

Econ 250B : Labor Economics
Sydnee Caldwell
Fall 2022
Thursdays 10-12, Cheit 325

Course Description: This course introduces students to core theoretical concepts in labor and personnel economics and surveys recent empirical work in the field.

Office Hours: Please sign up on my website.

Logistical Information: Lecture notes and problem sets will be posted on bCourses. The course is cross-listed as Econ 250B and PHDBA 297T.¹ Students can register for either section. There will be no lecture on November 17.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to attend lectures and read the papers marked “main papers” before class. Grades will be based on 2 problem sets (15% each, due October 8 and November 5), one “referee report” (30%, due November 17 via bCourses), and one research proposal (40%, due December 3). Information on the referee report will be distributed at a later date.

The proposal should be 10-12 pages double-spaced and should cover the following: (1) a concise statement of the research question; (2) a review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature; (3) a clear description of the proposed empirical strategy, including both a description of the data and estimating equations and an explanation of how you would interpret different sets of possible findings; and (4) a discussion of the key challenges you expect to encounter.

	Lecture Topic	Date	Note
1	Incentives and Contracts	August 25	
2	Incentives and Contracts	September 1	
3	Internal Labor Markets	September 8	
4	Social Dynamics within Firms	September 15	
5	Assignment Models & Superstars	September 22	Problem set 1 distributed
6	Management Practices	September 29	
7	Hiring	October 6	Problem set 1 due

¹ There are multiple sections of PHDBA 297T. If you want to sign up using this course number, please make sure you sign up for the Thursday 10-12 section.

Reading List

8	Social Networks in the Labor Market	October 13	Problem set 2 distributed
9	Experiments and Surveys	October 20	
10	Compensating Differentials	October 27	
11	Wage Rigidity	November 3	
12	Unemployment	November 10	
		November 17	Referee report due SC Away
	NO CLASS	November 24	Thanksgiving
13	Labor Markets During Recessions	December 1	Proposal Due