

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

ECON 380: LABOR ECONOMICS

Fall 2020

MWF 9:20-10:10AM

Zoom Meeting: <https://unc.zoom.us/j/96357981273>

Instructor: Estonia Black

Email: efblack@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: TBA

Course Website: sakai.unc.edu

The Sakai web site will contain the official course gradebook, announcements, and other supplementary materials.

Prerequisites: ECON 101 and ECON 310/410

Course Description: This course applies concepts from microeconomic theory to the study of labor markets. We will apply the ideas you learned in ECON 101 and ECON 310/410 to various topics in labor economics as a means of understanding labor market behavior.

Required Textbook: George Borjas, Labor Economics, 7th Edition.

Grading and Course Components

- Homework: 25% (5% each)
- Policy Memo: 15% (7.5% each)
- Exam 1: 15%
- Exam 2: 15%
- Final Exam: 30%

The grading scale is subject to change, but will not be stricter than the following:

A : 93 – 100	C+ : 77 – 79.99
A- : 90 – 92.99	C : 73 – 76.99
B+ : 87 – 89.99	C- : 70 – 72.99
B : 83 – 86.99	D+ : 65 – 69.99
B- : 80 – 82.99	D : 60 – 64.99
	F : < 60

Homework: There will be five problem sets assigned during the course of the semester. You are free to collaborate on homework assignments, but each student must turn in their own work. Homework is due at 5:00 PM on the assigned date, and must be submitted via [gradescope.com](https://www.gradescope.com). Due dates are firm and no late homework will be accepted without prior approval.

Students should use a Gradescope account connected with their UNC Heelmail address. If you are not automatically added to the course on Gradescope, you can use the course code **9337R6** to gain access to our course site. I will create a fake assignment on Gradescope for students to test the system for uploading homework submissions; if you are not already familiar with Gradescope, I highly recommend using that assignment to practice uploading your work, to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.

You may submit a “regrade request” on Gradescope for any questions on a homework assignment within one week of the date the assignment’s grades are published. Any regrade request submitted after that point will not result in a change to your grade for that assignment.

Policy Memo: There will be two policy memos assigned during the course of the semester. Policy memos are due at 5:00 PM on the assigned date. You must submit an electronic copy of the memo on Sakai as instructed during class. You will choose a topic from the available list and write a memo to President Trump explaining why he should support or oppose such policy. Your writing should be clear, concise, and well-organized, and your arguments should be based on the economic concepts and theories we discuss in this course and supported by empirical facts.

Policy Memo Format:

- 3-4 pages
- Double spaced
- 12 point font
- 1 inch margins
- Name and PID in the header.
- References on separate page at the end (does not count towards length requirement), citing at least 3 sources, 2 or more of which should be from peer-reviewed economics journals in Chicago Author-Date style.

Exams: There will be two in-class exams during the course in addition to the final exam. Each exam will cover material presented in class, readings scheduled outside of class, and homework assignments. The exam format will be provided a few days prior to a given

exam. You may utilize a **non-graphing, non-programmable** calculator, the required textbook, your own notes, and any material available on Sakai to assist you in completing the exam.

Each exam will consist of a multiple choice section and a free-response section. Multiple choice answers will be submitted on Sakai through an assignment in the “Tests & Quizzes” section, while your work for the free-response section will be submitted on Gradescope. I will make a pdf copy of each midterm available on Sakai at 9:20 AM on the date of the exam, and you will have until 10:20 AM to submit your work on Sakai and Gradescope. You should be sure to leave yourself time to deal with any technical difficulties in submitting your answers, and double check that your answers on Sakai have been successfully submitted.

Exam Dates: (subject to change)

Exam 1	Wednesday, September 16th
Exam 2	Wednesday, October 21st

Course Policies

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and participation is strongly recommended, but not required. You are responsible for any notes or class announcements that you may have missed. You should attempt to get these notes/announcements from one of your peers before seeing me. It is expected that you will respect your peers and the instructor with appropriate behavior while in class and that you will arrive to class on time.

