

Boston College  
Department of Economics  
Fall Semester, 2004-05

EC 340 Labor Economics

Instructor: Professor F. M. McLaughlin

Office: Administration Building 492

Office Hours: MWF 1:30 p.m. until 2:30 p.m., and by arrangement

Class Meetings: MWF at 11:00 a.m.

Place: Fulton 220

Required Text

McLaughlin F.M., Labor Economics Course Pack EC 340

Additional Reading

Supplementary readings from other sources are also listed below. These readings will expand and deepen your understanding of the content of the required readings.

Assignments from the supplementary readings will be made in course.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, Nickel and Dimed: Metropolitan Books, 2001.

Plan of the Course

Class members are expected to do the assigned readings in the order given below. Each reading should be done before the class in which it is to be discussed. Class time will be devoted to responding to questions, either of clarification, significance or meaning, raised by class members on the basis of their prior serious and close reading of the selection under discussion. Class members are expected to take part in answering questions raised by their classmates, as well as raising their own questions. The purpose of class questioning and discussion is to assist you in your personal reading, study, and growth in understanding. Class time will not serve as a substitute for your own careful reading. The philosophy underlying this educational approach is that active engagement with original sources and intense questioning of what you are reading is the best way to ensure genuine learning.

Grades will be based on two one-hour examinations given during the course of the semester, and a comprehensive final given in the examination period. Each of the two in-course examinations will count for 30 percent of the final grade. These examinations are October 13 and November 15. The final examination will count for 40 percent.

Examinations will be based on the material covered in class and the readings contained in the syllabus. Students should be present on scheduled examination dates. Make-up examinations will not be given except at the request of the Dean, and only when the absence is for serious reason.

According to the academic regulations published in the Arts & Sciences Catalogue students are expected to attend class regularly, take tests and submit papers and other works at the times specified in the course syllabus. Students who are absent on the day of a previously announced test are not entitled, as a matter of right, to make up what was missed, and professors may include as part of the semester's grades, marks for the quality and quantity of students' participation in class.

### Course Calendar

#### Institutional Labor Economics 1890-1940

Commons John R. "American Shoemakers, 1648-1895 A Sketch of Industrial Evolution," Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 24, November 1909, pp. 39-83.  
WebCt: Shoemakers

Kaufman, Bruce E., "Labor Markets and Employment Regulation: The View of the 'Old' Institutionalists," in Government Regulation of the Employment Relationship, Industrial Relations Research Association Series, Kaufman, B. [editor], 1997, pp. 11-55. Course Pack

#### Labor Economics 1940 -1960

##### Theory

Kerr, Clark, "Labor Markets: Their Character and Consequences," American Economic Review, May 1950, pp. 278-91. WebCt: LabMarkChar.

Fisher, Lloyd, "The Harvest Labor Market," Quarterly Journal of Economics, November 1951, pp. 463-491. WebCt: Harvest

##### History of Labor Unions

"A Short History of American Labor," American Federationist, V. 88, No. 3, Mar, 1981, pp. 1-16. Course Pack

Yellowitz, I., "Samuel Gompers: a half century in labor's front rank," Monthly Labor Review, July 1989, pp. 27-33. WebCt: Gompers

##### Labor Law

"Case of the Philadelphia Cordwainers," in Sayre, Francis B., Cases on Labor Law, Harvard University Press, 1922, pp. 99-102. Course Pack

"Commonwealth v. Hunt," in Sayre, Francis B., Cases on Labor Law, Harvard University Press, 1922, pp. 104-111. Course Pack

## Industrial Relations

Dunlop, John, "An Industrial Relations System," Industrial Relations Systems, Holt-Dryden, 1958, Ch. 1, pp. 1-32. Course Pack

Schatz, Ronald, "A Portrait of the IRRA's Founders as Young Men" Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Meeting, V. 2, Jan., 3-5, 1998, pp. 1157-1162. Course Pack

Kaufman, Bruce E., "Reflections on Six Decades in Industrial Relations: An Interview with John Dunlop," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, V. 55, No. 2, {Jan. 2002}, pp. 324-348. WebCt: DunlopInt

## Neo-Classical Labor Economics

McLaughlin F.M., "Notes: The Neo-classical Theory of Labor Demand." WebCt: DemandNotes

McLaughlin F.M., "Notes: The Neo-classical Theory of Labor Supply." WebCt: SupplyNotes

## Applied Labor Economics

### The Impact of Unions

Freeman, R., and Medoff, J., "The two faces of unionism." The Public Interest, 1979, pp. 69-93. WebCt: Two Faces.

Rees, A., "The Effects of Unions on Resource Allocation," Journal of Law and Economics, Vol. 6, [1963], pp. 69-78. Course Pack

Bruno, R., "Presidential Labor Regimes: Democrats from Truman to Clinton," Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Meeting, V. I, Jan. 3-5, 1998, 1998, pp. 11-22. Course Pack

Kleiner, M., Leonard, J., and Pilarski, A., "Do Industrial Relations Events Have Long-Term Effects on Plant Performance? The Case of Commercial Aircraft Manufacturing," Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the 51st Annual Meeting, Jan. 3-5, 1999, pp. 136-143. Course Pack

Waddoups, C. J., "Union-Nonunion Wage Differentials in the Hotel Industry: The Case of Las Vegas and Other Large Hotel Markets," Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the 51st Annual Meeting, January 3-5, 1999, pp. 161-168. course Pack

### The Regulation of Labor Markets

Belman, D. & Belzer, M., "Regulation of Labor Markets: Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Competition," in Government Regulation of the Employment Relationship, Industrial Relations Research Association Series, Kaufman. B., ed., 1997, pp. 179-219. Course Pack

### Minimum Wage Laws

"Review Symposium: Myth and Measurement: The New Economics of the Minimum Wage," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, July, 1995, pp. 827-849. WebCt: MythPartI, MythPartII, MythPartIII, MythPartIV, MythPartV

### Wage Inequality

Blau, Francine, "Widening Inequality by Skill: An American Dilemma," Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Meeting, Volume I, January 3-5, 1998, pp. 1-10. Course Pack

### Labor Market Discrimination

McLaughlin F.M., "Notes on Discrimination." WebCt:Discrimination

Holzer, H. & Neumark, D, "Assessing Affirmative Action," The Journal of Economic Literature, V. XXXVIII, No. 3, September 2000, pp. 483-488, 491-500, 504-508, 514-525, 532-544, 558-561. WebCt:AffirmAction

### Low Wage Labor Markets

Ehrenreich, Barbara, Nickel and Dimed: Metropolitan Books, 2001.

### National Labor Policy

Kaufman, B.E., & Lewin, D., "Is the NLRA still relevant to Today's Economy and Workplace?" Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the Fiftieth annual Meeting, V. 2, Jan. 3-5, 1998, pp. 1113-1125. Course Pack

Brody, David, "Labor Law Reform: Taking a Long View," Perspectives on Work, V. 7, No.1, IRRA 2003, pp. 16-18. Course Pack

### Employment Dispute Resolution

Dunlop, John T., and Zack, Arnold T., "The New Frontier of Employment Dispute Resolution," Perspectives on Work, V. 1, No. 1, IRRA 1997, pp. 56-60. Course Pack

### The Future of Industrial Relations

Kochan, Thomas, "Building a New Social Contract at work: a Call to Action,"  
Industrial Relations Research Association Series: Proceedings of the 52nd Annual Meeting, January 7-9, 1998, pp. 1-25. Course Pack

Final Examination: December 17, 2004 at 12:30 p.m.