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**Course** ECON 3100-070 Hybrid  
Labor Economics – 3 Credit hours  
Summer 2014 - Murray Campus  
Fulfills University UI Requirement  
Tuesday 6:00 – 9:00 pm

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**Instructor** Rick Haskell  
Office: OSH 199M (149)  
Office Hours: Tuesday after class and by appointment  
Cell Phone: 801-209-3546  
Email: [rick.haskell@utah.edu](mailto:rick.haskell@utah.edu)

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**Course Text** Ehrenberg and Smith, Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy 11th Edition (preferred - previous and used editions are perfectly acceptable). Selected readings from published articles and texts will be available through Canvas. The text can be purchased through the campus bookstore or can be found very reasonably through various online book sellers.

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**Course Overview** At its core, the discussion of Labor Economics is a discussion of microeconomic principles applied to labor markets and labor market policies in an effort to understand differences in outcomes experienced by various labor market participants. In other words, *labor economics simply seeks to explain why different people receive different wages.*

While the theoretical foundations, microeconomic mechanics, and appropriate application frameworks are all well suited to online delivery, the development of higher level intuitions and judgments are best formed through interactive discussion and application within a forum well suited to real-time response, challenge, assessment, and restatement – in other words, the classroom. This course seeks to combine the efficiency of online learning with the effectiveness of informed personal interaction in such a way as to deliver important qualitative and quantitative skills associated with Labor Economics, and at the same time allow for a forum through which intuition can be developed, judgment skills can be gained, challenged, and restated, and most importantly, passion for the discipline can be shared.

Since classroom time is limited, it is critical that readings and assignments be completed before class. Though this isn't an unusual expectation for a university level course, in all practicality most students arrive in class unprepared but still hopeful to receive an above average grade. In this course, such a strategy will certainly end in disappointment. However, for those students willing to prepare and participate, this course becomes one of those rare opportunities to gain a comprehensive understanding of a market in which virtually everyone participates. In our classroom discussions we'll apply the science of economic decision making to workers and firms in such a way as to help you better understand the world in which we live... and work.

This course emphasizes the evaluation of economic models illustrative of modern labor markets and uses a combination of readings, discussions, quizzes, in-class problems, Canvas

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Discussions, Reaction Papers, and Research Projects/Presentations to drive home the concepts and applications of labor economics. Class attendance and participation are strongly encouraged and you are responsible for material covered if you miss class. The assigned readings should be completed before class, will be discussed in class, and weekly quizzes and course exams will come from both the assigned readings and class discussions. Please note that you may be called upon in class. You will be required to write three (3) reaction papers and may be called on to present any or all of them (with advance notice). There will be one mid-term exam and a comprehensive final exam. If you anticipate missing a test due to a time conflict, please notify me in advance. No make-up exams will be given if arrangements are not made before the exam dates.

There is a one classroom session each week during which we will explore and answer a particular aspect of the course's core theme, "*Why different workers receive different wages*". We'll do this by reviewing aspects of the assigned readings, working through one or more in-class quantitative problems (one of which will be turned in a graded), and discussing the microeconomic fundamentals behind the issue addressed. Participation in the classroom sessions is required; most sessions will include graded quizzes and assignments; students will participate in Research Presentations and Exams will be administered during these sessions.

There are no specific prerequisites for this class. However, some knowledge of microeconomics (at the principles level) and basic algebra will be very helpful. We'll spend a significant amount of time analyzing graphs and doing algebraic calculations.

