

Econ 329: Labor Economics
Moravian College, Fall 2012
Department of Economics and Business

Professor: Sabrina Terrizzi

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Office Hours: Tuesdays/ Thursdays: 10:15 am – 11:45 am, or by appointment

Class Information:

Meeting Times: Tuesdays, Thursdays 8:55 am – 10:05 am

Class Location: PPHAC 301

What is this course all about? Our goal in this course is to analyze various labor market phenomena and problems, and suggest policy alternatives using the tools of economic analysis. The questions we will investigate vary broadly. For example, why has married women's participation in the labor force grown so rapidly in recent decades? Why has labor union membership drastically declined lately? How much do unions affect wages? Are the net effects of immigration on the U.S. economy favorable or harmful? How good of an investment is a college education? In fact, you should find that labor economics is one of the most interesting areas of economic analysis!

What I am required to read? *Modern Labor Economics, Theory and Public Policy*, 11th Edition, Ehrenberg, Ronald G. and Robert S. Smith, Pearson, Prentice Hall Publishers, Massachusetts c. 2012.

ISBN: 978-0-13-254064-3

Several websites have excellent and regular information on economic articles relevant to classroom discussion.

New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/>

Wall Street Journal <http://online.wsj.com/public/page/news-economy.html>

The Economist <http://www.economist.com>

Other relevant readings and course materials will be posted on the Blackboard site for this class. Please check Blackboard regularly.

What preparation do I have to have? Econ 152, Econ 225, and either Writ 100 or Linc101

How will I be assessed?

CPAs	45%
Project 1	15%
Project 2	20%
Scrap Book	15%
Participation	5%

What are the learning outcomes for this course?

- Understand how wages and employment are determined in labor markets
- Apply human capital analysis to worker education and training decisions
- Understand the role and effects of concentration, information and search, and worker mobility in labor markets
- Analyze and evaluate the effects of unions on wages, employment, and other important economic variables
- Understand the theory of wage and employment discrimination and the effects of discrimination on workers
- Analyze the problem of unemployment and its incidence
- Understand the phenomenon of growing inequality in earnings and its consequences

What schedule* will we follow in this course?

Week:	Topic:	Assignments Due:
1: Aug. 28, 30	Introduction to and Overview of Labor Economics: Ch 1 & 2	Syllabus Signature Page Due: Aug. 30
2: Sept. 4, 6	Demand for Labor: Ch 2 & 3	CPA 1: Due Sept. 6
3: Sept. 11, 13	Demand Elasticities: Ch 3 & 4	CPA 2: Due Sept. 13
4: Sept. 18, 20	Supply of Labor: Ch 6	CPA 3: Due Sept. 20
5: Sept. 25, 27	Supply of Labor, cont.: Ch 7	CPA 4: Due Sept. 27
6: Oct. 2, 4	Investments in Human Capital: Ch. 9	CPA 5: Due Oct. 4
7: Oct. 11 (no class Oct. 9)	Human Capital, continued.	SB 1: Due Oct. 11
8: Oct. 16, 18	Frictions in the Labor Market: Ch. 5	Project 1 Draft: Due Oct. 18
9: Oct. 23, 25	Labor Markets and Wage Determination: Ch 8	CPA 6: Due Oct. 25
10: Oct. 30, Nov. 1	Labor Mobility and Migration: Ch 10	Project 1: Due Nov. 1
11: Nov. 6, 8	Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the Labor Market: Ch. 12	Project 2 Proposal: Due Nov. 8
12: Nov. 13, 15	Unions and the Labor Market, Ch. 13	CPA 7: Due Nov. 15
13: Nov. 20 (no class Nov. 22)	Review Ch. 12 and Ch. 13	Project 2 Draft: Due Nov. 20
14: Nov. 27, 29	Unemployment: Ch 14	SB 2: Due Nov. 29
15: Dec. 4, 6	Presentations	Final Paper Due: Dec. 10 at 10:30 am

* Schedule subject to change with notice.

Weekly readings will be listed on Blackboard at least one week prior to discussion in class. Detailed course preparation assignments will be listed on Blackboard one week prior to their due dates.

What are your classroom policies?

