

Course Syllabus

Economics 33481 The Development of the American Labor Force (Writing Intensive)

**Professor Abigail Wozniak
University of Notre Dame
Fall 2010**

Course Logistics:

Website: www.nd.edu/~awaggone.

Office hours: Sunday evenings by announcement and Fridays 9-10 am. Alternatively, to make an appointment, just send an email to a_wozniak@nd.edu with some times that work for you.

Readings: Assignments for each class period are listed in this syllabus. The readings are posted on the course webpage, linked from my website.

Course Description

This course uses the tools of economics to understand the major forces shaping the American labor force, in both the past and the present. The course introduces students to several major research areas in the field of Labor Economics. Examples include study of accountability and outcomes in the US educational system, racial and gender integration in the labor market, and the impact of immigration.

Coursework involves reading and analyzing academic research papers. A typical class consists of a combination of lecture and discussion focusing on the reading assignment in depth with emphasis on the statistical methods employed. ***This course will fulfill the writing requirement for the Economics major.*** Students will write several short papers applying concepts from the readings and lecture material to new problems. The course is also appropriate for students considering writing an Honors thesis in Economics and for upper level students in related majors who seek a rigorous study of US labor market issues.

Prerequisites: Principles of Microeconomics. Concurrent enrollment in or completion of a statistics course, Econometrics, or Intermediate Microeconomics is recommended but not required.

Course Objectives

This course has four goals:

- You will learn about major features and episodes of change in the American labor force
- ...and come to understand the economic explanations for them.
- You will learn to critique these explanations in writing
- ...and discuss their implications intelligently with your peers and professor.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grading is done by assigning points to all assignments. Final grades will be assigned on a curve over the final point totals, but I will make every effort to communicate your standing throughout the semester.

Points will be assigned based on your performance in the following areas:

Midterm and Final Exams – 80 points total, final not cumulative.

- Midterm held in class on 10/7 (40 points)
- Final held in class on 12/9 (40 points)

Independent writing assignments – 105 points total

- Three one page, single spaced response papers. Response questions will be handed out by the professor in class and due the following class period. (10 points each)
- Five page, double spaced draft of critical analysis paper (25 points)
- Ten page, double spaced final critical analysis paper, incorporating revisions from draft (50 points)

Attendance and participation – 40 points total

- 20 points class attendance, loss of two points per absence.
- 20 points discussion participation, to be assigned by the professor at the end of the course based on *overall quality* of participation. Aim for a balance – “precautionary participation” will be penalized as well as under-participation.

225 total possible points for the course.

COURSE CALENDAR

8/24 Course introduction

Section I “American Exceptionalism and Early European Immigration”

8/26 Prince and Steckel

8/30 Galenson; Letwin

9/2 Collins (DP 1 distributed)

9/7 Freeman and Kleiner

Section II “Educating the Work Force”

9/9 Goldin and Katz

9/14 Card and Lemieux

9/16 Goldin, Katz and Kuziemko (DP 2 distributed)

9/21 Neal

9/23 No reading assigned

Section III “Integrating the Work Force”

9/28 Donohue and Heckman

9/30 Pan (DP 3 and midterm questions distributed)

10/5 Krueger, Rothstein and Turner

10/7 – **Midterm in class; Division into reading groups.**

Section IV “Working Conditions II”

10/12 Autor, Levy, and Murnane - ALL

10/14 Discussion of critical analysis topics

Fall Break

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10/26 Gant, Ichniowski and Shaw – RG1
10/28 Frydman – RG2

Section V “Moving for Jobs and Luck in the Labor Market”

11/2 Kahn – RG1

Wednesday, November 3: ND Forum “The Global Marketplace and the Common Good”

11/4 ND Forum discussion
11/9 Wozniak – RG2

Section VI “The Impact of Immigrants on Native Workers”

11/11 No class.
11/16 Card – ALL. (Five page drafts due in class)
11/18 Wozniak and Murray – Not required

11/23 Discussion of critical analysis papers

Section VII “What Does the Future Hold?”

11/30 Fortin – RG1
12/2 Bleakley and Chin – RG2
12/7 No reading assigned
12/9 Final exam in class

12/15 Final draft of critical analysis paper due in Flanner 424 at noon.

I. THE ARRIVAL OF THE AMERICAN LABOR FORCE

NR: Denotes non-required reading.

American Exceptionalism and Early European Migration

NR: Haines, Michael. "The Population of the United States, 1790-1920." In Engerman, Stanley and R. Gallman (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States, Vol. II, The Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: 2000. pages 1-14 and 47-62 ONLY.

Steckel, Richard and Joseph Prince. "The Tallest in the World: Native Americans of the Great Plains in the Nineteenth Century," *American Economic Review*, 2001.

NR: Hughes, J.R.T. "What Difference Did the Beginning Make?" *American Economic Review*, 1977.

Slavery

Galenson, David. "White Servitude and the Growth of Black Slavery in Colonial America," *Journal of Economic History*, 1981.

NR: Darity, Jr., William. "The Numbers Game and the Profitability of the British Trade in Slaves," *Journal of Economic History*, 1985.

Letwin, William. Review of *Time on the Cross*, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 1975.

