

Economics 139 – Labor Economics, Winter 2009

9-9:50am, MWF, Center Hall 101

Instructor: Kate Antonovics

Office: Department of Economics, Room 327

Email: kantonov@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00-3:00pm

Web Page: Go to <http://webct.ucsd.edu>

Teaching Assistants (please check class web page for office hours, contact information, etc.)

OBJECTIVES:

This course will introduce various theories about labor markets and evaluate how well those theories explain observed patterns in the data. After taking this course, you will know more about a) economic theory, b) the methods that economists use to test those theories and c) observed trends in wages, employment, education and other labor market phenomena. The class has a heavy public policy focus.

PREREQUISITES:

Econ 1.

HOMEWORK:

There will be (almost) weekly homework assignments posted on the class web page. Homework assignments generally will be posted Friday afternoons, and are due the following Friday. During the week between when an assignment is posted and when it is due, your TAs will hold out-of-class review sessions to go over the assignment. These review sessions are optional, but you're encouraged to go since the questions on the midterm and the final will look very much like the questions on your homework assignments. On the day your homework is due, I will post the answer key. *You do not have to turn in your homework assignments, and they will not be graded.* Thus, the "due date" of the assignment is really just meant to serve as a signal of how quickly you should be moving through the material.

EXAMS:

There will be one midterm and a *cumulative* final. The midterm will be on **Friday, February 6th in class**. The final will be on **Wednesday, March 18th from 8:00-11:00am**. These dates are NOT negotiable.

GRADES:

Midterm 1 (40%), Final (60%)

TEXTBOOK:

The basic text is *Labor Economics*, 3rd Edition, by George Borjas, (Irwin McGraw-Hill, 2005), which is available at the Bookstore. The 2nd Edition is also fine.

SUPPLEMENTAL READING:

These readings are required. You can download them from the Supplemental Readings folder on the class web page.

SR1: Juhn, Chinhui and Simon Potter, "Changes in Labor Force Participation in the United States," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Summer 2006, 20:3, 27-46.

SR2: Blank, Rebecca, "Fighting Poverty: Lessons from Recent US History," Journal of Economic Perspectives, Spring 2000, 14:2, 3-19.

SR3: Kahn, Larry, "The Sports Business as a Labor Market Laboratory," Summer 2000, Journal of Economic Perspectives, 14:3, 74-94.

SR4: Gottschalk, Peter, "Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts," Journal of Economic Perspectives, Spring 1997, 11:2, 21-40.

SR5: Yinger, John, "Evidence on Discrimination in Consumer Markets," Journal of Economic Perspectives, Spring 1998, 12:2, 23-40.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES:

1. If you have a documented disability, please come to talk to me as soon as possible so that I can make suitable accommodations for you. If you believe that you have a disability and desire accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities.
2. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will earn a failing grade for the course. In addition, the Council of Deans of Student Affairs will impose a disciplinary penalty.
3. If you need to miss a midterm for a verifiable medical/legal/sports reason, your midterm grade will be your grade on the final. Failure to notify me promptly that you must miss a midterm will result in a zero grade for that midterm. Unexcused absences will also result in a zero.
4. If you arrive late to an exam, I will allow you to take the exam in the time that remains *as long as no one has turned in his/ her exam and left the room*. Once a classmate has turned in his/her exam, you will earn a zero on the test if you arrive late.
5. UCSD now has automated waitlists. If you have any questions regarding adding the class, please refer to Triton Link or contact the undergraduate advisors in Sequoyah Hall 245. The Economics Department does not allow you to add a class after the second week of the quarter.

SCHEDULE:

This is a *rough* guide, and may change. It is up to you to keep up with the reading. It is strongly recommended that you complete the reading before coming to lecture. You are responsible for all of the material in the chapters listed below. However, exams will emphasize material covered in class. In the table, SR stands for Supplemental Reading.

Topic	Reading
Week 1: Labor Supply	Chapter 2, SR1
Week 2: Topics in Labor Supply	Chapter 3, SR2
Week 3: Labor Demand	Chapter 4
Week 4: Labor Market Equilibrium	Chapter 5, SR3, pp. 75-83
Week 5: Compensating Wage Differentials	Chapter 6
Week 6: Human Capital	Chapter 7
Week 7: The Wage Structure	Chapter 8, SR4
Week 8: Labor Mobility	Chapter 9
Week 9: Labor Market Discrimination	Chapter 10, SR5
Week 10: Labor Unions	Chapter 11