ECON 8410 – Fall 2020
Labor Economics I

Instructor:	Ian M. Schmutte	**Class:**	M 9:10–11:40 AM Orkin Hall 207
Office:	Amos B408	**Office Hours:**	Tues. 2:45–3:45 PM
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This syllabus is a general plan for the course. Deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Reading (strongly recommended)

- Cahuc, Carcillo, and Zylberberg (2014) *Labor Economics*, Second Edition, MIT Press.

Course Objectives: This is the first of a two-course sequence in labor economics for graduate students in Economics who have completed their preliminary coursework. We will develop an understanding of the fundamental questions, models, methods, and results in labor economics. We will also develop familiarity with the main sources of labor market data. By the end of the course sequence, you should be able to pick up any academic article in labor economics, understand what the paper does and why. The ultimate goal is to prepare you to conduct new research in labor economics. Toward that end, we will carefully study the literature on a few topics with the aim of locating the research frontier.

Assessment:

- Homework (35%)

- Literature Review (30%)

- Replications (35%)

Homework: I will give several homework assignments. These assignments will combine analytical exercises and empirical work to reinforce course material.

Replications: You will replicate and extend the empirical results of several papers in labor economics. Upon completion, you will submit a complete code archive and a report describing your findings.

Literature Review: Over the course of the semester, you will write a thorough review of the literature in a particular area of labor economics. The purpose of this literature review is to characterize the state-of-the art in knowledge on a particular subject, and to describe how we arrived at the current research frontier. In particular, your literature review should highlight several open questions that have not yet been addressed in that literature. Your review should follow a structure similar to a paper in the *Journal of Economic Literature* or a chapter from the *Handbook of Labor Economics*.

Research Tools: You will need to use some package for econometric or statistical analysis I can help you with SAS, Stata, MATLAB, and maybe R. I will also expect you to submit written assignments that have been typeset using LaTeX. We will also have occasion to interact

with the version control system, `git`, and the Github platform. This is not a methods course, and I will not devote much time to teaching specific tools.

Topics Covered (subject to change):

1. Labor Supply

2. Labor Demand

3. Labor Market Equilibrium

4. Self-Selection and Sorting

5. Labor Market Data

6. Search in the Labor Market

7. Contracts between Firms and Workers

8. Imperfect Labor Market Competition

9. Discrimination

10. Human Capital

11. Inequality