The George Washington University
MA in Applied Economics

Course: Labor Economics and Public Policy (Economics 6295.32)
Semester: Fall 2016
Time: Thursday 12:45 to 3:15 p.m
Location: TBD

INSTRUCTOR
Name: Diana Furchtgott-Roth
Campus Address: Department of Economics
2115 G St., NW, Washington, DC 20052
GW office phone 202-994-6150
E-mail: FurchtgottRoth@gmail.com
Office hours: Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:00 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers major topics in labor economics such as unemployment, unions, immigration, the minimum wage, pensions, worker mobility, and inequality. The course will apply labor economics concepts to the real world. Students will be asked to read the chapters in advance and come prepared for discussion. They will debate subjects such as what causes inequality; whether wages are stagnating; whether women and minorities are underpaid; whether the minimum wage should be raised; and how to reduce unemployment. Students will write two short papers (about 5 pages) and take a final exam.

PREREQUISITES

All students should have taken intermediate microeconomics and at least one semester of calculus at the undergraduate level.

TEXTBOOK
Kenneth McLaughlin, Labor Economics: Principles In Practice, Oxford University Press, 2016. I will also assign papers from economics journals that I will put in a separate readings file on Blackboard/in Dropbox.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will

- learn about the data sets available from the Department of Labor and the Census Bureau to perform research;
- be able to explain the effects of government policies on employers and workers;
- learn how to apply theories of labor economics to public policy;
- learn how to identify a research project, conduct a literature review, and present their research to the class;
- learn how to write a persuasive paper showing both sides of the subject.
GRADING

- Paper 1     25%
- Paper 2     25%
- Class participation    20%
- Final       30%

Discussions: Each class will feature discussions about the week’s readings. I will assign
students to take positions on different aspects of the week’s topics so that we can have a
stimulating discussion. Students are expected to have completed the readings before coming to
class. Students will also write two short 5- page papers to be presented in class. Students will be
graded on the draft and final version of the paper and the presentations. Questions are
encouraged.

Final exam: The final is cumulative.

BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS

Please write a page telling me why you are interested in Labor Economics, your
undergraduate major and why you chose it, your career goals. Please bring a copy to the
first class.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to
be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on
such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of
the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-
related activities

For GW’s teaching policies, see http://www.gwu.edu/~academic/Teaching/main.htm

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The GW Code of Academic Integrity states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any
kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without
crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.”
Allowing another student to copy your work is defined as cheating under the Academic Integrity
code.

For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
  http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

SECURITY
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.