

Econ 331: Labor Economics

Rhodes College, Fall 2013

Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Erin Kaplan
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Office: 327 Buckman Hall
Office Hours: Mon. 3:00-4:00pm
Or by Appointment

Course Description:

This course covers standard labor economic theory. Topics include market equilibria, the demand for and supply of labor (including human fertility, human capital, hours of work, and labor force participation), wage levels and differences (including discrimination) and unions and government as labor market forces.

Course Materials:

- *Modern Labor Economics* 11th Ed. By Ehrenberg and Smith (*Required*)
- *Moodle* – All assignments and announcements will be posted on Moodle, so please check the course page frequently. (*Required*)

Course Policies

Attendance:

Success in this class requires regular attendance, preparation, and willingness to ask questions and engage in discussion. Students with recurring extracurricular commitments (athletics, mock trial, etc...) should speak with me in advance about their anticipated absence(s). If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining notes from a colleague.

Office Hours:

Students are encouraged to attend office hours. The material covered in this course is often challenging, and students should consider office hours an additional resource to aid in their understanding. If you are unable to attend my regularly scheduled office hours, please contact me to schedule an alternative time to meet.

Email:

In general, email is the best way to get in contact with me. However, if you send me an email within 24 hours of an exam or homework deadline, don't expect me to respond before the exam/due date.

Honor Code:

Academic misconduct includes the following examples as well as any other similar conduct which is aimed at falsely representing a student's academic performance: cheating, plagiarizing, using unauthorized aids on an exam, falsifying records, or assisting another individual in any of the above. All instances of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Council.

Mutual Respect:

Classroom discussion is meant to allow us to hear a variety of viewpoints, and I encourage respectful disagreement and civilized debate. For this reason, it is vital that we create an environment of mutual respect. Remember that each of us has a unique set of experiences and opinions, and that this diversity is valuable both inside and outside of the classroom.

Use of Cell Phones:

The use of cell phones during lectures is a disrespectful distraction to your instructor and other classmates. Please turn off your cell phone while you are in class. In emergency situations, please discuss limited use of cell phone with me prior to the class during which you would like to use your cell phone.

Disability Services:

If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services on the 4th floor of Burrow Student Center (901-843-3885) as early as possible in the term, to verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Missed Exams:

In the event that you are unable to attend an in-term exam due to an extreme illness or other documented emergency, please notify me as soon as feasibly possible with the appropriate documentation.

Course Grades

Quizzes (10%) There will be 10 days throughout the semester when you will be required to complete a short in-class assignment. The dates of quiz days will typically not be announced in advance; however, students who are up to date with the suggested coursework should be able to complete these assignments easily. I will exclude the lowest 2 scores from the final grade calculations, and consequently *no make-ups* will be given for students who are absent.

Midterm Exams (40%) There will be two midterm exams, and each exam will be worth 20% of your grade. The first exam is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 1st, and the second exam is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 7th.

Final Exam (30%) The final exam will be held on Tuesday, December 10th at 8:30am, as scheduled by the Registrar's Office. The exam will be *comprehensive*.

Term Paper (20%)

Over the course of the semester you will write a paper on a topic of your choosing within the field of labor economics. A list of suggested topics will be provided. Topic proposals will be due on Thursday, September 12th, and the final draft of the paper will be due on Thursday, November 21st. Papers should be coherent, concise, and well-organized with an emphasis on economic analysis.