

University of Victoria

ECONOMICS 515 (CRN: 21050)

Topics in Labour Economics

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 BEC 338
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Office Hours:
 Wednesday 11:00-12:00
 or by appointment

OBJECTIVES:

This course provides a survey of some of the issues in labour economics. The goal throughout the term will be to bring together the theoretical and empirical aspects of Labour Economics. To this end students will be presented with a number of theoretical models on a small number of topics, will be required to read journal articles and working papers, and will develop empirical and econometric skills for dealing with microdata. Students will become familiar with Stata, a commonly used statistical software package used to analyse microdata. A substantial portion of time will be spent understanding how to interpret empirical results and how to avoid some of the common pitfalls associated with interpreting causal relationships in Labour Economics research.

We will start off by developing the basic models of labour supply and labour demand. The focus will then shift to a small number of topics that illustrate some difficulties surrounding empirical labour research and the techniques commonly used to overcome these difficulties. Topics may include minimum wages, human capital acquisition and the returns to education, immigration, discrimination and compensating wage differentials.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation in this course will be based on a series of assignments, an in-class presentation, class participation, and a course project (guidelines for the course project will be handed out early in the course). The determination of your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Assignments	30%
Presentation	10%
Course Project	50%
Participation	10%

GRADES

Course letter grade - numerical score (%) equivalencies used at UVic are as follows:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
90-100	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	65-69	60-64	50-59	0-49

Note: E grades will not be assigned in this course. A mark below 50% will result in an F.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER READING MATERIAL

1. A list of journal articles and working papers for each topic will be distributed early in the term.
2. I would recommend Labour Market Economics, 7th edition, by Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux and Riddell as a basic reference. Daron Acemoglu also has excellent lecture notes for graduate labor economics. (<http://econ-www.mit.edu/files/199>).
3. A basic or intermediate econometrics text such as, for example, *Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach*, by Wooldridge, or *Learning and Practicing Econometrics*, by Griffiths, Hill and Judge, or *Econometric Analysis* by Greene.

NOTES

Webpage: Copies of reading lists, assignments and answers to assignments will be made available through the course web page (<http://web.uvic.ca/~hschuetz/econ515>). It is expected that students will check the web page frequently for updates and information relevant to the course.

Course Policies: Students must read and be familiar with the Department of Economics [Course Policies](#).

E-mail correspondence: Emails should be limited to critical matters, such as inability to attend class, an exam, or prolonged illness, and should include the course name and number in the subject line. Questions on course material should be asked during office hours or in class. The standard format for writing a letter must be used. This means it should begin with a salutation (e.g. Dear...), include full sentences and it must conclude with a signature that includes your **full name and V#**. Text message lingo should not be used.