) that draw on material from the lectures, articles, discussions and problems. Make-up exams will be considered for documented medical reasons only. Senior option is not available.

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
Johns Hopkins University Department of Economics
ECO 180.351 Labor Economics
Course Outline and Reading List

Date:

9/3 Introduction to the Course

9/8, 9/10 Overview of the Labor Market
E-S Chapter 1 (excluding Appendix), Chapter 2

9/15, 9/17 Labor Demand
E-S Chapter 3, 4

9/22, 9/24 Labor Supply
E-S Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 (pp. 209-219)

9/29, 10/1 Frictions in the Labor Market
E-S Chapter 5

10/6, 10/8 Human Capital
E-S Chapter 9

10/13 MID-TERM EXAM

10/15 Statistical Analysis in Labor Economics
E-S Appendix to Ch. 1

10/20, 10/22 Discrimination
E-S Chapter 12
Presentation, Thursday October 22: “Does Labor Market Discrimination Still Exist?”

10/27, 10/29 Immigration
E-S Chapter 10
Presentation, Thursday October 29: “Do Immigrants Negatively Impact the Economy?”
11/3, 11/5 Labor Unions
E-S Chapter 13
Presentation, Thursday November 5: “Are Labor Unions an Anachronism?”

11/10, 11/12 Unemployment
E-S Chapter 14
Presentation, Thursday November 12: “Is the Minimum Wage Bad Public Policy?”

11/17, 11/19 Inequality in Earnings
E-S Chapter 15
Presentation, Thursday November 19: “Is U.S. Inequality a Big Problem?”

11/24 On Tuesday, November 24th we will have a discussion of the labor market policies pursued by the new administration. Please bring to class newspaper articles pertinent to the topic. Donuts will be served. Bring your own coffee!

11/26 Thanksgiving

12/1, 12/3 An International Perspective
E-S Chapter 16
Presentation, Thursday December 3: “Does Globalisation Hurt Labor?”

**FINAL EXAM FRIDAY DECEMBER 18 2 P.M.- 5 P.M.**