Course Description: This course is designed as an introduction to the study of labor economics with special emphasis on labor supply. We will discuss various public and social policies and their corresponding labor market implications. Students will apply the tools learned in their (introductory and) intermediate (micro)economics courses, along with those from statistics (and econometrics), to various topics in labor economics.

Prerequisites: Students are expected to have completed and passed micro and macro principles (EC131 and EC132), microeconomic theory (EC201), and statistics (EC151). It is assumed that students have a working knowledge of the material from these courses and are comfortable with some basic calculus.

Teaching Assistant: Junghyun Kwon, kwonju@bc.edu. Office hours: Tues. and Thurs. 11am-noon, Maloney 480D (cubicle).

Reading List: The reading list is available on Blackboard, along with .pdfs of the journal articles. It will be updated as students choose/are assigned to the days in which they will present and critique the article to their classmates, and submit a written summary and analysis to the professor.

Blackboard Vista: Blackboard will be used to post class announcements, gain access to grades, and to download/print course documents. Blackboard can be accessed at https://cms.bc.edu/ or through the Agora Portal (https://portal.bc.edu). It is your responsibility to check this system periodically and to arrive to class prepared and informed.

Class Attendance: Class attendance is strongly encouraged as it is essential to learning the material of this course. If you will miss class due to a religious observation or civic obligation, please notify the instructor at least one week in advance and provide requested and appropriate documentation. Should an emergency arise, the student—or someone acting on his/her behalf—is required to contact the professor as soon as possible. The material is analytical, theoretical, and cumulative in nature and thus it is necessary to keep up with the subject matter. Material covered in class is not always readily available in the assigned readings. Do not allow yourself to get behind. If a student misses a lecture, it is his/her responsibility to get the lecture notes from a classmate; neither the professor
nor the T.A. will make the lecture notes available. Moreover, please do not attempt to copy a classmate’s previous notes during the lecture when the student returns.

Classroom Conduct: Students are expected and required to maintain a professional and pleasant environment that facilitates learning. Any disrespectful, disruptive, or otherwise unbecoming behavior will result in a verbal warning. If such behaviors continue the student will be issued a written notice. Upon the third violation the student will be administratively dropped from the course. Students are encouraged and expected to:
1. Arrive on time.
2. Do not leave early (except for a legitimate/valid reason).
3. Be courteous to the professor and to their fellow peers.
4. Do not talk while professor or other student is talking or during exams.
5. Silence/turn off and put away all cell phones, etc.
6. Only use laptops/tablets for taking class notes.
7. Maintain maturity and professionalism.
8. Participate in class activities and discussions.

Grading Policy: Each student’s course grade for EC320 will be determined on the basis of the student’s overall performance on the problem sets, summaries of assigned reading, current event presentation, in-class participation, exams, and group project.

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Sets</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Article Summary and Analysis</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Article Presentation and Critique</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Events Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class attendance, participation, etc.</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterms and Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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There are two midterm exams and an optional comprehensive final exam, each weighted equally. Subject to the professor’s approval, students have two options available in calculating the remaining 40 percent of their grade.

Option #1
The student is required to take both midterm exams. Each exam is worth 20 percent of the course grade. If the student is satisfied with his/her grade, the comprehensive final exam is optional. Student will notify professor on the last day of class as to his/her decision whether or not to take the final exam. Should the student choose to take the comprehensive final exam, the lowest midterm exam score will be dropped and replaced by the score received on the final exam.

Option #2
Should the student miss one midterm exam, he/she is required to contact the professor before the scheduled day/time or immediately thereafter, subject to feasibility. The student will provide the appropriate documentation to the
professor, as requested, to support the excused absence (e.g., illness). The student is then required to take the comprehensive final exam that will replaced the missed midterm exam and count for 20 percent.

**Problem Sets:** Problem sets will be handed out periodically in class. The problem sets count for 15 percent of the course grade. You should attempt to complete each as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. The problem sets are designed to provide additional aid in understanding the subject material covered in class and in the readings and as a review for the midterms and final. You are encouraged to form study groups and work on the problem sets collectively. However, each student must submit his/her own problem set to be graded. **Do not merely copy someone else’s problem set.** Problem sets are due on the date specified at the beginning of the class period. **No late problem sets will be accepted.** **Problem sets are required to be in hard copy—no email attachments are acceptable.** Please note that problem sets must be legible. Thus, if your handwriting is poor the problem set should be typed. It is not necessary, however, to type graphs and numerical solutions.