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<b>Canvas</b>	This course heavily uses Canvas for communication, scheduling, assignments, discussions, and dissemination of critical course materials. If you haven't already set up Canvas to forward your Canvas email messages to your regular email you should do so immediately.
<b>In-Class Problems</b>	There will be one or two graded In-Class problems assigned during each regular class session. These problems will reflect the material being addressed during the particular class section and may include material from the prior session. In-Class problems cannot be made up without express written notification.
<b>Quizzes</b>	There will be a short graded quiz at the beginning of each class session reflective of material from the text and/or discussed during the prior class. Quizzes cannot be made up without express written notification.
<b>Exams</b>	There will be one mid-term exam (6/17/2014) and a final exam (7/29/2014) administered during scheduled class sessions. Each exam may include short-answer questions, multi-part problem sets and short essays. Exams must be taken as scheduled unless express written is received in advance. If you anticipate any unavoidable scheduling conflicts, please see me immediately.
<b>Research Project</b>	At the beginning of the term you will be assigned to work on a research project with 1-3 other students, with each topic being specific to one of the various concepts addressed in this course. Your project will culminate in the formation of a short presentation and research poster to be presented in the Economics Department on <b>Thursday, July 31st</b> and will be considered for inclusion in the CSBS Student Research Day competition to be held April 2015. <b><i>You must be in attendance for the Economics Department Event.</i></b>

These projects should display the assigned topic using contemporary and relevant data,

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examples, methods, and models in such a way as to highlight the issues associated with the topic as they relate to providing answers to the central question for the course, “*Why do different workers received different wages?*” Presentations and posters will be judged by a select group of professors and graduate students from the Economics Department, with the scores associated with the adjudication heavily influencing your overall score for the assignment. This set of assignments, progress points and adjudication score, will comprise 15% of your grade for the course and are due as follows:

Topic Assignment	5/25/2014
Papers and Models	6/08/2014
Contemporary Example	6/22/2014
Data Evaluation	7/06/2014
Draft Poster and Presentation	7/19/2014
Presentation and Poster Display	7/22/2014

**Reaction Papers**

You will be required to write three (3) Reaction Papers due 5/25/2014, 6/8/2014 and 6/22/2014 through the Canvas assignment submission function. These papers should be used to assist you in building the content for your research project. For **each paper** you are required to find two or more published journal articles specifically associated with your research topic, discuss them relative to your research topic, offer your personal reaction to the authors’ arguments, methods and conclusions and present economic models illustrative of the concepts being addressed. These papers are to be no less than 750 words in length, must include appropriate economic graphic representation of the issue being addressed and will be graded on content, grammar, syntax and proper use of graphs and charts. It is important to note that economic graphics (models) are not simply charts, tables or graphs presenting values associated with the issue, but are specifically formatted graphs designed to present economic models with their temporal or equational dynamics.

An excellent Reaction Paper (one that receives 18+ points) addresses a timely topic, points out strengths and weaknesses of the author(s) argument(s), includes at least one economic graphic representing the dynamics or effects of the issue being addressed, and offers your personal opinion, or reaction, in respect to the issue. Examples of excellent Reaction Papers can be found in Canvas.

**Canvas Discussions**

During the semester there will be five Canvas Discussions presented for your participation. Each discussion will include several articles, papers, etc. posted in Canvas’s Discussion forum for you to comment on or to discuss. You are required to review these postings and enter into the discussion with specific and substantive comments in respect to the postings. You are also required to **separately** comment on the posting of another student, as such you will want to begin participating in each discussion well in advance of the assigned due date. Canvas Discussions are due as follows:

Canvas Discussion #1 – Minimum Wage	5/18/2014
Canvas Discussion #2 – Healthcare	6/01/2014
Canvas Discussion #3 – Education	6/15/2014
Canvas Discussion #4 – Immigration	6/29/2014
Canvas Discussion #5 – Labor replacing technology	7/13/2014