Missed Exams: There are no make-up midterm examinations without a notice of a University Approved Absence from the office of the Dean of Students. If you must miss a midterm exam, you may be permitted to transfer the missed credit to the final examination. To qualify for a transfer of credit, you must contact me before the start of the missed midterm examination and provide me with an acceptable explanation. If the reason for your absence could not be foreseen, please make the request as soon as possible thereafter. All requests should be in writing and you may be asked to provide support with suitable documentation.

If you must miss a midterm exam due to a university-approved reason, such as a health concern or personal/family emergency, and would rather take a make-up exam than transfer the credit to the final, you may submit a request for a University Approved Absence to the office of the Dean of Students. Once you have obtained a University Approved Absence, I will work with you to schedule a make-up examination.

If you must miss the final exam for any excused reason, it is your responsibility to alert your instructor and Dean as soon as possible to schedule a make-up exam. Please see the

[University policy](#) regarding final examinations.

Accessibility Resources: UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us>.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to adhere to the [UNC Honor Code](#).

Additional Resources:

- **CAPS:** CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or call 919-966-3658.
- **The Learning Center:** The UNC Learning Center is a great resource both for students who are struggling in their courses and for those who want to be proactive and develop sound study practices to prevent falling behind. They offer individual consultations, peer tutoring, academic coaching, test prep programming, study skills workshops, and peer study groups. If you think you might benefit from their services, please visit their website for more information or to set up an appointment: <http://learningcenter.unc.edu>.
- **Title IX Resources:** Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne Allison Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Course Outline*

Date	Topic	Readings	Notes
08/10	Introduction to Labor Economics	Syllabus; 1.1-1.3	
08/12	The U.S. Labor Force; Unemployment	2.1-2.2, 12.1-12.2	
08/14	Unemployment;		
08/17	Neoclassical Model of Labor Supply: Preferences and Constraints	2.3-2.4	
08/19	Labor Supply: The Hours Decision	2.5	
08/21	Labor Supply: The Participation Decision	2.6-2.8	
8/24	No Class	Homework 1 Due	
08/26	Labor Supply: Elasticity; Application: Anti-Poverty Policy	2.10-2.11	
08/28	Labor Demand in the Short Run	3.1-3.2	
08/31	Labor Demand in the Long Run	3.3-3.4	
09/02	Application: Minimum Wage Empirical Studies	3.10, Sakai Readings	
09/04	Labor Market Equilibrium: Competitive Markets	4.1-4.2	
09/07	Application: Immigration Impacts	4.5	
09/09	Noncompetitive Labor Markets	4.8	Homework 2 Due
09/11	Application: Labor Markets and Development	Sakai Readings	
09/14	Catch up / review day		
09/16	Exam 1		
09/18	Human Capital: Introduction	6.1	
09/21	Human Capital: The Schooling Model	6.2-6.3	
09/23	In-Class Activity		
09/25	Human Capital: Returns to Schooling I	6.4-6.5	Policy Memo 1 Due
09/28	Human Capital: Returns to Schooling II	6.4-6.5	
09/30	Human Capital: Signaling Model	6.9	
10/02	Application: Human Capital and Development		Homework 3 Due
10/05	Income Inequality: Introduction	7.1-7.3	
10/07	Application: Why is Inequality Rising?	7.4	
10/09	Wage Dispersion and Intergenerational Inequality	7.5-7.6	
10/16	University Day - No Class		
10/14	In-Class Activity		
10/16	Labor Market Discrimination	9.1-9.3	Homework 4 Due
10/19	Catch up / review day		
10/21	Exam 2		
10/23	Statistical Discrimination	9.6	
10/26	Measuring Discrimination	9.8	
10/28	Application: Discrimination	9.7, 9.9, 9.11, Sakai Readings	
10/30	Application: Discrimination	Sakai Readings	
11/02	In-Class Activity		Policy Memo 2 Due
11/04	Compensating Differentials	5.1-5.2, 5.5	
11/06	Application: Health Insurance	5.6	
11/09	Selected topics (time permitting)	Sakai Readings TBD	Homework 5 Due
11/11	Selected topics (time permitting)	Sakai Readings TBD	
11/13	Selected topics (time permitting)	Sakai Readings TBD	
11/16	Review day		Bring questions!

*Note: This outline is tentative and subject to change.