ECN 451: Labor Economics
Summer Session 1, 2012

Prerequisite: ECN 301 or ECN 311
Class Meets: M - Th 10:00 am - 11:45 am
Shaffer Art Building, Room 205
Office Hours: Monday & Friday 3:30 - 5:00 pm.

Instructor: Pallab Kumar Ghosh
Office: 446A Eggers Hall (CPR)
Telephone: 315 443 9054
Email: paghosh@syr.edu

Learning Outcomes:
In ECN 451 we study the concepts and behavioral regularities of labor markets with the objective of increasing your understanding of important social issues such as poverty, discrimination, job safety, and unemployment.

Our time together is designed with the following learning goals.

(1) To gain an understanding of the theoretical tools of modern labor economics.
(2) To gain an understanding of the empirical findings of modern labor economics.
(3) To become aware of how the theoretical tools of labor economics can be used to better understand personal and societal economic outcomes.
(4) To become aware of how empirical evidence on labor economics feeds into personal and societal economic decisions.

Course Materials:
Please purchase the following, which is available at the SU Bookstore

There is also an on-line study tools website: http://www.mhhe.com/borjas5e

Course Calendar:
ECN 451 is organized into the seven topic areas

I. Labor Supply (Chapter 2)
II. Labor Demand (Chapter 3)
III. Labor Market Equilibrium (Chapters 4)
IV. Compensating Wage Differentials (Chapter 5)
V. Human Capital Investment and Related Outcomes (Chapters 6, 7 & 8)
VI. Market Complications: Discrimination, Unions & Unemployment (Chapters 9, 10 & 12)
VII. Inside the Firm: Basic Personnel Economics (Chapter 11)

The course coverage will be split into three sections; each section will be two weeks long.

• There will be a problem set handed out on the Thursday of the first week of the two week section due the following Tuesday.
• I will hand over some practice problems at end of the each chapter.
• There will also be an exam on the final Thursday of each two week session.
• I will hand over a practice exam on the final Tuesday and go over the solution on Wednesday of each two week session.
• Because the course moves swiftly, you are strongly encouraged to read ahead.

The calendar looks like this:

**Section 1:** May 21 through May 31  Covers Chapters 2, 3, 4  
Problem Set Handed out May 24, Due May 29 (Tuesday). Exam I on May 31.

**Section 2:** June 4 through June 14  Covers Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8.  
Problem Set Handed out June 7, Due June 12. Exam II on June 14.

**Section 3:** June 18 through June 28  Covers Chapters 9, 10, and 12.  

We will cover Chapter 11 if there is time at the end of the summer session.

**NOTE:** There will be no class on Monday, May 28th due to Memorial Day.

---

**Course Grades:**

Your course grade will be based on, two midterm exams, three homework assignments, a final exam, as well as a possibility for bonus points based on attendance. Assignment weights are listed below. Exams will contain both multiple choice and short essay questions. Problem sets will contain longer more thought provoking questions surrounding labor market outcomes. Your assignments are designed to show how well you understand the conceptual and empirical findings of labor economics and whether you can use modern labor economics to clarify the positive and normative consequences of labor market policies and outcomes.

**Grading Scale:**

Exams, homework, and problem sets will be scored numerically. The following grading scale will be used to determine your letter grade for ECN 451.
### Table 1: Weights of Exams and Homeworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Weights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem set 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem set 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem set 3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A : 90 - 100.       A− : 85 - 89
B+ : 80 - 84.       B : 75 - 79       B− : 70 - 74
C+ : 65 - 69.       C : 60 - 64       C− : 55 - 59
D : 40 - 54         F : 0 - 39

I believe in horizontal equity: all students who receive the same numerical grade will receive the same letter grade (i.e. a 90 will not be an A- for one student and an A for another). I also believe in vertical equity: higher numerical grades will (obviously) correspond to higher letter grades. After grading is complete, identical adjustments may be made to everyones grade if the median score is lower than expected.

**Important Exam Details:**

I do not give makeup examinations, but if you have a reasonable excuse in my judgment for missing a midterm exam, then the final exam will count for 50% of your course grade. Excuses should be discussed before the midterm date.

If you do not take the final exam for any reason you must provide me with a written explanation for you absence. If, in my judgment, your final exam absence is justified then your course grade will be based on the midterm examinations, which will receive a weight of 35% each, plus the three problem sets, which will each receive their normal 10% weights. Unexcused absences from an exam will result in a zero on that exam. If that leads to an F or a D, its the students choice as to whether s/he will retake the course.