**Journal Article Presentation and Critique:** Students will choose (or be assigned) a class period in which they and one or two of their classmates will present and critique one of the assigned journal articles. The student will prepare a 10 to 15-minute (Power Point) presentation and will devote an additional 5-minutes to class discussion, comments, etc. This will count for five percent of the course grade. A good rule of thumb is to prepare 12-15 slides for a 15-minute presentation. The student(s) will email the professor and T.A. the presentation in advance of class so that it can be loaded on the classroom computer and also made available through Blackboard to the student’s peers. Students are expected to present and summarize the following points from the article:

i. Authors, title, and journal
ii. The objectives
iii. The contributions
iv. A brief summary of the background information/related literature
v. Details about the data set, time frame, chosen sample, etc.
vi. Key statistics, tables, figures, etc.
vii. A brief description of the theoretical framework/empirical approach
viii. The main findings
ix. Caveats and critiques
x. Conclusions

Through these presentations, the students will be educating their classmates about the assigned reading for the day, along with general information regarding current research in the field of labor economics. Furthermore, the students will critique the paper and can include suggestions for improvement, concerns, worthiness of the methods/data, etc. The student’s presentation and critique should adequately inform the class so that a discussion can ensue.
Journal Article Summary and Analysis: The reading list is available on Blackboard. The writing summary and analysis, corresponding to the article that the student presents and critiques with his/her classmates, counts for 5 percent of the course grade. The minimum one-page summary/analysis should have the following format and address the following points:

- size 12 font, Times New Roman or Arial font, single-spaced, standard margins (1” top and bottom and 1.25” left and right)
  - i. What is the goal of this study?
  - ii. What is the time period analyzed?
  - iii. What is/are the data source(s)?
  - iv. What are the main findings?
  - vi. Questions you have for the author(s)?

Any summary short of one complete page will not receive credit. A separate title page should include your name, course number, reading #, date, and title and author(s) of assigned article. A sample writing assignment can be found on Blackboard.

Writing assignments are required to be in hard copy—no email attachments are acceptable. Writing assignments are due on the designated day that the student will present the article with the class. No late writing assignments will be accepted.

Presentation/Discussion of Current Events: Students will choose or be assigned a class period in which they and some of their classmates will present and discuss current event articles chosen by the professor. The current event presentation counts for five percent of the course grade. Students are expected to present the topic, discuss the articles, and to facilitate a classroom discussion amongst their peers. This should take approximately 15 minutes.

Group Project: The purpose of the group project is to have students apply the tools they are learning in class to topics in labor economics that further interest them. Students will form or be assigned groups, likely consisting of 2-4 persons. Groups will submit ideas to the professor for approval. Students will turn in a 12-15 page (size 12 font, Times New Roman or Arial font, double-spaced, standard margins—1” top and bottom and 1.25” left and right) to professor in class on Nov. 21, 2013. Any paper short the minimum page requirement will not receive credit. Supporting tables and graphs should be included at the paper’s end but are not part of the 12-15 page written requirement. Students are expected to properly cite and document their list of references at the paper’s end; a minimum of four academic journal articles (other than those used in class for the writings/analysis) must be included. This list of references is not part of the 12-15 page written requirement, however. I would also encourage the groups to write their papers with the aid of sections (e.g., I. Introduction) and to ensure that one person is in
charge of reading the entire paper to ensure that it flows, reads well, and is edited correctly.

A list of acceptable/appropriate economics journals will be available on Blackboard and further details will provided during the semester. The format of the paper will follow those of the journal articles that have been read and presented throughout the semester:

i. Introduction/motivation
ii. Background information
iii. Literature review
iv. Description of the data
v. Presentation and discussion of the findings
vi. Conclusions
vii. List of references/bibliography
viii. Note: tables, figures, and appendices should be included, at the paper’s end, but are not part of the 12-15 page requirement

Grades for the group project will be distributed based on group peer evaluations. Upon completion of the project, students will rate their group members’ participation on a scale of 1-10 where 1=no contribution and 10=perfect contribution. The student’s grade will be scaled by the average peer assessment. The group project counts for 20 percent of the course grade. Further details will be provided during the semester.

