

Econ 480-001: Labor Economics

UNC at Chapel Hill, Department of Economics
Spring 2022

Instructor Information:

Pulasthi Amarasinghe
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Class Schedule:

Class Hours: Tu, Th 2-3 pm at Gardner 0309
Office Hours: M, W 1-2 pm online using <https://unc.zoom.us/j/152217765> or By appointment

Grader:

Anlin Zhi
Email: azi65@email.unc.edu

Course Materials:

Textbook: G. J. Borjas, *Labor Economics*, 5th, 6th or 7th Edition, McGraw-Hill. Macroeconomics
Software: Assignments, announcements, grades, class notes, exams and other information will be posted at sakai.unc.edu. Sakai will be the primary method of communication for this course, so please check it frequently. You will submit your assignments on Gradescope. I will register your emails for Gradescope using Sakai so please make sure you are able to access it. If you are not familiar with Gradescope, please contact me for more information.

Course Credit:

Students can not receive credit for both Econ 380 and Econ 480.
Econ 400 and Econ 410 are pre-requisites for this course.

Course Goals: This course covers classic topics in labor economics. Labor economics studies a peculiar market where workers supply labor and firms demand labor in exchange for a wage. We apply models and concepts from your core economics courses to analyze how labor markets function. Students will then use the specific and unique characteristics of the good traded in the labor market to study human capital and discrimination applications.

The course will emphasize evaluating models and policies using economic theory, data analysis, and econometrics. By the end of the course, students should gain the tools to explore policy implications in topics such as wage determination, human capital accumulation, discrimination. The text for the course will provide a rough guide of the topics we will cover. However, lectures will provide much supplemental material. The syllabus is subject to change. The honor code is in effect.

Code of Conduct: The University Honor Code is in effect. Students are allowed to study in groups but all work submitted must be your own. Moreover, non-academic use of personal electronic devices is prohibited.

Grading	% of Course Grade	Date	Details & Policy
Final Exam	(30%)		The final will cover all of the material we do this semester. Missing the Final Exam without a valid excuse from the Dean will result in a zero exam score. The instructor will provide more information and guidelines about exams at least a week prior to the exam date.
Midterm 1	(20%)	02/22/22	Midterm will cover Labor Supply and Labor Demand. Missing the Midterm without an excused absence results in a zero score for that Test. The instructor will provide more information and guidelines about exams at least a week prior to the exam date.
Midterm 2	(20%)	04/05/22	Midterm will cover Labor Market Equilibrium and Human Capital. Missing the Midterm without an excused absence results in a zero score for that Test. The instructor will provide more information and guidelines about exams at least a week prior to the exam date.
Homework	(20%)	TBA	There will be three homework assignments throughout the semester. If you miss an assignment due to an excused absence, your Homework grade will be reweighted among the remaining homework assignments. However, you can only miss one homework assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted.
Paper Presentation	(10%)	TBA	You will present a paper related to the class lectures. This will be done in groups and each group has 20 minutes to present their paper. Instructions for this assignment will be on Sakai.

Students associated with Disability Services must contact me one week prior to each Test.

Excused Absences: Illness or participation in University sanctioned activities. Documentation from coach or doctor must be provided.

Students that miss a graded assignment due to an excused absence such as an illness or university related activity may have the assignment dropped from consideration.

A	$x \geq 92\%$
A-	$87 \leq x < 92$
B+	$83 \leq x < 87$
B	$80 \leq x < 83$
B-	$75 \leq x < 80$
C+	$70 \leq x < 75$
C	$65 \leq x < 70$
C-	$60 \leq x < 65$
D+	$55 \leq x < 60$
D	$50 \leq x < 55$
F	$x < 50$

Syllabus Changes: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including homework and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Accessibility Resources and Service Office:

The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. You can access their website here: <http://accessibility.unc.edu>.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes except for University Approved Absences (The UAAO website provides information and FAQs for students and faculty related to University Approved Absences).

Due to COVID, I understand the difficulties with attending classes this semester. I will provide a zoom session of the in-person class for those with a university-approved absence. Students are expected to inform the instructor of their absence before 1 pm to receive the zoom link on the day of class.

Medical and Counseling Services : If you are having any mental, physical, or other personal problems that are interfering with your ability to focus on your coursework, please contact the UNC Campus Health Services (919-966-2281 or <https://campushealth.unc.edu/>) right away.

Diversity Statement : I value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve.

Tentative Course Outline

- Week 1-4 *Labor Supply*
Measurements, Labor supply decisions, Policy Applications
- Weeks 5-7 *Labor Demand*
Production function, Labor demand curve, Policy applications
- Weeks 8-10 *Equilibrium*
Single Market Equilibrium, Across Markets, Policy Applications
- Week 11-13 *Application 1: Human Capital*
Endogenous schooling decisions, Returns to schooling, Signaling, On-the-job Training
- Week 13-14 *Application 2: Discrimination*
Taste discrimination, statistical discrimination, measuring discrimination
- Week 14-15 *Application 3: Wage Structures and Inequality*
Earnings Distribution, measuring inequality, inequality across generations
- Optional: *Labor Market Mobility*