Students who may need academic accommodations due to a disability should discuss their needs with me at the beginning of the semester. To obtain authorized accommodations, you should be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309 (phone: 3154434498; TDD 4431371) and have an updated accommodation letter for me. Accommodations and related support services such as exam administration are not provided retroactively and must be requested in advance. For more information about services and policy see http://disabilityservices.syr.edu

**Academic Integrity:**

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and homework assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. You must do all of your exams independently. If it is
determined that you have violated this standard of academic honesty you can receive an F in the course.

For more information and the complete policy see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu

**Grading Philosophy:**

Your course grade will be assigned solely on the basis of the three homework assignments, three exams and attendance. The trend in your performance does not matter although the final exam counts for 30% of your course grade so that putting it all together at the end of the course is significantly rewarded.

If you believe that any of your assignments or exams has not been correctly graded, then you may resubmit the graded assignment or exam with a short note explaining why you think it was incorrectly graded. I will then re-grade the entire assignment or exam, with your comments in mind. If, after receiving the response, you would like to discuss the issue further, you are more than welcomed to do so in person.

NOTE: The grade you get after a review is final, and may be higher or lower than the original grade.

As a final piece of philosophy, many of you plan careers in business or the law where outcomes depend on slight differences in the bid, wording of a contract, or the judges interpretation of the law. Sports championships are decided by one point; and baskets, touchdowns, and strokes count the same early in the game as late in the game. The message here is a simple. Get used to making every point count and to having small differences in performance matter a lot in life, as can be the case in ECN 451.

**Homework:**

Homework will be a group activity. You will be randomly/alphabetically assigned to a homework group. Every single student in the group is responsible for turning in their own single homework assignment. Graphs should be clearly drawn and labeled. Equations and variables should be easily understandable. Text should be legible. Late assignments will not be accepted because I distribute model answers when I collect the groups’ homework assignments. Finally, you must sign the cover page of your group’s answers pledging that you participated in constructing the group’s assignment.

Why the group approach to homework? Working in a group is a cost-effective way to learn economics as you will be forced to debate your ideas with your fellow students as you decide on the answers. It is also a good way to meet some of your classmates. Furthermore, working in a group is a necessary skill to develop for your economic future because any organization employing you will require group projects. Finally, this group approach allows me to grade the homework and return them to you quickly too.

**Attendance:**

After each class I will also ask you to write a one-minute paper, where you will answer two questions: (1) What is the most important thing you learned in class today? and (2) What is the one thing that you wish you understood better from today’s class? Your answers are an important source of regular feedback on how I can make the material in ECN 451 immediately more understandable. Be sure to print your name and student ID number on your one-minute paper because I will use them to take attendance.

I will take attendance randomly 13 times. If my attendance record shows that you have been absent three classes or less I will add one point to your final course average as a bonus for good attendance.

**Important Notes:**
(1) If you miss consecutive two classes, before coming to the third class you have to email me the exact reason of why you missed last two classes. If you have any medical documents or any other documents which support your absence in the class, please attach those files in the email. If I am not convinced by your reason, you have to give me a written letter signed by the Economics Department chair to continue the ECN 451 class.

If you miss more than three classes (i.e. 37.5%) in the final third of the semester, I will take out one third (i.e. 33%) of your points form the final exam. For example, If you score 90 out of 100 in final exam, your score will be 60 out of 100. If you miss more than 4 classes in the final third of the semester, in addition of taking one third of your points from the final exam I will also take one third of your points from the final homework. For example your score is 36 out of 40 in HW3, then your score will be 24 out of 40.

(2) If I feel you are copying the homework solution from online sources or from previous years students or any other sources. I will hand over your Homework copy to the Syracuse University Academic Integrity Office without letting you know that. Syracuse University Academic Integrity Office will decide whether you violates their policy or not and they will ultimately decide the final verdict. I will fully support their decision and I would not interfere on their work. So if you have any question regarding that during the process you are not allowed to contact to me regarding this matter.

Teaching Assistant:

Name: Wael Moussa  
Office: 446A Eggers Hall (CPR)  
Telephone: 315 443 9054  
Office Hours: Monday & Friday 2:00 - 3:30 pm.  
Email: wsmoussa@maxwell.syr.edu

Attention Please!!! You are not allowed to use Cell Phone, ipad, Laptop or any other electronic devices inside the classroom.