**Midterms and Final:** There will be two midterm exams and a comprehensive final exam. You are expected to be present for each examination, as there will be no make-up exams. **Missing an exam will result in a grade of zero.** Should the student miss one midterm exam, he/she is required to contact the professor before the scheduled day/time or immediately thereafter, subject to feasibility. The student will provide the appropriate documentation to the professor, as requested, to support the excused absence (e.g., illness) and the student will be given Option #2, as detailed above, in determining his/her course grade. Should the student miss an exam and **not contact the professor and/or not provide an acceptable excuse,** he/she will be assigned a grade of zero for the unexcused missed midterm exam and **thus not eligible** for Option #2.

You may use a basic calculator during the exam; you cannot use a graphing/programmable calculator, smart phone, etc. The professor will have calculators available during the exam for everyone to share.

**Grade Appeals:** If you believe that a mistake has been made in the grading of one of the assignments/exams, you should submit your assignment/exam to the professor immediately at the conclusion of the class in which the assignment/exam was returned. No appeals will be considered after this time. No appeals will be considered if the student was not in class on the day the assignments/exams were returned. Appeals must be submitted in written form, listing the
question number and a clear explanation for the appeal. Appeals can result in your grade being raised or lowered.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in any form. Please see the university’s policies and procedures regarding academic integrity. [http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html](http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html).

**Dropping the Course:** Classes can be dropped/added online (UIS) until Sept. 11, 2013. The last day to drop/add or pass/fail a course in the Associate Dean’s office is Oct. 1, 2013. Official withdrawals from courses must be completed before Dec. 2, 2013.

**Suggestions for Success:** While the material presented will be analytical, theoretical, and cumulative in nature it is my hope that each student succeeds in class. Students who put forth the effort and work hard should succeed in class. Here are my suggestions for success:

1. Attend class.
2. Take notes and be attentive during class.
4. Form study groups.
5. Do problem sets.
6. Complete assigned readings.
7. Ask questions.
8. Visit office hours.
9. Do not get behind.
10. Stay positive.

**Special Needs and Disabilities:** If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Paulette Durrett, Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities (617-552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, disabilityservices@bc.edu, [http://www.bc.edu/offices/dos/disabilityservices.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/dos/disabilityservices.html)) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

**Student Athletes:** If you are a student athlete, please provide me as soon possible with the appropriate documentation and contact information for your coaches and your travel/game schedule. I will work with the Athletic Department and your coaches to help accommodate your travel and practices.

**Laptops, Cell/Smart Phones, Tablets, and other Recording/Imaging Devices:** Students may use laptops and tablets only to take notes in class. Phones must be silenced or turned off. Absolutely no recording/imaging devices are allowed.
during the lectures, exams, office hours, etc. Refrain from surfing the web, texting, emailing, social networking, etc. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Note: Pareto Superior changes in course policies, etc. may be made at the professor’s discretion.

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<th>Due Dates &amp; Times</th>
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<td>Problem Sets</td>
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<td>Journal Article: Writing &amp; Presentation</td>
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<td>Current Event Presentation</td>
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<td>Midterm #1</td>
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<td>Group Project</td>
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<td>Midterm #2</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>TBA (beginning of class)</td>
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<td>Designated class</td>
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<td>Oct. 17, 2013 3-4:15pm</td>
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<td>Nov. 21, 2013 (at beginning of class)</td>
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<td>Dec. 5, 2013 3-4:15pm</td>
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<td>Dec. 16, 2013 12:30-3:30pm</td>
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Note: All exams occur where we meet for lecture. The midterms occur at the regularly scheduled class meeting time but the day/time of the final exam is determined by the Office of Student Services and is determined at the University-level so that there are no conflicting final exams. Please consult: http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/current/exams.html#finalfall.