NR: Fogel, William. "Three Phases of Cliometric Research on Slavery and Its Aftermath," *American Economic Review*, 1975.

Turn of the (Last) Century European Immigration

NR: Hatton, Timothy and Jeffrey Williamson. "After the Famine: Emigration from Ireland," *Journal of Economic History*, 1993.

Collins, William. "When the Tide Turned: Immigration and the Delay of the Great Black Migration." *Journal of Economic History*, 1997.

Working Conditions and Unionization

Freeman, Richard, and Morris Kleiner. "The Last American Shoe Manufacturers: Changing the Method of Pay to Survive Foreign Competition." *NBER Working Paper #6750* (1998). [Published in *Industrial Relations* 44(2005).]

NR: Freeman, Richard. "Spurts in Union Growth: Defining Moments and Social Processes." *NBER Working Paper #6012* (1997). [Published in edited volume. *The Defining Moment: The Great Depression and the American Economy in the Twentieth Century*. Michael Bordo and Claudia Goldin, eds. 1998.]

II. EDUCATING THE WORK FORCE

Goldin, Claudia and Lawrence Katz. "Why the U.S. Led in Education: Lessons from Secondary School Expansion, 1910-1940." *Working paper*, 2002.

Card, David and Thomas Lemieux. "Dropout and Enrollment Trends in the Post-War Period: What Went Wrong in the 1970s?" In Gruber, John (ed.) *Risky Behavior Among Youth*, Cambridge: 2001.

Goldin, Claudia; Lawrence Katz and Ilyana Kuziemko. "The Homecoming of American College Women: The Reversal of the College Gender Gap." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20(2006): 133-156.

Neal, Derek. "How Vouchers Could Change the Market for Education." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2002.

TBD NR: Causal effects of schooling papers.

III. INTEGRATING THE LABOR FORCE

NR: Reber, Sarah. "Court-Ordered Desegregation: Successes and Failures Integrating American Schools since *Brown*." *Journal of Human Resources*, 2005.

Donohue, John and James Heckman. "Continuous versus Episodic Change: The Impact of Civil Rights Policy on the Economic Status of Blacks." *Journal of Economic Literature*, 1991. READ ONLY selected pages, to be announced in class.

NR: Hellerstein, Judith; David Neumark; and Melissa McInerney. "Spatial Mismatch or Racial Mismatch?" *Journal of Urban Economics* 64(2008):464-479.

Pan, Jessica. "Gender Segregation in Occupations: The Role of Tipping and Social Interactions." *Manuscript, University of Chicago* (2009).

Kreuger, Alan; Jesse Rothstein; and Sarah Turner. "Race, Income, and College in 25 Years: Evaluating Justice O'Connor's Conjecture." *American Law and Economics Review* 8(2006): 282-311.

NR: Blau, Francine and Kahn, Lawrence. "Gender Differences in Pay." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14(2000): 75-99.

NR: Bertrand, Marianne; Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz. "Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial and Corporate Sectors." *Manuscript, Harvard University* (August 2009).

IV. WORKING CONDITIONS PART II

Gant, Jon; Casey Ichniowski; Kathryn Shaw. "Social Capital and Organizational Change in High Involvement and Traditional Work Organizations." *Journal of Economics and Management Strategy* 11(2002): 289-328.

Autor, David; Frank Levy; and Richard Murnane. "Upstairs, Downstairs: Computers and Skills on Two Floors of a Large Bank." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 55(2002):432-437.

Frydman, Carola. "Rising Through the Ranks: The Evolution of the Market for Corporate Executives, 1936-2003." *Manuscript*, MIT (2005).

V. MOVING FOR JOBS AND LUCK IN THE LABOR MARKET

Kahn, Lisa. "The Long Term Consequences of Graduating from College in a Bad Economy." *Labour Economics* (forthcoming).

Wozniak, Abigail. "Are College Graduates More Responsive to Distant Labor Market Opportunities?" *Journal of Human Resources* (forthcoming).

NR: Shapiro, Jesse. "Smart Cities: Quality of Life, Productivity and the Growth Effects of Human Capital." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 88(2006): 324-335.

VI. THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRANTS ON NATIVE WORKERS

Wozniak, Abigail and Thomas J. Murray. "Timing is Everything: Immigrant and Native Migration Dynamics in the U.S." *Manuscript*, University of Notre Dame.

Card, David. "Is the New Immigration Really So Bad?" *Economic Journal* 115(2005):F300-F323.

NR: Borjas, George. "Does Immigration Grease the Wheels of the Labor Market?" 1(2001):69-119.

VII. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Fortin, Nicole. "Higher-Education Policies and the College Wage Premium: Cross State Evidence from the 1990s." *American Economic Review* 96(2009): 259-287.

NR: Freeman, Richard. "Contraction and Expansion: The Divergence of Private Sector and Public Sector Unionism in the United States." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 2(1988): 63-88.

Bleakley, Hoyt and Aimee Chin. "What Holds Back the Second Generation? The Intergenerational Transmission of Language Human Capital among Immigrants." *Journal of Human Resources* 43(2008): 267-298.

NR: Clemens, Michael; Claudio Montenegro and Lant Pritchett. "The Place Premium: Wage Differences for Identical Workers across the U.S. Border." *Working Paper*, Center for Global Development (2008).