Syllabus
ECON-327-001
Labor Economics

3:00 – 4:15 MW, MEBE 1100
Spring 2015
Professor Dalton

Office: MEBE 3222
Office Hours: MW 1:30 – 2:45 pm, or by appointment
E-mail: allendalton@boisestate.edu
Website: http://cobe.boisestate.edu/allendalton/

PREREQUISITES
Principles of Macroeconomics and Principles of Microeconomics.
Admission to COBE or B.A. Economics Major or Social Studies, Secondary Education
Emphasis Major or Economics, Social Science, Secondary Education Minor

TEXT AND STUDY MATERIALS
The required texts for this course are:

The Economics of Women, Men, and Work, by Francine Blau, Marianne Ferber, and
Anne Winkler
Licensing Occupations, by Morris Kleiner.

Additional readings may be assigned during the course and either distributed as
handouts or available for download from the course webpage.

All course-related materials will be posted on the course webpage. Please note that I do
not use Blackboard.

COURSE OBJECTIVE AND OVERVIEW
The primary objective of this course is to apply the “economic way of thinking” to the
operation of labor markets and employment relations. Labor economics is an applied
theory class – tools students have mastered in principles and intermediate micro are
applied to analyze labor market behavior. The course is heavily “policy” oriented, with
concentration on family, gender and racial issues.

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS
Students are expected to come to class having read the appropriate readings prior to
lecture and discussion. Most classes will begin with the interrogatory: “Are there any
questions?” This is the student’s opportunity to ask questions over material previously
covered or to raise questions about the material under current discussion, the nature of
economics, or other matters related to economic learning. Students are expected to be
prepared to discuss and answer the end of chapter questions in class.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner amenable to the learning
process, treating one another with respect. Students are encouraged to form study
groups among themselves, assist one another in mastering material, and provide one
another with missed notes.
If, due to time constraints, we don’t cover some assigned readings in class, that doesn’t mean that you are necessarily excused from knowing the material. The general rule is: if a reading is assigned, you are responsible for knowing it.

Please read the handout on Classroom Conduct and Expectations that appears on the course website.

**GRADING**
The final course grade will be based upon ten of eleven problem sets, four exams, a term paper, and class participation:

(1) ten weekly problem sets are worth a total of 300 points;
(2) four exams worth 150 points each;
(3) term paper worth 200 points;
(4) classroom participation worth 100 points.

Total graded points are 1200. The following grading scale will be used:

- A+ 1158 – 1200 points
- A 1074 – 1157 points
- A- 1038 – 1073 points
- B+ 954 – 1037 points
- B 834 – 917 points
- B- 714 – 833 points
- C+ 918 – 953 points
- C 834 – 917 points
- C- 714 – 833 points
- D 614 – 713 points
- F 0 – 713 points

**PROBLEM SETS**
Each week a problem set will be assigned in class (as well as emailed to your Broncoweb email address) and a due date assigned. The dates are noted below. Each assignment will be worth 30 points. Problem sets may be turned in as either hard copy or electronically in either pdf or word document form. Electronic submissions in any other form will have points subtracted.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Set</th>
<th>Assignment Date</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Feb. 9</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Feb. 23</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>March 9</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>March 16</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>March 30</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>April 8</td>
<td>April 20</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>April 27</td>
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**EXAMS**
There will be 4 exams. The dates for the first three exams are tentative. Each exam will consist of short-answer questions, and each exam will be worth 150 points. The last exam is not a comprehensive exam.

The first exam is tentatively scheduled for Monday, February 2.
The second exam is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, March 2.**
The third exam is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, April 6.**

The fourth exam is the **scheduled** final exam, **Wednesday, May 6, 12:30 – 2:30 pm.**

**TERM PAPER**
The term paper is worth 150 points toward your final grade. The term paper is to cover a topic in labor economics that we don’t cover in class. The paper may be theoretical, empirical, historical or a review of the literature. Examples of such topics are the economics of death and injury, hiring, signaling and screening, incentives and principal-agent issues, organizational design, careers and internal labor markets, relational contracts, executive pay, trade union organization, contractual frictions and unemployment, market frictions and unemployment, job search, quits and layoffs, retirement, and crime.

The research selection is to be submitted to the instructor no later than **Monday, February 23.**

The term paper is to be [double-spaced](#), typed, and in font size no larger than 12. Margins should be 1” on top, bottom, and both sides. This paper should have a cover page with your name; an end-note page; and a bibliography page; the paper should be twelve to fifteen pages in length (excluding title, end-note and bibliography). It is to be submitted as a hard copy and as a word file, mailed to the instructor’s email address. The paper is due **Wednesday, April 22.**

See the guidelines for grading I use on term papers at the course website - [Guidelines for Term Paper Grading](#).

**CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION**
Participation in classroom discussion is encouraged and expected. See [Getting an “A” in Class Participation](#) on the course website.