1. Attendance is expected at each class period.
2. As a common courtesy for your fellow students and myself, I expect students to be on time.
3. I do not allow cell phone use in class.
4. Violations of the Moravian College Academic Honesty Code will not be tolerated.
5. Late assignments are not accepted and a grade of zero is recorded. Please be cognizant of the due dates for each assignment; all assignments are due on Blackboard by 8:45 am on their respective due dates. No exceptions will be made to accommodate late work.
6. Part of your responsibility as a Moravian student is to attend classes and to take notes. This is an essential part of the learning process. I will therefore not post extensive lecture notes online. Also, note that this course will be fairly intense, so it is essential that you do not fall behind in your readings.
7. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center. The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.
8. I do not offer extra credit.

The following pages detail specific information regarding each assessment. More details will be provided as due dates and exam dates approach.

PARTICIPATION

Class participation accounts for five percent of your final grade. Simply attending class will earn students an approximate participation grade of 75%. Students can marginally improve their participation grade through “passive participation”, which implies attending class, taking notes, and being attentive. Students can substantially improve their participation grade through “active participation”, which includes volunteering thoughtful questions and answers on a regular basis. Students who choose not to attend class will receive a participation grade lower than a 75%. Additionally, there may be

surprise assessments to check students' understanding of certain topics. Successfully completing these assessments will also improve a student's participation grade.

COURSE PREPARATION ASSIGNMENTS

Course preparation assignments are designed to facilitate discussion in the classroom. You will be required to prepare CPAs according to the schedule detailed above. Topics and response requirements will be detailed on Blackboard.

Your CPA must be submitted to Blackboard before class begins! The CPAs are due via Blackboard at 8:45 am on the due date listed above. You are also required to bring a copy of your CPA to class on the date it is due, so you can reference it during classroom discussion.

CPAs will include a review of a current article related to the weekly topic of discussion. Discussion or empirical analysis of specific economic points will be required.

I will randomly select a student to lead the class discussion corresponding to the CPA assignment on the date it is due. Each student should come prepared to facilitate the discussion on that topic. Your facilitation of the class discussion will represent half of your class participation grade.

SCRAPBOOK FOR LABOR ECONOMICS

Collect and analyze four newspaper or magazine articles relating to different labor economic issues. Each article should relate to a different topic studied in class. The analysis of each article should:

1. indicate what specific labor economic concept(s) is (are) discussed in the article;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the concept(s); and
3. demonstrate why this article is a good example of the concept(s).

The following "rules" apply:

- Articles must have appeared in print since the beginning of the semester (Cartoons are eligible).
- Source and date of each article must be indicated. All types of magazines and newspapers are eligible.
- The analysis must be typed (or word processed) and double-spaced. Cut and paste the article into the scrapbook.
- The analysis of each article is limited to a maximum of two pages, not including the graphs.
- Scrapbooks are due on two different dates during the semester...two entries per each due date.

Scrapbooks will be graded on:

- Quality of the analysis of each article.
- Appropriateness of the articles selected.
- Appropriate use of graphs, where relevant.
- Diversity of topics covered in the articles.
- Overall presentation of the materials.

Scrapbooks are due at the beginning of class on the dates listed above. Electronic copies of your scrapbooks are also due to Blackboard by 8:45 am on their due dates. Late scrapbooks will not be accepted.

Your scrapbooks and CPAs will be graded on a scale of 1-5 according to the following:

5: Excellent, response includes clear and complete thoughts and a detailed, accurate analysis

4: Good, response contains fully developed ideas, but the understanding of the concepts is slightly confused

3: Fair, response is not fully developed and understanding of the concepts is not evident

2: Poor, response is incomplete and analysis is missing or totally inaccurate

1: Unacceptable, response is unintelligible and lacks proper analysis and thought development

0: Late or missing

PROJECTS

There will be two main projects during the course of this semester in which students will have the opportunity to investigate different labor economics topics while improving their writing skills. In the first project, students will estimate the net present value of their expected future earnings stream and the expected rate of return of their college degree. In the second project, students will investigate a specific labor economic topic of their choice, and conduct a literature review to understand the current research, insights, and challenges in that field of study. Students will present their findings related to project two during the last week of class.

In both projects, student will work with the writing center, the library staff, and each other to improve research and writing skills. More details will be provided as the semester continues.

Syllabus Signature Page
Moravian College

Professor: Sabrina Terrizzi
Course: Econ 329
Semester: Fall 2012

By signing this document and submitting it to Professor Terrizzi, I agree that I received a copy of the course syllabus for the class mentioned above. I understand the course requirements and Professor Terrizzi's classroom policies including those related to: attendance, participation, late/ missed assignments, extra credit, and cell phones.

Print Full Name

Signature

Date