

Course and contact information:

Course: Economics 3142 – Labor Economics

Semester: Fall 2023

Section 10: MW 9:35—10:50

Section 11: MW 11:10—12:25

Elliott School, 314

Instructor:

Name: Nicholas Li

Campus address: Hall of Government, 313

E-mail: nicholas.li@gwu.edu

OH: ThF 8—9, Zoom

Sign-up 12 hours in advance: <https://calendar.app.google/tgJFDEjZdeJusJ9N9>

Week 1 Administration:

Read this now!

Disability Support Services (DSS) 202-994-8250

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services at disabilitysupport.gwu.edu to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

*If this applies to you, get me your DSS letter before **September 8 or within 1 week** of the date on the accommodation letter.*

The final exam is required. *If you cannot take the final exam, you cannot pass the course.* Per university policy, final exams are only rescheduled if **(1) you have three finals on the same day** or **(2) the final conflicts with religious observance.**

E-mail policy and Ed Discussion

Please use e-mail only for private administrative questions. General administrative questions and substantive questions should be directed to Office Hours or posted on Ed Stem (<https://edstem.org/us/courses/44517/discussion/>). Ed Discussion is a platform that allows you to ask questions and get answers from your classmates much faster than if you were to wait for me to respond. Up to 2% extra course credit will be awarded for high-quality questions and high-quality answers on Ed Discussion.

Course prerequisites:

Economics 1011 and 1012: Principles of Economics

Economics 2011 or 2013: Intermediate Microeconomics

HIGHLY recommended:

Economics 2123: Introduction to Econometrics

Textbook (Optional):

George Borjas, Labor Economics, 8th Edition. Older editions are fine, but come see me because the section numbering has changed. I will post other readings on Blackboard.

Learning outcomes that state descriptions of behaviors or skills that students will be able to demonstrate at the end of the course or unit:

As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize core tradeoffs in constructing labor market policy
2. Identify workhorse research designs and whether they can (or cannot) establish a causal relationship
3. Critically evaluate positive economic evidence on policy effectiveness

Average amount of direct instruction or guided interaction with the instructor and average minimum amount of independent (out-of-class) learning expected per week:

In-class: 2.5 hours/week

Out-of-class: 5 hours/week

Grading

- 30/N% each: Max(Problem set, Final)
- 25%: Max(Midterm, Final)
- 40%: Final
- 5%: Max(Participation/Data assignments, Final)
- 2% (Extra): Ed Discussion

Exams

There will be one midterm in class and the final exam. The final exam will be cumulative. The final exam is required. *If you cannot take the final exam, you cannot pass the course.* Per university policy, final exams are only rescheduled if (1) you have three finals on the same day or (2) the final conflicts with religious observance.

Problem Sets:

- Tentatively, there will be $N=6$ problem sets. You will have two weeks to complete each problem set. See the course schedule for the tentative due dates.
- Submission
 - All homework must be submitted through **Gradescope**
 - No homework (or parts) will be accepted through e-mail
 - Typed problem sets with computer-generated figures will receive 10% extra credit
- *Teamwork*
 - Working in groups is encouraged (THERE IS NO DOWNSIDE!)
 - You may work in groups of up to 3
 - List all group members when submitting a single problem set on Gradescope
- *Mortgage-like late policy*
 - All problem sets are officially due on Saturday mornings at 5 AM.
 - Homework less than 24 hours late (i.e. before Sunday morning at 5 AM) will be accepted and eligible for full credit.
 - Homework more than 24 hours late (e.g. 24 hours and 1 second) will not be accepted for any reason

Participation/Data assignments

Your classmates learn from you, and they learn from you better when you come to class prepared. Part of being prepared is understanding the context that we're studying. I will be giving short (~10–15 minutes) data assignments for most classes. Most of these involve looking up data and producing a graph. Please prepare these on your own and submit the graphs on **Blackboard** before 7 AM the day of class.