**AUTHORIZED “EXTRA-CREDIT” OPPORTUNITIES**
Up to 45 points (3.8% of total points) may be earned by attending authorized extra-credit opportunities on campus, featuring off-campus speakers. Three such opportunities are available for the Spring 2014 semester. Attendance at each will be worth 15 points. (Additional lectures may be added during the semester.)

February 18 (evening) – Economics Association Lecture: Prof. Bruce Benson
April 3 (evening) – Economics Association Lecture: Zachary Turk
April 20 (evening) – Students for Liberty Lecture: Prof. Gary Chartier

Additional details for these lectures will be announced in class.

**MAKE-UP POLICY**
Since most of the assignments may be turned in electronically, only in cases of extended illness will make-ups be possible for those assignments. Appropriate
documentation will be required. Make-ups of exams will only be granted if the instructor is contacted by email prior to the start of the class period when the exam is held.

GENERAL POLICIES
(1) There are no extra credit projects beyond the authorized lectures noted above.
(2) An incomplete will be allowed for the class only if a 70% or better average is achieved through the exam scheduled for April 6.
(3) Withdrawal from class is the responsibility of the student.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, February 2 – First exam
Wednesday, February 18 – Extra credit lecture
Monday, February 26 – Research selection topic for term paper
Monday, March 2 – Second exam
Friday, April 3 – Extra credit lecture
Monday, April 6 – Third exam
Monday, April 20 – Extra credit lecture
Wednesday, April 22 – Term paper due
Wednesday, May 6 – Final Exam; 12:30 – 2:30 pm

PLANNED COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text Section/Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Historical Perspectives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Supply and Demand</td>
<td>BFW, appendix 1A</td>
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<td>Women and Men: Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 2</td>
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<td><strong>The Household and the Labor Market</strong></td>
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<td>The Family as Economic Unit: Theory</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphical Analysis of Specialization &amp; Exchange</td>
<td>BFW, appendix 3A</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Family as Economic Unit: Evidence</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 4</td>
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<td>Labor Force: Definitions and Trends</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Supply</td>
<td>BFW, chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income and Substitution Effects</td>
<td>BFW, appendix 6A</td>
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**Exam 1**

**Labor Market Outcomes**

Evidence on Gender Differences in Labor Markets  BFW, chapter 7
Gender Differences in Education: Theory and Evidence  BFW, chapter 8
Supply Side Sources of Gender Differences  BFW, chapter 9
Supply-side versus Discrimination in Gender Differences  BFW, chapter 10
Regression Analysis and Discrimination  BFW, appendix 10A
Theory of Labor Market Discrimination  BFW, chapter 11
Government Policy and Discrimination  BFW, chapter 12
Exam 2

*Economics of the Family*
- Changing Work Roles and Family Formation: BFW, chapter 13
- Changing American Family: BFW, chapter 14
- Government Policy and Family Well-Being: BFW, chapter 15
- Balancing Work and Family: BFW, chapter 16

*Women and the World Economy*
- Gender Differences: an Overview: BFW, chapter 17
- Gender Differences in Advanced and Developing Nations: BFW, chapter 18

Exam 3

*Topics in Labor Economics*
- Occupational Licensure: Kleiner
- Labor Mobility: Migration and Immigration: Assigned reading TBD
- Minimum Wages: Assigned reading TBD

Exam 4

**COBE REQUIRED SYLLABUS STATEMENTS:**

**Statement of Shared Values**
Boise State University upholds the following values as the foundation for a civil and nurturing environment. Campus community members and all who are part of COBE are expected to adhere to the following values:

- **Academic Excellence** – engage in our own learning and participate fully in the academic community’s pursuit of knowledge.
- **Caring** – show concern for the welfare of others.
- **Citizenship** – uphold civic virtues and duties that prescribe how we ought to behave in a self-governing community by obeying laws and policies, volunteering in the community, and staying informed on issues.
- **Fairness** – expect equality, impartiality, openness and due process by demonstrating a balanced standard of justice without reference to individual bias.
- **Respect** – treat people with dignity regardless of who they are and what they believe. A respectful person is attentive, listens well, treats others with consideration and doesn’t resort to intimidation, coercion or violence to persuade.
- **Responsibility** – take charge of our choices and actions by showing accountability and not shifting blame or taking improper credit. We will pursue excellence with diligence, perseverance, and continued improvement.
- **Trustworthiness** – demonstrate honesty in our communication and conduct while managing ourselves with integrity and reliability.
### Core Curriculum Student Learning Goals and Objectives

**ECON 327**

Students in this class will learn or practice the following COBE Core Curriculum concepts, methods, and skills:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understand and apply analytical and disciplinary concepts and methods related to business and economics:</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>1.3. Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>2.1. Communicate effectively: Write messages and documents that are clear, concise, and compelling</td>
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<td>2.2. Communicate effectively: Give oral presentations that use effective content, organization, and delivery</td>
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<td>3. Solve problems, including unstructured problems, related to business and economics</td>
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<td>4. Use effective teamwork and collaboration skills</td>
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<td>5. Resolve ethical issues related to business and economics</td>
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