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<b>Course Schedule (tentative)</b>	Week 1	5/13	Labor Supply and Demand; Evaluating Economic Models
		5/18	<b>Canvas Discussion #1 due</b>
	Week 2	5/20	Labor Demand Elasticities
		5/25	<b>Research Topic Assignment</b> <b>Reaction Paper #1 due</b>
	Week 3	5/27	Friction in the labor Markets
		6/1	<b>Canvas Discussion #2 due</b>
	Week 4	6/3	Compensating Wage Differentials
		6/8	<b>Papers and Models</b> <b>Reaction Paper #2 due</b>
	Week 5	6/10	Investments in Human Capital
		6/15	<b>Canvas Discussion #3 due</b>
	Week 6	6/17	<b>Mid Term Exam</b> Research Project Review
		6/22	<b>Contemporary Example</b> <b>Reaction Paper #3 due</b>
Week 7	6/24	Worker Mobility, Migration and Turnover	
	6/29	<b>Canvas Discussion #4 due</b>	
Week 8	7/1	Pay and Productivity; Discrimination in the Labor Markets	
	7/6	<b>Data Evaluation</b>	
Week 9	7/8	Labor Unions and Unemployment	
	7/8	<b>Canvas Discussion #5 due</b>	
Week 10	7/15	Inequality in Earnings	
	7/19	<b>Draft Poster/Presentation</b>	
Week 11	7/22	<b>In-Class Poster Presentations</b>	
Week 12	7/29	<b>Final Exam</b>	
	8/1	<b>Econ Department Research Poster Presentations</b>	
<b>Grading</b>	Research Project		20%
	In-Class Problems		10%
	Reaction Papers		15%

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Canvas Discussions	15%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

<b>Grading Scale</b>	A	> 93.9%	B-	80 - 83.9%	D+	67 - 69.9%
	A-	90 - 93.9	C+	77 - 79.9%	D	64 - 66.9%
	B+	87 - 89.9%	C	74 - 76.9%	D-	60 - 63.9%
	B	84 - 86.9%	C-	70 - 73.9%	E	<60%

Grades will be determined in accordance with the University of Utah’s grading policies. Written feedback will be provided on some assignments and more detailed feedback will be provided at any time upon request. If you believe you have received an incorrect grade on any assignment for this class, please bring it to my attention immediately.

**Expectations**      **You can expect me to:**

- Treat students and others with respect, expect that as adults we are each responsible for our decisions and actions, and ask “why” often.
- Grade and provide feedback on assignments within one week of the date they are submitted.
- Return email messages, texts and phone calls within 24 hours.
- Use Canvas to enhance student learning, communication, and convenience.
- Follow the syllabus and hold each class session as scheduled. In the event of an unsolvable conflict or emergency, I will make every effort to arrange for a qualified substitute to teach the class.
- Be readily available to meet with students, either during regularly-scheduled office hours or at any other time that works for both of us.
- Complete final grades and provide students with feedback on final grades within two weeks of the date the last course assignment is submitted.
- Bring drinks or some suitable recompense when I screw up in front of the class

**I expect you to:**

- Actively communicate and use Canvas regularly.
- Complete reading and homework assignments, take all quizzes and exams, participate in class discussions and ask “why” often.
- Attend each class session. In the event that you must miss a class, please notify me in advance and assume responsibility for the material you missed.
- Read the course syllabus, ensure you have a clear understanding of the course requirements and evaluation methods used in the course, and fulfill the course requirements.
- Come to class prepared and participate fully, honestly, and professionally in class discussions and online class activities.
- Learn about and abide by the University of Utah’s academic honesty policy. Specifically, I

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expect you to not engage in cheating, plagiarism and furnishing false or misleading information to any faculty or staff member.

- Immediately notify me in the event of an emergency that prevents you from submitting an assignment or completing the course.
- Ask questions if any expectations or assignments are unclear.
- Be courteous of others when using technology. Always give speakers your full attention and make sure that any use of technology during class enhances your learning and does not distract your or others from course content.

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**Class Participation**

This course is designed to be highly participative and participation in class discussions is required. We will take time during most classes to discuss current domestic and international labor market issues. **There will be material covered in class that will not be part of the reading but for which students will be responsible on Mid-Term and/or Final exams.**

**Additional Readings**

There will be two kinds of additional readings posted on Canvas: required and optional. We may discuss these readings in class and material from the required readings may be represented on exams. The list of readings will be updated throughout the semester, and the addition of new readings will be announced in class.

**Late Assignment Policy**

Late assignments will not be accepted for credit without prior permission.

**ADA statement**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 801-581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. ([www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/](http://www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/))

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**Syllabus changes**

This syllabus is subject to change. Potential changes will be discussed in class and may be posted in Canvas.

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