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Course Recordings

I will record lecture, and individual recordings will be available upon request. Recordings are not meant to be a substitute for not regularly attending lecture.

Cheating and plagiarism. If you cheat on an assignment, you get a zero. If you cheat on an exam, you fail the course and are referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. See the academic integrity code at the end.

Tentative Schedule and Book Readings

| Date | Policy/Book Reading | Theory |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Aug 28 | Course overview | |
| | Empirical methods | |
| Aug 28, 30 | Borjas Ch 1 Appendix | |
| | Micro theory review | |
| Sep 30, 6 | Borjas 2-3:2-7 | |
| | Poverty and Welfare | |
| | Welfare and workfare | Static labor supply |
| Sep 11, 13, 18 | Borjas 2-11,2-14, 2-12 | |
| | Medicaid and Social security | Labor market equilibrium |
| Sep 20, 25 | Borjas 2-13, 3-8, 4-1:4-4 | |
| | Inequality | |
| Sep 27 | Borjas 7-5:7-9 | |
| | Education and training | Skills and signaling |
| Oct 2, 4, 9 | Borjas 6-1:6-9 | |
| Oct 11 | Midterm review | |
| | Minimum wage | Competition in labor markets |
| Oct 12-13 | Fall Break | |
| Oct 16 | Borjas 3-10 | |
| Oct 18 | Midterm | |
| | Spatial inequality | |
| | International | Labor demand |
| Oct 30, Nov 1, 6, 8 | Borjas 4-5:4-7, 8-5:8-8 | |
| | Horizontal inequality, norms, and discrimination | |
| | Gender | Labor supply and discrimination |
| Nov 13, 15, 27, 29 | Borjas 2-9, Borjas 9-1:9-6 | |
| | Race | |
| Dec 4, 6 | Borjas 9-7:9-11 | |
| Dec 11 | Final exam review | |

Other University policies

Academic Integrity Code

Academic integrity is an essential part of the educational process, and all members of the GW community take these matters very seriously. As the instructor of record for this course, my role is to provide clear expectations and uphold them in all assessments. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and otherwise violate the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). If you have any questions about whether or not particular academic practices or resources are permitted, you should ask me for clarification. If you are reported for an academic integrity violation, you should contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) to learn more about your rights and options in the process. Consequences can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the university and may include a transcript notation. For more information, please refer to the SRR website (<https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity>), email rights@gwu.edu, or call 202-994-6757.

University policy on observance of religious holidays

Students must notify faculty during the first week of the semester in which they are enrolled in the course, or as early as possible, but no later than three weeks prior to the absence, of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. If the holiday falls within the first three weeks of class, the student must inform faculty in the first week of the semester. For details and policy, see “Religious Holidays” at provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines.

Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact Disability Support Services at disabilitysupport.gwu.edu if you have questions or need assistance in accessing electronic course materials.

Academic support

Writing Center

GW’s Writing Center cultivates confident writers in the University community by facilitating collaborative, critical, and inclusive conversations at all stages of the writing process. Working alongside peer mentors, writers develop strategies to write independently in academic and public settings. Appointments can be booked online at gwu.mywconline.

Academic Commons

Academic Commons provides tutoring and other academic support resources to students in many courses. Students can schedule virtual one-on-one appointments or attend virtual drop-in sessions. Students may schedule an appointment, review the tutoring schedule, access other academic support resources, or obtain assistance at academiccommons.gwu.edu.

Support for students outside the classroom

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Counseling and Psychological Services 202-994-5300

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services.

Safety and Security

- Monitor [GW Alerts](#) and [Campus Advisories](#) to [Stay Informed](#) before and during an emergency event or situation
- In an emergency: call GWPD/EMeRG 202-994-6111 or 911
- For situation-specific actions: refer to GW's [Emergency Response Handbook](#) and [Emergency Operations Plan](#)
- In the event of an armed intruder: Run. Hide. Fight.